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THE MODERN INSPECTORATE:
A STUDY OF
HER MAJESTY'S INSPECTORATE OF SCHOOLS
IN ENGLAND AND WALES,
1944-1991

by

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THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM
FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

1992

2 6 AUG 1992

ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is to examine the work of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Schools from the 1944 Education Act up to the end of 1991 when the Education (Schools) Bill, which was intended to change radically the role of the Inspectorate, was being discussed in Parliament.

The first two chapters trace the background of HM Inspectorate from its inception in 1839 to its role in the Second World War. Emphasis is placed on those factors which influenced the role of the post-war Inspectorate.

The position of the Inspectorate within the Ministry of Education, and later the Department of Education and Science, is examined in detail and particular attention is given to the independence of the Inspectorate and the way in which this has been used and maintained. This is discussed through a study of the influence of HM Inspectorate on educational policy-making and, in particular, on the development of the school curriculum.

The five functions of HM Inspectorate are examined in detail: inspection, advice, writing, training and the executive function. The ways in which these functions have been exercised in relation to individual educational institutions and Local Education Authorities are the subject of two chapters. HM Inspectorate has also had a role in further and higher education, including teacher training, and this is discussed in a separate chapter. The thesis concludes with a discussion of the influences which led to the 1991 legislative proposals.

The work of the HM Inspectorate is examined in the context of the educational and political climate since the Second World War and the mid-1970s is seen as a watershed, when the declining role of the Inspectorate was turned around and it became - and remained - a body of considerable influence in all areas of education.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am most grateful to all those who have supplied me with information, either by letter or in interview. For their readiness to be interviewed and the frankness with which they spoke about the work of the Inspectorate, I am particularly grateful to a number of HMIs, Chief Education Officers, Local Education Authority inspectors and politicians, but particularly to Sheila Browne, Eric Bolton and Terry Melia, whose terms as Senior Chief Inspector covered the period 1974-1991. I am also grateful to those who manage the work programme of HMI, in particular Gina Alexander HMI, who were most helpful in providing me with material for chapter 3. The Section Committee of the First Division Association - the HMIs' professional association - was kind enough to permit me to have full access to the archive of the Association of HMIs (AHMI) and I am particularly grateful to Jack Kitching, a former HMI who organised the archive material, and Stuart Ingleson HMI, the Section Committee Secretary, who arranged for me to see the archive. I am also grateful to those members of the Inspectorate who, perhaps unknowingly, have supplied me with information when they were inspecting my school or speaking to meetings which I attended.

Researching and writing a thesis part-time for five years can be a lonely task and there are many times when one questions the wisdom of the undertaking. I have therefore been particularly fortunate in being able to

rely on the guidance of Richard Goodings of Durham University, who shares my deep interest in the Inspectorate as an institution, and whose help and encouragement have been of immeasurable value.

Finally I am most grateful to my family for their encouragement and for the uncomplaining way in which they have allowed me the time to devote to the writing of this thesis.

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PREFACE

The bibliography of a work on Her Majesty's Inspectorate comprises many sources in which HMI is mentioned, but few which are wholly devoted to the Inspectorate itself. In particular, the role of HMI in the period since the Second World War, which has seen many changes, has received little critical attention and much of what has been written has been from the pens of former inspectors. Yet Her Majesty's Inspectorate forms a fascinating subject for study. It is not an inspectorate which enforces government legislation, nor is it a body which monitors efficiency according to a pre-determined set of performance indicators. It has existed in its post-war form, partly because of the manner of its origin and partly in response to changing political, social and educational circumstances. Little of this is based in legislation, a condition which has given HMI an enviable flexibility.

Perhaps the most remarkable part of the history of the Inspectorate, both before and after the Second World War, has been the way in which it has preserved its professional independence. Based in the government department which has responsibility for education, employed as civil servants and part of the machinery of central policy-making, the senior members of the Inspectorate, with few exceptions, have preserved a distance from the politicians and administrative civil servants which has given to their reports and pronouncements an authority which few other bodies can claim. As the degree of central control of the education system has varied, the mannner of the influence of HMI has varied too.

In one sense HM Inspectorate is part of the machinery of government,

but it has been much more than an arm of the central body, inspecting and advising teachers and Local Education Authorities. It has been the weft in the web of the educational system, in which the warp is the Department of Education and Science, the Local Education Authorities, the teachers, the non-governmental bodies, the committees and the institutions. Although this analogy describes the way in which Her Majesty's Inspectorate has made connections between the different parts of the system, its geometrical simplicity belies the complexity of the relationships, in which inter-connections are made at many levels and in many different directions. Through its programme of inspection, its advisory role and its membership of numerous committees, HM Inspectorate has been able to make connections among the various participants in the system.

In approaching the study of the modern Inspectorate, it soon became apparent that the secondary sources and the writings of the inspectors themselves painted only an incomplete picture. The essence of the work of HMI - the abbreviation stands for the body corporate as well as for the individual inspector - was in the inter-relationships described above. To understand this, I had my own experience as a teacher and head, to which was added a series of interviews with HMIs, former HMIs and those whose work brought them into contact with inspectors. This provided a range of views of the work of the Inspectorate over a considerable period of time.

HM Inspectorate in Scotland and in Northern Ireland work separately from their colleagues in England and Wales and I have concentrated mainly on England, with references to the Welsh inspectors where appropriate. I have not considered the separate situations in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The 1944 Education Act formed a natural starting point for a study of

the modern Inspectorate, but it was more difficult to choose a sensible terminal date. In the event, the legislative proposals in the Education (Schools) Bill 1991 are likely to change so much the responsibilities and role of the Inspectorate that the end of 1991 became a natural choice. It had never been my intention to write the history of the final fifty years of Her Majesty's Inspectorate, but events may prove this to have been the case.

January 1992

GLOSSARY

ACSET	Advisory Committee on the Supply and Education of Teachers
AEC	Association of Education Committees
AHMI	Association of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools
APU	Assessment of Performance Unit
ATO	Area Training Organisation
B.Ed.	Bachelor of Education degree
BFSS	British and Foreign Schools Society
BTEC	Business and Technician Education Council
CACE	Central Advisory Councils on Education
CATE	Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education
CEE	Certificate of Extended Education
CEO	Chief Education Officer
CI	Chief Inspector
CNAA	Council for National Academic Awards
CSE	Certificate of Secondary Education
CSG	Curriculum Study Group
CTC	City Technology College
CVCP	Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals
DES	Department of Education and Science
DI	Divisional Inspector
DPO	Departmental Planning Organisation
DSI	Divisional Staff Inspector
ESG(E)	Expenditure Steering Group (Education)
FE	Further Education
FHE	Further and Higher Education
GCE	General Certificate of Education
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GEST	Grants for Education Support and Training
GRIST	Grant-Related In-Service Training
HE	Higher Education
HMC	Headmasters Conference
HMCI	Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspectorate or Her Majesty's Inspector(s)
IAPS	Incorporated Association of Preparatory Schools
ILEA	Inner London Education Authority
ISJC	Independent Schools Joint Council
LCC	London County Council
LEA	Local Education Authority
LEATGS	Local Education Authority Training Grants Scheme
LMS	Local Management of Schools
MSC	Manpower Services Commission
NAB	National Advisory Body
NAFE	Non-Advanced Further Education
NAIEA	National Association of Inspectors and Educational Advisers
NCC	National Curriculum Council
NFER	National Foundation for Educational Research
NUT	National Union of Teachers
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAR	Programme Analysis and Review
PCFC	Polytechnics and Colleges Funding Council
PGI	Policy Group for Inspection

RI	Reporting Inspector
RSI	Regional Staff Inspector
SCDC	Schools Curriculum Development Council
SCI	Senior Chief Inspector
SEAC	Schools Examinations and Assessment Council
SEC	Schools Examination Council
SEO	Society of Education Officers
SI	Staff Inspector
SSEC	Secondary Schools Examinations Council
TRIST	TVEI-Related In-Service Training
TVEI	Technical and Vocational Education Initiative
UDE	University Department of Education
UFC	Universities Funding Council
YOP	Youth Opportunities Programme
YTS	Youth Training Scheme

CHAPTER 1

THE FIRST HUNDRED YEARS: 1839-1939

1839-1862: Up to the Revised Code

Few bodies founded over one hundred and fifty years ago owe as much as HM Inspectorate to their founding principles and early history. The circumstances of its inception, the definition of its role, the character of the early inspectors and the way in which they played their part in the history of education during the first thirty years have, to a remarkable extent, moulded the course which the Inspectorate has taken in the twentieth century.

In the early part of the nineteenth century elementary schools were provided either by private individuals or by one of the religious societies, notably the non-denominational British and Foreign School Society (BFSS) and the National Society, which was formed by the Church of England. (1) Dr Bell, the founder of the National system, acted as the National Society's inspector for several years and the BFSS also had its own inspector. Finding this expensive, the BFSS applied to the government for a grant in 1823 but, fearing that a precedent would be created, this request was refused by Peel. (2) Ten years later complex Benthamite proposals for a national system of education were rejected in the House of Commons, which then passed a simpler government measure on a Vote on Supply 'that a sum not exceeding £20 000 be granted to His Majesty, to be issued in aid of private subscriptions for the erection of school houses for the

education of the children of the poorer classes'. (3)

There was considerable disquiet over the way in which the Societies spent this money and in 1838 the government asked the National Society to inspect its own schools. However, in the 1838 parliamentary debate on education, several MPs urged the government to institute its own scheme of inspection for the schools which received a government grant. Apart from the BFSS and National Society inspectors, there were precedents for such a scheme in Holland, Prussia and Ireland. (4) In Britain there were the factory inspectors, whose reports had revealed the inadequacy of educational provision for children who were working a twelve-hour day.

Factory inspectors had to enforce the regulations in the Factory Acts, but the voluntary nature of educational provision meant that there were no such regulations for school inspectors to enforce. Nevertheless, the Societies did not submit willingly to government inspection and the scheme which was put forward by Lord John Russell, the Home Secretary, in 1839 was accepted by the religious societies only because of their need for the government grants which came with it. In the early years of the scheme more than half of the grants offered to National Society schools were refused by the school managers in order to avoid government interference, even though the 1839 Minute made clear the limitations on the activities of the inspectors (5):

> Inspectors, authorised by Her Majesty in Council, will be appointed from time to time to visit schools to be henceforth aided by public money; the Inspectors will not interfere with the religious instruction, or discipline, or management of the school, it being their object to collect facts and information and to report the results of their inspections to the Committee of Council.

Although the Church could not prevent the establishment of a system of inspection of its schools, it won the right to influence the appointment of

the inspectors, whose names had to be approved by the Archbishops, and whose appointments could be terminated if the Archbishops withdrew their support. It was also agreed that copies of each report on National Schools would be sent to the Archbishop and to the Bishop of the diocese in which the school was situated. Religious instruction was to be inspected according to guidelines which had been agreed between the Archbishops and the government. The religious hold on elementary education was therefore confirmed by this Concordat which preceded the appointment of the first inspectors and the opportunity for the government to introduce a stronger model of inspection, similar to the system of factory inspection, was lost. This was confirmed in the first letter of Instructions to Inspectors which was sent in August 1840 (6):

> It is of the utmost consequence you should bear in mind that this inspection is not intended as a means of exercising control, but of affording assistance; that it is not to be regarded as operating for the restraint of local efforts, but for their encouragement; and that its chief objects will not be attained without the co-operation of the school committees; the Inspector having no power to interfere, and not being instructed to offer any advice or information except where it is invited.

The letter concluded:

> My Lords are persuaded that you will meet with much cordial co-operation in the prosecution of the important object involved in your appointment; and they are equally satisfied that your general bearing and conduct, and the careful avoidance of whatever could impair the just influence or authority of the promoters of schools, or of the teachers over their scholars, will conciliate the confidence and goodwill of those with whom you will have to communicate; you will thus best fulfil the purposes of your appointment, and prove yourself a fit agent to assist in the execution of Her Majesty's desire, that the youth of this kingdom should be religiously brought up, and that the rights of conscience should be respected.

The two men who received this letter had been appointed as Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools in December 1839. Rev John Allen, who had been educated at Westminster School and Trinity College, Cambridge, had

spent two years as a master in a proprietary school in Pimlico and three years as Examining Chaplain to Bishop Otter of Chichester; he was to inspect Church of England schools. Hugh Seymour Tremenheere, a barrister and member of the Central Society of Education, was appointed for the British schools. At 35, Tremenheere was six years older than Allen, but had received a similar education at Winchester and New College, Oxford, of which he was a Fellow. (7) Their early annual reports included some fascinating social comment and they used these reports, as well as their reports on individual schools, to advocate good educational practices, a function which the first Secretary of the Committee of Council on Education, Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth, had emphasised in the 1840 Instructions. Tremenheere's 1842 report on London schools was too critical for the BFSS, whose secretary wrote a letter of complaint to Lord Wharncliffe, the Lord President of the Council. Tremenheere criticised many aspects of provision, including the poor quality of the teaching, and he reported that he had found only three schools which were efficient. Wharncliffe placated the Society by appointing Tremenheere as an Inspector of Mines and by agreeing to give the Society some control over the appointment of the inspectors of its schools. (8)

The first increase in the size of the Inspectorate occurred in 1844 and it was Kay-Shuttleworth's intention that each school should be inspected twice a year. This aim was never fulfilled, as the number of schools and the extent of the inspectors' duties grew. These new duties were outlined by Kay-Shuttleworth in 1844 in a letter to HMIs, who were told to recommend grants for equipment, such as parallel desks and blackboards, which could be used for simultaneous teaching. In this way Kay-Shuttleworth was aiming to reduce the reliance on the monitorial

system. (9) In a year when the Factory Act gave increased powers to factory inspectors to disqualify inefficient teachers in factory schools, Kay-Shuttleworth had to use indirect methods to influence the style of education in the denominational schools.

The first executive powers for HMIs came in the Pupil-Teacher Minutes of 1846. (10) Not only did the HMIs have to carry out tests and administrative procedures at the start of a pupil-teacher's apprenticeship, they also had to give an annual examination to each pupil-teacher for five years. From 1848 they had to conduct examinations of older teachers for Certificates of Merit. These duties meant that the inspectors had time to visit only the grant-aided schools and were unable to visit the poorer schools where their advice would have been of great value. Throughout the 1850s, Minutes were issued which continued to increase the workload of HMIs and, in spite of the appointment of assistant inspectors from 1850, several HMIs were ill for considerable periods as a result of the strain. (11) One such change was the introduction of capitation grants to schools in certain districts on conditions which had to be established by the inspector through the examination of individual pupils. (12) Although it was not possible for HMIs to carry out fully this measure, a precedent had been created for the Revised Code and 'in a sense, the teacher was more dependent upon HM Inspector's judgment than after the Revised Code, when there was a standardised examination to test his school'. (13)

During the 1850s the number of HMIs and assistant inspectors increased from seventeen to forty-eight. It was claimed that too many of the new inspectors were 'raw young men fresh from college, or the country' with no knowledge of elementary education. (14) The evidence tends to support this claim. The 1857 intake to the Inspectorate averaged only 29.1 years of age

and fewer than a quarter of inspectors appointed up to this time had had any connection with elementary education. All the Anglican inspectors were clergymen and two-thirds had first or second class honours degrees. Although most of the early HMIs had been College Fellows or barristers, thirty per cent had had some experience of school education. (15) They were, therefore, men of considerable intellect who, 'moving in the same class of society, understood the objects and the feelings of the managers of schools'. (16) The difficulty of recruiting suitable men was compounded by the lack of any structure in the Inspectorate (17):

> Young men, appointed as assistant inspectors, were given their Letters of Instruction, assigned to a full HMI and, with minimum guidance, were sent to inspect the schools in the less congenial parts of his district.

The Inspectorate was divided by religious denomination into seven separate Inspectorates (18), but inspectors' conferences were held from 1846 in order to discuss common problems and modes of inspection. These were stopped by Robert Lowe in 1859 and there were to be no more conferences for twenty years. In the previous year Lowe's predecessor, C.B. Adderley, had stopped the voting at these conferences and it was in the 1850s that the Department began to ignore the legislative suggestions which appeared in the inspectors' reports. This contrasts with earlier schemes, such as pupil-teachers, book grants and capitation grants, which had all been advocated by HMIs. After Kay-Shuttleworth left office the leaders of the Department lacked vision and were more concerned with administrative detail. The extent to which the Department refused to be guided by its field officers was an indication of the inadequacy of the Department's civil servants. It was also one reason why the Church retained its hold on the elementary education system.

In 1858 the Newcastle Commission was set up to inquire into the state of elementary education. Although its report mentioned the benefits of inspection, it recounted complaints about the inspectors and their widely differing standards. Few HMIs were called to give evidence and the Commission's fieldwork was carried out, not by HMIs, whom the Commission's members believed to be biased in favour of the existing system, but by Assistant Commissioners with little experience of elementary education. In the House of Commons Robert Lowe backed the judgment of the Assistant Commissioners against that of the HMIs. (19) This contributed to a lowering of the reputation of the Inspectorate, which had already been weakened by some of the appointments made in the 1850s. Yet the HMI reports of the time suggest that the inspectors were still trying to be educational missionaries, as Kay-Shuttleworth had intended. They advised on teaching methods, school organisation and buildings. They were greatly concerned about the twin problems of poor attendance and early leaving age of the schoolchildren. They had generally good relationships with school managers and were often a great help to teachers, individually and collectively.

The problems which arose in the period before 1862 resulted largely from the attitude of the civil servants in the Department, who had a very limited view of the role both of the elementary education system and of its inspectors.

1862-1895: A Game of Mechanical Contrivance

Some HMIs were among those who attacked the recommendations of the Newcastle Report (20) and the ensuing arguments enabled the government to put forward its own scheme for elementary education. Robert Lowe instructed Henry Cole, who had already drafted a similar scheme for the Science and Art Department, of which he was Secretary, to prepare a scheme of payment-by-results in the 3Rs. (21) This first Code met with strenuous opposition from teachers, school managers, training college principals and newspapers. (22) The HMIs were more concerned at the implication that they had not been carrying out their inspections with sufficient rigour and thoroughness. They sent a memorial (23) to this effect to Earl Granville, the Lord President of the Council, who condescendingly reassured the inspectors that they were 'a most faithful body of very able men, who had acted most efficiently under the existing system, and under the instructions which they had received'. (24)

Many of the criticisms of the first Code were taken into account by Lowe in the second Revised Code, which attracted little parliamentary opposition. Matthew Arnold's well-known opposition to both versions of the Code (25) has created the impression that the HMIs were against it (26), but in fact the Inspectorate was sharply divided (27):

	In favour	Against
Anglican	17	8
British and Wesleyan	5	2
Roman Catholic	2	0
Total	24	10

In general, the more experienced inspectors were against the Revised Code although they were not opposed to the principle of payment-by-results.

Under the Revised Code, grants to elementary schools depended upon average attendance and upon the performance in an examination in the 3Rs of children with over two hundred attendances in the year. Six Standards of achievement were laid down in considerable detail and children could only be presented once in each Standard. Grants could be withheld by inspectors for, inter alia, faulty buildings and could be reduced by one-tenth to one-half for faults in instruction or discipline. (28) Inspectors received detailed guidance on the administration of their greatly increased powers in a letter of instructions. (29)

The main criticisms of pre-1862 inspections were that they had omitted to examine the lower classes of schools and that they had paid insufficient attention to the basic subjects. The Revised Code aimed to remedy these matters and to bring greater precision into the inspectors' judgments, but the detailed nature of the examination of individual pupils reduced an inspector's flexibility and increased his workload. This necessitated the appointment of inspectors' assistants (30), who were elementary schoolmasters under the age of thirty, whose duties were strictly limited to the examination of individual pupils. Being schoolmasters, they were seen to be of lower social status than the school managers - they were called Mister and not Esquire - and HMIs were instructed to be very careful not to allow their assistants to make any judgments which might cause offence to the managers. (31) The teachers disliked the inspectors' assistants, not for reasons of class, but for 'the competence with which they exposed weak spots, for they were poachers turned gamekeepers.' (32)

The workload on inspectors was further increased in 1867 by the introduction of extra grants for the study of subjects other than the 3Rs and in 1876 by Sandon's Act which prevented employers from taking on any

children under ten years of age and permitted them to employ children over ten only with a certificate of release from school which was signed by an HMI. In 1893 the Elementary Education (Blind and Deaf Children) Act required inspection of schools for children with these disabilities and the first HMI with medical qualifications was appointed at this time. This work was subsequently taken over by a different department under a Chief Medical Officer, although the Inspectorate retained its interest in the educational needs of handicapped children.

Throughout this period the Department continued, through a series of Codes and Minutes, to exercise detailed supervision over the work of the HMIs. It also sought to limit the independence of the Inspectorate, which had been asserted by the early inspectors, who had often used their annual reports to criticise publicly the work of the Department. In 1858 Adderley tried to censor the inspectors' reports, but the independence of the Inspectorate was supported by Parliament and Adderley had to be content with insisting that reports should only include material under certain specified headings. Reports which broke this rule were returned to the inspector for cutting, which established the principle, which still exists, that HMI reports cannot be altered by civil servants. In 1861 Lowe issued an instruction that reports should not contain inspectors' personal opinions. (33) Two years later an inspectors' report, which had been marked by Lingen, Kay-Shuttleworth's pedantic successor as Secretary of the Committee of Council on Education, was circulated on the back benches while Parliament was debating the censorship issue. Lowe, who had denied that such censorship took place, resigned and a Select Committee was established to investigate the matter. Its brief report cleared Lowe and supported the principle of government control of its field officers. (34) In treating the

relationship between the Department and the inspectors as one of subordination and discipline, Lowe was being consistent with the prevailing climate of civil service responsibility. Although the independence of the Inspectorate survived this period, it had been limited in a way which meant that its effectiveness in advising the Department of the consequences of its policy was curtailed at a time when it would have been especially valuable to have had a fully independent view. Inspectors who stepped out of line were sent letters in the name of 'My Lords', which may well have been drafted by junior clerks or examiners in the Department, and three HMIs were dismissed during the early 1860s. (35)

Following the termination of their conferences in 1859, the inspectors were rarely consulted by the Department, which viewed the Inspectorate as subordinate to the central Office and which may still have been sensitive about the part played by the churches up to 1870 in the appointment of inspectors. The 1865 Select Committee questioned a number of HMIs on the subject of consultation, after which the Department again began to take account of the opinions of its inspectors. The 1867 Minute seems to have been introduced in response to HMI reports. In the following year W.E. Forster used experienced HMIs to report on the elementary school situation in major cities. Their reports helped to create the climate in which the 1870 Education Act was passed. During the 1870s the reports of the inspectors contained no strong policy suggestions and any criticisms were confined to matters of detail. Although HMIs identified the twin problems of school attendance and fee collection, they defended the Revised Code and did not campaign either for compulsory or for free education. Even when they were given a policy-making role on the Code Committee, which made annual amendments to the Code from 1881, these Codes merely consolidated

the payment-by-results system. (36)

Some HMIs were more outspoken and as early as 1865 HMI Fitch had noted that the Revised Code was

> tending to formalize the work of the elementary schools, and to render it in some degree lifeless, inelastic and mechanical. Too many teachers narrow their sense of duty to the six Standards, or what they sometimes call the 'paying subjects'. (37)

With their background it was not surprising that most HMIs

> subscribed to the current orthodoxy that the appropriate education for the poor was large helpings of the 3Rs and religious instruction. Nevertheless their support for the Code was not such that they were blind to its disadvantages and a common verdict was that 'it is a very good test of a bad school, and a very indifferent one of a good school.' (38)

Matthew Arnold described the school examinations under the Revised Code as 'a game of mechanical contrivance in which the teachers will and must learn how to beat us'. Some HMIs resorted to asking obscure questions, such as HMI Fussell who dictated the sum 100,315 divided by 9 in a Standard 3 examination and HMI Fraser who asked Standard 4 children to divide £46,983 13s 8½d by 67. (39) It is a tribute to the teachers that pass rates in such examinations were respectably high, but the percentage pass rates of individual inspectors varied considerably and one schoolmaster alleged that there were 'as many standards as there are inspectors'. (40) Inspection Day became the most important day in the school year and there was so much at stake for the managers and teachers that their nervousness was bound to be communicated to the children, however gentle may have been the manner of the visiting inspector. Some inspectors certainly abused the power which they had, appearing self-important and over-bearing. Flora Thompson recalls vividly the inspection of the school she attended as a child (41):

> Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools came once a year on a date of which previous notice had been given. There was no singing or quarelling on the way to school that morning. The children, in clean pinafores and well blackened boots, walked deep in thought; or, with open spelling

> or table books in hand, tried to make up in an hour for all their wasted yesterdays. ... Ten - eleven - the hands of the clock dragged on, and forty-odd hearts might be heard thumping when at last came the sound of wheels crunching on gravel and two top hats and the top of a whip appeared outside the upper panes of the large end window. ... Her Majesty's Inspector was an elderly clergyman, a little man with an immense paunch and tiny grey eyes like gimlets. He had the reputation of being 'strict', but that was a mild way of describing his autocratic demeanour and scathing judgment. ... What kind of man the Inspector really was it is impossible to say. He may have been a great scholar, a good parish priest, and a good friend and neighbour to people of his own class. One thing, however, is certain, he did not care for or understand children.

Yet some inspectors retained a sympathetic and understanding approach to the problems of the elementary school and the social comment which had appeared in the reports of the early HMIs continued after 1862. Noting that the efficiency of a school often reflects the locality in which it is situated, the Lancashire HMI Kennedy wrote (42):

> Give us better homes, better dwellings, better streets, better habits, better social life among the poor, and better food, and then we should have better schools everywhere ... It is false to blame the school for not being good when the sole fault lies in the social condition of the people.

The end of payment-by-results came in 1895 and with it the end of the most difficult period in the history of the Inspectorate.

The organisation of the Inspectorate changed several times during this period. After the 1870 Education Act, HMI no longer inspected religious instruction and there was no requirement for new inspectors of Anglican schools to be clergymen. This brought to an end the denominational Inspectorate and paved the way for a reorganisation in 1871 into eight divisions, each under a Senior Inspector and containing eight to ten districts, each with its own District Inspector. In 1882, the rank of sub-inspector was introduced and this provided an avenue for the promotion of inspectors' assistants. The first Senior Chief Inspector, Rev T.W. Sharpe, was appointed in 1890 and combined this role with that of Chief Inspector,

the title by which the Senior Inspectors were then known. He retired in 1897 and, after Thomas King had spent six years as Senior Chief Inspector, the post lapsed in 1903. By the time of the Cross Commission in 1886, the Inspectorate consisted of 12 chief inspectors, 120 district inspectors, 30 sub-inspectors and 152 inspectors' assistants. The Commission's report (43) made various recommendations concerning the Inspectorate. It advocated the appointment of teachers as inspectors and in 1892 F.S. Marvin became the first teacher to join the ranks of HMI. The first female inspectors were appointed in 1896; they were entitled Sub-Inspector (Women) until 1904 when the title changed briefly to Junior Inspector before Morant renamed them Women Inspectors. (44)

A Central School of Design had opened in London in 1837 and this was followed in 1841 by Schools of Design elsewhere. In 1842 the Director of the Central School was asked to act also as inspector of the provincial schools. The first full-time Science and Art inspector was appointed in 1850, but he was not an HMI and, although the Science and Art Department at South Kensington was transferred from the Board of Trade to the Education Department in 1856, the two inspectorates remained separate. During the period 1876-90 there were four inspectors for Science and Art; this was increased to ten (in England and Wales) after 'whiskey money' had boosted technical education in 1890. (45)

1895-1939: A More Positive Role

The 1898 Instructions to Inspectors buried the Revised Code inspection - 'inspectors should not include any of the processes heretofore employed in formal examination' (46) - but it was many years before relations between teachers and inspectors were rebuilt and the teacher no longer lived in terror of the arrival of HMI in his carriage. Surprise visits replaced the annual examination in elementary schools. HM Inspectorate, which had been critical of secondary provision at the end of the nineteenth century (47), was reorganised to carry out inspections of the growing number of secondary schools which had been established following the 1902 Education Act. The need for reorganisation was also evident from the very rapid increase in the size of the Inspectorate which had taken place during the previous thirty years. Between 1870 and 1880, the number had increased every year. It reached 314 at the time of the Cross Commission in 1886 and continued to grow to 352 in 1899. Between 1890 and 1898 the Science and Art Inspectorate grew from four to twenty.

In 1898 Science and Art examinations had been abolished and some of the South Kensington inspectors were transferred to the elementary branch. (48) The Science and Art Department was integrated into the Education Department in 1901 and it was only after this time that its inspectors became known as HMI. Most of the South Kensington inspectors joined the technological branch, although six became secondary HMIs when Morant reorganised the Inspectorate in 1902. He created three branches - elementary, secondary and technological - each led by a Chief Inspector. Morant's 'branches' of the Inspectorate reinforced the divisions between the stages of the educational

system and delayed the development of a coherent system of schooling. In addition there were nine regional divisions of the Inspectorate in England and one in Wales. A separate Welsh Inspectorate under its own Chief Inspector was established in 1907. Recruitment of Sub-Inspectors had ended in 1900 and the new grade of Junior Inspector was established in the following year. This lasted only until 1912, when it became apparent that it would not be possible to promote all Junior Inspectors to full HMI status, and the grade of Assistant Inspector was re-introduced. Recruits were intended to be elementary school head teachers with at least eight years' teaching experience. From 1904 the new divisions were headed by Divisional Inspectors, who were responsible for the district inspectors who worked in their areas.

In 1904 the technological branch of HMI was split into five divisions. These HMIs inspected evening schools, technical institutes, Workers' Education Association classes and commercial subjects, looking not only at the work of individual institutions, but at the overall provision in their area. They soon identified lack of co-ordination between institutions as one of the major problems of the service, which provided the new Local Education Authorities with the information which they needed in order to plan their provision. The technological HMIs wielded considerable power through their responsibility for the recognition of technical institutes as suitable to run the new National Certificate courses. (49)

The post of Chief Woman Inspector was established in 1905, after which the Women Inspectors were called HMI (Women), but there was no equality with their male colleagues. The marriage bar for women civil servants was confirmed in 1920 and was not abolished until after the Second World War. Salaries of Women Inspectors were lower than those of their male

counterparts until equal pay was introduced into the Inspectorate in 1961 and it was only in 1934 that responsibilities were given equally to men and women HMI. The first woman Divisional Inspector was appointed in 1936.

Under the 1921 Education Act the Board of Education was reorganised and its separate elementary, secondary and technological branches disappeared. The Inspectorate was also unified at this time and in 1926 the post of Senior Chief Inspector was re-introduced. This overall responsibility was combined with the Chief Inspector post and was held by Henry Richards until 1933 and by Edward Savage for the following seven years.

There is little evidence that the relationship between the Board of Education and its Inspectorate changed significantly during the inter-war period. The 1899 Education Act had provided for the establishment of a Consultative Committee in order to frame regulations for a register of teachers, to advise on the inspection of secondary schools and to look into any matter referred to it by the Board. Only the third of these provisions was implemented and this produced the Hadow Report in 1926, a report on the primary school in 1931 and the Spens Report in 1938. (50) The Inspectorate played its part on these Committees, but the minutes of the inspectors' annual conferences provide the clearest evidence of the matters of greatest concern to HMIs at this time. They played a considerable part in the administration of the School Certificate examination which was introduced in 1917 and HMIs formed nearly half of the 1931 committee which reviewed the progress of the examination. They were concerned about the growth of homework in secondary schools - marks for homework were regarded as 'a vicious practice' by Savage - and about the working of the 'free place' system. After 1920 Local Education Authorities were permitted to use psychological tests, as well as attainment tests, in this 'eleven plus'

examination, but the Inspectorate had considerable reservations about excessive reliance on intelligence tests. (51)

During the inter-war period the Board was going through one of the weaker phases of its history; in the words of one educational historian 'the chillingly ingrained capacity of the Board to avoid fighting for its own - and therefore education's - case within the government had become chronic'. (52) There was certainly nothing to match the purge which Morant had carried out in 1903. Morant had regarded HMIs as the future intermediaries between the Board and the Local Education Authorities and he sent a Minute to Lord Londonderry, the new President of the Board, pointing out the opportunities created by the new system for young and flexible HMIs, which would not be taken by those who had been in the Inspectorate for over thirty years and who were now nearing retirement. Mr Danby, a Chief Inspector, 'has been 33 years in the service, doing the same thing in the same way and always ineffectively, without energy ... frequently absent ... He is rich, has a wealthy wife and only one grown-up daughter'. Mr Aldis is '... notorious as a fool ... inconceivably futile and worse than useless'. Mr Balmer is a '... thoroughly ineffective person. When he does do anything desirable, he is notorious for doing it in the most aggravating way possible'. Mr Ley '... has sunk into so deep a rut that he will never again see over the edge, nor [is] able to do anything definite either in this rut or in any other rut'. Mr Morgan Owen 'is not yet 58 and therefore special steps will need to be taken in order to get rid of him. ... He is wholly without breeding or feelings: has been tried in one place after another with the same disastrous results'. The names of Turnbull and Currey, both Chief Inspectors over sixty, were added to the list. A later Minute stated 'I am wholly convinced that these gentlemen must be got rid

of at the earliest possible moment.' Within four years all had departed through retirement, Morgan Owen's retirement being on the grounds of ill-health. (53)

In 1905 Morant acquired a powerful ally in the Board of Education when Edmond Holmes was appointed as Chief Inspector for Elementary Schools. Holmes has been described as a mystic and was certainly influenced by Buddism. (54) He was an accomplished writer, whose direct style of expression would have appealed to Morant. Thus, when Holmes wrote a confidential letter in 1909 to Walter Runciman, the President of the Board of Education, he deplored the state of elementary education and placed much of the blame for this on Local Education Authority inspectors who had failed to encourage elementary schools to develop away from the 'evil effects' of the Revised Code years. Through the District Inspectors Holmes conducted a survey of Local Education Authority inspectors and circulated his analysis of the findings in a confidential memorandum to HMIs. He described the local inspectors, over eighty per cent of whom were former elementary school teachers, as 'uncultured and imperfectly educated' and contrasted them with the predominantly public school and university-educated HMIs. 'The local authorities,' he wrote, 'have inherited from the School Boards not merely a vicious system of local inspection, but also a large number of vicious local inspectors.' Morant approved this memorandum for limited circulation and so it became known as the Holmes-Morant Circular. Its contents were leaked to the National Union of Teachers and both Morant and Runciman were moved from the Board of Education. The damage to relations between HMIs and Local Education Authority inspectors was deep and lasting. (55)

Following the 1902 Education Act, the Board of Education developed its

relationship with the new Local Education Authorities through the District inspectors. In his evidence to the 1912 Royal Commission, Sir Lewis Amherst Selby-Bigge, Morant's successor as Permanent Secretary, said that (56)

> the inspector in charge of a district ought to act as the Board's ambassador; it is not merely his duty to report the things he sees and hears, whether for good or evil, and to act as the Board's eyes and ears in connection with individual schools and teachers; he has to settle a great many cases with the Local Education Authority without reference to the Board.

Although not all of Fisher's 1918 Education Act was carried out, it obliged Local Education Authorities to produce schemes for the total educational provision in their area and it was the duty of the District Inspector to consider these schemes. The first Hadow Report in 1926 recommended the reorganisation of schools into primary up to the age of eleven and secondary for children over eleven. Local Education Authorities had already begun this reorganisation and the District Inspectors were again heavily involved in these schemes for over twenty years.

The Board's Annual Report for 1922 gave four main duties for HMIs: the inspection of schools, work with LEAs, conduct of examinations and general advisory work. (57) Into this last category came the programme of Short Courses for teachers, through which members of the Inspectorate brought examples of good practice to the attention of many thousands of teachers. Within the Inspectorate a series of Memoranda to Inspectors was circulated in order to keep HMIs abreast of current developments. From 1933 groups of inspectors met to share their knowledge under the Panel System. The advisory role also formed an important part of the inspection of schools and, whatever was later said in the written report on a school, it was often through the informal discussions which took place during an inspection that the most lasting effect was made on the life and work of an

institution.

Following the Board of Education's new Regulations for Secondary Schools in 1904 (58), HMI undertook the inspection of secondary schools, for which a new style of inspection had to be devised. These 'full inspections' were carried out by a team of HMIs and lasted several days, but the intended frequency of full inspections was never attained. The increasing number of schools meant that shortened forms of inspection had to be devised for secondary schools and the backlog caused by the First World War reduced further the frequency of full inspections.

From 1906 the Board of Education issued a list of secondary schools 'recognised as efficient'. This recognition followed an inspection by HMI and many independent schools were willing to submit to inspection in order to be placed on this list, although well known schools, such as Eton, were not inspected until much later.

Through its programme of inspections HMI has had considerable influence over the curriculum of individual institutions and, at a national level, HMI has shared with the civil servants in the Department a considerable degree of control and influence over the curriculum. The national curriculum of the 1988 Education Reform Act was by no means the start of central control of the curriculum in England and Wales. (59) During the period of the Revised Code elementary school teachers had very little freedom of action and 'much of the distrust by teachers of any kind of centrally imposed curriculum may be closely connected with the folk memory of payment-by-results'. (60) In 1882 the Department began to issue specimen schemes of work for elementary schools, while the detailed supervision of the curriculum was firmly in the hands of HMI through the power given to them by the 1872 Education Department Circular to approve school

timetables. 'The powers given to inspectors to approve the timetable virtually meant the power to control it' and, once approved, the timetable could only be changed with approval from HMI and then only if the school managers showed 'strong grounds' for the change. (61) The 1904 Code extended to secondary education the detailed curricular controls of elementary education (62):

> Not less than 4½ hours per week must be allotted to English, Geography and History, not less than 3½ hours to the [foreign] language where one is taken or less than 6 hours where two are taken; and not less than 7½ hours to Science and Mathematics, of which at least 3 must be for Science ... Where two languages other than English are taken, and Latin is not one of them, the Board will require to be satisfied that the omission of Latin is for the advantage of the school.

The curricular controls were repeated in the Education Department Codes up to 1925.

From 1905 no further Instructions to Inspectors were issued; instead there were Suggestions for the Consideration of Teachers, which was a booklet divided into ten sections by school subject. (63) It contained much enlightened advice and bore the hallmark of Morant, who wrote its Introduction, Cyril Jackson, the Chief Inspector of Elementary Schools, and the fifteen or so HMIs who contributed the advice on individual subjects. Significantly, Edmond Holmes was one of the four HMIs who advised W.R. Davies, the Lord President's Private Secretary, on the editing of the Suggestions. Holmes was also able to influence the revised editions of the booklet which appeared after he had succeeded Jackson as Chief Inspector. (64) His liberal philosophy of elementary education, contrasting with the Revised Code curriculum which he had witnessed during his long career as an HMI from 1875, was published after his retirement in an influential book on What Is, or the path of mechanical obedience, And What Might Be, or the path of self-realisation. (65) Educational historians have traced the

influence of progressive thinking on the curriculum from Holmes up to 1944, during which period freedom for the teacher was strongly advocated. (66) This was the framework within which the Inspectorate was working in 1944 and HMIs encouraged teachers to use this freedom in a constructive way. After 1926 the inspectors no longer had to approve school timetables and the 1927 and subsequent editions of Suggestions were re-named Handbook of Suggestions for Teachers, the final edition of which was issued in 1937. The last re-printing was in 1948.

Notes

1. N.Ball, Her Majesty's Inspectorate, 1839-49, Oliver & Boyd, 1963, 17ff.
2. H.B.Binns, A Century of Education, 1808-1908, Dent, 1908, 103.
3. Quoted in H.E. Boothroyd, A History of the Inspectorate, privately printed for the Inspectors' Association, 1923, 1.
4. N. Ball, op.cit., 4-5.
5. Minute, 24.9.1839.
6. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1840-41, 1.
7. J.E.Dunford, 'Biographical Details of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools Appointed Before 1870', History of Education Society Bulletin, no.28, Autumn 1981, 8-23.
8. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1842-43, 434. Ball, op.cit., 52-61. In 1842 a similar agreement had been reached between the government and the Church of Scotland. Agreements were reached with the Wesleyans and the Catholics in 1847.
9. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1844, I, 126-31.
10. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1846, I, 1.
11. J.E. Dunford, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Schools in England and Wales, 1860-1870, Leeds, Museum of the History of Education Monograph no.9, 1980, 4. Assistant inspectors were equal in rank to HMI but were paid less and did not write an annual report. In 1862 the assistant inspectors all became full HMIs.
12. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1853-54, I, 12.
13. N. Ball, op.cit., 228. See also J.E. Dunford, op.cit., 1980, 5.
14. The School and the Teacher, Oct 1854, 177; ibid., Aug 1857, 162.
15. J.E. Dunford, op.cit., 1981.
16. Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire in to the State of Popular Education in England (Newcastle Report), 1861, I, 342.
17. J.E. Dunford, op.cit., 1980, 6.
18. Including the Scottish Inspectorate.
19. Hansard, 13 Feb 1862, clxv, col.204.
20. See, for example, Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1861-62, 15, 57.
21. See PRO Ed. 28/10, Apr-Aug 1859, and PRO Ed. 28/12, Jun 1860.
22. J.E. Dunford, op.cit., 1980, 18.

23. Parliamentary Papers, 1862, xliii, 171-4.
24. Hansard, 11 April 1862, clxvi, col.834.
25. M. Arnold, 'The Twice Revised Code', in R.H. Super (ed.), The Complete Prose Works of Matthew Arnold, II, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1962, 241.
26. See, for example, J. Leese, Personalities and Power in English Education, Leeds, Arnold, 1950, 99
27. Twelve HMIs gave no opinion in their reports, from which this analysis is drawn. For a full summary of inspectors' opinions, see J.E. Dunford, 'Her Majesty's Inspectorate in England and Wales, 1860-1870', unpublished M.Ed. thesis, Durham University, 1976, 70
28. Minute of the Committee of Council on Education, 9 May 1862, Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1861-62, xv-xliv.
29. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1862-63, xviii, paragraph 7.
30. Inspectors' assistants should not be confused with assistant inspectors. See above, note 11.
31. Instructions to Inspectors, 1863, Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1863-64, x.
32. F.H. Spencer, An Inspector's Testament, English Universities Press, 1938, 95.
33. Parliamentary Papers, 1864, ix, 143.
34. Report of the Select Committee on Education (Inspectors' Reports), 1864, ix, 17. For a full discussion of this episode, see J.E. Dunford, 'Robert Lowe and Inspectors' Reports', British Journal of Educational Studies, xxv, no.2, 1977, 155-169.
35. J.E. Dunford, op.cit., 1980, 71-74.
36. G. Sutherland, Policy-Making in Elementary Education, 1870-1895, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1973, 342.
37. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1864-65, 171.
38. J.E. Dunford, op.cit., 1980, 24, quoting Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1865-66, 245.
39. Ibid., 1869-70, 291; ibid., 1866-67, 67; ibid., 1865-66, 100-101.
40. Letter to the Museum, March 1866, NS ii, 456. A table of percentage pass rates is given in J.E. Dunford, op.cit., 1980, 31.
41. Flora Thompson, Lark Rise to Candleford, Penguin, 1973, 188-192. See also J.E.Dunford, op.cit., 1980, 28-34.
42. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1869-70, 152.
43. Report of the Royal Commission on the Elementary Education Acts (Cross Commission), 1886-88.
44. D. Lawton and P. Gordon, HMI, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987, 86-101, devotes a chapter to women inspectors.
45. Ibid., 14-16. 'Whiskey money' was a local customs and excise tax which local authorities could spend on technical education.
46. Instructions to Inspectors, 1898, Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1897-98, 577.
47. E. Eaglesham, From School Board to Local Authority, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1956, 46-48.
48. D. Lawton & P. Gordon, op.cit., 1987, 16.
49. Ibid., 69-70.
50. P.H.J.H. Gosden, The Development of Educational Administration in England and Wales, Oxford, Blackwell, 1966, 116.
51. D. Lawton & P. Gordon, op.cit., 1987, 56-60.
52. Department of Education and Science, 1839-1989: Public Education in

England. 150th anniversary, DES, 12.
53. R. Betts, 'Robert Morant and the purging of HM Inspectorate,1903', Journal of Educational Administration and History, xx, no.1, 1988, 54-59.
54. D. Leinster-Mackay, Cross-Pollinators of English Education: Case Studies of Three Victorian School Inspectors, Leeds, Museum of the History of Education Monograph no. 16, 1986, 44.
55. D. Lawton & P. Gordon, op.cit., 1987, 34-35.
56. Quoted in E.L. Edmonds, The School Inspector, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962, 139.
57. J.S. Harris, British Government Inspection as a Dymanic Process, Stevens, 1955, 96.
58. Board of Education, Annual Report, 1903-04.
59. See, for example, D. Lawton, The End of the Secret Garden? A Study in the Politics of the Curriculum, University of London Institute of Education, 1979, and R.F. Goodings, 'How free is the teacher in England?' in F. Coffield & R.F. Goodings (eds), Sacred Cows in Education, Edinburgh University Press, 1983, 41-59.
60. D. Lawton, op.cit., 1979, 9.
61. P. Gordon, 'Commitments and Developments in the Elementary School Curriculum 1870-1902', History of Education, vi, no.1, 1977, 47.
62. Quoted in R.F. Goodings, op.cit., 1983, 45.
63. Board of Education, Suggestions for the Consideration of Teachers and Others Concerned in the Work of Public Elementary Schools, 1905. For secondary teachers, HMI issued a series of Circulars on individual school subjects and further information appeared in the Annual Reports of the Board of Education.
64. For the full background and authorship, see P. Gordon, 'The Handbook of Suggestions for Teachers: Its Origins and Evolution', Journal of Educational Administration and History, xvii, no.1, 1985, 41-48.
65. E.G.A. Holmes, What Is and What Might Be, Constable, 1911.
66. P. Gordon & D. Lawton, Curriculum Change in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, Hodder and Stoughton, 1978, 70 ff.

CHAPTER 2

THE SECOND WORLD WAR

In 1943 the Norwood Report recognised that

> owing to evacuation and the depletion of the Inspectorate itself, the burden of work has become too great for the numbers available. Inspectors have had too much to do; full inspections of schools have become rarer than they should be, individual visits to schools have tended to become less frequent and more hurried. A growing burden of purely administrative work has been placed upon their shoulders, largely arising from the imperative needs of the situation created by the war, but needing to be lightened as soon as possible. (1)

This burden of administration on HMIs came from a succession of menial tasks which helped to retain some semblance of an education system during the Second World War. Inevitably the situation led to a fall in the professional standing of the Inspectorate and a decrease in its involvement in government policy-making.

Evacuation

In early 1939 the Board of Education held planning meetings with education authorities concerning the number of children to be evacuated. The Senior Chief Inspector, Edward Savage, drew attention to the probability of a shift system of education for the evacuated children and the consequent need to plan spare time activities for them. (2) On 19 July 1939 five thousand children rehearsed evacuation procedures in Chelsea; on 25 August schools reassembled throughout London and six days later the evacuation order was issued. Concern about an invasion was so great that the four-day evacuation programme was telescoped into three days.

Inevitably, such a late change to so complex an operation caused considerable muddle, especially at the evacuees' destinations. There were 1500 assembly points in London, 168 departure stations and 271 arrival stations. 287,000 people left the capital city on the first day, 600,000 during the three days. Forty-nine per cent of the school population left London in the first ten days of September. Almost all the London teachers had volunteered to take part in the evacuation and to help with the schools on arrival.(3) In total, three million people were evacuated from towns and cities.

A clash of cultures between town and country soon became apparent and the country people found it difficult to accept the habits and standards of hygiene of some of the children from the towns. It had been planned to attach evacuated secondary schools to particular secondary schools in the reception areas and, to the extent that this policy was successful, schools were able to keep their identity. However, the Ministry of Health, and not the Board of Education, was responsible for organising the evacuation and little notice was taken of advice from head teachers. The children from many city schools were widely spread, having been despatched in arbitrary groups by Ministry of Health billeting officers. (4) This led to complaints in Parliament and a circular on the re-billeting of children was issued in November 1939. Local Education Authorities had to consult HMI about re-billeting and the Ministry of Health then had to give permission. (5)

HMIs met the evacuees at the arrival stations and worked closely with the local authorities on the ensuing problems, such as the billeting of a large London school in an area which had only a small village school. Inspectors discussed complaints with the billeting officers and wrote reports on the progress of the evacuation.

> We had to iron out many difficulties, at local and national level, and spent a great deal of our time visiting and encouraging the evacuees in the schools. Life was far from easy, either for the local children or the evacuees, and our days were long and worrying. (6)

But, apart from the increase in population and the number of military vehicles, 'life went on very much the same as it must have done when Napoleon was at the door. It was a glorious autumn and the countryside had never looked more beautiful.' (7)

By January 1940 fifteen per cent of secondary school children and twenty-five per cent of elementary school children were not in schools. This was partly because many children had returned to the cities, where all schools had been closed 'for the duration'. These children had little to do except run wild and the London County Council inspectorate supervised some London teachers in rounding them up. The dilemma for the government and city authorities was whether to put the evacuation policy at risk by re-opening city schools. This decision was further constrained by the high proportion of school buildings in cities which had been requisitioned for other purposes. Some emergency schools were opened in the cities, some teachers were recalled from their evacuation areas, and the LCC, in common with other local authorities, enforced school attendance again. (8)

School Buildings

Procedures for the requisitioning of buildings were not laid down until 1941, when demand had passed its maximum. Prior consent had to be obtained from HMI and from the local authority. If there were conflicting priorities which the HMI could not reconcile, the question was passed to a civil servant, A.R. Maxwell-Hyslop, who investigated and passed the case to the

Assistant Secretary in the Board. (9)

In 1944 HMIs had to carry out a further survey of educational premises (10) and, later that year, the return of evacuees in large numbers to the cities necessitated the release of requisitioned buildings. When a local authority asked for the release of a building, HMI had to decide on local priorities. If there was disagreement between HMI and the LEA, the matter would be referred to the Divisional Inspector and, if necessary, to the Board of Education. Between January and October 1945 the number of requisitioned schools was reduced from 1225 to 516. (11)

The Board gave HMIs the task of authorising essential repairs to school buildings, up to a maximum of £500. For greater amounts HMIs had to consult the Board before giving approval. Subsequently HMIs were told to decrease authorisations for Air Raid Protection work and, owing to restrictions on the use of steel and metal, not to permit the replacement of school heating systems, except when the system was about to break down. (12)

Teacher Supply

In 1940 the Board was concerned at the shortage of teachers in certain areas and inspectors were asked to recommend the merger of evacuated and local schools where this was sensible, although the lower salaries of teachers in rural areas were a disincentive to these mergers. HMIs were given strict guidelines on staffing levels and increases which reduced the pupil-teacher ratio to less than 1:25 could not be agreed without reference to the Board. LEAs had to discuss staffing levels quarterly with HMI, who were supposed to adjust staffing between LEAs with different ratios. In 1941 Sir Percy Sharp, the influential Secretary of the Association of

Education Committees, used this as an excuse not to carry out a national survey of staffing levels, but there remained great inequalities between different areas. Sources of additional teachers included the newly-retired and married women. Some Local Education Authorities did not allow married women to teach and, although the Board wanted inspectors to persuade Directors of Education to employ them part-time, HMIs 'showed little enthusiasmm' for this policy. (13) In 1943 the Chief Inspector, R.H. Charles, stated that the shortage of teachers was the worst problem in education. Science, Handicrafts and Physical Education provided the greatest difficulties because of the lack of male teachers. The staffing position was so bad in some areas that double-shift arrangements were considered, but the Board threatened these LEAs with a cut in their grant, telling the local HMIs not to accept double shifts and to transfer staff where necessary. (14)

The teacher shortage was made worse in August 1940 by the increase in the reservation age from twenty-five to thirty. The Ministry of Labour proposed to increase this to thirty-five in July 1941 and to abolish the reservation age in October 1941. The Board of Education protested, urging a range of exemptions, subject to approval by the local HMI. The Ministry of Labour agreed to a compromise with the reservation age for headmasters being thirty and assistant teachers thirty-five from July 1941, but with ten per cent reserved, and special regulations for mathematics and science teachers in secondary schools. It was the task of HMIs to administer this at local level. (15) There was also a shortage of non-teaching staff, made worse by the 1942 call-up of women. For women kitchen staff HMIs had to obtain deferment from the Domestic Manpower Boards. (16)

The stream of administrative memoranda which emanated from the Board of

Education on all these matters depended upon the steady flow of information from HMI reports.

Technical Colleges

The inspectors in the technological branch were also playing their part, encouraging cooperation between technical colleges and local industry in order to use equipment efficiently. HMIs felt that it was better to promote the work of technical colleges in higher grade courses with fewer trainees, rather than increasing the number of students with the unskilled and semi-skilled. In 1941 technical colleges were asked by technological branch HMIs to contribute to the war effort by producing parts for machinery essential to the war. The HMIs also worked with inspectors of labour supply to train more engineers. (17)

Maids of all work

In December 1939 the Board of Education encouraged local authorities to expand the school meals service. For speed, approval of schemes was given by the local HMI rather than by the Board. (18) This is one of many examples of administrative devolution from the Board to the HMIs. LEA monthly returns of educational provision were also submitted to HMI from February 1940 and inspectors were able to permit schools to be used as sleeping accommodation for the nightly 'trekkers' who worked in the cities in the daytime, but who needed a safer place to stay at night. During the day these schools continued to be used for educational purposes. (19)

In the cities inspectors were told to work with local authorities in

re-establishing schools after bombing raids. They were also encouraged to help the war effort by growing vegetables and by doing extra work during their summer holidays, with leave in lieu. Leonard Clark, for example, spent three days helping a local farmer. He also joined the Local Defence Volunteers, with official permission. However the LDV officer was a local teacher and Clark did not like this subordinate situation. (20)

During the evacuation of London children in summer 1944, HMIs in reception areas were asked by the Board to arrange holiday activities for evacuees and to rotate the teachers' holidays so that children were not left unsupervised for long periods. (21) They also had to help in setting up day Nursery Centres for younger evacuated children.

Although full inspections were stopped in 1940 and HMIs had to carry out many extra duties during the war, they continued to inspect schools and to report on educational progress and problems. By 1945 they were reporting a considerable decrease in pupil attainment, especially in reading and written work. (22) Throughout the war school attendance was a problem and the Board of Education urged HMIs to encourage local authorities to appoint more attendance officers and to ensure better treatment for scabies, which was a major cause of pupil absence. Inspectors were also told to confer with local JPs about school attendance. In spite of the pressure from the Board, HMIs recognised that the problems which caused poor school attendance were not susceptible of rapid solution, particularly in the rural areas where many children were employed on the land. (23)

Plans for Reconstruction

In November 1939 the Times Educational Supplement commented (24) that the War had made the Board of Education plan and control, whereas they had only advised and watched during the inter-war years. In 1940 R.S.Wood, Deputy Secretary of the Board of Education from 1940-46, analysed the decline in the influence of the Board, especially under the Presidency of Eustace Percy (1924-29) who had neglected to exercise the powers and assert the position of the department. 'I do not think we have ever fully recovered from the damage of that period,' wrote Wood, who was replying to a Minute from Maurice Holmes, Permanent Secretary from 1937-45, in which Holmes suggested that the Board should start work on plans for post-war educational reconstruction. 'This is an admirable opportunity,' continued Wood, 'for re-establishing the position of the Board as the body competent to lead and to direct the educational system of the country.' (25) Holmes had responded positively to a suggestion from S.H.Wood, the Assistant Secretary in the teacher training branch from 1939-45, that a committee on post-war educational reconstruction should be formed. The committee included the five principal Assistant Secretaries (S.H.Wood, G.G.Williams, W.C.Cleary, H.B.Wallis and N.D.Bosworth-Smith), the three Chief Inspectors (F.R.G.Duckworth, R.H.Charles and W.Elliott), the Senior Woman Inspector (Miss Hammonds) and the Permanent Secretary of the Welsh Department (Wynn Wheldon). Holmes and the Accountant-General (D.du B.Davidson) were ex-officio. (26) This group of civil servants was based at the Branksome Dene Hotel in Bournemouth, to which they had been evacuated. R.S.Wood was in London, but remained influential through his written papers and memoranda,

such as the November 1940 paper which outlined most of the changes which were subsequently included in the 1944 Education Bill.

The Educational Reconstruction Committee addressed the problems of the school leaving age and the age of transfer between schools. The Chief Inspectors reported on the educational effects of the proposed changes, although the Assistant Secretaries seem to have written all the important papers for the committee. In January 1941 S.H.Wood summarised the main points of the Assistant Secretaries' Committee as:

1. Compulsory attendance to 15; 15-18 part-time at continuation schools.
2. Free education in LEA schools.
3. Uniform regulations and grants for all post-primary schools, to be called modern, grammar and technical.
4. Age of transfer at 11 (and possibly later at 13); encouragement of multilateral schools. (27)

Meanwhile Arthur Greenwood, the Minister responsible for post-war reconstruction, held a meeting with Ramsbotham, the President of the Board of Education, which R.S.Wood and Holmes interpreted as interfering in their department's work, causing them to urge the Assistant Secretaries to hasten their deliberations. They rapidly produced papers on such matters as teacher salaries, teacher training and day continuation schools, on which the technological HMIs were asked to prepare background papers.

In these discussions there were the first signs of the future controversy over selection for the proposed new pattern of secondary education. Cleary put forward the view that the age break should be 11, with further possible transfer at 13. Charles supported Cleary, proposing that all children should transfer at 11 to senior schools to follow a common course for two years, with selection for technical and grammar

schools taking place at 13 and the non-selected children remaining at the senior schools. Duckworth opposed this view, stating that the interests of the talented children would be sacrificed without benefitting the others. Grammar schools, he felt, should not be asked to make further concessions. (28) Holmes finally decided in favour of age 11 on the grounds that it could be introduced more easily. This was therefore included in the Green Book of 1941.(29)

Circulation of this confidential Green Book was to local authority associations, teachers' organisations, churches and some other educational bodies. MPs complained that they had not seen it and R.A.Butler, the new President of the Board of Education, had to defend the secrecy in Parliament. (30) Incredibly, HMIs had not seen the Green Book and the Divisional Inspector for London asked R.S.Wood for a copy so that he could discuss with the London County Council the points which the LCC officers had raised after reading it. Holmes refused to allow Wood to give copies to the HMIs, who asked for assurances that they were not being 'disregarded and neglected.' Holmes said that, because it was concerned with administrative, and not pedagogical, matters 'there was little in the Green Book on which he would regard the views of the Inspectorate as of particular value.' (31) However, he relented a little and gave copies to Divisional Inspectors.

The power of the Board's civil servants, by comparison with that of HMIs, is emphasised in Butler's autobiography (32), in which he stated that he was fortunate to be served by a group of outstanding civil servants, mentioning by name Holmes, R.S.Wood 'who did much of the drafting', S.H.Wood 'who kept us on the progressive path', Williams, Cleary and Neville Heaton. No inspectors were mentioned. Butler asked this team of

civil servants to prepare the 1944 Bill in spite of Churchill's statement that 'I cannot contemplate a new Education Bill. I think it would be a great mistake to stir up the public schools question at the present time.' (33)

The Board then began a series of consultations on the Green Book proposals with the churches, local authorities and teachers' organisations. The main problem was to be the denominational schools, on which the only evidence that HMI were consulted was when Sylvia Goodfellow of the Board wrote to G.W.Buckle HMI to ask whether there was any evidence in Liverpool and Lancashire of non-Catholic children being obliged to attend Catholic schools. His assurance that they were not forced to do so helped to persuade Free Church leaders to agree to the Bill. (34)

On administrative reform there was external pressure for regionalisation of the Board, although the civil servants were against this, pointing out that it already had an Inspectorate which was organised on a regional basis. (35)

The White Paper (36) included a recommendation that the appointment and dismissal of Chief Education Officers should be carried out only with the approval of the Board. Holmes realised that the only information on which the Board could base this approval would be 'some rather general impressions of HMIs'. (37) The White Paper recommended that there should no longer be restrictions on times when religious instruction might be given. 'Similarly, the statutory prohibition forbidding His Majesty's Inspectors to inspect this subject is to be removed, but their inspection will be limited to the agreed syllabus instruction.' (38)

Under the 1918 Education Act all independent schools were required to give certain information to the Board. The Act stated that attendance at an

independent school should not be a defence against school non-attendance proceedings in Court unless the school was open to inspection by the LEA or by the Board of Education. In spite of this, there remained many defective independent schools and so the White Paper proposed the requirement that all independent schools should be open to inspection by the Board and registered on a Board list. (39)

The Norwood Report

In 1940 an editorial in the Times Educational Supplement (40) argued that the existing curriculum was irrelevant to the modern world and that the examination system was preventing change. Yet the content of the curriculum and the nature of the examination system were omitted from both the Green Book and the White Paper.

The Secondary School Examinations Council (SSEC) set up a committee under Sir Cyril Norwood, ex-head of Harrow School and President of St John's College, Oxford. G.G.Williams, the SSEC secretary, suggested that there should be about eight members, supported by HMIs and senior officials. On the advice of Duckworth, Williams recommended R.H.Barrow, an HMI on secondment to the Home Office, as secretary to the committee. G.G.Williams, Duckworth and W.J.Williams acted as assessors. According to Gosden, Barrow played a pivotal role in the committee's work, advocating a staged reform of the school certificate system. (41)

HMIs had a considerably greater influence on the conclusions of the Norwood Committee than they appear to have had in the corridors of the Board of Education. Duckworth proposed to the committee a scheme of internal school examinations, to be introduced after four to six further

years of the School Certificate. Approval and monitoring would be carried out by subject panels which would each include an HMI. Norwood liked Duckworth's plans, but suggested that the School Certificate should be retained for between five and ten more years. During this time teachers would be trained, the Inspectorate increased and school record-keeping improved. Then the internal school examinations would be introduced, with a senior HMI as chairman of each regional Internal Examinations Board.

> The framework of Norwood's system was to be the Inspectorate, who would guarantee the necessary degree of equivalence and objectivity; the work of examining and most of the assessing would be undertaken by teachers. (42)

Eventually the committee agreed to recommend a transitional period of seven years in which the School Certificate should be a subject examination, followed by internal school examinations at the age of 16, with extensive external assessment and moderation. A university examination would be held for pupils aged 18.

The committee also recommended a common curriculum for pupils aged 11-13, greater emphasis on Physical Education, character development and use of English, with greater freedom for schools to devise curricula for individual needs. The report received a warm welcome in the press, but the SSEC was less receptive. Norwood and Barrow, who had been appointed secretary of SSEC, tried to reduce the effect of the opposition of SSEC members by presenting them as having vested interests in the existing system. HMIs were by no means unanimous and many of them were concerned at the effect of the report's recommendations on standards in grammar schools. However, they agreed that the School Certificate should become a subject examination. (43)

Remarkably, the Norwood Report contains a chapter on HM Inspectorate,

although this topic was not included in its terms of reference. The chapter is justified on the grounds that

> the maintenance of the present spirit and professional competence of His Majesty's Inspectors, and a generous development of their numbers, are so essential a foundation for the success of the proposals which we make that it is right to devote a separate chapter of our Report to this topic. (44)

The committee recognised that the administrative load on the Inspectorate had grown to unmanageable proportions and that 'the system is not working as well as it did, but the cure for this is simple. What is required is a generous recruitment in numbers, if possible, without loss of quality.' (45) The functions of the Inspectorate were said, first 'to be the eyes and ears of the Board, reporting regularly what is being taught, said and done in the schools.' Secondly, the Inspectorate provides 'a guarantee to the public that the schools are doing their work honestly, maintaining their standards and responding to new needs as they arise.' Thirdly, HMIs have to 'keep the friendship and willing cooperation of the teaching profession.' (46) In order to fulfil these functions the committee considered that the Inspectorate must retain its independent status and should therefore retain its HM prefix. In order to assist with the recruitment of the large number of extra HMIs which Norwood recommended, it was suggested by the committee that inspectors' salaries should be increased and that there should be greater movement between HMIs, local inspectors and heads of schools.

A majority of the committee members felt that the role which they saw for inspectors would be more accurately described by the title 'His Majesty's Educational Advisory Service'. They also recommended the amalgamation of the three branches - elementary, technological and secondary.

The End of the War

At the end of 1943 an internal committee was set up by the President of the Board of Education to report on the future structure and staffing of the Inspectorate. Its chairman was the new Senior Chief Inspector, Martin Roseveare. (47) It rapidly became clear to the civil servants in the Board that the Inspectorate was too small to perform all its functions and, well before the publication of the Roseveare Report, twenty-five additional HMIs were sought. (48) The Report recommended a substantial increase in the size of the Inspectorate, with more Chief Inspectors, more Staff Inspectors and many more HMIs. These recommendations were largely carried out. The three separate branches of the Inspectorate were amalgamated, the Women's Inspectorate was absorbed into HMI and Assistant Inspectors became HMIs. The Senior Chief Inspector no longer had Chief Inspector duties. (49)

Like Roseveare, many HMIs had been seconded to other Ministries during the War and the former Senior Chief Inspector, Savage, saw this as a diminution of the role of HM Inspectorate. In this assessment of the wartime role of HMI, Savage was undoubtedly correct. The Inspectorate had been approximately 120 under strength in numbers, over-burdened by administrative tasks as the Board's field officers, unable to devote sufficient time to the inspection of schools and, worst of all, playing almost no part in the important process of planning for educational reconstruction. It was a group of civil servants, who had all been in the Board for many years, which was most influential in the preparation of the 1944 Act. According to one writer, even R.A.Butler was only the midwife 'and his triumph was to deliver the infant safely after a prolonged and difficult labour'. (50)

One may speculate on the reasons why Her Majesty's Inspectors were largely excluded from the policy-making process. Holmes' refusal to allow HMIs to receive copies of the Green Book suggests that the senior civil servants felt that policy matters were not within the sphere of competence of inspectors. With so many HMIs seconded to other government departments and the majority of inspectors busy with their multifarious tasks, it is possible that the Inspectorate could not afford the personnel or the time to participate in policy-making. There may also have been an ideological gulf between the civil servants and the inspectors which made the departmental officials wary of the views expressed by HMIs. The evacuation of many Board of Education civil servants to Bournemouth in October 1940 certainly put them out of touch with many of the inspectors. Whatever the reasons for excluding HMIs from the policy-making process - and it was probably a combination of the above - the War had not been a good time for the Inspectorate.

Notes

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4. G.A.N.Lowndes, Silent Social Revolution, Oxford University Press, 1937, 1969 (Second edition), 209.
5. P.H.J.H.Gosden, op.cit., 1976, 16.
6. L.Clark, The Inspector Remembers, Dennis Dobson, 1976, 53-4.
7. Ibid.
8. G.A.N.Lowndes, op.cit., 1969, 211; S.Maclure, op.cit., 1970, 134-7.
9. P.H.J.H.Gosden, op.cit., 1976, 64-5.
10. L.Clark, op.cit., 1976, 93.
11. P.H.J.H.Gosden, op.cit., 1976, 67.
12. Ibid., 62-3.
13. Ibid., 93-7.
14. Ibid., 102-3.
15. Ibid., 106-7.
16. Ibid., 104.

17. Ibid., 132-3.
18. Ibid., 186.
19. Ibid., 46.
20. L.Clark, op.cit., 1976, 60-3.
21. P.H.J.H.Gosden, op.cit., 1976, 60.
22. S.Maclure, op.cit., 1970, 138; G.A.N.Lowndes, op.cit., 1969, 212
23. P.H.J.H.Gosden, op.cit., 1976, 70-3, 83.
24. Times Educational Supplement, 25.11.39.
25. P.H.J.H.Gosden, 'From Board to Ministry: the Impact of the War on the Education Department', History of Education, xviii, no.3, 1989, 188; PRO Ed 46/155, PRO Ed 136/212.
26. P.H.J.H.Gosden, op.cit., 1976, 238ff.
27. Ibid., 249.
28. PRO Ed 136/212 in P.H.J.H.Gosden, op.cit., 257.
29. This is given in full in N.Middleton & S.Weitzman, A Place for Everyone. A History of State Education from the Eighteenth Century to the 1970s, Gollancz, 1976, Appendix 1.
30. R.G.Wallace, 'The Origins and Authorship of the 1944 Education Act', History of Education, x, no.4, 1981, 286.
31. PRO Ed 136/216 in P.H.J.H.Gosden, op.cit., 1976, 267.
32. R.A.Butler, Art of the Possible, Penguin, 1973, 95.
33. Ibid.
34. PRO Ed 136/250 in P.H.J.H.Gosden, op.cit., 1976, 289.
35. Ibid., 292.
36. Board of Education, Educational Reconstruction, HMSO, 1943.
37. PRO Ed 136/389 in P.H.J.H.Gosden, op.cit., 1976, 301.
38. Ibid., 12.
39. Ibid., 28.
40. Times Educational Supplement, 17.8.40.
41. PRO Ed 12/479 in P.H.J.H.Gosden, op.cit., 1976, 375.
42. P.H.J.H.Gosden, op.cit., 1976, 378.
43. Ibid., 380-6.
44. Norwood Report, 50.
45. Ibid.
46. Norwood Report,51.
47. M.Roseveare, Joys, Jobs and Jaunts: Memoirs of Sir Martin Roseveare, privately printed, 1987, 26-44.
48. P.Gordon, 'Watchdogs and Missionaries: the First Hundred Years' in Department of Education and Science, 1839-1989: Public Education in England. 150th Anniversary, HMSO, 1990, 50.
49. Report of the Inspectorate Committee (B). Establishment Minute 1768, 3 October 1944, PRO Ed 23/838 in P.Gordon, op.cit., 1990, 51. See also M.Roseveare, op.cit., 1987, 48-49.
50. R.G.Wallace, op.cit., 1981, 290.

CHAPTER 3

THE STRUCTURE AND ROLE OF HM INSPECTORATE SINCE 1944

Duties and Functions of Her Majesty's Inspectors

The Rayner Report gave the following definition of the role of HMI (1):

> to assess standards and trends throughout the education system and to advise central government on the state of the system nationally on the basis of its independent professional judgment. This is the first and overriding duty; and at the same time
>
> to contribute to the maintenance and improvement of standards in the system by the identification and dissemination of good practice; by bringing to notice weaknesses which require attention; and by advice to those with a direct responsibility for the operation of the service including teachers, heads and principals, governing bodies and local education authorities.

The same report also outlined the limitations on the role of HMI (2):

> HM Inspectorate has no direct responsibility or powers (other than delegated powers for advanced course approval in higher and further education) except the right of access to institutions and the duty to inspect on behalf of the Secretary of State. It is not responsible for decisions about the organisation or the curriculum of schools; nor for standards; nor the standard of premises, equipment, staffing or other resources; nor for the deployment or promotion or appointment of teachers. Thus its influence within the system and on the system depends preeminently on the overall quality, timeliness and authority of its advice and writings; on a continuing regard for its professional independence and integrity; and on the maintenance of a delicate set of working relationships throughout the education system.

These descriptions of the extent and limitations of the role of the Inspectorate bear a striking resemblance to the Instructions to Inspectors issued to the first HMIs over 140 years earlier and quoted at the start of the opening chapter. There was the same emphasis on advice and improvement to the education system, the duty to report to the central authority, the

insistence on not interfering with the school management and the intention to contribute to the work of the local people responsible for the school.

At the heart of these duties lies the essential function of inspecting schools and colleges, without which the Inspectorate cannot speak with an authoritative voice and between 1944 and 1960 an inspection of every school took place. By long-standing tradition, however, inspectors contributed to the improvement of the system by giving advice and during the 1960s they put more emphasis on advice than on inspection. Robin Tanner, for example, wrote in his autobiography: 'I inspect in order to advise.' (3) This practice led one commentator on British inspectorates to write in 1972 that 'the modern HM Inspectorate no longer inspects and in giving advice is no more expert than many others in the educational system. ... Such inspection as is done seems virtually worthless.' (4) It also led to suggestions that full inspections of schools by HMI should end and that HMI should become a national educational advisory service. (5) Although this did not happen, the Inspectorate began to put more of its resources into inspection and into the publication of the results of those inspections. The advisory function remained, as did the inevitable tension between inspection and advice, but the priority of HMI to inspect was widely recognised by the end of the 1970s.

The 1944 Education Act laid on the Minister of Education the duty to inspect at appropriate intervals all educational institutions. Section 77 of the Act went on to state that such inspection need not be carried out by the Minister's inspectors if other suitable arrangements were in force. Local Education Authorities were also authorised to carry out inspections.

In the period following the 1944 Act, the Inspectorate continued to bear the heavy administrative burden which it had acquired during the War.

In particular, it contributed to the school building programme, both through its advice to local authorities and through the involvement of a number of HMIs in the Ministry's Schools' branch and in the influential Architects and Buildings branch. In the immediate post-war period the design of British schools was admired and copied throughout the world. The Architects and Buildings branch is generally given the credit for this, but it depended to a large extent on the professional advice of these HMIs.

The extent of the administrative work may be gauged from memoranda such as the letter from Miss Goodfellow HMI to Mr Mackenzie in Schools branch, asking whether it was really necessary for the Office to ask so many questions of HMIs concerning school closures. (6) An article in the Times Educational Supplement by a Chief Education Officer expressed the view that HMI had become over-concerned with the Ministry's Building Regulations (7):

> They conscientiously measure the size of classrooms, count the number of lavatories and washbasins, and pace out the size of the playground. ... The art of assessing standards of work seems to be a lost art so far as the present-day inspector is concerned.

Ten years later the situation was no better and the inspectors' reports were still being criticised for their tendency 'to deal more with the physical side of schools rather than with the teaching side.' It was felt that this should be done by a building inspector rather than an HMI. (8)

During the 1950s HM Inspectors also continued to hold some of their wartime responsibilities concerning teacher supply, which involved them in allowing appointments of women to men-only posts (and vice-versa) 'if HMI is satisfied that the work of the school concerned would otherwise be seriously interrupted or prejudiced.' They could also approve appointments of women teachers even when the LEA maximum quota of women had been reached. Other responsibilities related to school attendance: children were

needed to help with the harvest, especially potatoes, in term-time and it was the job of the local HMI to grant exemptions from school attendance up to a maximum of ten half-days. (9)

Through the 1950s the Inspectorate continued to expand the breadth of its duties. Not only did HMIs have the administrative work associated with school buildings and meals and the other trivial tasks outlined above, their advisory burden grew and they were given an increasing number of assessorships to outside committees and organisations. This eventually caused a considerable reduction in the amount of school inspection and there were complaints that HMI did not visit schools often enough. At a time when the civil servants in the Department needed the advice and professional expertise of its Inspectorate concerning standards of education, HMI did not have the evidence of inspection to provide a confident view. (10) Maclure has related the changing role of HMI to the development of accountability within the education service. This moved from the rigid authoritarianism of the second half of the nineteenth century to the more flexible accountability of the 1960s and 1970s, in which HMI had become more closely identified with the teachers as fellow professionals whom they were advising and from whom they were collecting information, but over whom their judgmental function had changed from a focus on individuals to a focus on national trends. (11) This accords with Harris' analysis of the British tradition of government inspection which discourages a superiority of the inspector over the inspected, courtesy, common sense and persuasion being the essential characteristics of the relationship. (12)

The main duties of the Inspectorate since the Second World War may be classified into five main areas of activity: inspection, advice, writing,

training and the executive function.

The inspection function covers a wide range of institutions and is carried out in a number of different ways. Inspections range from a one-day visit to a small primary school to the taking of a nationwide sample or the inspection of a whole Local Education Authority, evidence for which may be gathered over more than a year. As well as maintained schools and colleges, HMIs inspect independent schools, further education, teacher training, the public sector of higher education, adult and community education and the youth service. They also inspect educational provision in prisons and community homes for the Home Office, education in hospitals for the Department of Health, the armed forces' schools for the Ministry of Defence and the educational components of training schemes, such as the Youth Training Scheme, for the Department of Employment. With such a wide range of institutions to inspect, it is not always easy for the Inspectorate to decide on its priorities. According to Eric Bolton (13),

> it is sometimes difficult for SCI to get the Chief Inspectors to cut the cloth according to the HMI coat. The Inspectorate is like an unsaturatable sponge - there is so much quality within it that it could comment sensibly on massive areas of education. We have to look at the opportunity costs of using x HMIs or y and at new forms of inspection.

The management of this inspection programme, as well as the management of institutional inspections and national surveys, constitutes a major element in the inspection work of HMI. Apart from the short informal visit to a school and the more formal inspection, carried out by a team of HMIs and lasting usually a week, the trend towards issues-led inspections has grown during the 1970s and 1980s. The issue will have been identified centrally and information may be gathered either from short visits or during the course of full inspections.

Their advice function has a breadth which is consistent with the role of HMI as a professional body with a national viewpoint on educational provision. HM Inspectorate offers advice to government departments, national committees and statutory bodies, Local Education Authorities, educational institutions and individual teachers. Civil servants and Ministers rely heavily on HMI for professional advice and it is essential for HMI to be able to identify possible future trends in government policy so that they will have carried out sufficient inspection to be able to underpin that advice with solid evidence. The questions asked of HMI by the Department may be more immediate, but answers are expected to be no less authoritative. This may result in HMIs receiving urgent telephone calls, while they are out on inspection, asking them to provide information relating to an issue of current political importance. Data can thus be provided for ministerial answers to parliamentary questions or for a speech which the Secretary of State is about to make. Such an emergency occurred during the 1990 controversy about reading standards in primary schools and, although this overloaded the Inspectorate with work, HMIs found it exciting to hear their evidence discussed in Parliament and to read it on the front pages of the popular newspapers.(14) Within the DES, HMIs contribute advice to the policy-making process through committees, memoranda and informal discussion. It was not always so, for there have been times when the Department has taken little advice from HMI. These periods tended to coincide with periods when HMI was at its lowest ebb, such as the 1960s when insufficient inspection was being carried out for the HMIs to provide the government with the information which it would have required as background to a legislative programme. These were also the periods when the Department was inactive in areas which could be informed by the evidence of

inspection. Apart from the DES, other government departments may call upon the advice of HMI where policy issues touch upon education.

The advice function is also carried out through involvement with a large number of committees and statutory bodies. The Rayner Report estimated in 1982 that acting as assessors or observers to about 700 outside bodies took up two per cent of HMI time, which it considered to be not excessive when the benefits both to HMI and to the committees were taken into account. A considerable proportion of this time for those HMI working in schools and 16-19 colleges was spent on work generated by the Schools Council, its sub-committees and working parties. (15) Although the Schools Council disappeared in 1982, the number of such links increased during the 1980s, reaching 1400 in 1987-88, but reducing to 1220 in the following year. (16) Some of the most important outside contacts for the Inspectorate have been with committees such as Plowden, Newsom and Warnock. More recent examples included the development of the public sector of higher education, which has been influenced by the presence of HMI on the Polytechnics and Colleges Funding Council (PCFC). In the schools' sector the national curriculum has been created by a network of committees and sub-committees, all including HMIs, based on the National Curriculum Council (NCC) and the Schools Examination and Assessment Council (SEAC).

Throughout the post-war period the Short Course programme has enabled HMI to help curriculum development and to influence the work of teachers. Although it felt that the Short Course programme could be more clearly focussed, the Rayner Report considered that the 4.5% of HMI time spent on this work was 'effectively used and widely valued by teachers.' (17) At the time of Rayner, the Inspectorate ran about one hundred short courses per year and spent a similar amount of time organising Invitation Conferences

for senior educationalists, contributing to LEA in-service courses and participating in the planning of DES Regional Courses. By the late 1980s this picture had changed: the DES Regional Course structure was replaced by the LEATGS and the HMI Short Course programme was halved. (18) This continued to diminish as schools and colleges took on more responsibility for the in-service training of their teachers. In 1991 Eric Bolton stated that it was no longer sensible for HMI to run a substantial Short Course programme, although the Invitation Conferences remained a valuable forum for the exchange of ideas. (19)

The dissemination of curriculum developments also took place through the work of a handful of HMIs who were acknowledged experts in their field. The most notable example in the post-war period was Edith Biggs, who had a great effect on the teaching of primary mathematics. Christian Schiller and Robin Tanner were other inspiring examples in the primary field. This mode of dissemination had a negative side, for it had led by the early 1960s to 'a feeling that HMIs were individual gurus, experts in their field, giving advice to schools, but of little use to the centre.' (20) As a new HMI, Tanner rejoiced in the fact that he was free to say and write what he wanted: 'I had nothing to lose. My allegiance was only to the truth as I saw it.' Gradually Tanner's anti-competition, child-centred views caused him to diverge from current orthodoxy. When he was moved to Oxfordshire late in his career, he reflected that (21)

> over the past twenty years I had come to see that my own views were totally opposed to our educational system and I had often found myself in the enemy's camp ... So I was determined in Oxfordshire to be even more outspoken in my beliefs, leaving no school or college in any doubt as to where I stood ... I would wage a private war against 'the system'.

Tanner was not a typical HMI but, happily, he was able to form a link with

Edith Moorhouse, an influential senior adviser in the county, with whom he shared a common philosophy.

The advice function of the Inspectorate has always been exercised through conversations with those who work in individual institutions. Up to the 1960s, the general inspector for a school was much closer to the school than his counterpart in the 1980s and 1990s. Consequently, the HMIs felt closer to the teachers in the schools for which they acted as general inspector. One HMI 'ran six small discussion groups with primary school teachers in the area, but there was always the feeling in HMI that it was the LEA's job, not HMI's, to follow up inspections.' (22) The advice function of HMI also extended to discussions with LEA personnel. In particular, HMIs could be asked to give advice to LEAs concerning school reorganisations independently of exercising their formal duty of advising the Secretary of State on the local authority's proposals. Proposals for grant-maintained status from schools required advice to the Secretary of State from HMI, based on their knowledge of the school itself and the other maintained schools in the area. 'That advice has not required that every school involved be formally inspected.' (23)

Up to the mid-1980s another matter on which HMI provided a source of advice to Local Education Authorities was the potential failure of a probationary teacher. Inspectors would be asked to observe the teaching of such probationers and to give an opinion on their suitability. This issue came to the High Court in 1982 when Mr Kantinay Kumar appealed against his LEA's decision that he had failed his probation. On the grounds of natural justice, the judge considered that Mr Kumar should have been told the basis of criticisms by HMI and given a chance to reply to them. (24) In the following year LEAs were reminded by the Department that, when they

considered that a probationary teacher was unsuitable, they 'should note that the Department's procedure involves seeking advice from HM Inspector, who will make a separate report to the Secretary of State.' (25)

The third function of HMIs is writing. It might have been possible to omit this from a list of HMI duties in an analysis of the work of the Inspectorate limited to the thirty years after the Second World War. During that time, the inspectors wrote Notes of Visit concerning their short inspections of schools, but these disappeared unseen into HMI files. They wrote reports on full inspections of schools and colleges, but these remained confidential to the employers and to those working in the institution. They wrote copious memoranda to civil servants and Ministers, but these were also confidential. Even where they contributed extensively to a published document - Stella Duncan HMI wrote most of the Plowden Report, for example - no acknowledgement was made of the extent of their contribution. One of Sheila Browne's most significant initiatives was to increase both the quantity and the quality of HMI writing, a trend which has continued. In 1987-88, for example, 528 inspection reports were published, including 112 surveys of areas and aspects of education. HM Inspectorate also published documents on curriculum in both schools and further education, reports on youth work, initial teacher training in universities, probationary teachers, the introduction of GCSE and a booklet on education and training at Sainsbury's, written by an HMI who had been seconded to the company for six months. Nine major visits abroad were made by groups of HMIs and some of these also led to published reports. (26)

HMI organises its own training and updating. In the aftermath of the Second World War the HMI training programme recognised the importance of inspectors offering encouragement and advice to teachers in order to raise

standards throughout the education service. One example merits inclusion. The area of influence of the Inspectorate included the Youth Service and in 1946 a group of HMIs did some experiential in-service training in order to be in a better position to advise on the improvement of standards of organisation of Youth Service camps. They were given the opportunity

> to learn something of the correct methods of running a camp and of the standards of comfort and hygiene which could reasonably be expected. ... The course was conducted by a divisional inspector and a staff inspector of the Ministry. ... For four days the inspectors lived and worked together. They took their share of camp chores; they learnt to pitch and strike camp and to set up washhouses and latrines. ... The almost incessant rain unfortunately prevented any prolonged exploration of the surrounding countryside or field study of its rich natural life. (27)

The same atmosphere of camaraderie may not be created in the four-star hotels of Llandudno or Bournemouth where modern HMIs hold their courses and conferences. Throughout the post-war period, the Inspectorate has placed great emphasis on the training and updating of its members. In 1991, for example, each HMI was allocated nine days for in-service training, some of which could be self-programmed. It is difficult to draw the line between training and participation in conferences and committees. Academics who produced important papers on some aspect of education were often invited to address the relevant groups of inspectors and this formed an important part of their in-service training.

The last of the five functions of HMI is the executive function, which disappeared following the ending of the course approval system for further and higher education. The Regional Staff Inspectors, who carried out this function until the mid-1980s, wielded a considerable amount of power. They were often feared and sometimes despised by the college principals and local authority officials with whom they came into contact.

Structure and Organisation of the Inspectorate

The number of HMIs in England and Wales in each grade has been (28):

Date	SCI	CI	DI	SI	HMI	Total
1945	1	6	10	36	364	417
1968	1	7	10	63	462	543
1981	1	6	7	61	387	462
1991	1	7	7	60	403.5	478.5

The total number of HMIs has fluctuated considerably during the post-war period, rising very rapidly in the 1940s to a high point of over six hundred in 1950. In the mid 1960s many of these HMIs reached retirement age and about 100 inspectors had to be recruited in a short period. The number reached its lowest point about 1980 during the period of uncertainty at the time of the Rayner Report, climbing quickly after Rayner had confirmed that the Inspectorate had an important role to play. (29) The total number of HMIs was normally below the full establishment figure. For considerable periods of time it was well below that figure and only rarely do the figures match exactly. At the end of the 1980s the Conservative government ceased to fix an establishment for each part of the civil service and after that date the Inspectorate had to bid for manpower according to need. The optimum size of HMI was frequently a matter for debate, but views tended to lack precision. The 1968 Select Committee Report noted (30):

> To a question about the size of the Inspectorate the Permanent Secretary replied: 'If I was asked whether we could use an Inspectorate of 1000 instead of 500 I would say Yes; on the other hand we could get by on 250 but 500 seems a reasonable sort of figure in present circumstances' and the Senior Chief Inspector found 'something about the Inspectorate, because it was about 500 people, which was worth preserving and which would soon be lost if we increased that number very much'. Now, as in 1956, 500 seems to be regarded as the right number and, with difficulty, the work has been made to fit it; we think that on the contrary the number should be made to fit the work.

As can be seen from the Table, the proportions of HMI in each grade

changed relatively little after 1945. Since the duties of a Chief Inspector were removed from the Senior Chief Inspector in 1945, the holder of this post has been the administrative head of the Inspectorate, with direct access to the Minister. Eric Bolton described this access as

> one of the visible planks of the independence of the Inspectorate. In practice, the Secretary of State may ask to see SCI, or vice-versa. It varies with different Secretaries of State and with what stage policy development is at. If the Inspectorate has something to say to the Secretary of State which for one reason or another cannot be mediated through the branches of the DES, then SCI has the right to go direct to the Secretary of State. Sometimes this means a physical visit, sometimes by putting in a paper parallel to that of the policy branches, when the Inspectorate wishes to say 'Secretary of State, we have debated all of this and we are quite clear why the branches are putting this view, but there is this important outstanding issue which, on a professional front, we believe you ought to know about.' So it is a token of HMI's independence from the Department, but it is also used in practice. However, SCI would not want to use it too frequently. (31)

After the 1968 Select Committee, SCI was promoted to Civil Service Grade 2, which is the same level as the other three Deputy Secretaries in the Department. Eric Bolton regarded this as very important, because it put SCI firmly into the senior management of the Department.

> This means that half the job of SCI is participating in the overall management of the Department in relation to its priorities, policy issues and running costs. Apart from giving HMI a clear position in the Department, it is important in helping SCI to spot those issues coming over the horizon which will require inspection evidence in two to three years time. (32)

The responsibilities of the Senior Chief Inspector encapsulate the different, and sometimes conflicting, roles of the Inspectorate. On the one hand he is the head of a body with considerable professional independence which it is his daily duty to preserve; on the other hand he advises civil servants and ministers and, through his departmental management role as a Deputy Secretary grade officer, he works very closely with those from whom he has this independence. This can be a difficult path to tread and, with

the increasing politicisation of education, it can never be an easy role. Nevertheless, the personality and operational skill of the Senior Chief Inspector is a vital component in the effectiveness of the Inspectorate as a whole. This was never clearer than in the mid-1970s when, after HMI's barren period of over fifteen years, Sheila Browne built on the work begun by W.R.Elliott and turned the Inspectorate in less than two years into a body which had considerable influence on the development of education policy and practice. For two brief periods there has been a Deputy Senior Chief Inspector when the post was occupied by the heir-apparent.

In 1945 SCI's team of four Chief Inspectors was increased to six, with responsibility for elementary, secondary and technical education, the two women Chief Inspectors and the CI for Wales. By 1970 three of the CIs were concerned mainly with schools, two with further education, one with teacher training and one for Wales. (33) When a Chief Inspector has retired, the areas of responsibility have generally been redistributed to reflect changes in HMI priorities and to incorporate the experience of the new CI. The Rayner Report recommended that the CI for primary education should no longer have responsibility for the oversight of the central inspection programme; an additional CI to take charge of all aspects of 16-19 education was also recommended. Only the first of these recommendations was put into practice, so that the main areas of responsibility for the seven Chief Inspectors in 1991 were:

primary education
secondary education 11-16
schools 16-19 and sixth form colleges, assessment and examinations
teacher training
further education
higher education
management

There is also a Chief Inspector for Wales. All CIs have a range of

responsibilities in addition to their main area. Under Eric Bolton's leadership the Chief Inspectors met weekly with him to discuss all matters relating to the management of the Inspectorate and to decide on the difficult question of priorities between the conflicting demands of the Chief Inspectors. At the same time as putting forward these claims for a share of HMI time, the CIs function as a collegiate management group, since HMIs are interchangeable in order to form teams for larger exercises. (34) Each CI is linked with one or more of the Department's policy branches and is involved in their meetings. They are on civil service grade 4.

In 1991 each CI had a team of five to ten Staff Inspectors, who were the middle managers of the Inspectorate on grade 5, the equivalent civil service post being Assistant Secretary. The majority of SIs are based in the Department of Education and Science's headquarters; others are based in offices 'within reasonable travelling distance' of the Department. There are teams of SIs for each phase of education - primary, secondary, further, higher and teacher training. For each subject there is normally one SI and there are also Staff Inspectors for aspects, such as educational disadvantage. Because only a very small proportion of SIs are promoted to CI, there was a problem of people staying in the same SI post for too many years and not being available for other work which needed an SI. Under Eric Bolton's leadership, the Inspectorate largely overcame this from 1989 by appointing HMIs not to a particular SI post but to grade 5, in which they are given an assignment, which may later be changed. All SIs have at least dual assignments: in 1991, for example, the SI for English spent 80% of available time on the subject and the remaining 20% on school development plans. Another SI, who was a member of the CI(Primary)'s team for 80% of his time, managed the Annual Report team for the other 20%, for which he

was directly responsible to SCI. This has made the management of the Inspectorate more flexible, but it required a complex management structure. For example, the SI referred to above had CI(Primary) as his main line manager and a different CI as his line manager for a proportion of his work. His own line management responsibilities were for seven primary HMIs in one of the Divisions and for the six HMIs who worked with him on the compilation of evidence for the Annual Report. Each of these HMIs had other SIs as their line managers for other parts of their work. This structure resembled a matrix, rather than a line management system, but was certainly far removed from the concept of 'the Brotherhood', which Blackie used to describe the lack of a hierarchical structure in the pre-war Inspectorate. (35) Eric Bolton said that 'this was always a rather precious notion' (36), but there was certainly less emphasis on a chain of command and more freedom for each inspector before the Second World War. Nevertheless there remains a closeness between HMIs which ensures that 'if someone coughs in Truro, somebody in Newcastle rings him up and asks how he is.' (37)

Until the early 1970s there were nine Divisions in England. The Divisional Inspectors, who were paid on the same grade as Staff Inspectors, had considerable power, helping to formulate the policy of the Inspectorate and being responsible for its implementation in their own Divisions. They arranged the territorial assignment of each HMI in their Divisions and had responsibility for the training of new HMIs. (38) During this period, the Inspectorate was dominated by the Divisions, with the Divisional Inspectors as kingpins, giving permission for HMIs to travel out of their Divisions for courses or inspections, although their influence over an individual HMI's programme depended on whether the inspector was part of a national team, such as teacher training. (39) As the main focus of the work of the

Inspectorate swung away from the largely autonomous Divisions towards the centre during the late 1970s and 1980s, the power of the Divisional Inspectors was diminished. This was emphasised in the mid-1980s when they were re-named Divisional Staff Inspectors, but still paid on civil service grade 5. This coincided with the demise of the role of Regional Staff Inspector, who had been responsible for course approval in further and higher education in the Division. Thus, instead of a Divisional Inspector and a Regional Staff Inspector in each Division, there was only the Divisional Staff Inspector.

Inspectors on the main HMI grade - grade 6 - have had a variety of assignments, including the role of District Inspector, who covered an area for either schools or further education and who was responsible for liaison with the LEA. (40) Most HMIs acted as District Inspector in at least one area during the course of their careers in the Inspectorate. All main grade HMIs acted as general inspector to a group of schools or colleges or higher education institutions. In 1970 it could be said that 'the task of the general inspector, trying to become aware of every aspect of the school's life and work, is a demanding one. Though it may now absorb on average somewhat less of the inspector's time than it once did, it remains central to his office.' (41) During the twenty years since this was written, the role of the general inspector has further diminished. HMIs have also had a phase and a subject specialism, such as Mathematics or Geography. In addition they may have had a specialism in a more general aspect of education, such as assessment or educational disadvantage.

The majority of HMIs remain in the main grade throughout their career in the Inspectorate. In 1974, when the Senior Chief Inspector, H.W. French, put forward a scheme for restructuring the Inspectorate by including an

intercalary grade between HMI and SI, 75% retired after twenty years' service in the main grade. Many of these inspectors had been recruited in the post-war expansion and this figure is therefore unusually high. Discretionary allowances had been introduced in 1951 to augment the salaries of HMIs who acted as District Inspectors in large LEAs or who had special responsibilities or, in some cases, for long service. French proposed that these 57 allowances be abolished and that the number of SIs should be reduced from 57 to 46, creating 102 new higher grade HMI posts for major district responsibility, divisional phase specialists and national specialists. The number of Divisional Inspectors was to be reduced to seven. The majority of HMIs supported French's proposals and it is not clear why the intercalary grade was not introduced. The reduction in the number of divisions took place. (42) Rayner concluded that the organisational structure of the Inspectorate, 'although complex and probably without parallel in any other government body', was appropriate and the report suggested no major changes. (43)

Because inspecting can be a lonely and isolated job, HMIs have always had a good network of panels, committees and conferences which enabled the Inspectorate to reach collective judgments on issues of current importance. Within each division there are formal phase and aspect committees, as well as meetings for all HMIs in the Division. There are also national committees for each phase, for specialist subjects, chaired by the Staff Inspector, and for aspects such as the education of young children, middle schools and special needs. For twenty-five years after the Second World War there were panel meetings of representative primary and secondary HMI, which reported to a Central Panel, comprising SCI, the Chief Inspectors and two senior Ministry officials. From 1944 the Central Panel co-ordinated the

work of HMI subject panels and formed a link between these and the Information and External Relations Branch of the Ministry. By 1967, when it was discontinued, the Central Panel had become little more than an Inspectorate Publications Committee. There had been over eighty panels and sub-panels, with eight to ten HMIs on each. Their functions were to initiate new thinking, collect information within and outside HMI, organise in-service training, produce publications and advise the Ministry. Meetings were held three times per year although, for reasons of economy, this was reduced to one per year during 1951-54. (44) The Secondary Education Panel discussed topics such as full inspections and reporting procedure, the role of the General Inspector, bilateral schools and the introduction of comprehensive schools. In 1971 a new system of phase and subject committees was introduced and this worked more effectively than the old panel system where the agendas for meetings had been conducive to congenial discussion rather than efficient decision-making. Nevertheless, all of these meetings provided a valuable channel of communication within the Inspectorate. (45) There were many other means of communication, including working instructions, Memoranda and Notes to Inspectors, minutes, phase bulletins and, more recently, electronic mail. Other publications within the Inspectorate included the Inspectors' Bulletin, introduced in 1949 as a revival of a pre-war series. The three issues per year became 'a sort of private magazine written by inspectors for their own interest and pleasure.' (46) An Information Series was started in 1959 and an Information Gazette in the following year. (47)

Communication between HMIs has also come through frequent working in teams. Only rarely was the team the same for more than one exercise. Apart from full inspection teams and committees there were, during the 1970s and

early 1980s, area teams which were programmed for one or two weeks per term for local inspection in their own area. These area teams were led by the District Inspector and, in the larger LEAs, included the HMIs who were attached to the schools in the area. These area team weeks were intended for pastoral visits or to study an issue of current interest, not for full inspections, and did not therefore lead to a report. Notes of Visit were written and, if appropriate, a short document was compiled which drew together the main findings of the exercise and was circulated within the Inspectorate.(48)

This arrangement was given a lower priority after 1977 when, in response to the increasing demands on HMI from central government, the Inspectorate was programmed in two teams. The smaller group of 70-100 HMIs was the First Call Centre (FCC) and the remainder of the Inspectorate was First Call Territorial (FCT). Assignments to FCC were normally for eighteen months. In the mid-1970s, well before Mr Callaghan's speech at Ruskin College, the DES had created a more active planning unit under Edward Simpson and this unit was asking the Inspectorate questions which, according to Miss Browne, (49),

> the management of HMI felt that they could not answer. This led to more structured inspections and enabled the Inspectorate to attack those general questions which they foresaw as requiring answers at some future date. The Office increasingly liked that sort of information and the politicians increasingly asked that sort of question. For example, at 3.30 pm one afternoon, a Minister asked whether a certain type of school was a good or a bad thing. I had to list the criteria, show the balance of advantage and disadvantage and give an answer.

At the start of FCC the Senior Chief Inspector wrote an emollient letter to Chief Education Officers informing them that a proportion of the Inspectorate would no longer be available for territorial assignment, 'but the district inspector will still be able to act as an intermediary in

calling upon such resources as may be required' by the Local Education Authority. (50) The letter stated that HMI were overworked, serving both national and local demands, and she hoped that the FCC/FCT organisation would be more efficient, create a better pattern of work, bring HMI more into the open, mean fewer visits being cancelled at short notice, lead to quicker publication of reports and surveys and help to foster a collective 'HMI view'. After six months of the new policy, the Senior Chief Inspector conducted a survey of HMIs in FCC and received a largely favourable verdict, although FCC involved more travel, more time away from home and 30% of the inspectors reported additional stress. (51) FCC, more than any other single policy, turned the Inspectorate into a national body and was, in Eric Bolton's view, an essential interim measure. When he became SCI in 1983, it was no longer adequate to have only part of the Inspectorate with this national focus and

> I had to convert the whole of the Inspectorate into a national body, looking nationally for its main priorities, these being a mix of those things which stem from government needs and what was coming from our own work. So we have a programme for HMI - no longer called a 'central programme' - where we leave some days unprogrammed for each HMI to organise their own time. The rest of the time is organised to relate to Inspectorate priorities. (52)

The Rayner Report recorded that, in 1980-81, 29% of all available HMI time was programmed centrally and a further 10% was reserved by individual HMI, in advance of the programme, for particular activities. 13% was used in area team weeks. The remaining 48%, outside the inspection programme, was free for HMIs to devote to specialist and district visiting. Within the Inspectorate, however, there were wide variations, the percentage of programmed time of individual HMIs varying from 17% to 42%. Rayner considered that the proportion of centrally programmed time should not be increased at the expense of routine visiting. 45% of HMI time was spent in

visiting institutions. (53)

During the 1980s considerable changes occurred in the management of HMI time. In 1980 central programming was largely a timetabling mechanism: by 1991 it was used to ensure that annually identified priority issues of national significance were addressed, as well as all the associated objectives of teams and individuals. This shift in priorities reflected the way in which the management of HMI had become more nationally focussed. It is therefore difficult to provide 1991 figures which can be compared directly with Rayner's figures. Around 40% of HMI time was devoted to inspection-related work conducted in teams and coordinated nationally. 47% of HMI time included specialist and territorial inspection-related activity, which was scheduled regionally rather than centrally. Approximately 13% of HMI time was for training and conferences, including dissemination of findings and HMI management. (54)

As civil servants, HMIs are professionals operating in a bureaucratic environment. New inspectors soon learn of the limitations of civil service regulations. For example, an inspector's time has to be recorded in a daily diary, although this has been simplified since the early twentieth century, when an inspector wrote (55):

> If anyone saw our weekly diaries he would never abuse an HMI again, for very pity. So numerous and galling - as well as senseless - were the columns to be filled, that I once officially asked for yet one more column in which to record time spent in filling diaries.

Recruitment to the Inspectorate has been by open advertisement, in which the required areas of specialism were listed. Although the appointment has been made by Order in Council, the interview process otherwise followed normal civil service procedure. The interview panel consisted of senior members of the Inspectorate and one member of the

Establishments Branch of the DES. The Chairman was normally a member of the Civil Service Commission. As will be seen from the breadth of HMI backgrounds outlined below, there has been no single career path into the Inspectorate; indeed, one of its strengths has been the diversity of experience of its members. Personal qualities were of paramount importance and people were sought who had 'cautious judgment, are shrewd observers, with analytical power and a willingness to go on learning, which largely means listening to other people.' (56) The ratio of applicants to vacancies has nearly always been high. Eric Bolton felt that there have recently been few problems in attracting people of sufficiently high quality, even when the Inspectorate was expanding rapidly in 1982-85. Relative pay scales have not always been conducive to recruitment although people have often been prepared to take a reduction in income because of the perceived status of HM Inspectorate. 'At times this has kept us going quite unjustifiably with good people.' (57)

On joining the Inspectorate, it is wise to ensure a sufficiently large postbox, for an enormous amount of correspondence and reading matter arrives every week. For a person joining the Inspectorate up to 1957, it must have been both an inspiring and a humbling experience to receive from the then Senior Chief Inspector Martin Roseveare a printed, but personally signed, letter outlining the history of HM Inspectorate and listing suggestions as to how to start work as an HMI (58):

> (i) I am sure that you will always remember that you are His Majesty's Inspector of Schools, that courtesy, consideration for others, evenness of temper and sincerity will be expected of you at all times.
> (ii) You should also remember that when you visit a school it is an everyday affair for you, but an unusual and important occasion for the school
> (iii) The essence of a successful system of inspection ... is good teamwork.
> (iv) Be a patient and sympathetic listener ...

(v) It is unlikely that you will meet with discourtesy or hostility. ... Occasions of dispute will unfortunately arise from time to time, but should not be grasped at. Both sides lose in the majority of quarrels and an inspector, if he is to do useful service, can afford very few, however good his cause. The 'Retort Courteous' and the 'Quip Modest' spoken of by Touchstone are the most that even an experienced inspector can permit himself. The 'Reply Churlish' and the later stages mentioned in 'As You Like It' are quite out of keeping with HM Inspector's position.
... I hope that you will find that your work will make a very full call on your sincerity of purpose, power of judgment and initiative. If it does, I believe you will enjoy it and that the traditions of His Majesty's Inspectorate will be safe in your hands.

The letter contains many echoes of Kay-Shuttleworth's 1840 Instructions to Inspectors. In 1951 the Minister of Education, Florence Horsbrugh, was asked in Parliament if she would ensure that all HMIs had experience of teaching in the type of schools which they inspect. She refused on the grounds that it would impose an undesirable rigidity on the service. (59) In fact, there may be relatively little interchange between primary and secondary specialists, except in a small LEA where the District Inspector visits both primary and secondary schools or in the early years of a career in the Inspectorate when a wider view of the education service is inculcated.

In the early post-war years, HMIs were classified at appointment, and thereafter annually (60):

G.A.- Competent to inspect and advise in any Grammar School.

G.B.- Competent to inspect and advise in a Grammar School where the standard is not high.

M. - Competent to inspect and advise in any Modern School (up to 16)

T. - Possesses technical knowledge as applied to industry.

There was no explanation of the criteria for this classification. In addition, there has been List A - the prestigious public schools - which could only be visited by certain HMIs.

Difficulties in recruitment and shortages in specialist areas can sometimes be overcome through short-term attachments, as recommended in the Rayner Report. However, the Association of HMIs (AHMI) has always been opposed to short-term appointments on the grounds that they would lower the prestige of the Inspectorate and that the training would take longer than the appointment. (61) It was not until 1980 that the first short-term appointment was made. The team of HMIs involved in the Middle School Survey had identified the need for a full-time scribe and Colin Richards, a lecturer at Leicester University School of Education, was appointed for two years to carry out this task. The AHMI Committee complained to the Senior Chief Inspector that they had not agreed to such appointments, but she made it clear that the request had come from the HMI Middle School team and that the appointment was not as a full HMI, but as part of the support services. (62) Subsequently Colin Richards joined the Inspectorate full-time.

HMIs served two years' probation up to 1970, when it was reduced to one year. During this time the new inspector was given a mentor and had frequent contact with the Divisional Staff Inspector. For guidance there was the comprehensive HMI Handbook and its Inspection Supplement. Few people failed their probation - in the ten years up to 1966, there was only one such instance. (63) The Induction Year Report, as it was called, has eight categories and on each of these the inspector was given a rating of good, adequate, capable of suitable development or poor. The categories were professional knowledge, relationships with colleagues/schools/officials/Office, oral expression, written expression, penetration (ability to understand and interpret), judgment, application to work and adjustment to HMI role. Probationers created their own work programme, in conjunction with their mentor, and this always involved aspects of education and visits

to types of institution with which the new inspector was unfamiliar. This can be bewildering. The change of role can be particularly difficult for a person who has previously achieved high status in a single institution and who has to make the transition to being a beginner again.

This problem may surface again later when an HMI, who had achieved rapid promotion outside the Inspectorate, has acquired some experience in the role and yet has remained in the main grade. Such people may have joined the Inspectorate in order to obtain in five years or so the breadth of view which they could not have acquired elsewhere; they then moved on to promoted posts in institutions or Local Education Authorities. The lack of promotion was felt more keenly by those for whom HMI was a terminal post, especially up to the mid-1980s when promotions to Staff Inspector were made by senior HMIs without prior notice. Since 1988 CI and SI vacancies have been circulated to all HMIs and a Promotion Board, comprising SCI, several CIs and the Director of Establishments, has invited HMIs to express an interest in vacant posts before deciding on the most suitable person. In addition, all CIs and SIs are asked annually to draw up succession plans for their own post and these confidential plans are considered as part of the promotion process. (64)

Since the 1988 Civil Service grading review, there has been a core Job Description for all grades of HMI, within which each inspector annually wrote his own objectives and retrospective Job Description under the categories of Problem Solving, Decision Making, Management and Representation. There was concern among inspectors about the criteria for the grading review, since procedures designed for all civil servants were being applied to HMIs in spite of the very different nature of their work. These objectives and Job Descriptions were reviewed at the annual appraisal

interview between the inspector and his line manager, when the inspector was graded 1-5 on pre-determined criteria. Although it would appear to be totally inappropriate for a professionally independent Inspectorate, the civil service system of performance-related pay had to be adopted by HMI in 1988 and grafted on to the appraisal system. A limited number of merit bonuses were available each year to HMIs and Staff Inspectors, but not to grades above that. Because of the fixed quota, not all who were eligible were awarded the bonus and this led to some disillusionment with performance-related pay. (65)

A constant difficulty in the organisation of the Inspectorate has been the system of transfer between Divisions, which caused considerable disruption for the families of HMIs. Because of spouses' jobs and the differential in house prices between different regions, the normal length of time in one area increased to seven or eight years during the 1980s. The extensive travel of all HMIs also meant that they acquired the necessary breadth of experience - and the Inspectorate maintained a good national distribution - without the need for frequent residential moves. Recruitment problems were created up to the mid-1970s by the requirement for an HMI to move out of the area with which he was familiar immediately on appointment. If new recruits are moved, it is now after the first year.

Placement of new entrants, transfers, promotion procedures (or the lack of them) and workload have been the main grievances of members of HM Inspectorate in the post-war period. These are reflected in the minutes of the AHMI, which is now a Section Committee of the First Division Association. Both Sheila Browne and Eric Bolton regularly attended AHMI Executive meetings to discuss conditions of service and the management of the Inspectorate, but the minutes reflect the low morale which has

frequently prevailed in the Inspectorate, especially at times when HMI is under review or is under attack in the media. AHMI also performs a valuable welfare role for inspectors and keeps in touch with retired colleagues.

In 1988 a paper on stress among HMIs concluded that the working conditions of inspectors were inherently stressful, citing a large number of aspects of the job in support of its thesis. These included the time pressures for writing reports, the overlapping responsibilities and conflicting demands of different aspects of the job, the variety of working relationships and frequent adjustment of roles, the lack of adequate support services, extensive travel, constantly meeting different people who were themselves in a stressful situation because of the HMI's visit and the uncertainty created by moves and transfers. (66) In providing a support network as part of its welfare role, AHMI has performed a valuable service to individual inspectors who work under these conditions.

The Inspectorate in Wales was established in 1907 and, up to 1970, it advised the Secretary of State for Education and Science on matters concerned with education in Wales. Throughout this period it had considerable autonomy from the English Inspectorate. In 1970 the responsibility for Welsh schools was transferred to the Secretary of State for Wales and in 1978 the responsibility for higher and further education was also transferred. The Welsh Office has an Education Department with which HM Inspectorate (Wales) has close liaison, although Welsh HMIs have continued to be recommended for appointment by the Secretary of State for Education and Science. Apart from this formality, the Welsh Inspectorate has continued to act autonomously, having its own priorities and devising its own work programme.

There has been a Chief Inspector (Wales) and about eight Staff

Inspectors. This group has met regularly to manage the Welsh Inspectorate and its members have chaired a network of phase committees and subject panels for Wales. The Rayner Report noted that the Welsh Inspectorate spent a higher proportion of its time in locally-based work than its English counterpart. It recommended that HMI (Wales) should concentrate more of its time 'on centrally planned exercises devoted to national rather than local themes.' (67) The Report was broadly satisfied with the three per cent of total HMI time in Wales which was spent on its 280 assessorships. Nearly 100 of these were sub-committees of the Welsh Joint Education Committee, which acted as both an Examinations Board and a Regional Advisory Council. Some of the Rayner Report recommendations for Wales, such as closer links with Local Education Authorities, parallelled those for England. Others suggested a strengthened role for HMI (Wales) within the Welsh Office, contributing information from a wider nationally-based programme of inspection. The Report noted that the inspection programme in Wales was carried out with virtually no help from English HMI. However, the attendance of Welsh HMIs at panels and committee meetings in England was seen as a important means of widening their perspective.

Backgrounds of Her Majesty's Inspectors

The backgrounds of the nineteenth century inspectors formed a clear pattern - public school educated, Oxbridge graduates, College Fellows and, up to 1870, clergymen (if they were to inspect Church schools). They had little previous experience of the schools they were to inspect but, more important at the time, they were of the same social class as the school managers with whom they had close relations.

From two recent studies (68) a picture emerges of the modern inspector, although it is hardly surprising that the Inspectorate was considerably less homogeneous in the late 1980s than in the nineteenth century. The age range and male/female distribution of HM Inspectorate in 1990 (69) was:

Age	Numbers male	Numbers female	Total	%
35-39	9	6	15	3
40-44	65	19	84	18
45-49	116	50	166	36
50-54	87	27	114	25
55-60	66	15	81	18
Total	343	117	460	100

The proportion of female HMIs had risen from 21% in 1976 and 1986 to 25% in 1990. The proportion of female HMIs in promoted posts in 1991 was 16% of grade 5 inspectors (11 out of 68) and two out of seven Chief Inspectors. (70)

A common misconception about HMIs is that they are predominantly public school educated. (71) Certainly this was true in the post-war period and many of these people remained in senior positions in the Inspectorate during the 1950s and 1960s. Of the inspectors at the time of the survey, 18% attended independent schools, 12% direct grant schools, 66% LEA grammar schools and 4% were at other LEA schools. In their questionnaire Williams, Reid and Rayner asked HMIs about their parents' education: over 90% had left school at fifteen or younger and 70% of fathers and 85% of mothers had gained no post-school qualification. They concluded from this that 'the social background of HMI is typically middle class and probably lower middle class.' 85% of HMIs had a first degree, most of the non-graduates being qualified teachers. Of those with a degree, 36% had attended Oxford or Cambridge Universities and over half had studied Arts or Social Sciences. 64% of HMI were trained teachers. If it seems surprising that as many as 36% had no teaching qualification, it should be remembered that the

inspectors of further and higher education would not have required a teaching qualification before starting their careers, nor would the older inspectors who had been schoolteachers. 43% of HMIs had a higher degree, many of them having acquired this through part-time study. (72)

The range of posts held immediately before joining the Inspectorate by the HMIs included in the Clive Hopes analysis was (73):

Institutions	Type of Post	% of all HMI
Schools	Head and/or Deputy Head	17
	Head of Department	12
	Teacher	2
Further and Higher Education (other than Teacher Training)	Director/Principal	7
	Senior Lecturer/Principal Lecturer/Head of Department	26
	Lecturer	4
Research		1
Teacher Training	Senior Staff	5
	Lecturer	2
LEAs	Adviser/Inspector	14
	Education Officer	5
Other Posts		5

However, HMIs had had a more varied experience prior to recruitment in the Inspectorate than these figures would suggest. The number of previous jobs held by HMIs when appointed was (74):

Number of jobs before appointment	% of all HMI
1	3
2	11
3	22
4	32
5	26
6	4
7	2

The average length of time spent in each job was five years and the types of job held were (75):

Type of Job	Order in which jobs were held						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Teaching:							
Grammar school	17	20	12	10	1	4	17
Public/Independent school	13	8	7	4	1	-	-
Comprehensive school	5	10	13	11	18	18	-
Sec Modern/Technical school	14	8	6	4	3	-	-
Junior school	10	12	11	9	13	21	33
Non-specified school	3	4	3	4	7	11	-
Further/Higher education	10	31	44	48	41	43	17
Educational Administration	2	-	4	7	15	-	33
Industrial/Commercial/Other	26	7	2	4	1	4	-

All percentages total 100.

It will be seen from this Table that 62% of HMIs had started their careers by teaching in schools, but that a high proportion, 26%, had started in non-education jobs. These included the armed forces (not National Service), as well as commerce and non-manual jobs in industry. (76) Indeed, according to Hopes' 1990 figures, 40% of all HMIs had substantial experience in business or industry and 76% of HMIs working in further and higher education had such experience. (77) Many of those who had remained in education had been involved in in-service training of teachers, examination work, regional and national committees, national curriculum projects or had prepared textbooks and learning materials. (78)

The general characteristics of HM Inspectors were therefore: male, age in the late forties, grammar school educated, university degree, teacher trained, with a first post in teaching, progressing to at least head of department level and spending about five years in each of four posts before joining the Inspectorate. But there are dangers in such generalisation, for the Inspectorate contains a diversity of talents and backgrounds and HMIs are selected to match the needs of the time.

Lawton and Gordon say little about the backgrounds of HMIs, but they include a chapter on the Senior Chief Inspectors (79), from which it emerges that five of the seven post-war SCIs had attended grammar schools. Of these Percy Wilson and Sheila Browne had been to Oxbridge, as had both of the privately educated SCIs. The post-war Senior Chief Inspectors were members of HMI for an average of twenty-six years, including an average of seven years as SCI. All except Roseveare had served as Chief Inspector, although Sheila Browne and Eric Bolton had been in this grade for only one and two years respectively. Their average age on appointment as SCI was 53. Lawton and Gordon tell us litle about the backgrounds of the Senior Chief Inspectors. Sheila Browne had been a Fellow of St Hilda's College, Oxford, and a university lecturer in French, having no schoolteaching experience at the time of her appointment to the Inspectorate. Martin Roseveare had had only a brief experience of teaching. After 16 years as an HMI, he was promoted in 1939 to Staff Inspector for Mathematics, but he never acted in that capacity as he was immediately transferred to the Ministry of Information and three months later to the Ministry of Food where he was concerned with the rationing system. Immediately on his return from this posting he was made Senior Chief Inspector. Eric Bolton had taught English in secondary schools, been a lecturer in a College of Education and a Local Inspector in Croydon. Terry Melia, who became Senior Chief Inspector in 1991, had been a research chemist with ICI, a university lecturer in Chemistry and Principal of a College of Technology. There is, it seems, no such person as a typical Senior Chief Inspector.

Writing and Publishing

In 1945 Roseveare issued guidelines to inspectors on the writing of reports on schools. They were to give an accurate and unbiased account of the work of the school and assist progress with advice 'in the spirit of sympathetic cooperation in which inspection is undertaken'. The reports could only be published in full, if at all, and they were to have the same standards for independent and for maintained schools. Unlike the pre-war reports on schools, they would no longer contain the names of the HMIs in the inspection team. (80)

By 1949 there were complaints about the length of time between the inspection and the issue of the report to the Local Education Authority, governing body and school. Letters to the Ministry complained of an average of ten months, although correspondence between Roseveare and the senior civil servant, Cleary, indicated that it was seven months, but they agreed that the aim should be to return to the pre-war average of four months. Roseveare wrote to all HMIs telling them that 'the present state of affairs on this vital report front is quite shocking' and referring to 'appalling delay', 'lack of proper editing' and 'poor English'. He instructed inspectors to adhere strictly to the timetable for writing reports, to write legibly, to edit thoroughly and not to have second thoughts at the proof stage. Both Roseveare and Cleary felt that the issuing of reports should be the responsibility of HMI, not of the Ministry. In Roseveare's words (81):

> Heaven knows you Deputy Secretaries have got enough on your plates, which thank goodness is not on mine, without feeling or wanting to feel responsible also for me and the whole of my vast and delightfully unruly tribe.

There was also correspondence about the publication of reports and the use which people made of them. In 1947 the National Association of Head Teachers complained that an HMI report had appeared in a local newspaper. The Ministry replied that it could be published only 'by the express direction of the competent authority of the school', and only in full. (82) Four years later a local newspaper editor complained through his Member of Parliament about this rule. The Ministry affirmed the rule, in spite of legal advice which was doubtful of the Ministry's ability to hold the line on confidentiality. (83) The Public Record Office files contain several letters from interested parties asking to see HMI reports, but all such requests were refused. There is also an account of an incident in which the formidable Liverpool MP, Bessie Braddock, alleged that a teacher, who was a Conservative co-opted member of the local Education Committee, had had an adverse HMI report on his work. After some doubt whether it should be concerned about this, the Ministry decided that it was a breach, not of the Ministry's confidence, but of the Local Education Authority's. (84)

The relative anonymity of the Inspectorate during the 1950s and 1960s was partly caused by the failure to publish the conclusions of inspections and surveys. HMIs made an important contribution to all the major reports on education, such as the Plowden Report, the James Report, the Bullock Report and to government White Papers such as A Framework for Expansion (85), but nothing substantial was published by HMI until the late 1970s when Sheila Browne had begun to raise the profile of the Inspectorate.

In 1977 a 36-page booklet with the title Ten Good Schools appeared as the first in an innovative series of Matters for Discussion. The aim of the series was outlined on the first page:

> The publications in this series are intended to stimulate professional discussion. ... The views expressed are those of the

> authors and are not necessarily those of the Inspectorate as a whole or of the Department of Education and Science.

This cautious, but disingenuous, disclaimer enabled HMI to write with greater freedom than they had hitherto revealed but, since the names of the individual authors were not given, readers would have concluded that the views had the support of senior HMIs. The fact that they did not purport to speak for the Department was less surprising, since it was generally considered that HMI and senior civil servants were not of one mind at this time. The preface ended with a caveat which became a normal feature of published HMI reports: 'Nothing said is to be construed as implying government commitment to the provision of additional resources.'

Ten Good Schools was followed by Gifted Children in Comprehensive Schools (1977), Modern Languages in Comprehensive Schools (1977) and Mixed Ability Work in Comprehensive Schools (1978). The Inspectorate also contributed to the broadening debate on the curriculum through the publication of Educating Our Children: Four Subjects for Debate (1977) and Curriculum 11-16: Working Papers (1978). In its review of 1977, the Times Educational Supplement (86) noted of HMI that

> not for many years has their productivity been higher - counted, that is, by the volume of their published output. Where before they have written for internal consumption, now they are being encouraged to pump it all out. And the Department of Education and Science, never entirely easy in its relationship with an Inspectorate, determined to preserve the element of reality behind its fictitious independence, sees for the time being at least, a value in the high-quality output of HMI as some sort of evidence of its own frenetic activity. The activities of HMI provide the stalking horse behind which the politicians and administrators carry on their search for the levers of power in the educational system.

Shortly afterwards came the substantial and influential surveys on primary and secondary education. (87) The pace and breadth of publication increased during the following four years, but the HMI reports on

individual institutions remained confidential, being issued with the proviso that

> This report is supplied in confidence. Its contents may not, without the written consent of the Department of Education and Science, be disclosed, in whole or in part, except as provided below.
>
> Copies of this report are supplied to the Local Education Authority, managing/governing body, and the head or principal responsible for the school or institution named as reported upon. The head or principal may disclose its contents, either in whole or in part, to members of the staff, and for that purpose further copies of the report will be made available to the head or principal on application to the Department.

In November 1982 the Secretary of State Sir Keith Joseph announced in the House of Commons that HMI reports on schools and colleges would be published from January 1983. Joseph, who was a strong supporter of the Inspectorate and who was an avid reader of HMI reports, had been influential in Margaret Thatcher's wholehearted adoption of the market philosophy and its translation into radical Conservative policy initiatives. The publication of HMI reports on schools would, Joseph considered, arm members of the public with information on which to base the choice of school for their children. Publication would also mean that the reports could be read by practitioners in other institutions 'as a means of spreading good practice and fresh thinking and identifying and correcting shortcomings.' (88) Sir Keith Joseph regarded HMI as one of the great change agents of the education system and felt that its writings were not reaching a sufficiently wide audience. (89)

The publication of HMI reports had been advocated in the Rayner Report (90) and the Times Educational Supplement welcomed the Secretary of State's decision with the comment that the HMIs themselves supported it. This was certainly true of Sheila Browne who had written in 1979 that 'in many cases there is a wider concerned public which wants to know the results of HMI's

inspection', although she recognised that there would have to be changes in the format and style of reporting if the reports on schools and colleges were to be illuminating for members of the general public. (91) The teachers' unions, however, were quick to condemn the decision to publish, believing that it would be unfair unless teachers had the right of reply or the right of appeal before publication. One union leader thought that his members might stop talking to HMIs, since publication 'could seriously undermine the teacher's position in the school and in front of the children ... These things should be done in private.' (92) The union reaction should be seen in the context of the many critical remarks which Sir Keith Joseph had made about teachers. These statements had been given wide coverage by sections of the press and had caused teachers and their unions to be defensive; it is not surprising, therefore, that the unions did not want the critical comments of inspectors to be given wider publicity. The writers of other letters to the Times Educational Supplement were concerned at the effect of publication on the relationship between teachers and inspectors and, at a time of falling school rolls, it was felt that the publication of reports would create unfair competition for pupil numbers between schools which had been inspected and those which had not. It was thought to be particularly unfair on schools which had been inspected before the Secretary of State's decision, but on which reports would appear in the glare of publicity. The main worry, which was highlighted in a letter from a former Chief Inspector, John Blackie, was the treatment which reports would receive in the media, particularly in the local press, where it was feared that only the more sensational parts would be publicised. (93)

Nevertheless the pressures for greater accountability of schools had

been growing and the publication of HMI reports was one way of meeting this demand. The Times Educational Supplement hoped that inspectors would write their reports in a clearer style and pointed to the illogicality of the position of the unions, which were in favour of openness about government cuts, but which opposed the publication of HMI reports. Since the views of HMI and the Department would not always coincide, the leader writer foresaw Sir Keith Joseph's decision as a two-edged weapon. (94) Before the end of the decade this had become an uncomfortable reality for the government. The 1988 Education Reform Act greatly increased the centralisation of education and it was inevitable that HMI would be reporting increasingly on the effect of the government's own policies (95):

> Herein lie two delightful ironies. Traditionally HMI has reported to the government on an education system that is organised by other people. As the Secretary of State increases his own power in the system, the inspectors will be reporting more directly on government policy and this is likely to prove even less comfortable than the present annual surveys. The second irony is that the government which began to publish HMI reports in order that the public could read about what is really happening in schools cannot complain if those same reports reflect on the performance of central government.

The Times Educational Supplement regularly carried summaries of the latest reports and, six months after reports began to be published, noted that they had not only put schools into the spotlight of publicity, but also Local Education Authorities and the Inspectorate itself.

The reports on individual schools were reflecting the same concerns as the major primary and secondary surveys. (96) In April 1984 the Inspectorate produced its own review of the early reports (97) and the tone was largely critical. As well as the shortage of books, aging equipment and the poor quality of many buildings, primary schools were criticised for the lack of curriculum guidelines, insufficient cross-curricular connections, the treatment of the ablest and least able pupils, the lack of

multi-ethnic work and poorly focussed in-service training of teachers. In secondary schools, the significance of the leadership of the head and the senior management team, which had been emphasised in Ten Good Schools, was noted, but concern was expressed at the small number of women in senior posts. The pastoral care work of secondary schools was praised, but the Inspectorate was concerned by the over-emphasis on didactic methods of teaching, by the curriculum imbalance in the final two years of compulsory schooling and by the inter-relation of subject choice and gender stereotyping. The review was particularly critical of small sixth forms, which were said to be costly and where the quality of educational experience was usually poor. The concluding section of the review stated:

> No school or college can ever do everything equally well, and society's hopes for the next generation and its expectations of those providing education always outstrip what is currently being achieved even by the best. Comments made in this review do not mean, therefore, that the education system is breaking down or that it is failing to provide for a significant proportion of its customers.

Nevertheless, the message was clear that all was not well in the nation's schools and this had its effect on an already depressed teaching force. The Times Educational Supplement observed that active teaching methods required a higher level of resources and that the preponderance of didactic teaching could be a strategy to produce good examination results in spite of inadequate equipment and buildings. The Times Educational Supplement continued (98):

> Furthermore, the whole-school planning and development work required by the Inspectorate need time and energy. When teachers are having to work beneath leaking roofs, patch and stretch scarce teaching resources, produce their own textbook substitutes and, in practical and science subjects, scrounge consumables and do the work that should be done by technicians, they do not have much of either to spare.

The message about resources was reinforced by the publication for the first

time in 1984 of the Inspectorate's annual review of Local Education Authority expenditure. (99) As with all HMI reports, the Inspectorate reported as it found and left the ensuing debate to others. In this way it was able to preserve its independence through the political storms that sometimes raged over its findings but, since it had no control over the use which people made of its reports, their effect may not always have been what was expected. During the mid-1980s it suited Conservative politicians - local and national - to turn the spotlight away from the effect of their expenditure policies on buildings and resources and to focus public attention on the alleged shortcomings of the teachers and schools. For this reason, the publication of HMI reports, both on individual institutions and in national surveys, contributed to low teacher morale.

The publication of a greater number of reports turned the attention of HMI to the quality of its own writing, which had previously been full of educational jargon and coded messages which were inappropriate for a wider audience. Reports were put through an increased number of drafts, which caused major delays in publication, and these delays were exacerabated by inefficient arrangements for typing and insufficient use of information technology. By 1987 the average time between a school inspection and the publication of the report was 42 weeks, although this average figure masked some much longer delays. In a parliamentary answer, the junior Education Minister, Bob Dunn, explained that reports were never published during school holidays or during General Election campaigns and that this had made the delays worse in 1987. (100) Nevertheless, delays could be harmful to schools where inspectors' criticisms will have been heard at the end of the inspection week and may well have been acted upon within a short time. An inspection report which appeared up to two years later publicised

failings which had long been corrected and therefore gave a misleading impression of the current state of the school. (101) Reports on teacher training institutions and other higher education establishments took even longer to appear in the mid-1980s. An extreme case was the report on the January 1985 inspection of Sheffield University's Postgraduate Certificate in Education which was published in September 1989. (102) Nevertheless, some HMI reports, particularly those which could be used for political advantage by the Secretary of State, appeared in print very rapidly. (103) This did not cause any concern to Eric Bolton, who pointed out that not all HMI reports were of equal importance (104):

> the Secretary of State may be being pressed as he walks down the lobby of the House of Commons or something may be coming up at Prime Minister's Question Time where a quick answer is needed, so the speed of publication is quite properly increased. There is nothing sinister in this. We are the servants of the government.

In 1988 a review by a firm of management consultants recommended a new 'milestones' procedure which, when adopted, largely solved the problem of delays in the production of published reports.

During this period the Inspectorate began to publish a wide range of surveys and reports on educational issues. These took even longer to appear and were certainly open to the criticism that they were based on out-of-date information. A survey of teacher training, for example, which appeared in April 1987, was based on inspections which had been carried out between January 1983 and January 1985. (105) Nevertheless, it was universally recognised that the HMI publications were based on a weight of evidence possessed by no other body in the education system. To that extent, the publications provided a stimulation towards good practice and thoughtful debate. A series of free booklets entitled Education Observed appeared from 1984 on subjects such as Good Teachers (1985), Homework (1987) and Good

Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (1987). Sixteen booklets, informally christened 'raspberry ripples' owing to their pink and red covers, appeared between 1985 and 1988 on the subjects of the school curriculum. These Curriculum Matters booklets were an intermediate step between the discussions on core curriculum which had taken place in the early 1980s and the national curriculum which followed at the end of the decade. The second book in the series - on the whole curriculum - was particularly influential in the developing debate on the need for a national curriculum and many of the subject booklets were well received. (106) The team of HMIs writing the booklet on English finished their task quickly and this paper appeared as the first in the series, causing a storm of protest. After a period of consultation, the English booklet appeared in a revised form in 1986. All the Curriculum Matters booklets were intended to be consultative documents but, for the later publications in the series, the consultation exercise was overtaken by the Education Reform Bill and the formation of the National Curriculum Council. The Times Educational Supplement described the first edition of the English booklet as 'a pretty fair mess' and the detailed objectives for children of 7, 11 and 16 as 'an astonishing mixture of the obvious, the trivial, the meaningless and the barmy'. The second edition was also criticised, but mainly for the obscure and verbose way in which some of the revised objectives had been phrased. (107) Other booklets in the series were also criticised, the document on Music causing the Times Educational Supplement to state (108): 'Given the dismal track record of official cerebrates in such matters, it is still quite breathtakingly inept.' Its banal objectives 'could only have been written by people whose professional isolation is extreme.'

Another extensive series of booklets was published by the further

education inspectors, beginning with a survey of NAFE Non-Advanced Further Education In Practice (1987) and containing ten subject surveys, from Science (1987) and Business Studies (1987) to Hairdressing (1988) and Construction (1988). Other HMI publications during this period included an explanatory leaflet on HM Inspectors of Schools: Their Purpose and Role (1988) and three leaflets on the modus operandi of Reporting Inspections (1986). There were some substantial surveys, such as Quality in Schools: The Initial Training of Teachers (1987) and Education 8 to 12 in Combined and Middle Schools (1985) and useful guides, such as Art in Secondary Education 11 to 16 (1983), History in the Primary and Secondary Years: An HMI View (1985) and Records of Achievement at 16: Some Examples of Current Practice (1985). There were some informative papers arising from the Inspectorate's programme of foreign visits, such as Aspects of Vocational Education and Training in the Federal Republic of Germany (1991), produced by the further education inspectors. The number of publications by the higher education inspectors increased enormously in the second half of the 1980s and included many subject surveys, as well as more extensive publications such as The English Polytechnics: An HMI Commentary (1989).

At the time of publication of the last HMI survey of Local Education Authority provision in 1987 (109), the Secretary of State, Kenneth Baker, announced that he had asked the Senior Chief Inspector in future to produce an annual report on 'teaching and learning over the full academic year.' (110) The first Annual Report appeared in February 1989 (111) and immediately caused a political storm. Labour education spokesman, Jack Straw, said that the report was 'an extraordinary and courageous indictment by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Kenneth Baker's stewardship of the education service' and the National Union of Teachers described it in

similar terms. (112) The Times Educational Supplement felt that the new format of report 'produced a much more bland account' (113), but few people criticised it on these grounds, as the wording left little room for misunderstanding concerning the problems and achievements of the education service. The report found much to praise, including the introduction of the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) courses, mathematics and science teaching, work in school sixth forms and colleges, initial teacher training and in-service provision. On behaviour, the report stated (114):

> The attitudes, behaviour and motivation of the substantial majority of pupils and students at all levels of education are good. Educational institutions are for the most part orderly communities in which good standards of behaviour and discipline prevail.

But, the report stated, 'some old, familiar problems persist.' (115) It criticised the variation in standards of work, the poor curriculum planning and lack of progression in a majority of primary schools, the lack of cross-curricular links, the education of those of below average ability and much unchallenging teaching at all levels. The report was particularly critical of the state of school and college accommodation and its poor level of repair and maintenance. It also drew attention to the acute teacher shortages, particularly in certain subject areas. The final section was a 'Commentary' in which the Senior Chief Inspector went much further than a mere summary of the foregoing report. He extrapolated the observations of the Inspectorate in order to identify future problems and every word carried a message for the government. He identified 'a number of sphinxes along the route whose riddles will need to be solved' if the education service was to respond to the Education Reform Act and other government initiatives. (116) The first riddle was how to ensure an adequate supply of trained teachers; 'without that the rest fails.'

Referring to the different methods of recruiting teachers, the report stated that (117)

> such schemes will, no doubt, be judged on their merits, but it will be vital to maintain the quality of entrants to teaching even though circumstances may well pull towards a 'never mind the quality, feel the width' attitude. Standards of learning are never improved by poor teachers and there are no cheap, high quality routes into teaching.

Secondly, the report pointed out that staffing numbers not only needed to cover the national curriculum, but also had to allow for in-service training and assessment programmes. Thirdly, there were the specific shortages in certain subjects. The first Annual Report concluded (118):

> The improvements sought for and intended through the Education Reform Act and other initiatives will be achieved only if the teachers are sufficient in number, suitably qualified and experienced, and so committed to the changes that, unsupervised, in thousands of classrooms they will bring their professional skills and competence to bear upon the job in hand.
>
> In seeking to ensure that is what happens, teachers' pay, conditions of service and the nature of the changes intended will all have a part to play. But of great importance to most teachers, is that the work they do is seen to be valued and rated highly by society; that its difficulties are understood; and that teachers and education are not used as convenient scapegoats for all society's problems. Currently, too many teachers feel that their profession and its work are misjudged and seriously undervalued. Whatever the rights and wrongs of that view, it is as unsteady a basis on which to build change and improvement as was a situation in which teachers were the first and final arbiters of all matters educational.

The second Annual Report of the Senior Chief Inspector (119) continued to warn of the 'complex and worsening' teacher supply situation, which 'quick solutions' would not solve. (120) But the main emphasis (121) was on

> serious problems of low and under-achievement; of poor teaching, and of inadequate provision. It is particularly troubling that in schools some 30%, and in higher and further education, some 20%, of what HMI saw was judged poor or very poor. Those figures, if replicated throughout the system, represent a large number of pupils and students getting a raw deal. Furthermore, and sadly, less able pupils and students are much more likely to experience the poor and the shoddy than are the more able: a worrying persistent feature of English education at all levels.

Eric Bolton said at the press conference launching his second Annual Report that it did not 'paint a picture that was 80% unsatisfactory; we mustn't talk ourselves into a deep pit of depression; in the main the system is working quite effectively.' (122) But the damage to the already fragile teacher morale was done. The popular national newspapers carried headlines such as 'Inspectors blast "raw deal" for school children' and the picture which was painted was much bleaker than the Senior Chief Inspector can have intended, implying that virtually nothing was right with the maintained education system. (123) Thus, the paragraph (124) which stated

> relationships within schools are generally good. The quality of care provided by teachers for pupils is high. Most pupils are generally industrious and well behaved, although all pupils may misbehave on occasions. At any given time there is a small minority of pupils whose behaviour is consistently unsatisfactory and a small group of schools where order and control come close to breakdown.

was quoted in a national newspaper (125) as: 'Of secondary schools, the inspectors say a small number have failed to take action to correct a near-breakdown of order and control.' It is little wonder that an article appeared in a teachers' newspaper under the heading 'How about an HMI report that says teachers are really doing quite a good job and that if they were actually given the tools they could probably do an even better one?' (126) In 1979 the HMI survey of secondary schools had similarly led to headline stories in the popular national newspapers that were highly critical of schools and which failed to mention that the great majority were said to be doing a good job. (127) By 1990 Eric Bolton was experienced in dealing with the press and should have been able to foresee the consequences of his choice of words. In his third and final Annual Report, Mr Bolton complained that

> over the past year, both state education and those that work in it have been the targets of indiscriminate scatter-shot attacks on standards, on the quality of all teachers, and on the state education

> service at large. Few teachers would claim that all was well in the public education service, but all resent blanket condemnation that at times seems to blame all teachers and the state education service at large for poor educational standards and, more irksome still, for a whole range of supposed and real social ills. (128)

The Annual Report again stated that 30% of lessons in schools were poor, but this was part of an account of a widely improving situation where the evidence of examination results pointed to a 'real rise in standards'. (129) It referred to the persistent defects to which the Inspectorate had long been drawing attention but, like the two previous Annual Reports, the 1989-90 Report laid before the public and the government the evidence on which both to judge the progress of the education system and identify clearly the policy issues which needed attention. The Reports outlined good practice and revealed shortcomings, but they did not present ready-made solutions. They were therefore in the best traditions of inspectoral writing and made a valuable contribution to the educational debate.

The Annual Report of the Senior Chief Inspector was drafted by a team of HMIs, but the pressure to write and publish to strict deadlines work of high quality and scrupulous accuracy falls on all HM inspectors. Written work which may lead to a report is edited by others and returned for re-writing, a process which may be repeated several times. Since this work involves the writing of reports, Notes of Visits, minutes, talks, summaries and annual reviews, this creates a flow of constantly changing and conflicting demands. The ability to work under these pressures, often for very long hours, has been one of the many essential attributes of an HMI in the post-war period, but particularly during the 1980s when the output of written material has greatly increased.

Inspection of Independent Schools

Prior to 1944 independent schools could be 'recognised' and this recognition was granted after an inspection had deemed them satisfactory. Many of the prestigious public schools did not apply for recognition and were not therefore inspected. The present power of inspection of independent schools derives from Part III of the 1944 Education Act, in which Section 70 stated that a provisionally registered school must be inspected before final registration can be agreed by the Department of Education and Science. This was followed by Circular 196 in which the Minister caused inspections to be made of all independent schools. Roseveare then issued a Memorandum which informed HMIs how the inspection of independent schools was to be carried out. (130) District Inspectors were to compile a list of independent schools and allocate inspectors, using retired HMIs to a large extent. The aim was to visit all independent schools in two to three years. Schools were to be notified in advance and it was left to the individual inspector whether to submit a written report, although this was to be done on a first, and normally on a second, visit. When the school was deemed to be satisfactory, the inspector should suggest to the head that the school should apply for 'recognition as efficient' and should word the report to the Ministry in such a way that recognition could be granted without a further inspection. Roseveare anticipated that the worst schools would close rather than face inspection. The independent school heads were concerned about a Ministry proposal to send copies of HMI reports to Local Education Authorities and a compromise was agreed whereby reports on schools recognised as efficient would not be sent to the LEA. (131)

The relationship between the independent head and the Ministry's inspector was not always easy (132):

> One may overlook the dictatorial air with which the Ministry informed us of the coming test. What disturbed and angered my staff and me was the 'inspection' of graduates and Froebel-trained teachers by one who appeared to have no similar qualification and whose handling of children was amateurish in the extreme. ... What is really worth worrying about is the formidable powers delegated to such people and the remarkable lack of humility . ... For obvious reasons I withhold my name and sign myself, LIBERTAS.

A month later a letter appeared in the Times Educational Supplement describing the courtesy and understanding of HM Inspectors, which had greatly improved, the writer felt, since the War. (133)

The Labour Party was particularly anxious to expose bad independent schools and asked the Minister to produce a list of schools inspected under Circular 196, indicating whether a report had been published. (134) On the grounds that the list would contain the names of 3500 schools, the Minister declined, but later a Conservative government, in which Margaret Thatcher was Secretary of State, initiated an extensive programme of inspection of independent boarding schools because it was felt that many were of an unsatisfactory standard. A similar programme was about to start for independent day schools when there was a change of government and other priorities took the time of the Inspectorate. Earlier, the Labour government had proposed to increase the size of HM Inspectorate by nineteen in order to extend the inspection of independent schools, more than half of which were not 'recognised as efficient'. (135) There was a considerable amount of discussion of this at the 1968 Select Committee (136) but, because of the potential cost, the increase in the Inspectorate never occurred. Later, the designation 'recognised as efficient' was ended and, although the independent schools wanted the scheme to continue, the Labour

government did not want to give any support to independent schools, especially when the scheme was costing money and HMI time. The Times Educational Supplement opposed this 'trivial economy measure'. (137)

Nevertheless it remains obligatory to register an independent school and, since it is a criminal offence to operate an unregistered school, HM Inspectorate has considerable power over independent schools. If an HMI inspection reveals that an independent school is inadequate and the Secretary of State feels that the school falls below the minimum required standard, a Notice of Complaint is issued under Section 71 of the 1944 Education Act, specifying the grounds of complaint and the measures necessary to remedy the situation. The four possible grounds of complaint are: unsuitable premises, inadequate accommodation, the lack of 'efficient and suitable instruction' and the presence of a proprietor or teacher who is 'not a proper person' to be at the school. After the issue of the notice, HMIs visit the school again in order to advise both the school and the Secretary of State on progress. If, after a specified period, the school remains 'objectionable', it is struck off the register and forced to close. Although the school head may write to the Registrar of Independent Schools at the Department of Education and Science concerning any points of doubt or dispute and appeals can be made to the Independent Schools Tribunal, the reports of HMI can, in the end, cause the school to be closed. (138) No such power exists for HMI in relation to maintained schools. In 1982 there was considerable publicity over an independent school in Suffolk where excessive physical punishment was alleged to take place. Eventually HMI reported favourably on the school which the Secretary of State, Sir Keith Joseph, had asked them to inspect. In a letter to the local Member of Parliament, Joseph emphasised his 'limited powers' to

control independent schools. 'For the most part,' he stated, 'the doctrine of caveat emptor applies.' (139) A further control on some independent schools is the need for inspection by HMI if the school is to be asked by the Local Education Authority to take children with special educational needs under Section 11 of the 1981 Education Act.

In the early 1980s the Incorporated Association of Preparatory Schools (IAPS) took five years to plan and introduce its own recognition scheme, under which all schools with a new head teacher would be visited by teams of three, comprising former HMIs and heads. (140) The Independent Schools Joint Council (ISJC) put an inspection scheme in place more quickly - as in the IAPS scheme, the ISJC teams comprise former HMIs and independent school heads. There are considerable differences between these schemes and the inspection of maintained schools by HMI. These differences stem from the closer relationship between inspector and inspected in many independent schools. In the IAPS and ISJC schemes schools have some say in the timing of the visit - 'It would have been easy to have postponed the review for a year or two,' wrote one head - and they tend to have longer notice of the proposed date and hence more time to update schemes of work and cover unsightly corners with a fresh coat of paint. Because of the relatively small size of the independent school associations which are affiliated to the ISJC, the head is quite likely to be on close personal terms with the heads on the visiting team. A further difference from HMI inspections is that the reports of the Independent Schools' Accreditation Review and Consultancy Service, which organises the visits, are not published. The major public schools, which are members of the Headmasters' Conference (HMC) are not part of the ISJC scheme. (141)

Notes

1. Department of Education and Science, Study of HM Inspectorate in England and Wales (Rayner Report), HMSO, 1982, 8, paragraph 2.4.
2. Ibid., 5, paragraph 1.12. The powers of approving advanced courses have since disappeared (see below, chapter 8).
3. R.Tanner, Double Harness: An Autobiography, Impact Books, 1987, 140.
4. O.A.Hartley, 'Inspectorates in British Central Government', Public Administration, winter 1972, 1, 450-51.
5. Evidence to the Select Committee on Education and Science, 1967-68, Part I: Her Majesty's Inspectorate (England & Wales), 1968. See below, chapter 4.
6. PRO Ed.147/49, 31.7.47.
7. Times Educational Supplement, 20.1.56.
8. Ibid., 14.10.66.
9. PRO Ed.135/9, Memorandum to Inspectors N.S. 483 Gen, 31.5.48 and 19.2.49; Ed.135/15, Memorandum to Inspectors N.S. 633 Gen, 14.2.55; Ed.135/12, Memorandum to Inspectors N.S. 571 Gen, 5.2.52. All these memoranda were written by SCI Martin Roseveare.
10. Times Educational Supplement, 29.10.76; ibid., 31.12.76; R.Hopkins, 'Inspecting the Inspectors Again', ibid., 8.1.82.
11. A.Becher & S.Maclure (eds), Accountability in Education, Windsor, NFER, 1978, 25.
12. J.S.Harris, British Government Inspection, Stevens, 1955, 2.
13. Interview with Eric Bolton.
14. Ibid.
15. Department of Education and Science, op.cit., 1982, 28, paragraph 3.39.
16. Department of Education and Science, Standards in Education 1987-88. The Annual Report of the Senior Chief Inspector of Schools based on the work of HMI in England, DES, 1989, Annex; ibid., 1988-89, 1990, Annex.
17. Department of Education and Science, op.cit., 1982, 30, paragraph 3.44.
18. Department of Education and Science, Standards in Education 1989-90. The Annual Report of HM Senior Chief Inspector of Schools, DES, 1991, Annex.
19. Interview with Eric Bolton.
20. Interview with Norman Thomas.
21. R.Tanner, op.cit., 1987, 96, 150.
22. Interview with Norman Thomas.
23. Letter from Eric Bolton, Times Educational Supplement, 6.1.91. Where the proposal for opting out is particularly controversial or where the Secretary of State is considering refusing permission to the school to opt out, an HMI visit will certainly take place. See, for example, Newbold Grange School, Rugby and Walsingham School, Wandsworth, Times Educational Supplement, 3.5.91.
24. Ibid., 26.11.82.
25. Department of Education and Science, The Treatment and Assessment of Probationary Teachers, Administrative Memorandum 1/83 to Local Education Authorities on Probationary Teachers.
26. Department of Education and Science, Standards in Education 1987-88. The Annual Report of the Senior Chief Inspector of Schools based on the work of HMI in England, DES, 1989, Annex.
27. Times Educational Supplement, 21.9.46.
28. The 1945 figures are taken from Department of Education and Science,

1839-1989, Public Education in England, 150th Anniversary, DES, 1990, 51; the 1968 figures are from House of Commons, Report of the Select Committee on Education and Science, Session 1967-68. Part I: Her Majesty's Inspectorate (England and Wales), HMSO, 1968; the 1981 figures are from Department of Education and Science, Study of HM Inspectorate in England and Wales (Rayner Report), HMSO, 1982, 112; the 1991 figures were supplied to the author by HMI and were correct on 1 July 1991. These figures exclude the small number of HMIs on secondment and those who are attached to HMI on a temporary basis.

29. The total numbers of HMI in England at five-year intervals since 1839 are given in D.Lawton & P.Gordon, HMI, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987, 163.

30. House of Commons, op.cit., 1968, vi, paragraphs 11-12.

31. Interview with Eric Bolton. Much of the information in this section came from interviews and discussions with serving HMIs. The proposals in the Schools' Bill 1991, if enacted in legislation, will radically change the role of all grades of HMI.

32. Interview with Eric Bolton.

33. Department of Education and Science, HMI Today and Tomorrow, HMSO, 1970, 5.

34. Interview with Eric Bolton.

35. J. Blackie, Inspecting and the Inspectorate, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970, 42.

36. Interview with Eric Bolton.

37. T.Albert, 'Power Without Responsibility?', Times Educational Supplement, 12.11.76.

38. Department of Education and Science, op.cit., 1970, 5.

39. Interview with Sheila Browne.

40. The areas coincide with Local Education Authority areas.

41. Department of Education and Science, op.cit., 1970, 6.

42. AHMI archive, series 2/43. H.W.French, Restructuring the Inspectorate: A Personal Note To All HMI, May 1974; Minutes of the Section Committee of AHMI, 10.5.74.

43. Department of Education and Science, op.cit., 1982, 51-52, paragraph 6.12.

44. PRO Ed.176.

45. The Secondary Education Panel Minutes are in PRO Ed.158/19-22.

46. R.Tanner, op.cit., 1987, 154. The Inspectors' Bulletin series is in PRO Ed.179/1-13.

47. PRO Ed.179/14-23 and 179/24-26.

48. AHMI archive, series 2/50, 13.10.77. N.Thomas, 'HM Inspectorate', in R.McCormick & D.Nuttall, Approaches to Evaluation. Part 3: Inspection, Milton Keynes, Open University Press, 1982, 20.

49. Interview with Sheila Browne.

50. Times Educational Supplement, 4.2.77.

51. AHMI archive, series 2/46.

52. Interview with Eric Bolton.

53. House of Commons, op.cit., 1982, 15-16, paragraphs 3.10-3.11.

54. These statistics were provided for the author by HMI's central management team.

55. A.J.Swinburne, Memoirs of a School Inspector. Thirty-five Years in Lancashire and Suffolk, privately printed, 1912, 88.

56. T.Albert, op.cit., 1976. See also J.Blackie, op.cit., 1970, 40.

57. Interview with Eric Bolton.

58. AHMI archive, series 2/14/9, letter printed in 1946.

59. Times Educational Supplement, 30.11.51.
60. PRO Ed.135/9, Memorandum to Inspectors N.S.488 Gen., 22.3.49. Written by Roseveare.
61. Department of Education and Science, op.cit., 1982, 58-59, paragraphs 7.3-7.4. AHMI archive, series 2/46, 21.6.78.
62. AHMI archive, series 2/59. Meeting between the Section Committee and SCI, 4.7.80.
63. Times Educational Supplement, 11.2.66.
64. AHMI archive, series 1a, Minutes of AHMI Section Committee meetings, 9.7.82, 17.12.82. Memorandum to Inspectors -/88.
65. AHMI archive, series 1a, Minutes of AHMI Section Committee meetings, 11.9.87. Times Educational Supplement, 20.10.89.
66. AHMI archive, series 1a, Minutes of AHMI Section Committee meetings, 8.4.88.
67. Department of Education and Science, Study of HM Inspectorate in England and Wales (Rayner Report), HMSO, 1982, 76, paragraph 8.9. Chapter 8 of the Rayner Report is devoted to HMI (Wales).
68. R.Williams, I.Reid & M.Rayner, 'Her Majesty's Inspectorate in the 1980s', Research in Education, No. 45, 1991, 13-22. The data for this article was collected by postal questionnaires in 1985. C. Hopes, The Contribution of Inspectors and Advisers to the Quality of Schooling in the European Communities, Frankfurt am Main, Deutsches Institut fur Internationale Padagogische Forschung, 1991. The section of this report concerning England and Wales was kindly made available to me by senior HMI. The data was collected in 1989 and 1990.
69. Ibid., A4.5.
70. Comparing the figures in ibid. with the figures in the Times Educational Supplement, 12.11.76, and in R.Williams, I.Reid and M.Rayner, op.cit., 16. The proportions of female HMIs in promoted posts were supplied by senior HMI and were correct at July 1991.
71. See, for example, J. Blackie, op.cit., 1970, 41, and House of Commons, Report of the Select Committee on Education and Science, Session 1967-68. Part 1: Her Majesty's Inspectorate (England and Wales), HMSO, 1968, vii.
72. R.Williams, I.Reid & M.Rayner, op.cit., 17-18.
73. C.Hopes, op.cit., 1991, A3.1. This Table also appeared in Department of Education and Science, 1839-1989, Public Education in England, 150th Anniversary, DES, 1990, 72.
74. R.Williams, I.Reid & M.Rayner, op.cit., 19.
75. Ibid.
76. Ibid., 18.
77. C.Hopes, op.cit., A3.3.
78. R.Williams, I.Reid & M.Rayner, op.cit., 20.
79. D.Lawton & P.Gordon, op.cit., 1987, 138.
80. PRO Ed.147/28. Memorandum to Inspectors N.S. 258 Gen., 16.3.45.
81. PRO Ed.147/28. Memorandum to Inspectors N.S. 258 Gen., 15.6.49, 16.6.49, 30.7.49. PRO Ed.147/147B, Note to all HMIs S.564/83, 28.6.49.
82. PRO Ed.147/67, 5.3.47, 17.3.47.
83. PRO Ed.147/67, 26.11.51, 6.12.51, 11.12.51.
84. PRO Ed.147/68, 26.1.54, 16.5.55, 13.4.55, 24.4.55.
85. Central Advisory Council on Education, Children and Their Primary Schools, HMSO, 1967; Department of Education and Science, Teacher Education and Training, HMSO, 1972; Department of Education and Science, A Language for Life, HMSO, 1975; Department of Education and Science, A Framework for Expansion, HMSO, 1972.

86. Times Educational Supplement, 30.12.77.
87. Department of Education and Science, Primary Education in England: A Survey by HMI, HMSO, 1978; Department of Education and Science, Aspects of Secondary Education in England: A Survey by HMI, HMSO, 1979.
88. Education, 19.11.82, 388. See also ibid., 4.5.84, 373, where Sir Keith Joseph reiterates these points in a parliamentary answer.
89. Interview with Eric Bolton.
90. Department of Education and Science, Study of HM Inspectorate in England and Wales, HMSO, 1982.
91. S. Browne, 'The Accountability of HM Inspectorate (England)', in J. Lello (ed), Accountability in Education, Ward Lock Educational, 1979, 42. However, in one of her last public speeches as Senior Chief Inspector, Miss Browne is reported as saying that 'she had had to carry the Inspectorate with her against their will at the time of the decision to make reports public.' Education, 23.9.83, 241.
92. Education, 7.1.83, 4; Times Educational Supplement, 19.11.82. The same criteria did not apply in Northern Ireland: in February 1983 the Minister of State for Northern Ireland told Parliament that he was 'not persuaded that inspectors' reports on schools in Northern Ireland should be made available to the public', although three summary reports would be published later in the year. Education, 11.3.83, 198.
93. Times Educational Supplement, 3.12.82; ibid., 4.2.83; Education, 26.11.82, 425; ibid., 10.12.82, 464.
94. Times Educational Supplement, 19.11.82.
95. J.E.Dunford, 'The Curriculum Private Eye', Education, 15.4.88, 315.
96. Times Educational Supplement, 12.8.83.
97. Department of Education and Science, Education Observed 1: A Review of the First Six Months of Published Reports by HM Inspectors, HMSO, 1984.
98. Times Educational Supplement, 13.4.84.
99. Department of Education and Science, Report by Her Majesty's Inspectors on the Effects of Local Authority Expenditure Policies on Education Provision in England - 1983, HMSO, 1984. See below, chapter 6, for a fuller discussion of this series of expenditure reports.
100. Education, 29.1.88, 85.
101. See, for example, Teachers' Weekly, 23.5.88, concerning Chiswick Community School, Hounslow, where the gap between inspection and report was nineteen months. In the author's school the report on a January 1986 inspection appeared in September 1988.
102. Times Educational Supplement, 8.9.89.
103. The report on the London Borough of Brent is one example. See chapter 6.
104. Interview with Eric Bolton.
105. Department of Education and Science, Quality in Schools: The Initial Training of Teachers. An HMI Survey, HMSO, 1987
106. Department of Education and Science, The Curriculum from 5 to 16. Curriculum Matters 2, HMSO, 1985.
107. Department of Education and Science, English from 5 to 16. Curriculum Matters 1, HMSO, first edition 1984, second edition 1986. Department of Education and Science, English from 5 to 16: The Responses to Curriculum Matters 1, HMSO, 1986. Times Educational Supplement, 5.10.84, 12.10.84, 19.10.84, 2.11.84, 11.7.86.
108. Department of Education and Science, Music from 5 to 16. Curriculum Matters 4, HMSO, 1985. Times Educational Supplement, 5.7.85.
109. Department of Education and Science, Report by HMIs on the Effects of

Local Authority Expenditure Policies on Educational Provision in England - 1986, 1987.
110. Education, 24.7.87, 68.
111. Department of Education and Science, Standards in Education 1987-88. The Annual Report of HM Senior Chief Inspector of Schools based on the work of HMI in England, DES, 1989.
112. Independent, 1.3.89.
113. Times Educational Supplement, 3.3.89
114. Department of Education and Science, op.cit., 1989, paragraph 7.
115. Ibid., paragraph 68.
116. Ibid., paragraph 69.
117. Ibid., paragraph 70.
118. Ibid., paragraphs 75-76.
119. Department of Education and Science, Standards in Education 1988-89. The Annual Report of HM Senior Chief Inspector of Schools, DES, 1990.
120. Ibid., paragraphs 16-17.
121. Ibid., paragraph 4.
122. Times Educational Supplement, 9.2.90.
123. Daily Mail, 6.2.90.
124. Department of Education and Science, op.cit., 1990, paragraph 57.
125. Daily Mail, 6.2.90.
126. Teachers' Weekly, 15.2.90.
127. Times Educational Supplement, 18.1.80.
128. Department of Education and Science, Standards in Education 1989-90. The Annual Report of HM Senior Chief Inspector of Schools, DES, 1991, paragraphs 15-16.
129. Ibid., paragraph 6.
130. PRO Ed.135/9, Memorandum to Inspectors N.S. 478 Gen, 28.1.49.
131. PRO Ed.147/147A.
132. Letter to the Times Educational Supplement, 30.6.50.
133. Ibid., 7.7.50.
134. Times Educational Supplement, 1.7.55.
135. Ibid., 10.5.68.
136. See below, chapter 4.
137. Times Educational Supplement, 7.1.77.
138. Department of Education and Science, Reporting Inspections. HMI Methods and Procedures. Independent Schools, HMSO, 1986, paragraphs 1, 13, 15, 22-24. See also Education, 9.2.90.
139. Times Educational Supplement, 17.9.82, 1.10.82, 11.3.83.
140. Ibid., 5.5.78, 3.9.82, 14.9.84.
141. Sunday Independent, 4.3.90; J.Baggaley, 'Ourselves As Others See Us', ISIS Magazine, no.1, Spring 1991, 11-12.

CHAPTER 4

THE INSPECTORATE UNDER INVESTIGATION

The 1968 Select Committee

Sir Martin Roseveare, who was Senior Chief Inspector from 1944 to 1957, carried out two reviews of the work of the Inspectorate, both of which were by internal committees of the Ministry. As we saw in chapter 2, the Roseveare Committee of 1944 recommended a substantial increase in the size of the Inspectorate and an amalgamation of its separate branches. The 1954 Working Party, faced with a rapid growth in the number of schools, felt that it would be undesirable for the number of inspectors to be increased pro rata. It therefore recommended that HMI, while retaining its major functions, should review its methods of working, relieving workload problems by having less frequent inspections and smaller inspection teams. It proposed a decrease in establishment over three years to 500, although this did not take place (1) and the changes which were recommended by the Working Party were not explained to anyone outside the Department. (2)

Demands on the time of the Inspectorate continued to increase. There were more teachers, more schools, more teacher training, more in-service training, more outside committee work and more advice needed within the Department. In 1966 an Organisation and Management Survey examined communications within HMI and between HMI and the civil servants in the Department. It also looked at the extent of executive and clerical support

for HMI. This led to some improvements, but did not address the fundamental matter of the role of the Inspectorate which had been called into question not only by the increasing workload of the inspectors, but by the prevailing liberal mood of the 1960s. (3)

The House of Commons Select Committee on Education was formed in 1967 and on 27 February 1968 a preliminary meeting was held concerning the forthcoming investigation of Her Majesty's Inspectorate. Thereafter meetings were held on every Parliamentary Tuesday from 12 March to 23 July and the Report appeared in September 1968. The Report is remarkable not so much for its recommendations as for the candid and forthright evidence which was given to the Committee. Senior civil servants, inspectors, former HMIs, local authority representatives and teachers' union leaders pulled no punches and a very clear view emerged of the place of the Inspectorate in the late 1960s.

Significantly, the Senior Chief Inspector, W.R.Elliott, appeared before the Select Committee with the Permanent Secretary, Sir Herbert Andrew, and it was Andrew who dominated the first two days of evidence, giving the impression that HM Inspectorate was a useful, but not distinctive, part of the civil service in the Department. Thus, when Elliott was asked whether the Inspectorate had become a branch of the Department, he replied that it was a field service and that guidance was issued to inspectors by senior HMI, not by civil servants. Andrew immediately put a different slant on Elliott's answer by saying that the Inspectorate's advice to the Department was not isolated, but played its part in committees which were formulating policy; senior HMIs transmitted information to inspectors in their own way by methods which were 'a bit primitive'.(4) Andrew also played down the significance of the historical independence of HMI which 'has in the past

excited a good deal of interest'. Concerning the manner of the appointment of HMIs by the Queen in Council, Andrew told the Select Committee,

> in practice I do not think it matters at all ... As an official of the Department an officer may be instructed to do anything; as a person with professional knowledge, offering advice to the Department, he cannot be instructed to give advice that clashes with his judgment.

In the first half of this quotation there are echoes of Robert Lowe's attitude towards the nineteenth century inspectors. (5) Comparing HMIs to architects, quantity surveyors and heating engineers, Andrew concluded: 'So in practice I do not think that this kind of protection of the independent inspector is necessary ... but I do not see any advantage in removing it.' (6)

The lack of importance which the Department attached to HMI reports was also revealed by Andrew. Questioned on the advantage of changing the law on the statutory duties of HMIs, he felt that there was no need for such a measure since only by carrying out inspections could the Secretary of State's 'duty to cause inspections' be prevented from dying away. But Andrew felt that 'the nature of an inspection has changed. It is not necessary, if you inspect something, to have an enormous report which takes weeks to write up and is then solemnly buried in the cellars at Curzon Street'. (7) Elliott, on the other hand, felt that it was important to have written reports of inspections in order to safeguard teachers from having things said about them to governors and to the Local Education Authority which had not first been said to the teachers themselves. If these reports were to be published, however, Elliott said that they would have to be written in a different way. (8)

Andrew and Elliott were followed by Cyril English, who had retired as Senior Chief Inspector in 1967 to become Director-General of the City and

Guilds of London Institute. English told the Select Committee of the frustrations of the Inspectorate within the Department. This occurred because of the grading of HMIs within the civil service and, in particular, because SCI was a grade below Deputy Secretary. The Inspectorate was also frustrated by the way in which committees worked in the Department, especially when a Chief Inspector or the SCI was called without prior notice into meetings and expected to join in the middle of a discussion. He said that HMI were able to contribute to discussions on all policy matters, but at an insufficiently high level. As they were absent from the higher level meetings, HMIs lost touch with the discussions until they saw a policy document as a Memorandum or Circular or they were called in at a late stage. 'I still believe,' said English, 'that we have not yet learnt how to use the Inspectorate fully. I do not think there is anybody like it in the world for the great breadth of advice, the breadth of experience ...' (9)

English explained that he had tried to broaden the intake to the Inspectorate by recruiting a smaller proportion from public schools and by encouraging suitable candidates to apply from secondary schools. (10) He had also 'tried to bring the Inspectorate closer to teachers. I think that the future of the Inspectorate is to serve the population alongside and with the consent of teachers, and you can never do it any other way.' (11) The relationship between HM Inspectorate and Local Education Authorities, English felt, was also close and HMIs worked well with the advisory services of the larger local authorities. He anticipated the forthcoming local government reorganisation when smaller LEAs, which had few advisers, would disappear and HMI and local inspectorates would then complement each other.(12)

Sir William Alexander, the influential Secretary of the Association of Education Committees, suggested that HM Inspectors were used too much as instruments of administration on matters which could be left to the local authority, such as the site of a new school, the problems of a particular institution or the in-service training of teachers. (13) He envisaged HMI, after local government reorganisation, as a corps d'elite of around two hundred. (14) Local authority inspectors would take a larger role, including the inspection of independent schools. (15) Alexander drew a distinction between the right to inspect and the duty to inspect all schools (16):

> [The Secretary of State] should have a right, but I do not think there is any need for a duty. I think the duty should be placed on the Local Education Authority, as it is now, because that is under a statutory duty to maintain educational standards.

Alexander was wrong in one respect, since LEAs had the power to inspect their institutions, but no legal duty had been placed upon them to do so.

In further education, where LEAs had fewer of their own advisers, Alexander envisaged that HMI would have a different role, continuing to provide an advisory and inspection service.(17) He supported the independence of HMI and extended this to the local inspectorates which, he suggested, should offer independent professional advice to LEAs. (18) He suggested that the title 'Her Majesty's Inspector' was no longer appropriate for people whose main function was no longer inspecting, although he could not think of an alternative. (19)

The local authority view was also put by Chief Education Officers, notably by Dr Lincoln Ralphs of Norfolk. Local authorities looked to HMI to bring in experience from elsewhere (20), he told the Select Committee, but they feared that an expansion of HM Inspectorate would mean the loss of too

many local inspectors to the more highly paid, higher status, national body. They felt that the size of HM Inspectorate could remain the same if full inspections of schools were less 'grandiose' and if there were no written reports. (21) This would be consistent with a more advisory, rather than inspectoral, role for HMI.

Not surprisingly, the evidence of the teachers' associations concurred with the view of HMI as an advisory body. The NUT valued the independence of HMI as a bulwark against government control of the school curriculum. The union felt that relations between inspectors and teachers were better than ever before; indeed, it was 'a very old tradition' that a newly appointed SCI visited the NUT Executive. (22) However, all the associations saw HMI more as a Ministry of Education Advisory Service, although they did not want to dispense entirely with its inspection function, especially if this could be used to criticise levels of provision by local authorities. (23) 'The ideal long term solution would be the abolition of the Inspectorate and its replacement by a service responsible to the teaching profession itself, to the state and to local authorities.' (24) In the meantime, the teachers' associations were content to have an independent Inspectorate of experienced former teachers, whose advice had to be listened to but could nevertheless be ignored by heads and teachers. (25)

The tendency for HMI to advise, rather than inspect, was confirmed by Robert Sibson HMI, the Joint Secretary of the Schools Council, who said that 'the Inspectorate has come to identify itself more with the problems and difficulties of individual schools and teachers', whereas twenty years earlier 'the teachers were even more terrified of the situation than I was' as a new HMI - 'relationships between inspectors and teachers have changed enormously' during that time. (26)

Sibson was on full-time secondment to the Schools Council, six other inspectors spent 80% of their time with various Schools Council projects and over 40 HMIs had direct contact with the work of the Council. Sibson regarded himself as entirely a member of the Schools Council staff and told the Select Committee that it was not his job, but that of other HMIs to report back to the Department of Education and Science. (27) There was not necessarily an identity of view between HMIs and the Schools Council. Indeed, 'individual subject specialists in the Inspectorate have very firm points of view which may or may not coincide with the Council's view ... I think we positively gain by having differences between the Inspectorate and the committees of the Council.' (28) In the end, the curriculum freedom of the 1960s was such that the teachers and heads made the final decisions about which Schools Council projects would be used in individual institutions. (29)

The evidence from heads in the independent sector suggested a close, even cosy, relationship between HMI and independent schools. Some HMIs were governors of independent schools (30) and the Select Committee was told 'how much the HMIs are at the disposal of schools when you have got a particular problem on your hands. If you have whistled in an inspector on a particular job, then you will get first-rate advice from first-rate people.' (31) When, in 1961, full inspections of independent schools were suspended while the Newsom Commission was sitting, Donald Lindsay, Headmaster of Malvern College and Chairman of the Headmasters Conference, went to see Percy Wilson, the Senior Chief Inspector, and agreed that HMI would try out a smaller inspection at Malvern with a team of five or six HMIs. At the end of the week the inspectors talked to the governors, but they did not produce a full report. Lindsay produced that himself from the

notes which he had taken during the Reporting Inspector's summary. RI altered 'a couple of phrases' and circulated it to the other members of the HMI team who agreed it. Doubtless many head teachers would relish the opportunity to write the inspection report on their own school! The preparatory school heads were becoming particularly concerned about the ten-year delay in inspections for 'recognition'. (32) Apart from the practical consideration of the need for 'recognition', the independent schools clearly placed great value on HMI visits and the solution appeared to lie in the shorter, less formal, inspections which had been tried at Malvern.

In its recommendations (33) the Select Committee agreed with Alexander that the duty of the Secretary of State to cause inspections to be made should be replaced by the right to inspect. The Committee agreed with the widely-held view that full inspections and written reports should be largely abandoned and a greater share of inspection should be left to Local Education Authorities where the inspection teams were adequate (34):

> As local authorities have become increasingly jealous of their responsibility and the teachers increasingly conscious of their professional status so the share of HM Inspectorate will inevitably continue to diminish.

In independent schools, the Select Committee considered that HMI should continue to offer advice and should carry out less thorough inspections, some of which could be made by the inspectors of the larger LEAs. The Committee was generally happy with the organisation of HMI, although it considered that the HMI regions should conform to the economic planning regions and that the HMI contribution to policy making in the Department would be improved if the Senior Chief Inspector were promoted to Deputy Secretary grade, with corresponding changes in other grades. The Committee

recommended that recruitment to HMI should draw from a wider field and that inspectors should have the opportunity of secondment to teaching posts. Concerning the inspection of further education, the Select Committee recommended that another investigation was needed. In conclusion, the Committee's report stated that (35)

> Throughout our inquiry we have found that the work of HM Inspectorate is widely appreciated. We share that view and welcome the emphasis on the advisory rather than the inquisitorial aspect of that work. In our opinion, however, the Department has failed sufficiently to recognize this evolution and failed to appreciate the effect upon HM Inspectorate of the growth of the local inspectorates, the development of the Schools Council and the enhanced status of the teaching profession. We believe that the effect of the acceptance of our recommendations would be an appreciable decrease in the numbers of HM Inspectorate, a clear recognition of its changed function and a more realistic view of its organisation.

The Times Educational Supplement (36) commented that 'the independence of the Inspectorate is a myth: this is the saddest conclusion in the report.' It noted the lack of consultation of HMI by the Department of Education and Science and compared this to the similar situation which had been revealed in a Select Committee report a hundred years earlier (37):

> Throughout its history the Inspectorate can be seen as an innovating force ... [but] the common view seems to be that HMIs shelter much too comfortably under the Civil Service umbrella of the Department.

With unconscious foresight of the next twenty years the Times Educational Supplement commented that the independence of the Inspectorate would become more important as 'the move towards centralised planning continues.' Full inspections of schools, however, had become 'haphazard and purposeless' and should be left to Local Education Authorities, except when a complaint made one necessary.

The Department's response to the Select Committee Report (38) confirmed that the balance of HMI activity was moving away from full inspections and written reports and agreed that relations between HMI and Local Education

Authority inspectorates should become closer, although this could not extend to the inspection of independent schools for which the Department had to bear responsibilities under Part III of the 1944 Education Act. The Department stated that the recommendations on economic planning regions and on the status of the Senior Chief Inspector were being considered and, subsequently, the second of these was carried out.

The 1976 Expenditure Committee

The functions and modus operandi of the further education Inspectorate were the subject of an internal departmental committee under Toby Weaver, a Deputy Secretary, in 1969, and the implications for HM Inspectorate of the Fulton Report on the Civil Service were considered by a Fulton Review Group in 1970. The Review Group recommended more short-term appointments to HMI, larger local offices, more clerical support for District Inspectors and a grade between HMI and Staff Inspector. (39) Little progress was made with the implementation of these recommendations.

In 1975 the planning procedures of the Department of Education and Science were criticised in a report by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). (40) This led to an investigation into Policy Making in the DES by the House of Commons Expenditure Committee, which took place in the following year. (41) The Committee recommended that the Departmental Planning Organisation (DPO) should be reviewed in order to embrace more overtly educational objectives and to incorporate more specialist advice. A Chief Scientist's organisation, similar to that in other departments, was favoured. The Committee was of the view that the DES was too secretive and that, for example, Programme Analysis and Review

(PAR) reports should be published. In the more open atmosphere of debate which these recommendations envisaged, the Committee felt that 'the Secretary of State should encourage, and participate in, educational development without seeking to control it. (42)

The Permanent Secretary, Sir William Pile, was dismissive of much research (43) and did not feel that a Chief Scientist's organisation was necessary. The main reason for this was felt by the Department to be the Inspectorate, to which there was no equivalent in other government departments. (44) The Report quotes Pile's evidence (45) on the 'very powerful contribution' of HMI to the DPO. It recognised that the presence of HMI on all planning committees formed the main contact between the Department and the outside world: 'The role of the Inspectorate in the planning process appears to us to be that of representing 'education in an activity that is primarily concerned with resource allocation.' However, the Committee felt unable to comment on the effectiveness of this arrangement. (46)

In its response to the Expenditure Committee Report, the Department of Education and Science rejected the proposed Chief Scientist's organisation, preferring to establish a new unit under a Chief Inspector with responsibility to lead and manage the Department's involvement in educational research. The Department agreed with the recommendation that the Secretary of State should participate in educational development without seeking to control it and felt that this was being done already through the reports of HM Inspectorate and the Assessment of Performance Unit. (47)

The 1977-78 Management Review

A Management Review of the Department of Education and Science took place in 1977. It was guided by a Steering Committee of senior DES civil servants and the Senior Chief Inspector, and was conducted by civil servants from the DES and from the Civil Service Department, although they were advised by John Bower, Director of Education for Humberside, for the section on HM Inspectorate.(48)

The largest single study was of the organisation and management of the Inspectorate and its relationships with the rest of the Department. The report reflected the widely held view that nothing should be done to diminish the independence of the Inspectorate, but it recommended that the work of the Inspectorate should be better coordinated with that of the Department as a whole. To this end, a third policy planning group was proposed, in parallel with the policy planning groups on schools and on further and higher education. This third group, it was suggested, should be led by the Senior Chief Inspector and should consider inspection policy. The report also recommended that the remit of the Permanent Secretary's Policy Steering Group should be extended to cover questions relating to the Inspectorate.

Apart from the course approval function of Regional Staff Inspectors, it was recognised by the Review team that one of the functions of the Inspectorate was to advise LEAs and educational institutions and hence to contribute to the improvement of the system. HMIs also contributed to the formation of government policies on education and 'are clearly indispensable to the effective performance of the Department.' (49) The basis of this advice was inspection and the independent reporting of the

results of that inspection. Commenting on the organisation of the Inspectorate, the report stated that 'the most important commodity which has to be managed in the Inspectorate at every level is their working time' (50) and the report was concerned that, in view of the shortfall on recruitment of HMIs, the Inspectorate was over-stretched. The Review team was, however, broadly satisfied with the division of HMI time - including 45% visiting establishments, 25% in office work and 20% in meetings and conferences - although it was felt that this represented too much time in meetings. Nevertheless,the system of national and divisional committees 'provides both essential management machinery and a standing information network.' (51)

The inter-relationship between HMI and the Department was the matter of greatest concern to the Review team. They recognised that, given the time it took from the identification of an issue to the reporting of HMI evidence, both the senior members of the Inspectorate and the civil servants of the Department needed to be clear about future policy trends and current inspection demands. Only if there existed this mutual clarity could HMI evidence be gathered in time to form the basis for future policy decisions. The DPO, with its contributions from HMI at different levels, needed to be clearer about inspection policy and this led to the recommendation for the third Policy Group.

The Policy Group for Inspection (PGI) was established in December 1979 with terms of reference 'to review developments across the education system and consider future policy in relation to inspection.' One of its early tasks was to carry out an analysis of the range of the Department's expectations of HMI. It recommended that the exchange of information between the Inspectorate and the rest of the Department could be improved

if the policy branches considered more carefully the level and the appropriateness of the demands which they made on HMI. The PGI recommended that branches should also provide the Inspectorate with regular updated forecasts of the likely demands of casework. On the other hand, HMI should use the civil servants in the branches more effectively by inviting them to join HMI committees and by cooperating with them in the design and piloting of major surveys. The PGI also felt that HMI reports could make a bigger impact on policy making if more careful consideration were given to their use. The PGI carried out a review of the demand from within the Department for advice from the Inspectorate. This could not identify any areas where HMI input could be reduced. (52)

In 1978 and 1979 there were internal reviews of HMI support services in the Divisions and in 1980 there was an internal job evaluation on HMIs, which was criticised by inspectors on the grounds that it failed to take account of the special nature of the job and that it was misleading for civil servants to compare the roles of HMIs with individual civil service grades. (53)

The Central Policy Review Staff - the government 'think tank' - produced a report in 1980 on Education, Training and Industrial Performance which ranged widely over education and recommended that HMI and the Schools Council should be more integrated, with HMI disseminating the curriculum developments of the Schools Council. The report considered that HMI should not be offering alternative advice on curriculum matters to the Secretary of State. In a leading article the Times Educational Supplement pointed out that the report had failed to recognise the professional independence of the Inspectorate. (54)

The Rayner Report

The Conservative Government under Margaret Thatcher was elected in 1979 on a manifesto commitment to reduce public expenditure. A unit was established in the Cabinet Office to carry out a series of efficiency studies, one of the aims being to reduce the number of civil servants. The unit was headed by Sir Derek Rayner (later Lord Rayner) of Marks and Spencer, although the reviews themselves were carried out by civil servants within the government departments. Between January and July 1981 a review of HM Inspectorate was conducted by Nick Stuart, a rising star in the Department of Education and Science, and a more junior civil servant, Miss J. Partington.

At first there was despair within HMI at the prospect of being reviewed again, so soon after the 1978-79 Management Review, which the inspectors felt had omitted many of the more important management issues concerning HMI. Sheila Browne wrote a memorandum stating the reasons why 'Rayner has no grounds for directing yet another exercise at HM Inspectorate.' She pointed to the eight recent examinations of HMI work 'for various purposes and for none' and reflected that, for the Management Review, HMI had produced

> a mass of detailed information which received little attention - and less understanding. The cost in official time and nervous energy and morale was very high. I feel sure that Sir Derek would not be party to an exercise which offended in respect of the first two, but I have to say that I cannot answer for the morale of the Inspectorate if, yet again, we are offered up as the sacrificial lamb. (55)

Although Nick Stuart and Miss Partington relied heavily on the advice of senior HMI, the clearly written 'Rayner Report', as it came to be known, reflected the high value which the Department's civil servants placed on

the work and advice of HMI. The fact that the report was not published until March 1983 owed something to the personal interest taken in its conclusions by the Prime Minister. As a former Secretary of State for Education and Science, Margaret Thatcher knew the Department well and was clearly disappointed that the report on HMI was so favourable towards their organisation and methods. When (or if) the relevant papers are released under the 30-year rule, it will be interesting to read about the differences of opinion on this issue between Downing Street and Elizabeth House, the DES headquarters at the time.

The terms of reference required a report on the work and organisation of the Inspectorate, including its collaboration with the Department, paying attention to, inter alia, 'the Government's plans to reduce public expenditure and Civil Service manpower.' (56) The message could not have been clearer.

Taking evidence from a wide range of people in the education service, the authors of the report stated that they had received (57)

> widespread and virtually unanimous evidence of the high regard in which HM Inspectorate is held. This may appear somewhat paradoxical given the job of assessing standards. Nevertheless, in general the demand from whatever quarter is for more, not less: more inspectors, more advice, more inspection, more involvement on national education bodies, more availability locally and nationally.

Moreover, they noted, HMI had no direct responsibility and few powers, only influence. Because they were so highly regarded and had already been reviewed eight times since 1968, any 'fundamental changes in the role and structure of HM Inspectorate would require very powerful arguments indeed if the fragile balance of HM Inspectorate's relationship with the education system were not to be disturbed.' (58) Nevertheless, the study set out to answer four basic questions about the Inspectorate:

1. What is the right balance between HMI's role in advising central government and its role in developing the education system?
2. How effective is the Inspectorate?
3. Is the structure and organisation of the Inspectorate right for choosing priorities and performing its wide range of tasks?
4. Could the size of the Inspectorate be reduced?

The review team defined the work of HM Inspectorate in two main parts: first, advising central government and, secondly, contributing to the improvement of the education system. (59) It noted that some people were arguing that HMI was too much dominated by its functions in relation to central government and that inspectors should provide a national advisory service, but the report stated that a move in this direction was 'neither necessary nor appropriate', since the value of such advice depended upon its basis in inspection, as did its advice to government. The professional independence of HMI was deemed to be essential for the effective performance of these functions. (60)

The report applauded the trend towards published national surveys. While this trend was seen to contribute greatly to the development of the system and to policy making in the Department, and the conclusions of such surveys were firmly grounded in inspection, it had led to a decrease in the availability of HMI locally to offer advice to institutions. No longer did the general inspector have a close relationship with his institution although, as the report pointed out, such a relationship had not existed between schools and HMI since the Second World War. Following the 1980 survey of provision in the Inner London Education Authority, the report advocated an annual programme of LEA-wide inspection surveys. (61)

The report outlined the ways in which HMI influenced the education

system through advice given during inspections, the Short Course programme, Invitation Conferences, DES Regional Courses and contributions to local in-service provision. It noted that this was 'highly valued by teachers.' (62) It considered that HMI could do more through a policy of wider free distribution of their publications. The report advocated the publication of HMI reports on individual institutions and called for a reduction in the time between an inspection and the issuing of the report. Adequate time should be allocated for dissemination after the publication of a survey and this should be associated with a clearer focus for the Short Course programme. There should also be more extended exercises, such as the 11-16 curriculum project which was taking place in 41 schools in five Local Education Authorities. (63)

On LEA advisory services, the report noted the wide variation in extent and quality, but felt that there was no duplication of role between LEA advisers and HMI. There was, however, ample scope for a closer partnership: where there was a good local service, increased contact should take place, and, where the local service was inadequate, HMI should promote its development. (64)

The report detailed the way in which the branches of the Department of Education and Science made wide-ranging demands on HMI and it showed how HMI advice was incorporated into the DPO. The PGI, it felt, was beginning to make an impact, although its future programme needed closer definition. It endorsed the recommendations which the PGI had made for improvements in the exchange of information between HMI and the rest of the Department. (65)

The organisation and management structure of HMI was seen to be appropriate for the execution of its functions, although two additional

Chief Inspectors were thought to be necessary, one for the coordination of 16-19 education and the other for the coordination of central planning, training and staff development. A reduction in the number of HMI committees and better feedback of information to other HMIs were the other main organisational recommendations. (66)

On the size of the Inspectorate, the review team noted that there had been problems in recruiting sufficient people of the right calibre and that this had caused HMI to operate below the establishment level for long periods. Increases in short-term attachments to the Inspectorate and exchanges with LEA advisers were recommended. The report's examination of the role of the Inspectorate 'failed to demonstate any functions which are unnecessary or could be performed by others' and the authors state that their report 'makes out a case in terms of the contribution that the Inspectorate makes to the education system as a whole for more inspectors rather than fewer.' (67) With a DES manpower target cut of a further 12% by 1984, this cannot have have made happy reading for the Prime Minister and would certainly have been one of the major reasons for the delay of nearly two years before the publication of the Rayner Report. Nevertheless, the authors were adamant that 'any reduction in numbers of the Inspectorate below its existing level could only be implemented by reductions in function.' (68) Inspectors were seen to be doing too many routine tasks and an increase in their support staff was badly needed, together with an increase in the use of word processors and computers.

The review team noted that the FHE Inspectorate retained a measure of separate identity within HMI. The report recommended a reduction in the involvement of Regional Staff Inspectors in advanced course approval - almost the only remaining executive function of the Inspectorate. It also

felt that the FHE Inspectorate should increase the volume of its publications and that it should introduce a standard Note of Visit for its records on colleges, as the school inspectors had done. General inspectors for colleges were tending to conduct advisory visits, rather than inspections, and their role required clearer definition. (69)

After a chapter on the Welsh Inspectorate, the review team tackled the question of the effectiveness of HMI, although the authors had found it impossible to find a way of measuring this accurately. In their role as professional advisers to central government, the inspectors were found to make 'a crucial contribution to the development of policies for the education service.' (70) In their role as agents of improvement in the education system as a whole, the report pointed to (71)

> the overwhelming evidence within the education service that HM Inspectorate is trusted to provide authoritative and accurate information, useful advice and sound judgment. As a professional body, their professional competence is highly regarded and their advice is highly respected.

At the same time as the Rayner Report was published, the Secretary of State produced a policy statement on the Inspectorate. (72) This endorsed the independence of the Inspectorate and agreed to retain the existing complement of 430 HMIs. (73) The number of short-term attachments to the Inspectorate was to be increased, particularly in areas such as information technology.

Several of the Rayner Report recommendations were put into effect. It became a clearer requirement on the general inspectors of FHE institutions to carry out more formal inspections. The policy statement also agreed that the involvement of the Inspectorate in the approval of advanced courses in FHE should be reduced.

By 1983 the publication of reports on individual institutions had

already been initiated by Sir Keith Joseph; Local Education Authorities were to be asked to indicate within three months of the issue of a report the action to be taken on its findings. Reports were to be published within six months of inspections.

The policy statement undertook that the Inspectorate would continue to play an important part in dissemination and development, working alongside Local Education Authorities wherever the opportunity arose. The Department agreed to increase the number of free copies of HMI publications. The importance of liaison with LEAs was emphasised in that District Inspectors would be given extra time for this work.

Although no definite commitment was made in the policy statement, the Inspectorate agreed to keep under review its committee structure; the size of the PGI would also be reviewed, as the Rayner Report had recommended.

A Chief Inspector had already been appointed to oversee the central programme, but the recommendation for a Chief Inspector for 16-19 education was never put into effect.

More important than all of these changes, however, was the tone of the government's policy statement, which confirmed that HM Inspectorate was a valuable and independent part of the education system. In the words of the Times Educational Supplement (74)

> 'The duty of the Inspectorate is to report what they see and not what others might wish them to see,' the study says. Last week's statement from the government should guarantee HMI's freedom to do that for at least another generation.

The Reviews Reviewed

Between 1968 and 1983 nine investigations took place into HMI and aspects of its work. One is bound to ask why HMI should be reviewed so often, why the conclusions of these reviews tended to be so favourable and what effect they had on the work of the Inspectorate.

By 1968 HMI had had a long period of quiesence and there was genuine concern, both within and outside the Inspectorate, concerning its role and future. In 1983 there was no such uncertainty - the Inspectorate was ably led and was making an impact in most parts of the education service. It was the political imperative of early Thatcherism which was the catalyst for the Rayner review.

The nature of the Inspectorate was also a factor which contributed to the frequency with which it was reviewed. Within the Department of Education and Science it was a discrete body of manageable size and its relationship with the rest of the education system was reasonably clear. Investigating HMI was therefore easier than reviewing other parts of the DES which, for much of this period, was failing to give adequate leadership to the education service and was struggling to work in a complex and subtle relationship with teachers and Local Education Authorities. It could be said that it was easier for civil servants to put the spotlight on HMI than on themselves. There was also the fascination with the uniqueness of HMI as an institution, and especially with its professional independence, which had no parallel elsewhere in Whitehall.

The conclusions of all the reviews tended to show HMI in a favourable light. No doubt this was partly because HMIs are an impressive and knowledgable group of people, especially when giving evidence to an

investigating committee. It could also be because the process of self-evaluation of the Inspectorate meant that it was always one step ahead of its investigators. In 1968 its role was in tune with the liberal consensus which governed education and by 1983 a greater emphasis on the inspection role had provided HMI with the evidence to enable it to serve the diverse and extensive needs of the Department for advice. Both the 1977 and 1983 reviews set out clearly the breadth of HMI advice to the Department and recognised the dependence of the Department on the Inspectorate, but could not suggest any areas where it could be reduced. In the evidence of non-HMI witnesses, the value of the Inspectorate and respect for HMIs was always emphasised and few substantial recommendations were made. Criticisms tended to be of the way in which the Department used HMI, rather than of HMI itself.

The Inspectorate survived the 1968 Select Committee recommendations to stop full inspections, alter its role and reduce its size, but it is important to remember that the recommendations of a Select Committee have no executive power and, when the Department has responded to them and the political interest has shifted to other areas, they are usually forgotten. None of the investigations came to terms with the complex relationship between the role of HMI and its size and one is forced to conclude that this is a subject on which one can do little more than hold one's finger up to the winds of educational opinion and political climate in order to feel for an approximation to the correct answer. The Inspectorate has therefore continued to have a complement of around 500 and the arguments for halving it or doubling it have not prevailed.

The period 1968 to 1983 was a time of uncertainty in the education system. The reorganisation of local government, the raising of the school

leaving age, the trend towards comprehensive education, the search for an acceptable and relevant curriculum, the changes in national governments and the shift in political priorities from quantity to quality all had a destabilising effect. It would have been surprising if HMI had remained immune from this uncertainty. Nevertheless, it was the internal changes which the Inspectorate made in its own organisation and structure, rather than the recommendations of the nine reviews, which were really significant in shaping the Inspectorate of the future. As we shall see in the final chapter, it was when these internal developments failed to keep up with the changing structure of the education service that the Inspectorate became the target of political reform.

Notes

1. AHMI archive, series 2/24. House of Commons, Report from the Select Committee on Education and Science, Session 1967-68. Part I: Her Majesty's Inspectorate (England and Wales), HMSO, 1968, 5.
2. Ibid., qq.213,248.
3. AHMI archive, series 2/40.
4. House of Commons, op.cit., 1968, qq.119-122.
5. Lowe's evidence to the 1864 Select Committee on Education (Inspectors' Reports), q.711, quoted in J.E.Dunford, op.cit., 1980, 64.
6. House of Commons, op.cit., 1968, q.55.
7. Ibid., q.56.
8. Ibid., q.71,107.
9. Ibid., qq.181-182.
10. Ibid., qq.214-215.
11. Ibid., q.220.
12. Ibid., q.223 ff.
13. Ibid., qq249,253,258.
14. Ibid., q.258.
15. Ibid., q.279.
16. Ibid., q.306.
17. Ibid., q.259.
18. Ibid., q.338.
19. Ibid., q.331.
20. Ibid., q.643.
21. Ibid., qq.637-640.
22. Ibid., q.733.
23. Ibid., qq.742,805.
24. Ibid., evidence of the National Union of Teachers, paragraph 25.
25. Ibid., qq.798,818.

26. Ibid., q.499.
27. Ibid., q.474.
28. Ibid., q.463.
29. Ibid., q.464.
30. Ibid., q.612.
31. Ibid., q.596.
32. Ibid., q.532 ff.
33. Ibid., v-xiv, paragraph 46.
34. Ibid., paragraph 39.
35. Ibid., paragraph 47.
36. Times Educational Supplement, 13.9.68.
37. House of Commons, Report of the Select Committee on Education, 1865.
38. Department of Education and Science, Observations by the Department of Education and Science on the Recommendations in Part I of the Report of the Select Committee on Education and Science, Session 1967-1968, HMSO, 1968.
39. AHMI archive, series 2/68.
40. Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, Educational Development Strategy in England and Wales, Paris, 1975
41. House of Commons, Tenth Report from the Expenditure Committee, Session 1975-76. Policy Making in the Department of Education and Science, HMSO, 1976.
42. Ibid., xxxv.
43. Ibid., xxii.
44. Ibid., q.449.
45. Ibid., q.473.
46. Ibid., xviii.
47. Department of Education and Science, Response to the Tenth Report of the Expenditure Committee, Session 1975-76, 1976, paragraph 6,12.
48. Department of Education and Science, Management Review of the Department of Education and Science 1977-78, 1979.
49. Ibid., paragraph 5.3
50. Ibid., paragraph 5.16.
51. Ibid., paragraph 5.38,5.19.
52. Department of Education and Science, Study of HM Inspectorate in England and Wales, HMSO, 1982, 44, paragraph 5.13; ibid., 88, paragraph 9.3.
53. AHMI archive, series 2/51; Report on the Job Evaluation of the Work of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (England and Wales), AHMI archive, series 2/60, 1980.
54. Times Educational Supplement, 30.5.80.
55. AHMI archive, series 2/57, 29.6.79; AHMI response to the Management Review, AHMI archive, series 2/58.
56. Department of Education and Science, op.cit., 1982, 2, paragraph 1.3.
57. Ibid., 5, paragraph 1.12.
58. Ibid., 5, paragraph 1.14.
59. See above, p.52.
60. Department of Education and Science, op.cit., 1982, 9, paragraph 2.6; ibid., 10, paragraph 2.8.
61. Ibid., 17, paragraph 3.14. This was subsequently carried out and is discussed below in chapter 6.
62. Ibid., 24-26, paragraphs 3.34-3.37.
63. Ibid., 30, paragraph 3.44.
64. Ibid., 35-37, paragraphs 4.10-4.13.
65. Ibid., 38-46, paragraphs 5.1-5.14.

66. Ibid., 48-54, paragraphs 6.3-6.16.
67. Ibid., 59-60, paragraphs 7.5,7.8.
68. Ibid., 62, paragraph 7.11.
69. Ibid., 21, paragraph 3.25.
70. Ibid., 87, paragraph 9.3.
71. Ibid., 89, paragraph 9.5.
72. Department of Education and Science, A Policy Statement by the Secretary of State for Education and Science and the Secretary of State for Wales on the work of HM Inspectorate in England and Wales, HMSO, 1983.
73. This entailed a large recruitment programme, as the 1983 size of the Inspectorate in England was 384, the lowest ever.
74. Times Educational Supplement, 1.4.83.

CHAPTER 5

HMIs ON THE RIM:

INSPECTION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

School Inspection up to the Second World War

In 1840 Kay-Shuttleworth gave the early inspectors very precise instructions on the limitation of their powers in inspecting schools (1):

> The inspection of schools aided by public grants is ... a means of co-operation between the Government and the committees and superintendents of schools; ... one main object of your visit is to afford them your assistance in all efforts for improvement in which they may desire your aid; but that you are in no respect to interfere with the instruction, management, or discipline of the school, or to press upon them any suggestions which they may be disinclined to receive.

Only six years later the burgeoning system of government grants to schools required three-quarters of the children to pass an examination before an inspector in order that the school could qualify for the grant. (2) The inspectors often did not have time to examine more than three or four children in a class and so it was in 1862, with the advent of the Revised Code, that the full effect of individual examination of children by inspectors began to be felt. Although they were written in a way which attempted to mollify the school managers, the underlying message of the new instructions to inspectors adopted a very different tone (3):

> The grant to be made to each school depends, as it has ever done, upon the school's whole character and work. The grant is offered for attendance in a school with which the inspector is satisfied. If he is wholly dissatisfied ... no grant is made. You will judge every school by the same standard that you have hitherto used, as regards its

> religious, moral and intellectual merits. The examination under Article 48 does not supercede this judgment, but presupposes it. That article does not prescribe that, if thus much is done, a grant shall be paid, but, unless thus much is done, no grant shall be paid. It does not exclude the inspection of each school ..., but it fortifies this test by individual examination. If you keep these distinctions in view you will see how little the scope of your duties is changed.

But the duties had changed and so had the relationship between the inspectors and the teachers. In the words of one of the great early inspectors, J.D.Morell, 'formerly, we were occupied chiefly in examining processes; now we are occupied almost entirely in testing results.' (4) Although Article 48 specified what was to be examined at each Standard (5), there was little guidance from the Department on the form which the inspection should take. This created 'as many standards of inspection as there are inspectors' (6) and contributed to the tension during a school inspection. Since, on the one hand, the government grant to a school depended upon the children's performance in the inspector's examination and, on the other hand, the school managers often based part or all of the teacher's salary on the amount of grant received, the teacher's pay could truthfully be said to depend on the children's examination results. This gave the inspector great power over the teacher and, by making the inspection more mechanical, the Revised Code formalised the relationship between them. This inevitably led to a deterioration in the relationship between some inspectors and some teachers, but this trend was not universal. (7) The potential injustice of the Revised Code was caustically illustrated in a teachers' magazine of the period (8):

> Since an inspector is no more competent to test exactly the quantity and quality of the educative influence exerted on a boy during the year, than of determining the quantity of beef consumed by him, during the same period, by an annual process of weighing him, is it very much more absurd to pay the butcher than the teacher by results?

As more subjects became eligible under Codes of the 1870s and 1880s, the

inspection of a school became, if anything, even more detailed and mechanical than it had been in the 1860s.

The system of individual examination ended in 1895 and HMIs then visited schools without notice, having considerable latitude concerning their method of inspection. If the inspector was dissatisfied with what he saw, he could question the children or, if the teaching appeared to be very poor, he could give a formal examination. (9) In the early part of the twentieth century such examinations almost entirely disappeared, but HMI were still regarded with deep suspicion by the teachers, who would exchange stories of the persecution which had been inflicted on them by unfeeling inspectors. (10) Edmond Holmes, the Chief Inspector of Elementary Schools from 1905-11, had clear views on learning which helped inspectors to move away from the type of inspection which had prevailed under the Revised Code. (11)

The 1902 Education Act enabled the new Local Education Authorities to finance secondary schools through the rates and the number and relative complexity of these schools meant that the Inspectorate had to find a new mode of inspection. The Secondary Inspectorate, which was established after the amalgamation between HMI and the South Kensington, or Science and Art, Inspectorate, began full inspections of schools in 1905. Instead of the one-day visit by a single HMI, with perhaps one assistant, a secondary school would be inspected by a team of subject specialists, each HMI looking at the teaching of his own, and sometimes also a related, subject. (12) The team of two to six HMIs would normally be headed by the District Secondary Inspector, who would be sent information in advance by the school. During the inspection, which usually lasted a week, the HMIs observed lessons and held team meetings to discuss general conclusions. At

the end of the week a verbal report would be given to the head teacher and then to the governing body, to which the head might be invited, although the conclusions did not have to be reported to the teaching staff. Later a written report was given to the governing body and to the LEA.

By 1912 nearly all grant-aided secondary schools had been inspected, a total of 1487 inspections in seven years. In the same year it was recognised that, because of the increase in the numbers of secondary schools, some schools would have to have a shortened form of full inspection. Apart from exceptional cases, full inspections were abandoned during the First World War. The resulting backlog required a change of policy after the War and, from 1922, the frequency target for full inspections was changed from five years to ten. Nevertheless the number of full inspections fell and the number of secondary schools increased: several alternative forms of inspection were therefore devised.

Full inspections were sometimes followed up after an interval with a shorter visit to observe progress. A second strategy was the Supplementary Inspection, which was an advisory visit with no report. Thirdly, Interim Inspections were made by two HMIs, who wrote a report on only a part of the school's work. Finally there were Shortened Inspections, which looked at similar aspects in a group of schools. (13)

The Inspection Process

The study of a complete series of full inspections on a single school between 1903 and 1949 is instructive. (14) At Durham Johnston Grammar School the teams of inspectors ranged from three to six, the length of the inspection from two to four days and the reports from thirteen to nineteen

pages, either printed on A5 or typed on foolscap paper. Apart from the headteacher, staff were not named, but are easily identifiable owing to the small size of the school and the comments which are made. The headings in the 1903 report were Administration and Finance - Buildings - Staff - Curriculum and Teaching - Examinations - General. In 1949 the headings were very similar, but had been expanded to include Library, School Meals, General Activities and Corporate Life. All the reports commented on the cramped buildings, but it was not until 1954 that the Local Education Authority moved the school to new premises - so much for the influence of HMI over the expenditure decisions of the County's Education Committee! The 1907 report recommended the separation of the boys and the girls into different schools. By the next inspection in 1911, this was about to happen. The inspectors' eye for detail was evident in 1923 when 'a shortage of urinal stalls was noted.' An addendum to the 1949 report was the minutes of the meeting of the governing body which immediately followed the inspection. Attached to these in the Public Record Office file is a sheet of notes 'not for inclusion in the issued report.' This sheet included a very critical note on the P.E. master and a reference to 'a dilatory LEA and a somewhat unprepossessing set of governors.'

Article 77 of the 1944 Education Act had stated that 'it shall be the duty of the Minister to cause inspections to be made of every educational establishment at such intervals as appear to him to be appropriate.' After 1944 the nature of school inspection varied according to the way in which Her Majesty's Inspectorate interpreted its role. In examining the post-war history of school inspection, it will therefore be necessary to look at the various types of school inspection and the importance of inspection at different times. A study of the inspectors' reports on schools raises

questions about the criteria on which HMIs make their judgments and it is interesting to consider these in relation to the aims of some schools with a non-traditional ethos as well as those with more conventional aims.

There have been a number of descriptions of the methodology of school inspection. (15) Throughout the post-war period the majority of HMI visits have continued to be made by individual HMIs, rather than large teams. At the end of a day-long visit to a secondary school an account of the individual inspector's observations is given to the teacher, the head of department and then to the head. At the end of a visit to a primary school the inspector talks to the individual class teachers and then to the head. A file note is added to the Inspectorate's record on the school; no written report is published and it is impossible to know what use was made of these files until the late 1980s when the form of Notes of Visit was standardised and the inspector's report was put on a database. This information was then available for the Inspectorate to use in its national surveys.

The more formal inspection on which a report is written and presented to the Secretary of State may take place in a school for a number of reasons (16):

(a) as part of a structured random sample of schools over the whole country.

(b) owing to the size and location of the school, its known strengths and weaknesses or recent national or local initiatives.

(c) a concern that there may be some problem at the school.

The choice may also be governed by the need for HMI to carry out an investigation of a particular aspect of education, for example,

(a) the implementation and effect of a national policy.

(b) a national sample to assess standards and establish benchmarks.

(c) to give publicity to an aspect of good practice or educational priority.

(d) a survey of a particular subject of the curriculum or an aspect such as health education.

These different motives led to different kinds of inspection and resulted in different kinds of reports. The survey, which may have covered an area, a phase of education, a curriculum subject or a cross-curricular theme, followed the inspection of a number of schools, which were usually listed in an appendix to the report. The full inspection covered every aspect of the work of a single school or college, including a commentary on each subject area. The short inspection in a secondary school led to a report on the general aspects of the school, but did not include the sections on individual subjects. After 1990 the traditional full inspection was replaced by issues-led inspections in which the format was designed to suit the issue. This resulted in a general report on the school and also contributed to national surveys on the issues which received particular consideration.

The size of the panel of HMIs on a full inspection varied from two in a small primary school to over twenty in a large community school. The period of the inspection lasted from three days in smaller schools to a week in the larger, although not all of the inspectors remained for the full week. A short inspection of a secondary school is carried out by four to six inspectors.

On an issues-led inspection, each inspection team comprised a nucleus of HMIs who carried out a general inspection of the school in the usual way, together with a group of HMIs who were attached to the team to study particular issues of national concern on which surveys were being carried

out. For the first part of the week the whole panel functioned as a single team, after which the nucleus team of HMIs focussed its attention on issues relating to the individual school, while the attached HMIs focussed on issues of national concern, such as a review of the teaching of reading, educational disadvantage or the cumulative effect of the introduction of the national curriculum.

The panel for an inspection is led by the Reporting Inspector (RI), who notifies the school about four weeks in advance of the inspection. This time period may be shorter, but is rarely longer, since schools are deliberately not given the opportunity to over-prepare. A considerable amount of documentation is required by HMI and the preparation of the staff is a matter of such importance that one head teachers' organisation has produced a booklet of guidance. (17) Some heads believe that HMIs do not read all the documentation and can cite examples to support their contention, but schools sometimes provide too much information, which cannot be absorbed even by the most assiduous inspector. As part of the staff preparation it is usual for the RI to address the teachers, but not all HMI are good at putting people at their ease in this situation (18):

> The nice man with the grey hair arrives to reassure us. It is a preliminary visit. He is avuncular. He perches in front of us, cross-legged on a stool, like an apologetic kestrel. There is nothing to worry about - they aren't going to look for faults; they are more interested in our strengths. In fact it is scarcely an inspection at all and it will only last four days. He reminds me of my dentist before he removed my wisdom tooth.

At the start of an inspection it is not only the teachers who are nervous. Percy Wilson recalled how, after twenty-five years as an HMI, he never conquered his nervousness on the first day of a full inspection. (19)

Among the preliminary papers which are circulated to the HMIs prior to an inspection is a copy of the school timetable and, by the time that the

HMIs arrive, each will have planned a draft programme of lesson observation and will waste no time before going to a lesson. It may be lunchtime before some HMIs arrive, for they will have come from several Divisions, and this gives barely three and a half days before it will be time to report on what may be a large area of activity in a big school. Their efficient management of time during an inspection week is impressive and one senior member of staff in a school which had recently been inspected conducted a survey of his pupils which revealed that the average number of visits by an inspector to a class was five and that there had been an average of one conversation with an HMI per pupil. Most pupils had also had their written work examined by an inspector and four pupils from each year group had had to hand in all their books and files. An interesting part of the survey was that over 90% of the pupils had observed a change in 'teacher attitude' during the week. (20) During a full inspection HMI tried to see a lesson by each of the teachers in the school and to observe classes at all levels of age and ability, but it was an irritating habit of some inspectors to seek coverage at the expense of thoroughness by seeing only half of each lesson. All subjects were usually inspected, except Religious Education in Voluntary Aided schools, which could be seen only at the request of both the head and the governors. Apart from lessons, HMI inspected the building (they were especially keen on toilets), the playground, the lunch break, registration procedures and registers, assembly, stock cupboards, work experience, visits and extra-curricular activities - in fact, every aspect of school life. They discussed schemes of work and departmental policy documents with heads of department and it was the task of one of the inspectors, who observed fewer lessons, to subject the curriculum plan and organisation to penetrating analysis. The RI convened meetings of the team of HMIs after

the end of the school day and, on the third and fourth day, team meetings were held at which a consensus emerged about the general comments on the school which were to be made in the final report. Conclusions on the work of individual departments did not necessarily accord with this consensus.

Meetings with parents and community groups were introduced during the 1980s and these became sufficiently frequent for Eric Bolton to write to Chief Education Officers to explain the procedure. Meetings with community groups were convened by HMI, particularly during inspections of community schools, but also with community groups representing ethnic minorities. Meetings with groups of parents were a new innovation and reflected the emphasis on the increased importance of the role of parents during the late 1980s. In his letter to CEOs, Eric Bolton wrote (21):

> The decision to meet parents usually depends on the nature of the inspection itself; it is not a routine procedure in all inspections. Such meetings are arranged if a particular focus of an inspection is, for example, on home/school liaison. They may also be arranged if a school serves a local population where there are particular parental concerns about the educational achievements of children ... Headteachers are usually asked to arrange meetings with a representative cross-section of parents, about 20-25 in number. To enable parents to engage in free and frank discussions with HMI the headteacher does not normally attend.

Her Majesty's Inspectors have usually been held in both respect and fear by the teaching profession. The fear has been created by the form of the inspection, but the respect has had to be earned and there have been periods when this has been less evident. During the nineteenth century, when elementary school teachers were not eligible to become HMIs, there was a feeling that HMIs, not having been elementary school teachers themselves, could not understand the problems of the teachers. The respect in which many of the great early inspectors were held was therefore earned in spite of, or perhaps because of, this situation. During the post-war period there

have been times when inspectors have been too concerned with administrative minutiae or have been inclined to give impractical advice, when they have been less well respected. Immediately after the Second World War a large number of new HMIs were appointed and inevitably the induction process was not as thorough as it should have been, which no doubt contributed to the rawness of some inspectors being the cause of some dissatisfaction in the schools which they were inspecting. (22) In 1956 a Chief Education Officer wrote an article in the Times Educational Supplement which was highly critical of HMI, expressing forcibly the teachers' complaints that inspectors were imposing teaching methods upon them without properly assessing the effect of the work that they were doing. (23) The article concluded:

> It is doubtful if the reputation of HM Inspectorate stands high at present. In the immediate pre-war years the relationship between the Inspectorate and the schools was happy and each admired the work of the other. The former reputation of HM Inspectors will return when teachers recognise that they are concentrating their time and attention on educational points and are there to help maintain good standards of work in the schools.

The article was followed by letters which in equal numbers supported and criticised HMI. (24) Criticism continued in the mid-1960s, referring to the distrust by teachers of inspectoral advice and the bad-mannered way in which some HMIs carried out their inspections.(25) Just fifteen years later, however, the Rayner Report recorded the evidence of the high regard in which the Inspectorate was held. (26)

Schools which have been inspected in recent years have sometimes criticised HMIs for having too pre-determined an idea of how a subject should be taught - they have felt that the teaching was being judged solely against these criteria, and not against a more absolute standard of what a good lesson should be. After all, they argue, successful learning and

teaching is a matter of relationships within the classroom and there is more than one way of achieving this success. Other criticisms of the inspection process have come from headteachers who have felt that the whirlwind progress of the HMIs around the school has not allowed enough time for sustained and reflective discussion to expand on the information which the head had provided before the inspection. Headteachers are also critical of inspection panels which contain plenty of subject expertise, but are weak on school management and which therefore fail to give a sufficiently helpful report on this central function. A more common criticism has been of a failure to inspect properly cross-curricular courses and community activities - facets of a school which do not easily come under a single subject heading. These criticisms have to be seen in the context of a high level of respect for HMIs as professionals with an impressive knowledge of the national educational scene. 'It was,' said one head, 'a thoroughly detailed and professional business, and left one with a sense of fairness on all judgments that had to do with the quality of teaching and learning.' (27)

In a case study of a 1980 inspection of a West Midlands 11-16 comprehensive school, W.J.W.Miles interviewed all who had been involved. (28) The teaching staff believed that inspections should take place and that the process of inspection was valuable for a school. Yet there were a number of irritants which were noted by many of the teachers. First, there was a feeling that the HMIs, who were mainly ex-grammar school teachers, had spoken of under-achievement and low teacher expectation without giving full recognition to the catchment area of the school. The HMIs appeared to have carried out no objective testing of their hypothesis of under-achievement. Secondly, the teachers noted a degree of idealism in the HMIs

which led to them making impractical suggestions which failed to take account of the constraints under which the teachers perceived that they were working. Thirdly, the teachers felt that the inspection process had been rushed and that this had offered insufficient opportunity for them to talk to the inspectors. Fourthly, they did not like the guarded nature of the inspectors' comments. The teachers in the school had felt considerable apprehension before the inspection took place, but their feelings of threat lesssened after their first meeting with HMI. Nevertheless, they tended to 'play it safe' by teaching very formal and highly structured lessons during the inspection week. This departure from normal teaching teaching methods introduced a degree of falsity into the inspection process. The dissatisfactions of the teaching staff caused Miles to conclude that

> the demand for expert objective assessment remains unchanged. The uniqueness of aspects of the study is acknowledged but there stands revealed a fact of wider significance - the inability of HMI today to satisfy institutional and individual needs. Viewed from the inspectoral standpoint as an information gathering exercise the inspection was a success. Yet, at school and staff level, the sense of disappointment remains.

The report

One of the essential tenets of HMI is that they report as they find. This means that, for example, if no children take books out of the school library during the inspection week, the lack of use of the library will be reported. Another tenet is that no individual teachers will be identified in the report, although this is of little consolation to the single Latin teacher in the school, whose work is synonymous with the report on the subject. This is a greater problem in primary schools and in small secondary schools than it is in the larger comprehensive schools.

Towards the end of an inspection week the HMI gave a report to the head of department or class teacher and then, during the final day of a full inspection, each of the HMIs, accompanied by RI, reported to the head in an series of twenty-minute monologues. In 1990-91 the chair of governors was invited to be present. Because there had been little time for interchange during the week, it was difficult for the headteacher to react to these reports, although errors which were made by the inspectors at this stage would be difficult to rectify later.

The next stage of the reporting procedure on a full, or a short, inspection was the verbal report to the governing body, which took place four to six weeks afterwards. Contrary to the former procedure, when the headteacher was invited in after the start of the meeting, HMI would not discuss the work of the school with the governors except in the presence of the head. (29) The Chief Education Officer or his representative would normally also be present. At this meeting the RI gave the governors a detailed verbal summary of the general part of the draft report. The governors and the head would respond with questions and a discussion took place on any of the points raised by the report. The reason why the report to the governors was verbal, and not written, was the protocol that the report was addressed to the Secretary of State and until he had received it and decided to publish it, the report could not be seen by anyone else. The effect of this protocol was that the governors had no time to consider the report before the meeting, which greatly limited the usefulness of the discussion. It also meant that the head could make factual corrections only on that part of the report which he heard at the meeting; and errors in the subject parts of a full inspection report remained uncorrected.

After the change to issues-led inspections in 1991, the procedure at

the end of an inspection week was slightly different. The feed-back from individual HMIs to the head took place on the final morning, but the main verbal report was given on a morning towards the end of the following week. Later on the same day, the HMIs reported back to the governing body.

Since 1983, when reports on school inspections began to be published, errors in a report have caused greater problems. Referring to inaccuracies in the report on his school, one head wrote (30): 'Now that reports are published there is no such thing as an unimportant detail that the inspectors can afford to treat carelessly.' Sometimes there were differences between the final written report and the verbal report given to the head and the governors. These problems would be overcome if the governors at the post-inspection meeting received a confidential draft copy of the report. Unfortunately, HMIs are civil servants and there are times when civil service protocol and procedures stand in the way of good sense.

A further problem was that an inspection report may have passed through many drafts before it was published. When the inspecting team had written the first draft, the DSI and the phase link Staff Inspector saw it and commented on the detail of the text, raising any policy issues which emerged. If it was thought to be a sensitive report, it would be seen by the Chief Inspector and may even have been seen by the civil servants in the relevant branch, although the independence of the Inspectorate dictated that they did not have to take account of civil servants' comments.

It is the policy of the Inspectorate that written reports should contain no surprises and that they should include nothing which has not previously been said to the head. However, comments - both complimentary and critical - tend to be toned down. A former SCI described it thus (31):

> If we have to say something critical about an individual person, we say it very firmly to the person, but much more lightly to the head, and

> when it comes to the written report it is a whisper. The way we work in this is long established by tradition.

Thus an 'outstanding' department becomes merely 'successful' and 'a lesson lacked pace' usually means that it was extremely boring. Heads tend to find this annoying as the stronger original comment, whether good or bad, can be put to good use in the management of the school. Written reports are diluted and their language is sometimes coded: for example, 'the pastoral system is complex, with lack of clarity of role' means that the pupils do not know whom to approach for help. (32) Since many people have learned how to decode HMI reports, it is debatable whether the Inspectorate should have reassessed this traditional obfuscation. On the one hand, the publication of HMI reports demands that the situation in a school should be presented with the utmost clarity; on the other hand, the coded language may serve to protect schools from the worst excesses of local newspapers.

Nevertheless the HMI report on a school inspection is a valuable document to a school. It is a snapshot of the state of the school at a particular time in its history and a school can use its detailed commentary to build on the good and to improve what is less satisfactory.

Copies of the report are sent to the school, the governing body and the Local Education Authority. The LEA simultaneously receives a letter from the Secretary of State asking it 'to indicate, within three months, what action it proposes to take in response to the report's findings.' (33)

The fall and rise of the full inspection

The frequency and importance of the full inspection during the post-war period has varied considerably. Following the Second World War there was a

considerable backlog of inspections to be carried out and the size of the Inspectorate was increased by over 60%. When a regular pattern of inspection was resumed, other demands began to be made on HMI time. As a former HMI has written (34), the price was a heavy one:

> By the mid-1960s inspections had fallen dramatically, and a professional lobby urged their discontinuance. ... The stage was set for the birth of comprehensive education - in an atmosphere of bitter wrangling and ill-informed debate. ... The position was aggravated by a campaign of rumour-mongering which argued that educational standards had fallen, and the central authority naturally looked to the Inspectorate for guidance. Intimate knowledge of classroom work, formerly the stock-in-trade of HMI, was now lacking.

The 1968 Select Committee heard from the former Senior Chief Inspector, Cyril English, that the rota of inspections had been abandoned; the decrease in the number of inspections was welcomed by English (35):

> This I welcomed and encouraged and speeded for a number of reasons. ... I think this formal coming in as a group into a school and writing a report creates the wrong sort of relationship between teachers and inspectors. The whole emphasis now of the Inspectorate is not to give up the inspection altogether because we still have to do it in the independent area and sometimes in other areas, but to look <u>with</u> the teachers rather than <u>at</u> the teachers.

In their memoranda and evidence to the Select Committee the teachers' associations called for the abolition of the full inspection and for a greater emphasis on advisory work by HMI. (36) In its report the Select Committee noted that inspection was no longer the main function of HMI and, since formal inspections of maintained schools were no longer carried out as part of a systematic pattern, the Secretary of State was now disregarding his statutory obligation under Section 77 of the 1944 Education Act. The Committee therefore recommended that this Section should be replaced and that formal inspections, accompanied by formal written reports, should be abandoned. (37) In fact, following the 1968 Select Committee Report, the number of full inspections began to grow again (38):

Year	Primary	Secondary	Total
1970	22	11	33
1971	17	25	42
1972	22	34	56
1973	14	32	46
1974	45	46	91
1975	14	11	25
1976	13	10	23
1977	4	6	10
1978	55	15	70
1979	82	52	134
1980	66	78	154

The growth in the number of full inspections was broken during the period 1975-78, when the Inspectorate was carrying out formal inspections for the primary and secondary surveys, for which 600 primary and 413 secondary inspections were conducted. In 1980 the total number of visits to primary schools was 4375, which represented 21% of all primary schools. During the same year 40% of middle schools, 74% of secondary schools, 18% of independent schools and 45% of special schools were visited. During 1990-91 the proportions of schools visited were: 17% of primary schools, 62% of maintained secondary schools, 19% of independent schools and 22% of special schools. 92 of these visits resulted in inspection reports being published.

The centrality of the inspection function of HMI was emphasised throughout the Rayner Report. The legitimacy of HMI advice rests upon the base of knowledge which is acquired during inspections of educational institutions. It is essential that the other demands on the time of HMI do not erode the time given to inspection. It is significant that the post-war period when the reputation and influence of the Inspectorate was at its lowest ebb coincided with the years when fewest inspections took place.

Criteria for inspection

A former Chief Inspector, writing in 1970, stated that the first task of inspectors throughout his thirty years as an HMI had been to (39):

> visit schools, and that what they did when they got there must be for each individual to decide. Their first aim would be to look into what was happening ... with the further aims of helping the teachers in any way in which they needed help and of satisfying themselves that the children were receiving as good an education as possible.

W.R.Elliott, the Senior Chief Inspector at the time of the 1968 Select Committee, told the Committee that there were no departmental directives, although subject specialists met together and the Staff Inspector might write a paper on, for example, the inspection of modern mathematics, but there was no HMI policy on teaching methods. (40) Norman Thomas, who joined the Inspectorate in 1962, told the author that,

> up to the mid-1970s there was, within HMI, a view of what primary education was and how it might operate, and HMI worked from that basis. There was enough interchange at HMI primary conferences and courses for a view to develop of what HMI were looking for. You were looking to see that children were becoming more literate, more numerate, that the range of mathematical abilities they were developing was increasing, that they were interested in their immediate and distant environment, that they were interested in science and that the art and creative side of the school was strong. You also worked from where the school was.

Sheila Browne outlined the position in an essay in 1979 (41):

> There has never been a rigid definition of inspection, though there have been and still are conventions, instructions and guidelines. The basic principle has always been close observation exercised with an open mind by persons with appropriate experience and a framework of relevant principles. HMI's first duty is to record what is and to seek to understand why it is as it is. The second step is to try to answer the question whether or not it is good enough. To do so, HMI uses as a first set of measures the school's - or other institutions's - own aims, and, as a second, those which derive from practice across the country and from public demand or aspiration. The two sets of measures are unlikely to be in general opposition but the circumstances of any individual institution or part of it may well lead to different emphases. In his assessment, HMI must strike a balance between the common and the particular requirements and he must try to give a rounded picture.

Later the Department of Education and Science, in describing the work of HMI to a wider audience attempted a more concise definition (42):

> HMI comment to teachers and others directly responsible for providing education on what they have seen of their work, its good points and how it might be different or better. ... In their reports and advice HMI use no blueprints, wave no magic wands. They offer the best professional judgments they can about what they see.

The assumptions which seem to underlie these descriptions are that HMIs are experienced educationalists who will recognise good quality teaching and learning when they see it and that therefore the required degree of consistency will be achieved without too much central direction. But the above DES quotation exposes the potential inadequacy of this approach, since it provides no guarantee of consistency. HMI reports do not only comment on the quality of lessons. Inter alia, they evaluate pastoral care, curriculum, organisation and examination results and, during the post-war period, there has been no consensus on the 'right' way of achieving success in these areas, as there has been no consensus on what constitutes good teaching. This is particularly so when considering performance in schools which serve different social areas. The head of a disadvantaged school reflected on HMI judgments during the inspection of his school (43):

> A serious reservation concerns HMI's collective response to schools like ours which serve heavily disadvantaged neighbourhoods. There seemed to be an assumption that, though methods must, of course, be adapted to suit the abilities of particular classes, the basic recipe should remain unchanged. Perhaps it should, but this should not be assumed and was never argued unless one counts an assertion that only the best was good enough for our children, a point which was not in dispute.

In order to study the criteria which HMI use in inspections, their comments on school examination results will be considered. This will be followed by an examination of the problems which were caused when the Inspectorate's usual criteria were applied to schools with a distinctive,

but non-traditional, ethos.

Gray and Hannon (44) studied thirty-five of the HMI reports on schools which were published in 1983. They identified four approaches to the assessment of a school's performance in external examinations. First, there was a comparison with national or local averages. Second, pass rates were cited - ABC grades at GCE 'O' level, for example. These two were described as 'standards models'. Third, there were comparisons over time, by which a school's performance was compared with its performance in previous years. Finally, there were comparisons with pupils of comparable ability levels or schools with comparable intakes. The second pair were described as 'contextual models'. Of the thirty-five school reports studied,

(a) the national or local average was used in 23 (66%),

(b) pass rates were used in 30 (86%),

(c) a comparison over time was made in 13 (37%),

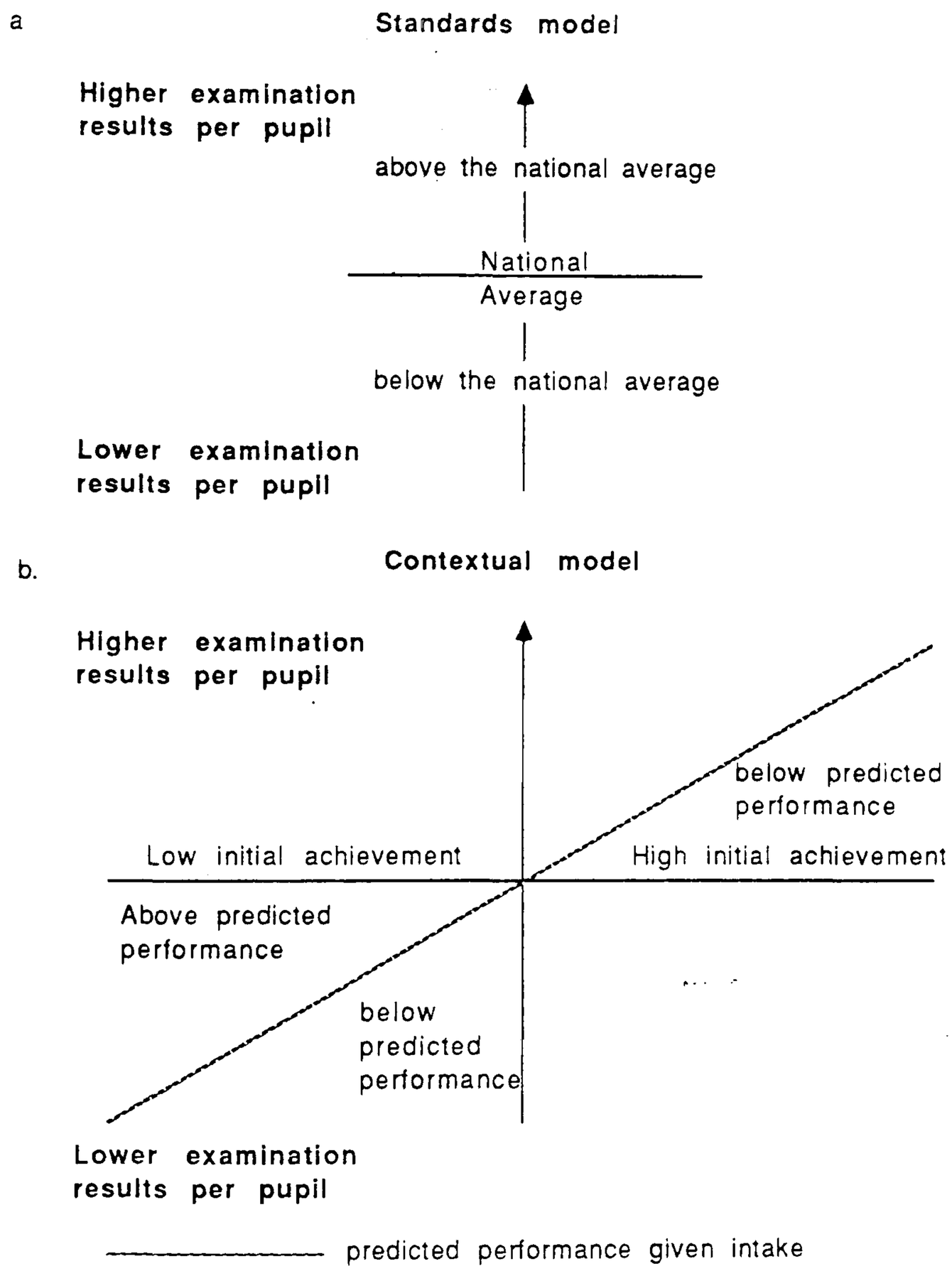
(d) the results were contextualized in terms of intake in only 6 (17%).

In three reports all four of the models were used and in eight reports three models were used, but the contextual model was never used on its own. The authors pointed out that the standards model and the contextual model were likely to lead to inconsistencies, except in schools which had an intake which was close to the national average. This tendency to prefer the standards model, often to the exclusion of the context in which the results were obtained, was confirmed in school reports where the context was cited elsewhere in the report, but was not used in the comments on examination performance. On the other hand, the information that a Wolverhampton school had an intake significantly worse than 80% of the other schools in the borough was used in the conclusion that 'if these [standardised test] scores are used as indicators of pupils' potential exam success at 16+ one

might expect that some two to ten pupils each year would achieve five or more O level grades A-C or CSE grade 1. Using these criteria, pupils' achievements are satisfactory.' This represented a summary which was fair to the school but, like all the context-based judgments found by Gray and Hannon, it was not allowed to stand alone and the inspectors also commented that, on the basis of pass rates, the O level results were 'generally poor'. At the other end of the spectrum, a grammar school with a 'very narrow band from the top of the ability range' was highly praised for examination results which were no better than should be expected from such able children. The suspicion that disadvantaged schools were judged less generously than those with a socially advantaged intake was confirmed by Gray and Hannon who also noted a difference in the language used to describe examination performance. Of six schools which were found to have good examination results, the three advantaged schools' results were described as 'highly commendable', 'highly satisfactory', 'very good', 'generally sound', while the three disadvantaged schools had results which were 'satisfactory', 'in about all cases satisfactory rather than good', 'in the main reasonably satisfactory except at O level'. This last comment, which related to an inner city school in the north east of England, seemed particularly unfair. It is difficult to argue with the Gray and Hannon's conclusion that

> schools are unlikely to be treated on an equal footing. Indeed, it follows logically that the less favoured a school is in terms of the ability levels of its intake, the more likely it is to receive a relatively less favourable evaluation. ... A more rigorous and consistent application of an agreed framework, from the professional body best placed to operate it, would surely be of service to the schools inspected, and ultimately to the school system as a whole.

Figure 1: Interpretation of examination results



Source: Society of Chief Inspectors and Advisers, Evaluating the Achievement of Schools and Colleges: Performance Indicators in Perspective, SCIA, 1990, 32.

For a group of people who normally choose their words so carefully it is surprising that the Inspectorate has failed to devise an adequate formula by which examination results can be related to the ability of the school's intake and summarised in a way which reflects fairly on the performance of the school. In the discussion on performance indicators for schools it has never been doubted that it is possible to compare such input and output measures. The failure of the Inspectorate to solve this problem satisfactorily has contributed to the vacuum of hard evidence by which schools can be judged, which has led to the demands for attainment tests at 11 and 16 so that more simplistic judgments can be made. It is ironic that, at the same time as Gray and Hannon's thirty-five HMI reports were being published, the Department of Education and Science Statistics Branch produced a report in which LEA examination results were analysed against eleven indicators of social composition. The research found that two-thirds to three-quarters of the variation in examination results between different areas could be explained by the social composition of the area. (45) It is inconceivable that HMI did not know of this research and it is surprising that it was not used to improve the way in which examination results were described in disadvantaged schools.

One would have expected HMI judgments on school examination results to have become more sophisticated in more recent reports. First, the publication of HMI reports on schools and the increased public discussion of their conclusions should have exerted a stronger discipline on the proven accuracy of inspectoral judgments and, secondly, the trend during the 1980s towards a greater public accountability for schools through performance indicators should have led to clearer guidelines in this area for Reporting Inspectors. A study of a sample of HMI reports suggests that

this has not happened. Extracts from two reports on short inspections which took place in March 1988 as part of the inspection of Durham LEA illustrate this lack of progress from Gray and Hannon's 1983 findings.

In a largely favourable report on a comprehensive school, the conclusion was that 'pupils gain satisfactory levels of success in some public examinations', with no reference to potential performance. This did not accord with the body of the report which stated that the ability of the intake covered 'a range and distribution close to national norms' (46) whereas, in the section on examination results (47), it stated that

> the proportion of the fifth year group gaining five or more higher grade results (ie O level grades A, B or C or CSE grade 1) in the last two years has been equal to or somewhat below the average for County Durham. This average is, in turn, approximately three percentage points lower than that for the country as a whole.

Thus, the performance of the school was in fact below the national average. The 'standards model' on which this was based was defined clearly in a footnote, which stated that

> In this paragraph, comparisons are made between the school's examination results and national and county averages. The national averages are calculated using data obtained from a 10% sample survey and are thus subject to sampling error.

The conclusion on another County Durham comprehensive school contained no judgment on examination results, but the paragraph in which the results were discussed failed to make any connection with the social context of the school which was described earlier in the report. Since the standardised tests on its first year pupils revealed an intake which was 'generally below average' (48), one would expect a contextual evaluation of the finding that the fifth year results were 'slightly below equivalent figures for the LEA as a whole' and that attainment in most subjects 'is very modest'. (49) Once again, the absence of such a context-based judgment

failed to show the performance of a disadvantaged school in a true light.

An analysis of the HMI reports on eight inspections, carried out in widely differing parts of the country in late 1989 and 1990, revealed that the quality of judgments had still not improved:

School	Free Meals	Ability of intake	% with 5+ GCSEs A-C	Comments on examination results
1	7 %	No indication	1988 22.8 1989 29.6	Better than LEA average Improvement from 1988 to 1989
2	9 %	Slight weighting towards the more able	1988 23.1 1989 38.1	1989 results significantly better than the national average
3	-	Many high ability 20-25% with learning difficulties	1988 30 1989 27	Better than LEA average in 1988 Better than national average
4	8 %	Ability of intake improving	1988 25.6 1989 34.2	Better than LEA average. Steady improvement over 3 years (1987 figure had been 13 %)
5	13 %	Slightly above average	1988 31.4 1989 36.5	Compares well with national figures. Improvement from 1988 to 1989
6	-	Few with very high ability.25% economically disadvantaged	1988 15.3 1989 25	Satisfactory in 1989. Less satisfactory in 1988. Less than LEA and national averages
7	16 %	No indication	1988 20.9 1989 22.3	Typical for the LEA, but less than national average. Improvement from 1988 to 1989
8	20 %	50% socially disadvantaged	1988 15.7 1989 26.5	Marked improvement from 1988 to 1989,up to the national average Quality of results varies between subjects

All included the standards model, comparing the school's results with LEA and/or national averages. Most included the contextual model in that a comment was made on the improvement from one year to the next. Yet there was still very little attempt to relate GCSE results to the ability of the intake and there were some inconsistencies in the judgments. The report on School 1 was generally very favourable, but the small amount of information which was given on the intake suggested that the GCSE results should be much better. Less advantaged schools - 5, 7 and 8 - appear to have achieved

very creditable results when compared with the ability of their intake, but little more than faint praise was given. (50)

There are occasional examples, however, in which the work of disadvantaged schools has been praised without disparaging references to national or local norms. In the course of a generally favourable report on an inspection in 1989 (51), a Derbyshire community school with 'a full range of ability that was skewed towards the less able' had examination results which showed 'a significant improvement from years 1988 to 1989 and reflect well on the school's efforts to improve pupils' standards.'

In 1991 the format of reports on school inspections was standardised and examination results were always presented in the same way. Unfortunately the opportunity to develop the contextual comment on examination results was not taken and the only comparative comments which appeared referred to national and LEA averages. Once again, the results of schools in disadvantaged areas were almost bound to appear in a bad light.

'A school of proven worth' was a phrase beloved of Sir Keith Joseph and was often taken to refer to academically successful schools which were to be changed through LEA reorganisation plans and which formed the grounds on which he turned down many such plans. In stating that he would not want HMI to use such a description of a school, Eric Bolton enunciated the problem of criteria in inspection (52):

> I think we should avoid the term 'proven worth' because when you are talking about a school with good academic results you can see very clearly what you are talking about in that one area of achievement. But the difficulty we wrestle with all the time is how you establish the proven worth of a good school in a downtown, inner-city area whose results, if measured only in terms of examination results are nothing like comparable with those of schools in more favourable areas, yet whose staff are dedicated, hard-working, well-qualified and doing their job to the best of their ability, just as they are in the other school of proven worth.

Eric Bolton went on to say that the Inspectorate needed to work out a more refined set of descriptors to enable HMI to set achievement in the context both of the specific school and of what was achieved in good schools in similar areas elsewhere.

Reflecting on the inspection of his school in deprived Kirkby on Merseyside, Alan Barnes (53) felt that the judgment of the HMIs concerning most areas of his school was 'about right', a conclusion with which many heads of inspected schools would no doubt concur. He attributed the consistency of judgments to the 'large measure of agreement which exists within the Inspectorate on what they are looking for and on the methodology of their search and partly because of the skill and judgment of the individuals involved.' On these factors is based the respect in which HM Inspectorate is held in schools and colleges. Alan Barnes pointed out, however, that this very consistency could lead to a dangerously uncritical acceptance by teachers in inspected schools of what were known to be methods which met with the approval of HMI.

Some of the recent surveys which have been carried out by HMI have included an appendix on the methodology of the inspection. (54) This lifting of the veil which covered inspectoral criteria has removed some of the mystique from HMIs and has enabled academic researchers to examine their methodology. Following the 1978 primary school survey, Professor Neville Bennett (55) analysed the methods which had been used in the 542 schools inspected. He criticised the lack of a focus for classroom observation and the lack of explanation for the choice of 'match' as the main theoretical orientation of the study. (56) He described the rating scales which HMI used for their observations as 'notoriously unreliable'. Professor Bennett then pointed to a factor which is of concern to all

classroom observers and to HMI in all types of inspection - the effect of the presence of the observer on the normal patterns of classroom behaviour. He noted that the visits for this survey took place between 1975 and 1977 'when the air was full of talk of declining standards and William Tyndale'. 'Could this', Professor Bennett asked, 'be one of the reasons why a mere five per cent of teachers were observed to be using exploratory methods?' Another reason could have been the tendency, referred to by Alan Barnes above, of teachers to conform to what they perceive to be inspectoral expectations.

In a large scale survey such as the 1978 primary school survey, the methodology and criteria were enunciated more clearly by the coordinating Chief Inspector than would be the case with the inspection of an individual school. Sheila Browne made out the case for a degree of individuality within an overall structure (57):

> In professional matters, advice [which is given to teachers] is personal to the individual HMI, who is not asked to purvey a DES line, a Schools Council line, or any other - though he should know the nature of any such line and be prepared to discuss it. Nor is there such a thing as an HMI line, although, in the interests of formulating a national view, HM inspectors work and discuss together and, in this way, often come to an agreed position. But this in no way inhibits the individual, provided he has evidence to support his own view.

Although schools may sometimes feel inhibited by the anticipated views of visiting inspectors, schools which are clear in their aims do not feel that they need to seek a comfortable congruence with perceived HMI orthodoxy. It is part of the British educational tradition that, however great is the tendency towards centralisation in policy making, schools are allowed to develop their own ethos and respond appropriately to the perceived needs of the community which they serve. It has already been noted that it is the stated aim of Her Majesty's Inspectorate that a school

should be judged first by its own aims. What happens when these aims are different from the aims of the mainstream of traditional British schools?

The 1949 inspection of A.S.Neill's Summerhill School was conducted by two HMIs over two days. (58) These 'broad-minded' inspectors recognised the need to inspect the school in a way that was different from their normal practice. They clearly found it a fascinating experience and said so in their report. They first considered the main features of the school which were unique. They pronounced the school parliament a success; they showed a remarkably liberal attitude towards the sexual freedom which was allowed in the school; and they made no critical comment on the complete absence of religious instruction. On more familiar ground, they described the academic achievements of the children as 'unimpressive' and 'meagre'. 'This is not', they wrote, 'an inevitable result of the system, but rather of the system working badly', a situation which they ascribed to the lack of a good teacher of juniors, poor quality teaching generally, a lack of academic guidance and a lack of privacy for study. In spite of this, they praised the teaching staff and were particularly complementary about the head.

In his Notes on the report, A.S.Neill (whose decision it was to publish it) explained that he accepted lower standards of learning at the junior level, because he regarded it as important that children of this age should play more and work less, claiming that they caught up later. The criticism of the academic achievement of the pupils was, he felt, the 'only paragraph in which the two inspectors did not rise above their preoccupations'. Neill concluded by expressing his pleasure that the Ministry allowed more scope for private venture than occurred on the continent: 'I show tolerance of children: the Ministry shows tolerance of my school. I am content.'

A year later, at the request of the Chairman of Governors, an inspection

of Howe Dell Secondary School, Hertfordshire, took place. Its headmaster, Michael Duane, who was later to become head of Risinghill School, was a man whose views on the education of children were not dissimilar to Neill's. The Reporting Inspector had taken part in the inspection of Michael Duane's previous school, where he had told him that corporal punishment was necessary for children. He disapproved of Duane's philosophy and told him that he should reconsider the direction in which he was leading the school.

(59) The inspector told the governors that

> The headmaster is largely concerned with providing an environment which will allow the children to adjust themselves more harmoniously to one another and to adults. The inspectors have asked the headmaster to reconsider this. ... If he continues to adhere to this point of view he will send out children who are not well-mannered, not interested in a wide range of subjects, and not competent in basic skills ... It might be legitimate in an independent school to adopt his methods, but they could not be tolerated in a state school.

It is difficult to see why the distinction has been drawn between criteria for independent and state schools, although this could explain why the HMIs who visited Summerhill were able to adjust more easily to the different basis upon which A.S.Neill ran the school.

As head of a school in Lowestoft, Suffolk, two years later, Michael Duane was highly praised in an HMI report on the school for his good organisation, high standards and clear ideas. (60)

In 1960 Michael Duane was appointed as the first head of Risinghill School, an amalgamation of four schools with their existing teachers in a difficult area of north London. He had had three previous headships and his philosophy must have been well known to the London County Council committee which appointed him. Being a man who believed that corporal punishment was brutal and encouraged brutality, he soon began to differ with the traditionalist LEA inspector who believed that 'six of the best would cure

any disciplinary problem'. (61) In early 1962 a visitation by twenty LCC inspectors led to a critical private report on Duane. With the District Inspector, Munday, Duane had a better relationship. According to Leila Berg, Munday agreed with the policy of abolishing corporal punishment and found his visits to Risinghill stimulating and enjoyable. He was prepared to concede that there would be no clear improvement in pupil conduct until a particularly tough group of children, who had been in the pre-amalgamated schools, had left. (62) Munday was the RI for the inspection of Risinghill in June 1964, but HMI Clark, who also took a leading role, was heavily criticised by Berg. Duane had already met Clark and knew him to be an inspector who did not hide his views that he was 'opposed to comprehensive schools and to all large schools'. Clark's conduct during the inspection is described by Berg as 'contemptuous towards both teachers and pupils.' (63) At the end of the verbal report, Clark asked 'Mr Duane, do you consider yourself fit to be a headmaster?'

The HMI visit to Risinghill had not been a full inspection and the RI stated that they had looked only at the academic side of the school. Nevertheless their verbal report was sufficiently critical to provide the required ammunition for those in the LCC who wanted to close the school and the government agreed to this in June 1965.

When Berg's book was published, the Times Educational Supplement commented in a leading article (64) that

> while it must be accepted that all men, including inspectors, are entitled to their prejudices, some of the remarks as yet unrefuted that are attributed to many of the inspectors with whom Mr Duane had to deal are quite extraordinary.

An example of an inspection during the 1980s of a school with a distinctive ethos occurred at Madeley Court in Shropshire. The background

to the HMI visit was similar to situations which had occurred at the Sutton Centre and elsewhere. At Madeley Court the LEA advisers had carried out a curriculum review and this eventually led to the request by the Chief Education Officer for a full inspection by HMI, which took place in late 1982 just after Sir Keith Joseph had announced that future HMI reports on schools would be published. (65) Philip Toogood had been head of Swavesey Village College in Cambridgeshire and, with the experience of this community school behind him, he was appointed in 1977 to Madeley Court, which had been founded six years earlier in South Telford, one of Shropshire's few social priority areas. He quickly began to establish a child-centred, resource-based, community school in which curriculum 'subjects' were subordinated to the personal development of the child through the concept of mini-schools. in which a team of teachers had considerable contact with a group of pupils.

The HMI report praised many aspects of the work of the school: the attendance rate, involvement in decision-making, good staff-pupil relations, excellent home-school links, the range of extra-curricular activities and some of the examination results, for example; but the tone of the report was highly critical of the academic standards in the school, the low expectations which teachers had of pupils and the inadequate demands which were made of the children. The report also criticised Toogood's mini-school policy, stating that academic standards would be higher if there was more specialised teaching in the early years. When the report was sent to the LEA it was accompanied by a letter from the Secretary of State asking the authority what steps they proposed to take to 'improve the educational standards, management and environment of the school', to ensure that statutory obligations concerning Religious

Education and collective worship were met and to deal with the other matters of concern in the HMI report.

Philip Toogood, who resigned a week before the report was published, claimed that the inspectors had not taken into account a report, of which they had been given copies, called Some Shropshire Children and their Needs, which analysed the academic and social situation of the Madeley Court pupil intake. Since HMI conducted no other tests on the younger children, Toogood concluded that the inspectors had no baseline on which to form their judgments of pupil performance at his school. He also felt that many of the statements in the report had been made on the basis of 'snapshot impressions' by HMI and comments which had been made to them by teachers in the school. More fundamentally, Toogood questioned the frame of reference which the HMIs had used for their judgments, which was that of a group of subject specialists evaluating children's work through their performance in separate subject specialisms. This was an approach which Toogood had specifically rejected in his establishment of mini-schools.

Following the verbal report by the RI to the governors, Toogood was given a formal verbal warning by the LEA and called to a disciplinary hearing, which is fortunately an unusual sequel to an HMI report. What is of particular interest, however, is that this is as clear a case as Risinghill of the problems which arise when the criteria for judgment by HMI in a school inspection are different from the philosophical basis on which a school is being run. The school is, under these circumstances, not being judged according to its own aims, but according to the standpoint of the visiting inspectors. The best description of this comes in a book by Anne Jones, a well-known head of a very successful community school in Hounslow, who was subsequently appointed to be Head of the Technical and

Vocational Education Initiative at the Manpower Services Commission. (66) Discussing the kind of classroom practice and school management which will be needed in the future, she criticised HMI for the contradiction of expecting a school to have on the one hand a traditional framework for delivery of the curriculum, and on the other hand a curriculum 'which challenges pupils and makes them masters of their own learning':

> In the HMI inspection of my school in 1984 by a team of twenty-nine delightful, intelligent inspectors, I was constantly caught in a tension between the traditional and the transitional. There was a sense in which they seemed to be counting caterpillar legs, whereas we were trying to produce something quite different, namely, butterflies. Furthermore they caught us at the chrysalis stage, when it was rather difficult to judge what would come out at the other end. We found ourselves backtracking in order to produce evidence of caterpillar legs. However, in my view our caterpillar legs were not very convincing because we were in the process of giving them up and moving on to a new way of working. So there was a built-in tension between what we were trying to do, and what we thought we were expected to have done. I suspect that this is a common dilemma for schools.

The inspection of schools

It is perhaps surprising that the process of inspection of schools has changed so little since 1944. The comprehensive and community schools of the 1990s surely require a different approach from the grammar and secondary modern schools of the 1950s. HMI take pride in the sensitivity of their antennae and the speed with which they can use this sixth sense to assess an institution. Yet the complexity of the school as an institution is now much greater than it was forty years earlier and one must question whether HMI could carry out its central function - inspecting schools - in a more reliable and effective way. It is often said that a school inspection provides a snapshot of the position of a school at a given moment in its history. The inspection week, when this snapshot is taken,

was originally designed on the premise that the team of HMIs would be led by a locally based General Inspector who knew the school well. He could therefore put the findings of the visiting inspectors into the context of his deeper knowledge of the school in order to ensure that the snapshot was in focus. For many years, however, the job of an HMI has extended into so many areas other than school inspection that it has been impossible for HMIs to have more than an outline knowledge of the schools for which they act as general inspector. There seems therefore to be an argument for having a smaller team of inspectors in a school for a longer period. This would create less of a snapshot effect and give a truer picture of the situation of the school.

In spite of the much modified structure of the schools and the largely unchanged procedures of the Inspectorate, the process of inspection has attracted relatively little criticism, apart from its hurried nature and the feeling that the advice which HMI offer to schools is sometimes out of touch with the reality of the school situation. Eric Bolton has tried to answer this criticism (67):

> I would be worried if the response to most of our reports was that they were generally out of touch. Occasionally one has that feeling about a particular report, but that is not the general reaction we get. We should not claim too much for what we do. ... We go in, we see what we are able to see at the time of the inspection and that is conditioned by the fact that we are there. We must be honest about what we say in our report and that our recommendations are points we issue for serious consideration - not conclusions about the things the school has to put right.

In the terms in which Eric Bolton has stated this position, there has not been much criticism of the actual process of inspection. What are more debatable, especially since 1983 when reports on individual schools began to be published, are the ways in which the reports are published and, secondly, the criteria on which the inspectors base their judgments.

The justification for toning down comments in the final report was given in 1968 as 'the way we work in this is long established by tradition'. (68) This is hardly an adequate justification for the continuation of such a practice, although it is easier since 1983 to see why it may be helpful to schools if coded language is used in published reports. The quantity of detail in a report on a school provides enough quotations for journalists to write a story from any angle and considerable damage can be done to the reputation of a school by unscrupulous press stories on HMI reports. The use of coded language can reduce the ammunition which HMI reports offer to such journalists. On the other hand, the reports are also read by government ministers - Sir Keith Joseph, when he was Secretary of State, was reputed to read them all - and it is important that they should be accurately informed about the state of the nation's schools.

The other part of the reporting process which has been criticised is the manner of presentation to the school governors. The oral report at this stage affords little opportunity for constructive debate and even less chance for correction of factual errors. A draft written report for the governors' meeting would overcome both of these disadvantages.

During the period since 1944 there has been a lack of consensus about good teaching methods in British education at both primary and secondary level. The lack of specific criteria by which inspectors judge schools both reflects this lack of consensus and has contributed to it. HM Inspectorate attempted to define the qualities of good teaching in a short booklet published in 1985 (69), but the previous forty years had seen a succession of phases during which different methods of teaching were fashionable. A clearer idea of the criteria by which HMI were judging schools, as has been developed in higher education and teacher training, would have created a

more informed public debate about teaching and learning methods.

> Good practice is judged not solely by its results, but also by how nearly it agrees with models of which HMI approve. Since the five-point scale, ranging from 'excellent' to 'poor' which they employ in assessing outcomes, cannot be wholly objective, teachers are likely to feel that it would be wise to adopt these practices. While the models which HMI advocate are admirable, it is possible to conceive of effective teachers who do it differently. No method, or cluster of methods, is for all persons and in all places the best or only way to promote effective learning. (70)

The extent to which teachers are accountable to HM Inspectorate is part of the growth in the accountability of teachers to the wider community. Stuart Maclure has noted how 'teachers account for their actions indirectly through departmental organisations within schools, and through their contacts with LEA inspectors and HMIs'. (71) This point is further discussed in Trevor Pateman's essay later in the same book (72):

> The Inspectorate has derived its importance from its ability to assess efficiency against unwritten standards. Efficiency was the only value for which politicians felt able to demand accountability. Inspectors have consequently enjoyed considerable independence, and schools have felt more accountable to them, perhaps than to anyone else. In this way, schools have been held accountable to inspectors.

Nowhere has this accountability been less satisfactory than in the reporting of the sensitive area of examination results in schools. The failure of HMI to subject school examination results to proper statistical analysis on the basis of the background of the pupils in the school has been particularly unfair on schools in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

However, the real tests of the inspection of schools are, first, does it inform HMI and hence the government about the state of education in the country, and secondly, does it leave the school a better place after the inspection and report? The answer to the first of these questions is surely yes, but the answer to the second question is a matter of degree. During the period since 1944, there have been times when inspections have added

little to the educational health of the school but, for the most part, when the inspection has been properly managed by the Reporting Inspector, the school is left with the opportunity to improve in all the many areas on which HMI have commented. Whether that opportunity is taken is outside the control of HMI.

Notes

1. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1840-41, 1, 'Instructions to Inspectors', August 1840
2. Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education, 1853-54, I, 12.
3. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1862-63, xviii. Original italics.
4. Report of the Committee of Council on Education, 1866-67, 260. Morell's italics.
5. E.g. Standard III Arithmetic: 'A sum in any simple rule as far as short division (inclusive)'.
6. Letter from a schoolmaster, Museum, March 1866, NS ii, 456
7. For a description of a school inspection under the Revised Code, see J.E.Dunford, op.cit., 1980, 28-34. The relationship between inspectors and teachers during the 1860s is also discussed, ibid., 47-56.
8. Museum, Nov.1865, NS ii, 335.
9. A.P.Graves, To return to all that, Cape, 1930, 258-9.
10. P. Wilson, 'Lord John Russell's Bashaws', in Views and Prospects from Curzon Street: Seven Essays and Addresses on the Future of Education, Oxford, Blackwell, 1961, 63.
11. See, for example, E.G.A.Holmes, op.cit., 1911.
12. Board of Education, Annual Report 1922-23, 1924, 37.
13. D.Lawton & P.Gordon, op.cit., 1987, 51-55.
14. Durham Johnston School: HMI reports of 1903, 1907, 1911, 1923, 1932 and 1949. The 1949 report is in the Public Record Office, PRO Ed. 109/8750. The other reports are in the Durham County Record Office.
15. Department of Education and Science, HM Inspectors Today: Standards in Education, HMSO, 1983; Department of Education and Science, Reporting Inspections: HMI methods and procedures, HMSO, 1986. There were three of these 1986 booklets: Maintained Schools, Independent Schools, and Further and Higher Education. For a good description of the methodology of inspection, see also N.Thomas, 'H.M.Inspectorate', in R.McCormick & D.Nuttall (eds), Approaches to Evaluation. Part 3: Inspections, Milton Keynes, Open University Press, 1982
16. Department of Education and Science, H.M.Inspectors Today: Standards in Education, HMSO, 1983, 2.
17. Secondary Heads Association, Preparing for inspection, SHA, 1987.
18. J.Price,'An inspector calls', Teachers' Weekly, 3.4.89.
19. P.Wilson, op.cit., 1961, 73. See also HMI Sibson's evidence to the 1968 Select Committee, q.499.
20. M.Carding, Times Educational Supplement, 6.6.86.
21. Letter from Eric Bolton to Chief Education Officers, 'HMI meetings with

parents and community groups', July 1988. Cf. Times Educational Supplement, 15.10.82, which quotes Sheila Browne, in agreeing to let a parent see HMI in London, but only in the presence of a DES official: 'It is not the practice of HMI to have conversations with parents - satisfied or dissatisfied - in the course of their inspection.'

22. See, for example, Times Educational Supplement, 30.6.50, and Stowers Johnson, Headmastering man: Picaresque Adventures in Education, Robert Hale, 1986, 107-110.

23. Chief Education Officer, 'Inspectors with theories: lost concern for standards', Times Educational Supplement, 20.1.56. A leading article urged that HMI should examine themselves against the criticisms of the CEO.

24. Times Educational Supplement, 27.1.56, 3.2.56, 10.2.56. For further critical comment, see also ibid., 19.5.57, 22.12.61.

25. 'Full inspection: voices from a cloud', ibid., 19.4.63. See also ibid., 3.5.63, 13.3.64, 24.4.64, 14.10.66.

26. See above, chapter 4. Department of Education and Science, Study of HM Inspectorate in England and Wales, HMSO, 1982, 4-5.

27. A.Barnes,'Undergoing a formal inspection - what it was like', Education, 20.5.83, 391. See also interviews with six secondary heads in Times Educational Supplement, 12.8.83.

28. W.J.W. Miles,'The Inspectoral role of HMI, with a Case Study Analysis of a Full Inspection', unpublished M.Ed. thesis, University of Birmingham, 1982

29. Department of Education and Science, Reporting Inspections: HMI methods and procedures, HMSO, 1986, 10.

30. R.Kirkpatrick, Times Educational Supplement, 1.2.85.

31. House of Commons, Report from the Select Committee on Education and Science, Session 1967-68, Part I, Her Majesty's Inspectorate (England and Wales), 1968, evidence q.74.

32. For further examples, see B.Passmore, Independent, 5.5.88.

33. Department of Education and Science, op.cit., 1983, 9-10.

34. R.Hopkins,'Inspecting the inspectors again', Times Educational Supplement, 8.1.82.

35. House of Commons, op.cit., 1968, evidence q.198 ff.

36. Ibid., q.880-1.

37. Ibid., 89, 93.

38. Department of Education and Science, Study of HM Inspectorate in England and Wales, HMSO, 1982, 100. The 1990-91 figures are taken from Department of Education and Science, Education in England 1990-91: The Annual Report of HM Senior Chief Inspector of Schools, HMSO, 1992, 51.

39. J. Blackie, op.cit., 1970, 48. See also R.Tanner, Double Harness: An Autobiography, Impact Books, 1987, 108. For a further discussion of criteria for inspection, from the point of view of the head teacher managing the quality of education in the school, see J.E.Dunford, 'Management for Quality Education', in D.B.Stevens (ed), Under New Management: Strategies for Secondary Schools in the 1990s, Longman, 1991.

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41. S.Browne, 'The accountability of HM Inspectorate', in J.Lello, op.cit., 1979, 36.

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47. Ibid., paragraph 30.
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49. Ibid., paragraphs 13-14.
50. Department of Education and Science, Reports by HMI on Horbury School, Wakefield; St James RC High School, Cheadle Hulme, Stockport; Shaftesbury School, Dorset; Eckington School, Derbyshire; Lawnswood School, Leeds; Whitecross School, Lydney, Gloucestershire; Edlington School, Doncaster; and Newton-le-Willows High School, St Helens.
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52. Interview with the Editor of the magazine of the Assistant Masters and Mistresses Association soon after his appointment as SCI, Report, Nov.1983, vol.6, no.3
53. Op.cit. See also J.Marshall, 'Not tablets of stone', Times Educational Supplement, 22.2.85.
54. For example, Department of Education and Science, Quality in schools: the initial training of teachers, HMSO, 1987.
55. N.Bennett, 'Surveyed from a shaky base', Times Educational Supplement, 3.11.78.
56. 'Match' is defined as the standard of work which children were doing compared with what HMI considered they were capable of doing.
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59. L.Berg, Risinghill: Death of a Comprehensive School,Penguin,1968,34-36.
60. Ibid., 43.
61. Ibid., 85.
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63. Ibid., 158-161. Leonard Clark's inspection of Risinghill was one of his last assignments in a career spanning thirty-three years as an HMI. He is the author of The Inspector Remembers, Dennis Dobson, 1976.
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CHAPTER 6

HMIs AND THE SPOKES

RELATIONS WITH LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITIES

Instruments of Decentralisation

In the opening chapter it was noted that the Holmes-Morant Circular of 1909 created a rift between HMI and LEA inspectors which persisted for many years. Yet, as Selby-Bigge stated in his evidence to the 1912 Royal Commission, HMI had to work closely with Local Education Authorities (1):

> The inspector is, I think, one of the most effective instruments of decentralisation and in leaving a great deal of discretion to the inspector we feel we are leaving a great deal to the discretion of the Local Education Authority.

As Harris put it (2), HMIs formed a link between central and local government 'which connects and harmonises' the work of the two bodies. This picture of the relationship, however, does not give adequate weight to the tensions which existed between central and local government, in which the LEA was often resisting the pull towards the centre. Maclure emphasises the wider responsibilities of Chief Education Officers after the 1902 Act, when professionals began to have more autonomy over the curriculum (3): 'The CEO was the professional as well as the administrative adviser to the local authority. He was the natural enemy of HMI and the natural defender of the schools against Ministry of Education control.' Thus HMI was sometimes seen as the external arm of the Ministry. It was the District Inspector who was

the link between the Ministry and the Local Education Authority and it was his task to explain the point of view of each to the other. As one former HMI put it (4):

> It is the business of a District Inspector to keep in close touch with the Chief Education Officer, with whom he is generally on good terms and not infrequently terms of friendship ... Such a relationship demands great tact, judgment and integrity ... The HMI must always try to understand the CEO's point of view and interpret it with the right mixture of sympathy and objectivity to the Department ... When I was appointed District Inspector of Manchester at the age of 32, a senior colleague said: 'It's a big job for a young man. You'd better watch your step and don't have a row with the Local Education Authority unless you're very sure of yourself. Remember you can be moved and they can't, and if you are you won't go in a blaze of glory.' This was very good advice.

In a good working relationship, the District Inspector co-operated extensively with the Chief Education Officer in, for example, reorganising schools on Hadow lines during the 1930s. (5) This co-operation was extended during the Second World War when the local HMI was an important member of the team which organised the billeting and education of the evacuees.

Contact with the Chief Education Officer

Since the Second World War HMIs have continued to work closely with Local Education Authorities and the closest individual relationship has been with the Chief Education Officer. The closeness of the relationship varied, depending upon the personalities of the CEO and the District Inspector. During the 1950s formidable Chief Education Officers such as Sir Lionel Russell of Birmingham did not see the District Inspector, who would meet with Assistant Education Officers. (6) However, the Inspectorate has become more prominent since the 1950s and, in general, Chief Education Officers welcome contact with the District Inspector, who provides an

avenue for their views into the Department of Education and Science. Their conversations cover four areas (7):

(a) Factual reporting by HMI to the CEO on all the visits which HMI have paid to schools in the Authority. This provides the CEO with an additional means of finding out what is happening in schools.

(b) LEA responses to government legislation. Prior to 1980 this was not a common subject of discussion but, with increasing centralisation during the 1980s, HMI were required to report to the Department of Education and Science on how LEAs were enacting government legislation. The District Inspector would ask the CEO 'What are you going to do about ...?' or the information would be sought less overtly through the research for the annual HMI Report on LEA Expenditure Policies. In this inquisitorial role HMIs sometimes gave the impression that they were acting more as agents of the Department than as independent inspectors.

(c) Private conversations. HMI form part of a grapevine of educational information. According to one CEO, 'their intelligence service is the best. Anything that happened in X today will be known by the District Inspector in Y tomorrow if it would be useful to him.' This information would often be shared with the CEO: 'We talk about personalities, inadequacies and difficulties which we could not put on paper, but which were enormously helpful.' Almost all communications between HMI and the LEA are oral.

(d) Unburdening. Both CEOs and HMIs have few people except their peers with whom they can share their concerns. The private conversations between an HMI and a CEO provide an opportunity for them to use each other in a confidant role. Frequent changes of District Inspector prevent the building of this close relationship and one CEO whom I

interviewed had four District Inspectors in six years. On the last two occasions the Divisional Staff Inspector apologised for making the change so soon.

Two areas of discussion between District Inspectors and Chief Education Officers are worth highlighting. First, CEOs receive a great deal more notice of which schools are to be inspected than do the schools themselves. The schools, if not chosen at random, are selected with the agreement of the CEO; sometimes the CEO will ask HMI to visit a particular school; at other times the CEO will be able to suggest to HMI which schools they should visit in order to see a particular aspect which they are investigating. Secondly, during local reorganisations, HMI visit all the schools and discuss the plans with the CEO. (8) No sensible LEA officer embarks on a reorganisation without first discussing it with HMI and with the DES Territorial Officer, a civil servant usually of Principal grade. Through hints and nods they may indicate to the CEO what is likely to be acceptable to the Minister and what changes might help to ensure Ministerial approval. If an LEA does not heed such hints, the whole scheme is more likely to be turned down.

The Chief Education Officer meets with the District Inspector for schools approximately six times per year and may meet occasionally with specialist HMIs. The CEO may also meet three or four times per year with the District Inspector for Further and Higher Education, who will meet more frequently with the LEA's Assistant Director for Further Education. The District Inspector also receives the Education Committee papers for the local authority and discusses these with the Chief Education Officer.

Some local Council members 'see HMI as unaccountable shadowy figures in conspiracy with the CEO to keep the truth from them and do the things they

do not want done. The less they have to do with HMI the better they like it.' (9) In the follow-up to a school inspection, local councillors sometimes show a certain impatience with HMI language and those who learned that a school needs a new science laboratory, for example, may react by saying 'You give us the money then', seeing HMI as agents of a government which had been reducing capital grants to Local Education Authorities.

Local Education Authority inspectors

Until the late 1980s, when schools and their governing bodies acquired greater independence from the Local Education Authority, LEAs could be very defensive in their follow-up to a school inspection, feeling responsible for the faults in a school. Since then, LEAs have been regarded by the community as less responsible in this way, but the conclusions of an HMI report on a school are still taken very seriously. This is partly because, in the words of one CEO, 'once an inspection had taken place, once the governors' meeting had taken place, once we had made our platitudinous comments upon the recommendations, that was the last we heard of HMI in the inspection of that school. On the whole HMI came, saw, went, and left the follow-up to the LEA.' (10) After the inspection, discussions take place between LEA officers and the head of the school; subject advisers are sent in to look at any criticised areas and the LEA tries to ensure that, where it is needed, in-service training is arranged for the staff.

The success of this adviser-led follow-up depends very much upon the calibre of the individual advisers, now usually called inspectors. The growth of Local Education Authority inspectorates may be judged from the total figures, which increased from 1926 in 1979 to 2504 in 1987-88. (11)

Many of these inspectors came into LEA work as subject advisers after a period as head of department in a secondary school or as a head of a primary school. In a time of such rapid change, teachers often feel that local advisers and inspectors are remote from the classroom and do not have as much experience of current changes as the teachers themselves. This creates a credibility problem for local inspectors, who may have experienced one or more changes of role as Local Education Authorities have sought to adapt to recent legislation. A subject adviser will normally have acquired pastoral responsibility for a group of secondary and primary schools. As the adviser was learning to balance the demands of this dual role, he was given a further role within the local authority's scheme of inspection of schools. Time constraints militate against the effective execution of this triple role, but what is of more concern, particularly in secondary schools, is the inadequate background and training of many people who would regard themselves with justifiable pride as subject specialists, but whose ability to carry out a general inspection role is limited. Heads and deputies of primary schools are recruited to LEA inspection services, but the comparative salary levels deter members of secondary school senior management teams from applying for LEA inspection and advisory posts. In 1969 the National Association of Inspectors published comparative salary figures, revealing the poor relative salaries of LEA inspectors against those of HMI, head teachers, college of education principal lecturers and LEA administrative officers. It was pointed out that the differential between LEA inspectors and HMI had widened from £200 in 1949 to £1080 in 1969. (12) Winkley also points out that career opportunities in advisory work have been very limited. (13)

In 1989 the Audit Commission studied the work of LEA inspection and

advisory services (14) and found much to criticise:

> The amount of observation of teaching by inspectors and advisers is uneven and in some LEAs disturbingly small. Recording of observations and record-keeping are usually unsystematic. Advisory work is not as positively managed as it needs to be. Support (staff, equipment and accommodation) for inspection and advisory services is often not matched to the tasks to be discharged.

The Audit Commission report, which was written by a seconded HMI, found that the time spent by inspectors on lesson observation varied from 3 per cent to 60 per cent. The majority of LEAs required no written report on visits to schools and few issued guidelines on the writing of reports. Unlike HMI reports on schools, those on LEA inspections are not published, although they are usually presented to school governing bodies, either verbally or in writing.

Apart from visits, the monitoring function of LEAs is carried out through analysis of documentation such as the School Management Plan, examination results, attendance figures, curriculum plans and financial information. 'None of the inspection and advisory services visited by the Commission team provided systematic moderation of [a school's] internal evaluation' (15), although one LEA participated strongly in the process. Winkley provides a clear analysis of the variety of organisational structures through which Local Education Authority advisory services operated. (16) Since the 1988 Education Act gave greater autonomy to school governing bodies and increased the responsibilities of Local Education Authorities to monitor the performance of their schools, it is surprising that more LEAs have not explored how their inspection systems could satisfactorily complement the school's own systems of evaluation and review. Some local authorities, which had previously carried out very little school inspection, found that they had to change the role of the

inspectors/advisers and build a systematic programme of inspection in order to fulfil their newly emphasised duties. In all this activity, however, LEAs have not addressed the issue of criteria for inspection. What is a well-provided Science department? What is a good lesson? In chapter 5 above HMI was similarly criticised, although their publications provide some evidence of criteria; Local Education Authority inspectors have no such base on which to judge the performance of schools.

During the progress through Parliament of the 1988 Education Reform Act the Local Education Authority officers felt that the combination of increased centralisation of the curriculum and greater decentralisation of Local Management of Schools would leave them without a role. The government therefore sought to emphasise the role of the local authority in inspection and monitoring of schools and colleges. In a speech to the Society of Education Officers in January 1988 Kenneth Baker said (17):

> I would put my money on an effective local inspectorate, appropriately complemented and accountable to the Chief Education Officer. The local inspectorates will need to monitor and evaluate school performance. They will need to provide Local Education Authorities and the schools themselves with trusted and informed professional advice, based on first hand observation of what schools are actually doing, of the way in which they are implementing the national curriculum, and of the standards achieved... Doing all these things well requires inspection in all its forms. Decisions about the forms inspection should take, and how its conclusions are reported, must be suited to local circumstances and priorities. But information from local inspection should complement what HMI have observed nationally and thus provide a more comprehensive evaluation of how the system is performing.

This cooperation with HMI was further emphasised in a speech in June 1988 to the National Association of Inspectors and Advisers (NAIEA) by the Permanent Secretary at the DES, Sir David Hancock, (18):

> The Department's wish is to see HMI and local inspectors cooperating more closely so that the country will benefit from an inspection service which, at the national and local levels, has the following characteristics:
> - ... it will report on the <u>quality</u> of teaching and the <u>standards</u>

of learning
- the joint service - national and local - will see inspection, in all its forms, as an instrument for promoting good education and taking action to improve matters where necessary
- HMI and local inspectors should maintain independent reporting lines and report what they find
- both inspectorates must have first hand knowledge of schools and classrooms
- HMI and local inspectorate roles need to be complementary, overlapping but clearly differentiated.

As the Hereford and Worcester CEO, John Turnbull, observed in an article in the Times Educational Supplement (19), and as the Audit Commission subsequently discovered, Local Education Authority inspectorates were not ready for this new role, but they soon began to adapt.

Describing the relationship between HMI and local inspectors as 'complementary, not hierarchical', John Pearce (20) emphasised the difference between the event of an HMI inspection and the continuous process of a local inspection. He explained how LEA advisers move between support, advice, inspection and in-service training. (21) Local inspectors, he pointed out, must produce a report knowing that they themselves must later provide the back-up for in-service training and improvement.

> To make inspection work as a continuing process is probably much more difficult than doing four- or five-day formal inspections, but it is potentially more rewarding as well as obviously more professional. It entails developing relationships with teachers in which mutual respect, confidential frankness and commitment to good education go together.(22)

Pearce developed this further in two articles in 1983 (23), arguing that LEAs needed urgently to address issues of inspection, 'otherwise LEA staffs will become the rank and file with HMI as the officers, and most HM Inspectors I know would view that with as much distaste as most LEA inspectors.' Sheila Browne dismissed these fears, describing a role for LEA inspectors as the 'oil in the educational system.' (24)

Apart from the contact between the District HMI and the Chief Education

Officer which has been described above, there is further contact at adviser/inspector level. Specialist subject HMIs spend time with LEA specialists of high reputation in the same subject area. This may be in school subjects such as mathematics or it may be in areas such as multi-cultural education where a local authority is known to do particularly good work. The District Inspector will also talk with LEA inspectors about their inspection processes and about what is happening in their schools. The HMI will often enquire where he can obtain a good view of some particular aspect in which he is interested. He may also meet with LEA area inspectors and in some regions the subject and phase HMIs hold meetings with LEA advisers in, for example, science and primary education. (25)

From time to time exchanges between HMI and LEA inspectors have been advocated, but these have not often occurred. There have, however, been secondments to HMI and these have been beneficial to both sides. Jennifer Wisker, CEO for Somerset, previously spent a year on secondment to HMI and 'learned much not simply about inspection in all its forms, but from their support network, their excellent induction arrangements, their vigorous pursuit of effective education and the value added factor.' (26) Such secondments of local authority personnel were never made in their own area. According to Eric Bolton, secondments and attachments have to be handled carefully (27):

> There should not be too many or HMI would begin to suffer. The heart and soul of HMI's influence is the quality of its collective judgments. For protocol reasons you can't just throw people who are not HMI into inspection without some important questions being asked, for example by the HMI Association. I had some difficult negotiations with them over the attachments issue. But it is done as part of policy according to what HMI needs and as part of the development of individual inspectors.

A programme of joint visiting has been carried out in seven Local Education

Authorities, but this has not found favour with HMIs, mainly because of the different line of reporting of the two inspectorates. HMIs report to the Secretary of State through the Senior Chief Inspector, whereas local inspectors report to the Chief Education Officer in his role as adviser to the local authority's Education Committee. (28) Since most HMI inspections are issues-led, HMI are searching for national trends in order to inform debate at a national level, whereas local inspectors are engaging in a process of evaluation which will later involve them in supporting a school's areas of weakness. A further purpose of joint inspections was to assist LEAs in the development of their quality assurance role under the 1988 Education Reform Act. (29)

HMI and local inspectors collaborated on in-service training courses for teachers, but HMI are participating less in these in the 1990s. HMI have, however, been holding hospitality and invitation conferences since 1988 to which LEA personnel are often invited. At one such conference a Chief Inspector, Brian Arthur, outlined how LEAs should be inspecting schools through classroom observation. Further contact takes place at national level through NAIEA, which has a nominated link HMI, and through the annual joint HMI/NAIEA conference.

The Inspectorate in London

Up to 1886 the London School Board inspectors examined each school annually but, although these inspectors had considerable prestige in the schools and advised the Committee on policy, they were seen to be less eminent than HMIs, on whom the teachers depended for their living. (30) After education was transferred to the London County Council in 1904, local inspectors continued to have a larger role in London than elsewhere.

In 1940 Graham Savage, the Senior Chief HMI, became the LCC's Education Officer. As an HMI he had seen how much of their work had

> by convention been delegated to the LCC inspectorate. He distrusted the peculiar combination of administration and advisory duties which fell to the London inspectorate. Teachers, he felt, were too dependent for their promotion on the goodwill of the inspectors which was necessary to get on to the promotion list. (31)

Dr John Brown, as LCC Chief Inspector, resisted Savage's attempt to limit the power of the London inspectorate and, although Savage remained as Education Officer until 1951, he never succeeded in reorganising the London inspectorate system. The London inspectors remained powerful throughout the 1950s and it was not until the 1970s that power began to shift away from the inspectorate in the Inner London Education Authority. By this time, according to one source, 'the true nature of the inspectorate's role was hedged about with doubts and uncertainties, compounded by the inspectors' own ontological hesitation and concern for professional niceties.' (32)

In 1973 there were nearly a hundred inspectors for ILEA's 1200 schools and colleges. The sheer size of the system created many problems: for example, Vivian Pape, ILEA Staff Inspector for Primary Schools, was responsible for 900 schools; Donald Rice, ILEA District Inspector for Islington, had 69 schools in his area. The ILEA inspectorate saw its main

role as giving advice and support, rather than inspecting, and, if the District Inspector did not like what was happening in a school, he could only advise against it and write a report for his superiors. If ILEA was sufficiently concerned, then either a full inspection or a less formal 'visitation' could be ordered. (33)

Problem Schools in London: William Tyndale and Highbury Quadrant

In January 1974 a new head, Terry Ellis, was appointed to William Tyndale School in Islington and things soon began to go seriously wrong. In June Donald Rice visited the school but his report failed to alert his ILEA superiors to the seriousness of the situation. (34) When an inspection was suggested by one of the managers, Rice discussed it with the ILEA Chief Inspector, Michael Birchenough, a former HMI Chief Inspector, and they decided that it would not be appropriate because Ellis was a new head and because it might depress staff morale. (35) Rice later wrote a more critical report on William Tyndale, after which again no inspection was ordered, but Rice failed to arrange for other subject advisers to visit the school, as he had been asked to do. (36) In May 1975 Ellis wrote to Rice asking for help and the Auld Report later concluded that Rice was 'gravely at fault in not making some arrangements to give William Tyndale School the urgent attention that it required.' (37)

On 2 July 1975 the teachers refused to allow the managers to inspect the school and the managers asked Harvey Hinds, the Chairman of ILEA Schools Sub-Committee, to invite the school staffs to join with the managers in requesting a full HMI inspection. The staff of the Infant School agreed, but the Junior School staff saw 'no reason for such a

general inspection since the Authority's own inspectorate, who are always welcome in the school, have expressed no concern about the educational efficiency of the school.' The teachers wanted an inquiry by the Secretary of State under Section 93 of the 1944 Act into the management of the school; the managers requested ILEA to ask the Secretary of State for a full HMI inspection. ILEA decided not to call in HMI, but to conduct its own inspection and inquiry. (38) The ILEA inspection was due to start on 22 September, but the Junior School teachers went on strike and the inspection eventually took place when the strike ended in mid-October. The ILEA inspectors' report gave cause for concern to Dr Birchenough (39), who subsequently increased the number of primary inspections throughout London.

Where was HMI during this crisis, which lasted well over a year? The District Inspector for Islington was John Woodend, who never visited the school during this time. Gretton and Jackson were told by a senior HMI that a decision not to intervene 'must have been taken at the highest level' in the Department of Education and Science. (40) It was certainly discussed at Chief Inspector level. 'In the context of William Tyndale,' Gretton and Jackson conclude, 'HMI were like the dog that didn't bark.' This could have been because of HMI's inclination to leave London schools to the local inspectorate and because of Birchenough's own position as an ex-HMI. Whatever the reason for the non-intervention of HM Inspectorate, a vacuum of responsibility was created at William Tyndale. HMI did not want to intervene, the ILEA inspectors appeared to have no standards by which to judge the school's performance and, because of Rice's bland reports, ILEA itself did not have the evidence on which to take action. The conclusion to the Auld Report recorded that, in common with most Local Education Authorities, ILEA had no policy on standards of attainment, aims of primary

school education or teaching methods. Thus, Auld reasoned, the ILEA inspectorate had no policy basis for its diagnostic and advisory function and 'where there is an issue between a headteacher and the inspector, the latter has no formal power to ensure that his professional advice is heeded.' (41)

Highbury Quadrant Junior School hit the headlines in July 1988 when there was a public row between two teachers over an assembly which had been held to celebrate the birthday of Nelson Mandela. The matter was raised by Conservative MPs in the House of Commons and Kenneth Baker asked for evidence from HMI. The differences between Highbury Quadrant and William Tyndale reveal how much had been learned from the sequence of unhappy events in Islington in the mid-1970s. Highbury Quadrant, which had a history of staff militancy, rapid turnover of headteachers and poor curriculum provision, had been on ILEA's 'at risk' register since 1986. During this time, according to a leading article in the Times Educational Supplement, 'with the ghosts of William Tyndale still hovering nearby, the local inspectors did all that they could'. (42)

The HMI report on Highbury Quadrant School was produced quickly and was extremely critical of the school's curriculum and organisation, behaviour and attendance, although it recognised the difficulties of headship and accommodation under which the school had laboured. The HMIs prefaced their report by stating that (43)

> it was no part of HMI's task to find out just what did or did not happen, what was or was not said in the school at the time of the Mandela assembly. We are school inspectors, not investigators or detectives. Our concern is with the standards and quality of pupil learning.

ILEA acted promptly by redeploying eight of the senior teachers at the school and, although the National Union of Teachers opposed the

redeployments and a judicial review of the ILEA decision was sought by the school governors, the redeployments went ahead. (44)

The contrast between William Tyndale and Highbury Quadrant is clear. By 1988 ILEA had a policy for dealing with schools which were causing concern (45), the ILEA inspectorate produced reports which had some authority and the Secretary of State took decisive action in asking HMI to report on the school, albeit for a reason that had more to do with the politics of the potential abolition of ILEA than with the educational provision of Highbury Quadrant School. HM Inspectorate then produced its usual detailed report, but distanced itself from the political controversy which the Secretary of State was seeking.

HMI Reports on Whole Authorities

In November 1980 the HMI report on ILEA secondary schools was published at the request of Peter Newsam, the ILEA Education Officer, 'in the public interest'. The Conservative government had requested this report as part of its investigation into the future of ILEA and, since the report criticised the schools but praised the local authority, Newsam considered that it would be helpful in the cause of preservation of ILEA. Sheila Browne also wanted the report to be published and made this clear at the outset of the inspection. The members of all ILEA's sub-committees held a closed meeting with HMI to discuss the contents of the report.(46)

After the ILEA report the DES announced that no further reports on whole LEAs were planned, but Rayner recommended that such reports would be beneficial (47) and, soon afterwards, HMI began the inspection of a second LEA, Dudley in the West Midlands. During the 1980s fourteen whole authority

inspections were carried out. The full list, with the date of publication of the report is: ILEA 1980, Dudley 1982, Powys 1983, Sutton 1983, Haringey 1984, Norfolk 1984, Dyfed 1985, Wigan 1986, Sheffield 1987, Cornwall 1987, Gwynedd 1988, Coventry 1988, Surrey 1989, Durham 1989. LEAs were given at least six months' notice of a whole authority inspection and there were discussions between the Chief Education Officer and HMI concerning the time period and type of inspections, as well as the extent of the concentration on individual subject and geographical areas. Day inspections and subject sweeps were also included in the evidence base on which the report was drawn up. The main reporting period was usually twelve months, but evidence from earlier inspections was also used and, by the time that the report appeared, some of the inspections on which it was based had taken place more than three years earlier. At a time of such rapid change in the educational system, this led to criticism that reports were based on out-of-date information and, because HMI did not return to the previously inspected schools, no account was taken of changes which had subsequently taken place. (48) Nevertheless, reports were based on an average of over four hundred days of inspection.

In 1985 Chief Education Officers became concerned about some aspects of the inspection of whole authorities. The Society of Education Officers which, by the early 1980s, had begun to have regular meetings with senior DES personnel including the Senior Chief Inspector, issued a confidential paper to its members. (49) This contained a warning that 'HMI are not management consultants and their reports will include comment on the administration of the service only in so far as it affects the educational process as they observe it in the establishments.' (50) The paper also warned that LEAs should try to ensure that the sample of schools inspected

by HMI was representative of the area as a whole (51) and that LEA officers should 'check the information HMI already has about the authority, especially if it is likely to be out of date.' The SEO was also concerned about the procedure for the publication of the report on the authority. 'The CEO, who may be accompanied by a colleague, is summoned to Elizabeth House (usually at short notice) and given a specified time (which seems to be an hour, with no more than a limited extension on request). He is merely expected to corroborate or correct the facts.' (52)

The reports, which were approximately ninety pages in length, included separate sections on all the areas of the service which had been inspected - primary, secondary, special needs, further and higher, youth work, adult and continuing education, as well as sections on finance, provision and advisory services. At the end of the inspection period a team of HMIs reported to the Chief Education Officer and, when the report was published, a team of inspectors, including senior HMIs, met the Education Committee of the LEA. HMIs held meetings with officers and with groups of head teachers and senior managers in other parts of the service, such as youth work.

The main areas of criticism in the reports were the shortages of books and equipment, the problems with buildings, the extent of parental contributions, uneven standards of attainment and the poor curriculum for less able pupils. Wigan, Sheffield, Cornwall and Coventry received generally favourable reports. The Times Educational Supplement noted that the report on Sheffield, appearing the day after a highly critical Panorama television programme on education in the London Borough of Brent, showed that HMI 'understood the difference between a high-spending authority and an extravagant one.' (53) The comparisons which HMI drew between expenditure and provision led to some rumbustious reactions from local

politicians in other authorities. The report on Dudley, for example, warned that, with such low levels of expenditure, 'standards of performance are bound to be adversely affected'. When Sheila Browne and seven other HMIs met with Dudley Borough Council for two and a half hours, they

> fended a stream of highly political questions about the conclusions... Miss Browne, who was entering a Council Chamber for the first time, tried to establish limits to what she and her colleagues could say. She pointed out that HMIs never made decisions about education; they observed and reported, but decisions were made either by the Secretary of State or local authorities. (54)

She also emphasised that HMIs could not become involved in political arguments. The Senior Chief Inspector had to defend the delay in publication of the report which, she said, had occurred because the original version had been unbalanced and she had had to correct the balance. During the argument between HMI and the councillors on lack of spending by Dudley LEA and the reason why such a low spending authority had been chosen to follow ILEA, Sheila Browne said (55):

> I feel a little bit like a football. I am not used to being a football and I am not sure how to respond to it. I gave you a perfectly honest account of why Dudley was chosen and if people are going to choose to believe something else, then I am terribly sorry but there is not much point in our staying. It was entirely fortuitous that the ILEA was followed by Dudley.

Another Conservative authority where the HMI report caused a strong reaction was Sutton, which had a grammar school system and was well above the national average for its examination results. The report criticised shortages of books and equipment, over-direction by teachers and passivity of pupils with too much concentration on a limited range of educational objectives. The leader of Sutton Council, Cllr David Trafford, responded by accusing HMI of political bias against selective schools (56) and another councillor accused HMI of living in ivory towers. 'If HMI do not change their ways', he wrote, 'their reports will increasingly be seen as

irrelevant to today's world.'(57) Cllr Trafford had protested to the Secretary of State before the report was issued, but Sir Keith Joseph reminded him that the Inspectorate was independent and free to report as it saw fit, although Sir Keith would no doubt have had some sympathy with Cllr Trafford's plea (58):

> We acknowledge that our emphasis on traditional methods as a means of preparation for the public examinations leads to a less broad approach to the teaching of the curriculum. However, we believe that basic literacy and numeracy in the primary school and a thorough preparation for examinations at secondary level are what the parents of this area expect, and we have no intention of making changes in our approach to the curriculum at the expense of these basic educational aims.

As was noted in the previous chapter, such statements would be echoed by many teachers in the individual schools.

In Dudley and Sutton it was apparent that the inspectors' comments on expenditure levels and traditional teaching methods struck a discordant note in a politically sensitive area and the Times Educational Supplement noted (59) that, less than a year after the publication of HMI reports had begun, the inspectors were more vulnerable to charges of political bias and that 'the further they move into relatively uncharted territory, the less likely the wounded recipients of their reports are to understand terms of reference or general context, or to interpret correctly the language code.'

HMI were not immune from criticism concerning their reports on left-wing local authorities. Haringey's expenditure per pupil was high and the Local Education Authority therefore escaped the criticisms levelled at Dudley and Sutton, but the inspectors criticised 'the quality of much of the teaching; a shortage of effective leadership and planning at many points in the system' and a majority of lessons which were 'mediocre to poor'. Examination results were described as 'disappointing', even taking

socio-economic factors into account. (60) Subsequently the Senior Chief Inspector, Eric Bolton, wrote to Haringey to admit that the examination results figures had not compared like with like and that the judgments on Haringey, by comparison with the national average, had been excessively harsh. (61) There were complaints that the inspectors had not visited a representative sample of schools and that some of these schools had been reorganised only four months previously. The inspectors were accused of not taking sufficient account of the borough's social deprivation (62) and a black parents' action group claimed that the HMI report was racist. (63)

Expenditure Reports and the Conservative Reaction

Another area of dispute between HM Inspectorate and the local authorities during the 1980s was the publication by HMI of a series of annual reports on the effects of LEA expenditure policies on educational provision. These began in 1978 and were written for the benefit of the Expenditure Steering Group (Education), a body set up by the government and local authority associations to study the likely effect of different levels of government grant to local authorities. In November 1980 there was pressure on HM Inspectorate from the local authority associations to publish the results of this HMI survey. The Senior Chief Inspector wrote to Chief Education Officers asking if they had any objection to publication (64) and the first expenditure report was published in February 1981. (65)

In this report the inspectors expressed their concerns about the effects on curriculum provision of staffing levels at a time of falling pupil rolls. They also expressed concern about capitation allowances to schools and the unevenness of provision for children within the same area,

particularly the most able, the least able and the socially disadvantaged, and the physical fabric of schools. The Times Educational Supplement noted that 'the Inspectorate had obvious difficulty in separating the consequences of falling school rolls from deficiencies directly due to cuts. In the event, they have rightly put the two together... This is a courageous report which demands an equally courageous response from Mr Carlisle', the Secretary of State. He was said to have expressed the view that the report would be helpful to him in Cabinet. (66)

The second expenditure report (67) contained critical comments about staffing levels, in-service training, LEA advisory services, capitation and the state of buildings. It noted the increasing reliance by many schools on financial contributions from parents. Local authority leaders cannot have been happy to read in the Times Educational Supplement (68) that

> the message of the Inspectorate ... is that cuts in resources are leading to declining standards of education. It is that it is not possible to maintain standards, let alone improve them, without increasing the resources per child, as pupil numbers fall.
> The importance of Miss Browne's report lies in the test which the inspectors applied to determine whether an LEA could be said to provide a 'satisfactory' service. "The term 'satisfactory' is used to denote a level of range and balance of resources that are in HMI's judgment at least adequate in educational terms for pupils to be taught according to their ages, abilities and aptitudes." The choice of words has not been lightly made: the phrase has obvious echoes of Section 8 of the 1944 Education Act. It goes directly to the question of how grossly deficient an education authority's schools would have to be to fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act. This is a ticklish one. The Secretary of State is responsible for enforcing the relevant section of the Act and his officials have made it abundantly clear up till now that they find it difficult to conceive of any circumstances in which it would be appropriate for him to act. Miss Browne's formulation must make it less easy for them to maintain this extreme position: it must mean that the four LEAs which were found to be unsatisfactory were judged to be falling short of their legal duties.

In February 1981 Sheila Browne appeared before the House of Commons Select Committee and was closely questioned on whether any local authorities were

breaking the law in not providing sufficient resources for the education of their pupils. She told the Select Committee that such questions were outside her remit; the job of HMI was to report what they found. (69) The Select Committee supported this view in its report. (70)

Two months later four LEAs were identified which had all made further cuts during 1980-81, even though they had been in a group which had given HMI 'cause for concern' the previous year. The four were Gateshead, Norfolk, Somerset and Wiltshire. Barry Taylor, Somerset's CEO, welcomed the report as it would strengthen his case for more resources from the local council for education, but Norfolk and Gateshead disputed the HMIs' judgment and politicians in Wiltshire and Somerset defended their school examination results. (71)

The 1983 expenditure report (72) noted a slowdown in the rate of deterioration over the previous two years. (73) The Welsh Inspectorate published a parallel report for the first time in 1983. (74)

When Eric Bolton became Senior Chief Inspector, the basis on which the expenditure report was drawn up was altered and this removed the possibility of identifying the local authorities where the level of provision was deemed to be unsatisfactory. However, the 1984 report did not concentrate solely on resources, but attempted 'to explore further the complex relationship between educational expenditure and the quality of education.' The report was based on inspections which had taken place in the autumn term 1983 and on returns from District Inspectors, who 'were asked to comment on the extent to which the quality of teaching, the level of resources and their management and deployment influenced the work.' (75) The report concluded that 'there are too many variables ... for direct causal relationships to be claimed between quality of work seen, the levels

of existing and visible resources and the various other factors considered likely to affect the performance of schools', but quality of teaching is at the heart of any consideration of the quality of pupil work and there were grounds for concern in this respect. (76) This enabled Sir Keith Joseph to support his view that there was no connection between expenditure and quality and caused the Times Educational Supplement to describe the report as 'a disappointingly muddled document' with less plain speaking than in previous years, when individual LEAs with poor provision could be singled out. It continued (77):

> The decision to stop picking on delinquents looks uncommonly like the result of political pressure but if we were told categorically that none had been applied, this too would be entirely believable. The most effective political pressures are self-imposed - the prudent determination to avoid putting credibility and autonomy to greater tests than they can plausibly be expected to bear. If Mr Bolton has concluded that, to keep his fleet in being, he must steer away from the rocks and keep a bit more water under his keel, this would be quite understandable and very probably a correct judgment. There are limits to what the Inspectorate can achieve. It's no use expecting them to fight and win political battles. Nor is it realistic to expect them to take up positions which are so exposed that, sooner or later, the office of Senior Chief Inspector is politicised.

But more rocks were ahead, for the attempt to link expenditure and quality was anathema to Conservative local politicians. Three months later Councillor Les Lawrence of Birmingham, chairman of the Conservative Party's National Advisory Committee on Education, initiated a survey of Conservative LEA chairmen and spokesmen on the value of published HMI reports. Some of these chairmen expressed their concerns to Bob Dunn, a Junior Minister, and to Stuart Sexton, a right-wing political adviser at the DES. No doubt they were more receptive than Sir Keith Joseph, with whom the chairmen also met, but who reminded them of the independence of HMI. In interviews with the Times Educational Supplement (78) the chairmen said:

> 'HMI strays into political, social and financial areas which are not its province.'

> 'HMI is a complete and utter waste of time. I don't believe that inspectors can make judgments about the effects of financial policies on education authorities.'
> 'I have often been critical of HMI reports. They are unrealistic, in a context of reduced spending.'

The HMI expenditure surveys had been a severe embarrassment to Conservative local politicians who, during the 1980s, were caught in a spending trap by the government's policies on local authority expenditure. Up to 1983 the dissatisfaction with the expenditure surveys had largely been confined to the authorities which had been identified as having very low levels of provision. From 1984, when HMI attempted to link expenditure and quality, the unrest spread to politicians in other authorities.

By 1985 Eric Bolton was more confident in his judgment (79):

> In the present economic climate, and with the continuing fall in the total number of pupils and students, the complex relationship between what is spent on education and its quality in schools and colleges remains of central interest ... HMI sought to identify the factors which appeared to be contributing to the quality of what was observed. ...In all institutions the most crucial factor influencing effective learning was the quality of teaching. ... There is a statistically significant association between satisfactory or better levels of resource provision and work of sound quality, and between unsatisfactory levels of provision and poor quality work.

The same conclusion was reached in the 1986 report (80) and the following year's report was striking in the similarily of its criticisms of school management and teaching, as well as of LEA provision. (81) Poor teaching in one-third of classrooms and poor management in one-quarter of schools made a bleak picture at a time when teacher morale was at a low ebb. (82)

Such proportions of satisfactory to unsatisfactory work and provision in schools occurred so often in these HMI expenditure reports that the Times Educational Supplement (83) suggested that

> had Her Majesty's Inspectorate been assessing the Titanic at the time of the disaster it is a safe bet that their considered judgment would have been that 75 per cent of the ship was satisfactory or better, while 25 per cent was going down by the stern.

The 1987 expenditure report was the last in that format and was replaced by the Annual Report of the Senior Chief Inspector which Kenneth Baker had requested as a summary of the full year's inspections. (84)

Race and Politics in Brent

In July 1986 Miss Maureen McGoldrick, head of Sudbury Infants School in the London Borough of Brent, was accused by a Council official of making a racist remark. During Miss McGoldrick's subsequent suspension Brent Council announced a plan to appoint over 150 extra teachers to promote racial equality and on 19 October The Mail on Sunday headlined a story on 'Race Spies in the Classroom'. This scheme had the approval of both the Home Office and the Department of Education and Science, according to the Council leader, Merle Amory. (85) Nevertheless Kenneth Baker appeared on television and in the press, expressing anxiety about both Miss McGoldrick's suspension and the special team of anti-racism advisers. He therefore asked HM Inspectorate for a report on Brent schools.

The Inspectorate moved quickly and between November 1986 and March 1987 inspected twelve primary schools, six secondary schools and three special schools. At a time when HMI reports on routine school full inspections were taking up to eighteen months to appear in print, the report on Brent was produced with unprecedented speed, appearing on 24 April 1987, just six weeks after the school inspections had ended. It is normal procedure for Local Education Authorities to receive copies of inspection reports two weeks before publication. In this instance Brent Council was not given an advanvce copy and had in fact expected the report to be published on 28 April. (86) In early May a General Election was called by the Prime

Minister, Margaret Thatcher, and it was therefore not surprising that that most political of Secretaries of State, Kenneth Baker, should seek to make considerable political capital out of the HMI report on Brent, claiming that the report vindicated his decision to send in the HMIs (87):

> It is the most disturbing I have read for it describes a gravely substandard education service. It shows how parents and pupils in Brent are paying the price for the authority's irrelevant policies and incompetent management.

The Labour Party spokesman reminded Kenneth Baker that one year earlier Brent had been run by a Conservative and Liberal coalition, but Baker had made his point.

The inspectors' report was, as usual, detailed, thorough and well-balanced and the concluding section began (88):

> Despite the undoubted problems in the authority and much public sound and fury, much of the work actually taking place in schools and colleges is reasonably organised and conducted by teachers and equally reasonably responded to by pupils and students. There is little evidence that the work in classrooms, lecture rooms and libraries is being distorted by improper practices to do with anti-sexist and anti-racist policies.

Nevertheless the report contained a considerable amount of criticism of the failure to deal with the consequences of falling rolls, inefficient use of teachers, unchallenging classroom work and poor school management. There was, however, no evidence that any of these problems had been caused by the Council's anti-racist policies, still less by the presence of race advisers in schools.

This episode is instructive not only because of the way in which HMI inspected a Local Education Authority which was at the focus of public attention, but also because of the light which it sheds on the relationship between HM Inspectorate and the Secretary of State, who considered that he had identified a matter of public concern in Brent and, therefore, as is

his right, he asked HMI to investigate. The Inspectorate reported as it found, producing a document that was balanced in its judgments, but it had no control over the use which the Secretary of State made of its report. In such situations the price of preserving its independence is that HMI has no control over the way in which its findings are used by politicians. The Inspectorate produces reports, but does not enter into public debate.

Two further inspections of Brent's anti-racist programme took place. In December 1987 Douglas Hurd, the Home Secretary, asked the Commission for Racial Equality to conduct an inquiry and a second HMI inspection was carried out simultaneously. (89) The HMI report again gave no political comfort to the government, concluding that the work of the race advisers was 'mostly of sound quality and staff were appropriately qualified and experienced.' (90)

Cooperation and Tension

The cooperation between Her Majesty's Inspectorate and the Local Education Authorities, which had been especially evident during the Second World War, had continued to exist without any major trouble for a further thirty-five years. During the 1980s the relationships between individual District Inspectors and LEA personnel, particularly Chief Education Officers, remained cordial and, in some cases, close. Tensions were growing, however, and these were caused by the increasing government involvement in education and the consequent politicisation of educational issues. The most difficult of these issues was finance and the way in which government controls on local authority expenditure began to have an effect on resource levels and building and repair programmes. The reports which

HMI produced on local authority expenditure and on whole LEAs publicised a situation which caused embarrassment to some local politicians. It was easier for the politicians to shoot at the messenger than to deny the message and HMI, ever mindful of the need to avoid entering into political debate, could not return the fire. HMI stated what they found and left it to others to draw the conclusions and debate the priorities.

Notes

1. Quoted in E.L.Edmonds, op.cit., 1962, 139.
2. J.S.Harris, op.cit., 1955, 122.
3. S.Maclure, 'The Control of Education', in S.Maclure (ed), Studies of the Government and Control of Education since 1860, Methuen, 1970, 7.
4. J.Blackie, op.cit., 1970, 56.
5. L.Clark, op.cit., 1976, 26.
6. Information received in interview with an LEA officer who had worked closely with Russell. In J.Lello, op.cit., 1979, 43, Sheila Browne stated that the closeness of the relationship between a Chief Education Officer and a District Inspector depended mainly on the CEO, but this does not accord with the evidence given to me by CEOs.
7. This section is based on interviews with Chief Education Officers.
8. This does not occur during all reorganisations, especially when the schools of a whole LEA are being reorganised.
9. Interview with a Chief Education Officer.
10. Ibid.
11. D.Winkley, Diplomats and Detectives. LEA Advisers at Work, Robert Royce, 1985, 67; Audit Commission, Assuring Quality in Education. The Role of Local Education Authority Inspectors and Advisers, HMSO, 1989, 5. Winkley provides a thorough analysis of the roles of LEA inspectors/advisers and the different ways in which they are deployed by LEAs. See also A.Stillman & M.Grant, The LEA Adviser - A Changing Role, Windsor, NFER Nelson, 1989.
12. Times Educational Supplement, 7.3.69.
13. D.Winkley, op.cit., 1985, 179
14. Audit Commission, op.cit., 1989, 12.
15. Ibid., 13.
16. D.Winkley, op.cit., 1985, 70-74.
17. Education, 29.1.88, 80-81.
18. Times Educational Supplement, 24.6.88.
19. Ibid., 27.1.89.
20. J.Pearce, 'Advisers and Inspectors', in J.Lello, op.cit., 1979, 72.
21. Ibid., 76.
22. Ibid., 77.
23. Education, 2.9.83, 182; Education, 9.9.83, 208.
24. Times Educational Supplement, 23.9.83.
25. Interviews with LEA inspectors, especially David Alexander, Senior Adviser in Bedfordshire and President of the National Association of

Inspectors and Educational Advisers (NAIEA) in 1990-91.
26. Education, 16.6.89, 551.
27. Interview with Eric Bolton.
28. In some Local Education Authorities the Council members have appointed an inspectorate to report directly to them.
29. Interview with Eric Bolton.
30. S.Maclure, op.cit., 1970, 61.
31. Ibid., 145.
32. J.Gretton & M.Jackson, William Tyndale, Collapse of a School - or a System?, Allen & Unwin, 1976, 85.
33. ILEA, William Tyndale Junior and Infant Schools. Public Inquiry. A Report to the ILEA by Robin Auld QC, ILEA, 1976, 12-16; J.Gretton & M.Jackson, op.cit., 1976, 90; T.Ellis et al, William Tyndale, The Teachers' Story, Writers and Readers Publishing Cooperative, 1976, 113.
34. ILEA, op.cit., 1976, 124.
35. Ibid., 190.
36. Ibid., 200.
37. Ibid., 222.
38. Ibid., 242-46; J.Gretton & M.Jackson, op.cit., 1976, 25.
39. Ibid., 96.
40. Ibid., 86.
41. ILEA, op.cit., 1976, 271.
42. Times Educational Supplement, 16.12.88.
43. Ibid.
44. Independent, 13.12.88 - 30.12.88.
45. The schools which were causing greatest concern on the 'at risk' register were publicly identified by ILEA in 1986 and, under a scheme called IBIS (Inspectors Based In Schools), inspectors were attached to these schools for several weeks at a time, Times Educational Supplement, 28.3.86.
46. Times Educational Supplement, 14.11.80; Ibid., 21.11.80. Interview with Sheila Browne.
47. Department of Education and Science, Study of HM Inspectorate in England and Wales, HMSO, 1982, 17-18, paragraphs 3.13-3.14.
48. R.Westerby, 'How the HMI Report Looks in Dudley', Times Educational Supplement, 29.10.82, in which the Director of Education makes this point. See also Times Educational Supplement, 13.11.87, which notes that the same time lapse occurred in the report on Cornwall. Much of the information in this section was obtained by the author at a meeting on 23.11.89 in County Durham, when HMI met with LEA officers and secondary heads after the publication of the HMI report on the County.
49. Society of Education Officers, Notes of Guidance on HM Inspections of LEAs, unpublished paper, April 1985, shown to the author by Jackson Hall, who was President of the SEO at the time. The continuing contact between the SEO and senior HMI has been confirmed in a letter to the author from Dennis Hatfield, SEO General Secretary, 8.5.91: 'We have over many years had reasonably good working relationships with HMI and have been consulted by them on many occasions.'
50. Ibid., paragraph 1.
51. Ibid., paragraph 3. See below, where the criticisms of the sample of schools which were inspected in Haringey is discussed.
52. Society of Education Officers, op.cit., 1985, paragraphs 6,11.
53. Times Educational Supplement, 3.4.87.
54. Education, 17.12.82, 470.

55. Ibid.
56. Education, 21.10.83, 318.
57. Education, 9.12.83, 483.
58. Times Educational Supplement, 21.10.83.
59. Ibid.
60. Ibid., 13.7.84.
61. Ibid., 27.7.84.
62. Education, 26.10.84, 329.
63. Times Educational Supplement, 3.8.84.
64. Ibid., 7.11.80.
65. Department of Education and Science, The Effects on the Education Service in England and Wales of Local Authority Expenditure Policies - Financial Year 1981, 1981.
66. Times Educational Supplement, 20.2.81.
67. Department of Education and Science, The Effects on the Education Service in England and Wales of Local Authority Expenditure Policies - Financial Year 1982, 1982.
68. Times Educational Supplement, 9.4.82.
69. House of Commons, Second Report from the Education, Science and Arts Committee, The Secondary School Curriculum and Examinations with special reference to the 14 to 16 year old age group. Session 1981-82, HMSO, 1981, q.199.
70. Times Educational Supplement, 12.2.82.
71. Ibid., 11.6.82.
72. Department of Education and Science, The Effects on the Education Service in England and Wales of Local Authority Expenditure Policies - Financial Year 1983, 1983.
73. Times Educational Supplement, 22.7.83.
74. Welsh Office, The Effects on the Education System of Recent Local Authority Expenditure Policies, 1983. This was the sixth such report in Wales, but the first to be published.
75. Department of Education and Science, Report by HMIs on the Effects of Local Authority Expenditure Policies on Educational Provision in England - 1983, 1984, 2.
76. Ibid., 11.
77. Times Educational Supplement, 15.6.84.
78. Ibid., 12.10.84.
79. Department of Education and Science, Report by HMIs on the Effects of Local Authority Expenditure Policies on Educational Provision in England - 1983, 1984, 1985, 5.
80. Ibid., 1986, 6, 11.
81. Ibid., 1987.
82. Times Educational Supplement, 24.7.87.
83. Ibid., 31.5.85.
84. See below, chapter 7.
85. Guardian, 5.5.87.
86. Ibid.
87. Times Educational Supplement, 1.5.87; Education, 1.5.87, 375-6.
88. Department of Education and Science, Report by HM Inspectors on Educational Provision in the Outer London Borough of Brent, 1987.
89. Times Educational Supplement, 1.1.88
90. Ibid., 3.6.88

CHAPTER 7

HMIs AT THE HUB

WORKING WITH THE GOVERNMENT

Policy Making in the Department of Education and Science: 1944-1974

During the nineteenth century the Inspectorate made little contribution to policy making in education, mainly because of the narrow view of the role of HMI which was taken by the civil servants in the Department, who were content to use their inspectors as instruments of a mechanistic system of educational assessment. After the end of payment-by-results, the Inspectorate contributed to policy through their Suggestions for the Consideration of Teachers, later re-named the Handbook of Suggestions for Teachers, which was very influential on the school curriculum up to the Second World War. During the War the inspectors were given so many administrative tasks that there was little time for them to contribute to policy making, although the senior members of the Inspectorate had ample opportunity to influence the plans for post-war reconstruction. That they had little influence in this exercise was due mainly to the powerful group of civil servants, and particularly the Permanent Secretary, Maurice Holmes, who felt that HMIs had little to contribute to the policy making process.

This attitude evidently continued for some time after the War since the Senior Chief Inspector 'in the midst of a most important reconstruction and

expansion of the Inspectorate, had to be loaned temporarily to the Ministry of Food' in order to carry out further work on rationing, in which he had been involved during the War. (1) In spite of the Ministry's 'lack of interest' (2) in what HMI might have to offer through its inspection reports and contributions to departmental committees, there were areas where the Inspectorate was able to make a distinctive contribution to policy making in the 1950s. A good example was set by the Senior Chief Inspector, since Martin Roseveare let few opportunities pass and, according to one of his successors, 'nothing happened in the Ministry without lashings of minutes from Roseveare.' (3) Another area of HMI involvement was in the Ministry's Architects and Buildings (A and B) Branch, to which an HMI was seconded full-time, who 'was crucial as the formal link between the Development Group and the educators'. (4) The group's ideas were disseminated to the LEAs through the District Inspectors.

HMIs were involved in the Secondary Schools Examinations Council (SSEC), as well as the Norwood Committee, and the Minister, Ellen Wilkinson, issued a Circular in 1946 stating that the view of HMI had been accepted by her and there would therefore be no external examination at age 16. The SSEC was then reformed, with Maurice Holmes as chairman, R.H.Barrow as secretary and Martin Roseveare as assessor. After a stalemate on the question of external examinations, it was Roseveare who prepared the paper 'which formed the basis for a unanimous report' by the SSEC. This contained the basic recommendations which led to the General Certificate of Education (GCE), Ordinary, Advanced and Special levels. (5) Subsequently there were complaints that the new GCE system led to earlier specialisation, but

> the Ministry resisted any change and on the advice of senior members of the Inspectorate continued to work towards the goal of a system of secondary education which would be free from examinations until the

end of the sixth form.(6)

Between 1953 and 1958 there was pressure for a suitable leaving examination for the average secondary school pupil, but 'the Ministry, advised by its Inspectorate, continued to obstruct.' (7) The Minister, Geoffrey Lloyd, accepted 'reluctantly' the recommendation of the Beloe Committee for the CSE examination and SSEC had to decide on the details of the proposal. (8)

The part played by HMI in the introduction of comprehensive schools reveals the Inspectorate at its most conservative. In 1948 the new Minister, George Tomlinson, rejected the Middlesex plans to establish comprehensive schools on the grounds that they would have been too small to produce viable sixth forms and because he considered that they would have difficulty in recruiting sufficiently well-qualified teachers for the grammar school classes. Only a 'limited experiment' was therefore permitted. (9) During this period, the Times Educational Supplement was very supportive of the government in its efforts to re-build state education after the War. In 1950 the paper was against the introduction of more comprehensive schools, although it did not oppose small-scale experiments. In discussing the Labour Party Conference resolution in favour of comprehensive schools, it stated (10):

> One wonders how many of the speakers at the Labour Conference had been enlightened as to the substance of some of the inspectors' reports on the experiments in progress. Some at least confirm all the doubts ... about whether the gifted child of grammar school standard can get a fair deal in the comprehensive school.

Such reports would probably have been written by sceptics in the Inspectorate, for the Secondary Education Panel of HMI, when it discussed comprehensive schools, found that 'the feeling of the Panel was one of apprehension'. (11) Senior members of the Inspectorate were more than sceptical: throughout Percy Wilson's memoirs there is a very condescending

attitude towards modern and comprehensive schools and a very uncritical attitude towards grammar schools. 'There is room for co-existence,' Wilson wrote, 'I would go further - there is a need for co-existence'. (12) The long-serving HMI, Leonard Clark, made the same point in his autobiography, adding that, although he was not allowed to express his private opinions, he was aware that many people were not entirely happy about comprehensive schools. (13) The Minister, David Eccles, told the NUT Conference in 1955 that he would agree to LEA proposals for comprehensive schools 'where all the local conditions are favourable and no good school is swallowed up.' The Ministry's 1958 White Paper also said that it would be wrong to impose a uniform pattern of secondary education, although comprehensive schools would be established on an experimental basis, especially in country districts or areas of new housing. (14) With the change to a Labour government in 1964, civil servants and Ministers looked to HM Inspectorate for guidance on the educational aspects of the drive towards comprehensive schooling for all. In Circular 10/65 the Secretary of State, Tony Crosland, presented LEAs not with a blueprint for the ideal comprehensive school but with a range of six types of scheme, the details of which were 'mainly a product of thinking in the Inspectorate.' (15) This provides a good example of inspectors giving professional advice to the Minister on a course of action which had been decided in principle politically.

The extent of such advice within the policy-making processes in the Ministry depends upon two essential factors: first, the politicians have to want to initiate policies which require the sort of advice which HMI can provide and, secondly, the politicians and civil servants must have sufficient confidence in the Inspectorate, and especially in its senior members, to seek that advice from them. In the period up to the mid-1960s,

and especially during the period when the Inspectorate was led by Percy Wilson (1957-65), neither of these prerequisites obtained. As Pauline Perry, a Chief Inspector in the 1980s, has explained (16):

> Throughout the fifties and sixties the Ministry and then the Department were primarily concerned with facilitating the role of LEAs and were pleased to describe education as 'a central service locally administered', with all the implications for low key central administration of that phrase. With such a perception of the central ministerial role, power in education was inevitably located in local authorities with their largely independent education departments, and those decades produced powerful Chief Education Officers, and a fierce belief in the independence of the individual school and teacher with respect to the curriculum. Ministers saw their role as largely relating to the structural organisation of schools - most particularly secondary schools in the comprehensive reforms of the sixties. The natural territory for HMI, the curriculum and its pedagogy, was out of the hands of the DES and in the hands of the teachers or their LEAs, and it is therefore not surprising that HMI were, in national terms, politically insignificant.

The supremacy of local control over national influence had even been emphasised in the courts where Tameside and Enfield had both won significant victories over the Department. Sir David Eccles was at pains to stress the partnership between LEAs and the government, explaining that

> the government does not run the education service itself, but tries to create the right conditions for those who do ... One element in the structure of our system, as it were the reinforcing rod hidden in the concrete, which seldom gets its public due, is HM Inspectorate. The Inspectorate is not the Minister's private army of snooping policemen, but an independent body advising politely, constantly and effectively the Ministry and all its partners. (17)

Eccles was speaking about advice within the system as a whole. HMIs were certainly dispensing plenty of advice within institutions and Local Education Authorities. Within the Ministry itself, however, it was a rather different story, as Sir Edward Boyle told Maurice Kogan, who asked him about the role of HMI during his time as Minister of Education (18):

> We've said nothing about them in this discussion up till now and I fear that rather tells its own tale. Looking back over the period we're thinking of, about fifteen years, the Inspectorate has played less of a part in policy making than I for one would have liked to see. I think this was certainly true over the whole question of

> secondary reorganisation. When I look back over my time at the Ministry, I associate inspectors a lot with the briefings I got from going to particular schools, as local informants about schools. Sometimes they played an active part in Ministerial discussions, ... [but] I don't think there was a sufficiently strong tradition that when you had a major discussion the Senior Chief Inspector should normally be invited in. Equally, I'm afraid I must say in fairness, I think there may have been personal reasons over the years why this tended not to happen. But for whatever reason, he didn't play a big enough part in policy making in the Department. The sad thing was that occasionally one would meet an inspector, say on a train, a senior one, who would talk interestingly and extremely fairly about any of these questions. I'm really thinking about the position in Curzon Street itself.

John Blackie, who was a Chief Inspector at this time, described the frequent interactions between politicians, civil servants and inspectors, but made the point that the extent of this depended upon personalities: 'Some Ministers like to have more personal contact with inspectors than others and some under-secretaries work more closely with their corresponding Chief Inspectors than others.' (19) One Minister who sought closer contact was Edward Short, who arranged quarterly meetings with HMIs. On appointment, Short had been surprised to find that, as a former head teacher, he was the only educational practitioner among the administrative civil servants at policy making meetings, in which HMIs were not invited to participate. (20) This confirms the evidence which was given to the 1968 Select Committee concerning the limited contribution of HMI to policy making. (21) The senior civil servants in the Department of Education and Science in the 1960s were a formidably intelligent group of people, who took little notice of the elderly men at the head of the Inspectorate during this period so that neither of the two conditions for HMI to be influential was in place. In the words of one former inspector (22):

> During this time the implications which people drew from what HMI was doing in schools were influential. But there were hardly any implications to be drawn at the centre. The centre wasn't doing very much and it didn't know what to do with the advice it got. It was up

to the schools and the NUT.

Throughout this period there was a particularly close relationship between the Permanent Secretary, Sir John Maud and then Sir William Pile, the General Secretary of the National Union of Teachers, Sir Ronald Gould, and the Secretary of the Association of Education Committees, Sir William Alexander. (23) Manzer comments on how harmoniously these men worked in partnership (24) and, when Sir Edward Boyle returned in 1962 for a second spell as Minister of Education, he noticed how the influence of these interest groups had grown. (25) This was a trend which was to accelerate during the next thirty years, as the influence of the NUT and AEC waned and they were replaced by a multifarious collection of groups, some of which had great influence on Ministerial thinking.

An attempt had been made by Eccles to develop curriculum policy planning in the Department with the establishment in 1965 of the Curriculum Study Group (CSG). This group comprised HMIs, civil servants and outside experts, but it only lasted two years because of the mistakes which had been made in the setting up process. According to Maurice Kogan, who was a member of the CSG, the civil servants who conceived it - including Derek Morell, Toby Weaver and Ralph Fletcher - never intended it to be prescriptive, but that was the role which the NUT and others felt that it was trying to play. Percy Wilson mishandled its introduction to the Inspectorate and Sir David Eccles' 'description of it as having commando-like characteristics was both comically inaccurate and damaging.' (26) The government's non-prescriptive curriculum role was confirmed in the 1972 White Paper: 'It is on matters of scale, organisation and cost, rather than educational content that attention is mainly focused in the White Paper.' (27)

Percy Wilson's tenure as Senior Chief Inspector was followed by a period of nine years during which the Inspectorate had three leaders in quick succession. Each may have had impressive credentials for the job, but an average of three years was insufficient time to make an impact on policy making within the Department. Cyril English (1965-67) was the first Chief Inspector of Further Education to become SCI and he increased the representation of mathematicians and scientists in HMI, as well as reforming the Further Education Inspectorate. W.R.Elliott (1967-72) had been runner-up to English in 1965 and was made Deputy SCI - heir-apparent - in the following year. Of all the SCIs since 1890, W.R.Elliott had served the longest before becoming head of the Inspectorate. His thirty-one years' service had left him as a distant figure to the younger HMIs and he was not an impressive witness to the 1968 Select Committee. In 1972, Margaret Thatcher was Secretary of State and she decided to look outside the Inspectorate for a successor to Elliott. H.W.French (1972-74), who, like Cyril English, had been Chief Inspector for Further Education, defeated the challenge from outside and was therefore the first SCI to be appointed by open competition. However, he can only have been regarded as a stop-gap, for he was already 62 years of age when he was appointed. Although in office only a short time, it was a crucial period in that a new Departmental Planning Organisation had been established in 1971. An important part of this was the Policy Steering Group, of which the Senior Chief Inspector was a member.

Sheila Browne, who had been made Deputy SCI in 1973, was appointed Senior Chief Inspector in open competition the following year. She had been a member of HMI for only 13 years. At last HM Inspectorate was to have the leadership which it had needed and deserved since Martin Roseveare left in 1957. As Staff Inspector, and then Chief Inspector, for Secondary Education, albeit only for three years, Miss Browne had earned the respect of the group of high-flying civil servants, such as Toby Weaver, John Hudson and Edward Simpson, who were later to become Deputy Secretaries in the Department. Soon after her appointment as SCI, Sheila Browne gave an interview to the Times Educational Supplement, the first occasion on which a senior HMI had done this. It was a sign of the more open and forceful style which was to come. She talked of the 'basic educational right of all children' and expressed the view that

> the Inspectorate must bolster the professionals. It is teachers who determine the quality of what goes on in the schools. Our help is bound to be indirect: courses, working with LEA advisers, and generally pushing out ideas. At the same time we can feed the evidence and our interpretations into policy making - though it may be hard to get the policy makers to hear what they don't know. (28)

She wanted the information gathered by HMIs to be put to better use. Information obtained in school inspections, which had previously disappeared into HMI office files, would 'get through to whoever is concerned.' She also felt that the Inspectorate should publish more speculative documents, at a more formative time in the debate on an issue. HMI should, she felt, be less concerned that it might later be proved wrong. Since that time no one has written, as they had done earlier, of the lack of influence of HMI on policy making.

In 1974 planning began for the primary and secondary surveys. The Chief Inspectors could see that the Labour government was showing an increasing interest in education in general, and in the curriculum in particular. They therefore started to plan ahead in a way which had not been done previously. They speculated on the issues on which inspectoral evidence would be needed three years later and began to find the means through which that evidence could be gathered. Before he made his speech at Ruskin College, James Callaghan went on a visit to Africa and took with him a draft of the primary survey to read on the plane. If HMI had not looked ahead in 1974, that evidence would not have been available when it was required by the Prime Minister. (29)

In the atmosphere of financial retrenchment which pervaded educational decision making in the 1970s, the Expenditure Steering Group (Education) - ESG(E) - was created in 1976 under the auspices of the Consultative Council on Local Government Finance. The local authority side was represented by officers and advisers from education and treasurers' departments; the government side comprised civil servants and HMIs, but it was the inspectors who provided much of the evidence for ESG(E) and it was Sheila Browne's decision that this evidence should be published. (30)

The 1977 Management Review of the DES had enhanced the position of the Inspectorate within the Department by recommending the creation of a third major policy group, the Policy Group for Inspection (PGI), which was established in 1979. This helped to coordinate the work of the Inspectorate with that of the Department. Four years later the Rayner Scrutiny listed the issues on which the Department asked HMI for advice. It was an impressively long list and 'not only is the range of demand made on HMI very wide and complex, it is also unpredictable in its timing.' The Rayner

Report went on to describe in detail the contribution which was made by the Inspectorate to each of the policy branches within the Department. (31)

Lawton and Gordon (32) have pointed out that earlier authors had a tendency to identify too closely HMI and DES civil servants as part of the same system of central control of education. They felt that such views misunderstood and oversimplified the complex position of HMI within the Department, which they expressed diagrammatically as a triangle of tension between politicians, bureaucrats and professionals. While they were right to question the previous assumptions about HMI's working relationships with civil servants, their representation of the situation was itself an oversimplification of a set of inter-relationships which were constantly changing, according to the personalities and policies of the ministers, top civil servants and senior HMIs. Rhodes Boyson, a former headmaster, who was a Conservative Education Minister from 1979 to 1983, claimed to have had no direct contact with HMI. Although he had great respect for Sheila Browne, he regarded HMIs as 'dilettantes on the fringes, who were semi-detached from the Department.' (33) In fact, Boyson and other education Ministers during the Thatcher administration were heavily influenced by a network of pressure groups, in several of which Boyson himself had been a key member. The National Council for Educational Standards, the Hillgate Group, the Conservative National Advisory Committee on Education, the Centre for Policy Studies and other groups provided a flow of right-wing policies, based on the market philosophy, which Conservative backbench opinion in the House of Commons, as well as the Prime Minister herself, ensured that education Ministers did not ignore. (34) Boyson needed little encouragement, for he regarded these groups as 'a bulwark against the DES civil servants.' (35)

In 1983 Sheila Browne became Principal of Newnham College, Cambridge, and it was thought that the Secretary of State, Sir Keith Joseph, would make an external political appointment to head the Inspectorate. Once again, however, the internal candidate was selected in preference to an outsider and Eric Bolton, at 48, became the youngest Senior Chief Inspector since Martin Roseveare. He had been in the Inspectorate for only ten years, having prevously been an English teacher, a College of Education lecturer and an LEA inspector. In making HMI into a truly national service, he brought it closer to the civil servants at the centre, an inevitable consequence of the centralisation of much of the decision making which had previously taken place in local authorities.

Eric Bolton described the links between HMI and the DES policy making structure as being of two kinds: first, the identification of policy issues which would require the underpinning of professional evidence, and secondly, working with the Department's policy branches to feed HMI's expertise into their discussions. (36) Each Chief Inspector was linked with at least one of the policy branches and was involved in their meetings. From that first point of contact a range of other operational contacts was built up, so that Staff Inspectors also became involved, attending meetings and preparing background papers. A submission for Ministers may begin at the other end of the scale with a draft paper from a civil service Principal. This would then be passed up to Assistant Secretary level, at which stage Staff Inspectors would normally be asked to make comments, although they may have been asked informally at the earlier stage. In the experience of one Staff Inspector, 'civil servants always accept HMI evidence, although they may not want to accept its implications.' (37) Thus there existed a very close inter-relationship of HMIs and civil servants,

with Chief Inspectors also attending the major programme meetings of the policy branches. This enabled them to hear the Deputy Secretaries talking with the policy branches about priorities. Such information was then digested by the committee of Chief Inspectors, meeting with SCI, in order to determine the Inspectorate's own priorities. During the second half of the 1980s the increasing government interest in educational matters on which the Inspectorate was competent to advise put HMI under a considerable amount of pressure. Eric Bolton contrasted this with earlier decades (38):

> When government is only interested in crude figures, such as teacher supply, then HMI has very little to say to the government, but when it is interested in matters of quality and process which HMI can tell them about, then HMI has a much greater central role.

The 1988 Education Reform Bill is one such example. Education had become a top policy priority for the Conservative government and the curriculum framework had largely been set out in the Department by the time that Kenneth Baker became Secretary of State in 1986. He asked the Inspectorate the crucial question, 'If there is a national curriculum, will everyone do it?' In view of all that HMI had been writing since the primary and secondary surveys, it is not surprising that the answer was 'No, some will not.' Kenneth Baker therefore concluded that legislation was necessary and the inspectors were able to tell him that, in the introduction of the General Certificate of Secondary Education, a mixture of top-down legislation and bottom-up execution had proved to be a successful model for spreading good practice very rapidly through the education system. (39)

The Education Reform Bill, however, contained much more than a framework for curriculum and assessment. Many of its clauses represented new initiatives, which sprang from the government's political commitment to the market economy and freedom of choice. This is where the closeness of

HMI to the civil servants and politicians becomes difficult. If they are to retain their independence, HMI can warn ministers of the possible consequences of their policies, but they can express no views on whether those policies are right or wrong. This is a fine distinction. 'That was the real danger,' said Eric Bolton (40),

> and it provides a good example of the line between political and professional advice. When the legislative programme is in place, then a different set of questions is raised for HMI. In that difficult relationship between senior inspectors and the Secretary of State - it ought to be difficult, but never uncomfortable - the politicians' freedom has been limited by the publication of HMI reports.

In this discussion of the role of HMI within the policy making of the Department of Education and Science, 1974 emerges as the date when the old order disappeared and a new order began. Even though it was not quite as clear-cut as this might suggest, the initial impact of Sheila Browne as SCI was sufficient to justify a division at this date. Before that time there was 'hardly an HMI who was not fed up with the lack of recognition of his work in the formation of policy.' (41) This was due to five factors: first,the politicians and civil servants were unwilling for most of this period to consult HMI; secondly, the policies in which the Department was interested were not within the sphere of expertise of the Inspectorate; thirdly, many of the education Ministers of the period were ineffective; fourthly, this contrasted with the strength of the senior civil servants who really ran the Department; and finally, the senior HMIs had insufficient vision and drive to make the most of their position as the professional advisers to the Department.

After 1974 all these factors changed. First, many of the post-1974 Ministers were people of some stature within their political party and the Cabinet. They were therefore able to make a stronger policy drive, which

meant that the civil servants had to be more sensitive to Minister's wishes and were therefore less dominating. Secondly, the political priorities of the government turned towards matters on which HMI could provide authoritative evidence. Thirdly, the Inspectorate was led by talented individuals who stayed in office long enough to make an impact. They defended fiercely the independence of the Inspectorate and produced their evidence in a much more public way. The quantity and quality of their writing and the messages which it contained concerning the impact of local and national policies put the Inspectorate in a much more influential position. They had to be listened to, both by the public and by the government. This extended their involvement with policy making, so that by the end of this period, HM Inspectorate was fully interlocked in the Department's planning procedures.

Into the Secret Garden: Curriculum Influence and Leadership 1944-1976

It is a long journey from the Handbook of Suggestions for the Consideration of Teachers (42) to the national curriculum. For the first twenty years after the Second World War the journey had barely started; thereafter the government took an accelerating interest in the curriculum and the destination of the journey acquired a gradual inevitability. Nevertheless it was a journey not without incident and there were casualties along the way. Indeed it could be said that, towards the end of the journey, with the destination in sight, there was some reckless driving which considerably upset the others on the road. Several vehicles were used on the journey, from the Central Advisory Council, through the Curriculum Study Group (CSG) and the Schools Council to the National Curriculum

Council (NCC) and Schools Examination and Assessment Council (SEAC). What is of particular interest to this study is the question: who has been driving the vehicles? The answer is not a simple one, but the part played by HM Inspectorate has been considerable. Throughout the post-war years HMI has had at least one hand on the steering wheel of curriculum change and, for considerable periods, HMI has been in the driving seat with one foot firmly on the accelerator.

The 1946 re-print of the Handbook of Suggestions for Teachers stated that it was not intended to impose uniformity of practice, because teachers must think for themselves, and it acknowledged such modern elementary school ideas as 'a shift of emphasis in teaching from the subject to the child' and the need to teach skills, values and attitudes, as well as promoting the personal development of the children. (43) The HMIs who wrote the Handbook stated that streaming was desirable, but that it should be 'no more than a framework' and other groupings should also be used, taking great care to ensure that the C stream did not become affected by a feeling of inferiority. (44) The main part of the Handbook was a section on each of the subjects of the elementary school curriculum.

Apart from its section on Religious Education, the 1944 Education Act contained no clauses on the school curriculum and the Handbook barely filled the ensuing vacuum in primary schools. The period 1944-1960 was therefore the 'golden age of teacher control (or non-control) of the curriculum'. (45) It was not until 1959 that the successor to the Handbook was published, in which the HMI authors had moved away from streaming towards a more flexible organisation of the primary school. (46) Meanwhile, the reorganisation of secondary education was proceeding along the lines of the 1938 Spens Report into grammar, technical and modern schools. There was

plenty of debate about the secondary examination system, but little about the curriculum, and the secondary modern schools had a particularly free rein in this respect. There was little guidance from HM Inspectorate, whose secondary members were former grammar school teachers with little understanding of the needs of the secondary modern school. Until the 1958 White Paper (47), the Inspectorate had been opposed to GCE courses in secondary modern schools, a policy which would have given the modern schools a much greater degree of public acceptability. Owing to the same lack of understanding on the part of HMI, the secondary technical school also failed to develop, according to John Hudson, who was a Deputy Secretary in the DES from 1969 to 1980: 'A clear vision of the distinctive ethos of a technical school for the able was lacking.' He recalled two separate incidents to illustrate the point (48):

> the first, when the responsible Staff Inspector, asked in the course of an internal meeting about his concept of the secondary technical school, replied that it was a grammar school without Latin; and on another occasion a senior inspector said that the technical school should use its vocational orientation to stimulate the motivation of its pupils, and then provide them with a good general education.

Furthermore, Hudson observed that the historical apartheid between the technical and commercial on the one hand, and the primary and secondary on the other, persisted at least until 1980 in the different educational languages spoken by the two sides of the Inspectorate.

In so far as there was any central influence on the school curriculum during the period up to the early 1960s, HMI considered that this was their territory. They played a large part in the work of the Central Advisory Councils on Education (CACE), of which there was one each for England and Wales established by the 1944 Education Act. The CACE set up a series of committees, the reports of which are known by the names of their Chairmen -

Percy, Crowther, Plowden, etc. HMIs acted as assessors to the committees and usually took the role of secretary, a key figure who had to 'make the administrative arrangements, keep in touch with the Department's officers and with the witnesses, and generally forward the work of the committee. (49) According to Kogan and Packwood, who made a close study of the CACE committees, they tended to favour a child-centred approach and were opposed to formalism and traditional relationships, a line which reflected the thrust of the background papers written by HMI, as well as the liberal educational establishment members who gave evidence. (50) The last of the CACE committees was the Plowden Committee, which was set up in 1963 and produced its report in 1967. Kogan and Packwood commented (51) that

> perhaps the later reports of the Council were too potent for a Department of Education and Science that was uncertain of its own role in leading the educational service, which needed to find its own identity and role in analysis and forward planning of policies.

Kogan and Packwood identified a circularity in the CACE committees, in which CACE members were appointed by the Department, its committees were serviced by civil servants and HMIs, and then the recommendations were considered by departmental committees on which the same people sat. 'They said what HMIs said anyway.'(52) Yet, during this period, apart from their work for CACE, HM Inspectorate was not exercising a central influence, as much as a disjointed series of individual influences. It was the era of the free-wheeling inspector, expounding pet theories and inspiring teachers to follow them. Thus Edith Biggs, who was pre-eminent in this way in primary mathematics, and others such as Robin Tanner in art, were encouraged to change the school curriculum through the Short Course programme and in their visits to schools. Yet this type of influence was by no means universal in the Inspectorate and 'there were tremendous tensions between

the free-wheelers and the inspectors proper, who were affronted by the free-wheeling manifestation. HMI was never in totality as liberal as it is reputed to have been.' (53) The way in which many inspectors influenced the primary curriculum was put by Norman Thomas, who was beginning his career as an HMI at the time (54):

> There was a pervasive view in HMI that children should be taking more responsibility for their own learning, that they ought to be less talked at and that they ought to be exploring the circumstances in which they lived, and that art and music were very important. It is true to say that nearly all, but not all, HMI were trying to loosen things up, but not in the sense of being soft.

The free-wheelers were supported by people such as Edith Moorhouse, who worked extensively with Robin Tanner in Oxfordshire, and who wrote that 'the one great joy of an HMI is that he is the Queen's servant, not the Ministry's, and in those days HMIs lifted teachers' sights and made them find gifts they didn't know they had.' (55)

Sir David Eccles had two spells as Minister of Education and, during the second of these, he widened public interest in education (56), expressing the intention to 'try to make the Ministry's voice heard rather more often and positively, and no doubt more controversially'. (57) By establishing in 1962 the Curriculum Study Group (CSG) within the Department of Education and Science and describing it as a 'commando-type unit', he succeeded in all these objectives simultaneously. It was Eccles who had first used the phrase 'the secret garden of the curriculum' and the CSG, which consisted of HMIs, civil servants and outside experts, was greeted with considerable suspicion by the teachers' associations which had been tending the garden largely undisturbed for nearly twenty years. The heads of the CSG were the widely respected civil servant, Derek Morrell, and R.W.Morris HMI. Maurice Kogan has pointed out that, far from being an

attack on the teachers' power, the CSG was intended to 'identify, analyse and publish accounts of curriculum developments which might be of help and interest to the schools. ... Most of its work consisted of preparing papers on methods of examining for the Secondary School Examinations Council (SSEC).' (58)

Nevertheless, the teachers' associations and Local Education Authorities, which were very influential at the time, persuaded Edward Boyle, who had succeeded Eccles in 1962, that the CSG should be disbanded and that a body should be established which contained representatives of government, teachers and LEAs. A committee under Sir John Lockwood recommended that the SSEC should be replaced by a Schools Council for the Curriculum and Examinations, which started work in October 1964 with three Joint Secretaries - Morrell, Morris and Joslyn Owen, an LEA officer who subsequently became Chief Education Officer for Devon. The Schools Council had a majority of teachers on all its committees, which covered both the examinations work of the SSEC and the curriculum work of the CSG. A Chief Education Officer wrote in a Times Educational Supplement article which was critical of HMI that 'the Schools Council, and not the Inspectorate, is now the powerhouse of ideas' on the curriculum (59), but he appears to have failed to notice that the inspectors were closely involved in all aspects of the Council's work. By 1980 this involved more than 70 HMIs for a total of 540 days per year (60) as well as Robert Sibson, the Joint Secretary of the Council, who was seconded full-time. (61) For the HMIs engaged part-time on Schools Council work, however, it was not easy to think of their Council work as separate from their inspection work and this led to certain key HMIs becoming too closely identified with particular Council projects, which endangered their role as impartial observers of the education system.

The way in which HMIs, as they moved around the country, were able to communicate their enthusiasm, or lack of it, for Schools Council projects, in the knowledge that the final curriculum decisions would anyway be made by head teachers in individual schools, contributed both to the nation's laissez faire approach to curriculum planning and to the poor opinion which many people began to form of the work of the Schools Council. Projects were put forward to the Council mainly by groups of academics, but the criteria for acceptance of a project were not clear - one of the Joint Secretaries referred to it as 'having the right smell'. (62) The Council was also poor on evaluation and dissemination, as it did not wish to be seen as prescriptive or infringing the freedom of the teacher. The HMIs, who worked on Council committees with a majority of teachers, were powerless to do anything about this, since 'it was a period when self-interest was too strong and the factional groups in the teaching profession were more interested in scoring off each other.' (63) A further problem was that the 'cafeteria approach' to curriculum development prevented any attention being given to the structure of the curriculum as a whole. (64) It was not surprising that the Schools Council survived the period up to 1970, and from 1974 to 1979, when the Labour government was in office, since Ministers worked closely with the teachers' associations, particularly the National Union of Teachers, but it was more surprising that Margaret Thatcher, who was Secretary of State from 1970 to 1974, did not seek to abolish the Schools Council, a task which was left to Sir Keith Joseph in 1982. This move was strongly supported by DES officials such as Walter Ulrich, a Deputy Secretary who had heavily criticised the Council and its management (65), and it represented a signal from the government that it felt that the partnership model of curriculum development did not work and

that it intended to move forward through the work of its own civil servants and inspectors. (66) In the meantime, however, the Inspectorate had already become frustrated by the Council's inability to consider the curriculum as a whole and, when Robert Sibson's secondment ended in 1973, he was not replaced.

The political climate in which the Schools Council had been formed and which left the curriculum in the hands of the teachers was changing, not least because of the Black Papers, the first of which appeared in 1969. (67) These challenged the progressive ethos of education, which had reached its apotheosis in the Plowden Report of 1967, much of which had been written by HMIs. (68) Although most inspectors instinctively rejected much of what the Black Papers were saying, they had an influence on the approach of HMI to primary education (69) and Lawton and Gordon found evidence of this in an HMI report on Open Plan Primary Schools (1972). (70) By then, a Conservative government was in power and Margaret Thatcher was Secretary of State, so that the Black Paper authors had a sympathetic audience inside the Department. The situation at William Tyndale Junior School (71) added fuel to the fires which had been lit and these burned very publicly between 1973 and 1976.

The 1972 White Paper (72) had said nothing about the curriculum, but it had led to the establishment of several internal DES committees in which HMIs were involved. Out of these was born the Assessment of Performance Unit (APU), the job of which was to monitor the educational system in a more statistical way than the Inspectorate had been able to do. It was led by an HMI and worked very closely with both inspectors and civil servants.

In the Secret Garden: Curriculum Influence and Leadership 1976-1991

The attack on progressive methods in primary schools was matched by public concern over standards in comprehensive schools, which by 1975 were attended by half of secondary age pupils. Under Sheila Browne's leadership from 1974, the Inspectorate was anxious to find the evidence which would establish whether the claims about standards were true or false. As she put it (73): 'We were constantly being asked to generalise and we were too professional to generalise without the evidence being clear.' A meeting was therefore convened, which was attended by Norman Thomas, the Chief Inspector for Primary Schools since 1973, DES officials and representatives of the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER). Thomas considered that NFER proposals for a survey would not produce findings which were sufficiently revealing and felt that a survey should be conducted by HMI, although he realised that HMI could not produce information on absolute standards. NFER helped to plan the survey and a DES statistician was attached to the HMI team for two years. This was the first time that HMI had employed standardised tests alongside the normal inspection process. These were extensively trialled and modified before the programme of more than 500 primary school inspections by pairs of HMI. (74)

During the period when these inspections were taking place, the national debate about education continued and a new Prime Minister, James Callaghan, began a series of briefings with his senior ministers, the first of which was with Fred Mulley, the Secretary of State for Education. At this meeting the Prime Minister asked Mulley for a paper from his Department officials on four issues - the 3Rs in the primary school, the curriculum of older children in comprehensive schools, the examination

system and the problems facing 16-19 year olds. Their report on these issues, which became known as the 'Yellow Book', was never published but was leaked to the Times Educational Supplement and caused a furore in the education world. (75)

After praising the way in which the post-war expansion had been carried out, the Yellow Book referred to complaints in the media which reflected 'a measure of genuine public concern' about education. Criticisms of primary schools included lack of discipline and application, and 'a failure to achieve satisfactory results in formal subjects, particularly in reading and arithmetic.' It blamed this on the child-centred approach advocated in the Plowden Report which was fully adopted in only a minority of schools, but which had a widespread effect on teaching methods generally. 'In the right hands this approach is capable of producing admirable results. ... Unfortunately these newer and freer methods could prove a trap to less able and experienced teachers ... The time is almost certainly right for a corrective shift of emphasis.'

Criticisms of secondary schools which were quoted included 'the feeling that the schools have become too easy going and demand too little work, and inadequate standards of performance in formal subjects.' There was also 'the resentment of middle class parents at the disappearance of the grammar schools' and too much subject choice for 13 and 14 year olds. To add salt to the wounds which the Yellow Book inflicted on the teachers, it continued:

> No one could deny that there are currently weaknesses in secondary schools. Some of these are the by-products of the change to comprehensive education. ... The teaching force is not as well equipped, in terms of formal qualifications, as we would wish. ... Because of its recent and rapid expansion, the teaching force contains a disproportionate number of young and inexperienced teachers. In the less definable qualities of skill and personality, while the best teachers are up to very high standards, the average is

> probably below what used to be expected in, for example, a good grammar school. ... Some of them have possibly been too ready to drop their sights in setting standards of performance and have failed to develop new styles of assessment.

The paper concluded that unacceptable variations between schools meant that the time had come to establish a core curriculum for secondary education.

The Schools Council came in for all the criticism that one would expect from DES officials, such as Walter Ulrich, who saw it as an obstacle to the greater central control of the curriculum which they desired. During the writing of the Yellow Book they had been joined by a new Permanent Secretary, James Hamilton, who had been in the Cabinet Office at the time of Callaghan's meeting with Mulley and who was later described as an 'unrepentant centralist'. (76) On the Schools Council's examination reform plans, the Yellow Book outlined misgivings about the proposed Certificate of Extended Education (CEE) and criticised the Council's scheme for replacing GCE and CSE with a single examination at 16+, claiming that 'the Department's reservations are shared by important sectors of the educational world.' It summarised the performance of the Schools Council, both on curriculum and examinations, as 'generally mediocre'.

The Department of Education and Science officials wrote the Yellow Book, although the senior members of the Inspectorate were party to it. (77) It is therefore hardly surprising that it contains no criticism of the role of the Department in the shortcomings which it listed. This led to a strong attack by Sir Alex Smith, the Chairman of the Schools Council, who pointed out that the Department was represented on the Council, where it had apparently not had the courage to express its criticisms directly. Of the Inspectorate, Smith was even more critical (78):

> ... were I the recipient of this report, my immediate reaction would be to ask what, if the weaknesses in schools summarized earlier in the report exist, this 'most powerful single agency' with a major

> commitment to improving the performance of the system, has been doing during the decade or two during which these weaknesses have been developing. The report shows that there is a clear need for a firm appraisal of the performance of HM Inspectorate, yet it contains not a word of criticism of it.

In fact, opinion had moved in the Inspectorate during the previous two years and there had been a shift away from support for informal methods in the primary school and the cafeteria approach to curriculum planning in secondary education. The Yellow Book emphasised the importance of the work of the Inspectorate and, of the sixteen 'specific lines of action' suggested in its final section, eight made explicit mention of HMI's role in developing them. The introduction of a common core curriculum was the most significant of these lines of action, the last of which gave a clear message that the Department saw for itself and its Inspectorate a stronger role in future curriculum planning:

> It will also be good to get on record from Ministers, and in particular the Prime Minister, an authoritative pronouncement on the division of responsibility for what goes on in school suggesting that the Department should give a firmer lead. Such a pronouncement would have to respect legitimate claims made by the teachers as to the exercise of their professional judgment, but should firmly refute any argument - and this is what they have sought to establish - that no one except teachers has any right to any say in what goes on in schools. The climate for a declaration on these lines may in fact now be relatively favourable. Nor need there be any inhibition for fear that the Department could not make use of enhanced opportunity to exercise influence over curriculum and teaching methods: the Inspectorate would have a leading role to play in bringing forward ideas in these areas and is ready to fulfil that responsibility.

Shortly before copies of the Yellow Book were circulated to all HMI, Sheila Browne warned her colleagues that 'nothing must be allowed to change radically the nature of our relationship with the various parts of the system. We must not get ideas above our station, nor abate our care always to give advice that is timely and realistic.' (79)

When the Prime Minister made his eagerly awaited speech at Ruskin

College shortly afterwards, he made a strong claim for public interest in education and articulated some of the concerns about informal methods of teaching, standards of numeracy and poor preparation for future employees in industry - 'whistling up weasel words to exploit popular prejudices', as the Times Educational Supplement put it. (80) He described the case for a core curriculum of basic knowledge and called for further discussion of 'the role of the Inspectorate in relation to national standards and their maintenance', although the thrust of his speech was to put the curriculum debate into the public domain, rather than into the hands of the Inspectorate or departmental officials. In this nuance may be detected the influence of the Downing Street Policy Unit, which was led by Bernard Donoughue, who regarded the whole education establishment as culpable for the shortcomings described in the Ruskin College speech which he had largely written. Describing the offended reaction of the teachers' associations and the Department officials, Donoughue wrote (81) that

> the Senior Chief Inspector of Schools asked to see me and she conducted a thorough investigation of my motives and objectives (although I sensed that she and the Inspectorate were secretly happy that somebody in power had at last talked about the real educational problems which they saw every day at classroom level).

By this time the evidence of the primary and secondary surveys was starting to emerge and the sharper edge which Sheila Browne had given to the work of the Inspectorate was entirely appropriate for the follow-up to Callaghan's speech. If momentum towards greater central control of the curriculum was to be sustained, the work of HMI was essential for two reasons. First, the government could make no progress without the evidence base which HMI would provide, and secondly, the so-called Great Debate which followed the Ruskin College speech was neither great nor a debate. It culminated in a Green Paper which contained platitudes and generalised intentions, but no firm

proposals. On the role of the Inspectorate, it stated that 'the traditional means of assessing the performance of the education system as a whole rests with HM Inspectorate. ...HM Inspectorate is increasingly moving towards complementary quantitative analyses of which the current surveys of primary and secondary schools are a good example.' (82) The Liberal Party education spokesman asked why the Green Paper contained no proposals for strengthening HMI and, when there was no mention of education in the Queen's Speech in the following November, it was clear that the Prime Minister had wasted the opportunity which he had created a year earlier. (83)

HMI, however, was determined not to miss the opportunity. As early as 1974 a group had been established under the leadership of Roy Wake, Staff Inspector for Secondary Education, to see how the secondary curriculum could be made more responsive to national needs. The thoughts of the group were aired eighteen months later at a conference in Oxford (84) and given greater prominence by the Senior Chief Inspector in a speech in July 1977, in which she criticised the diversity in the curriculum of secondary age pupils. Miss Browne was clearly keen that the Inspectorate should play its part in reducing this diversity (85):

> You will realise that one of the problems in our current work on the curriculum arises from the professional independence of HMI. We have, to some extent, jumped the gun and perhaps started running the wrong race. Ours is perhaps a longer distance. We have been thinking about a very broad common core - almost but not quite a common curriculum - translatable into a whole range of forms to match pupils' needs.

When the HMI survey of Primary Education in England appeared in 1978, it exploded some of the myths of the Yellow Book and the Black Papers. It found that, far from being neglected, the basic subjects formed the major part of the primary school curriculum. (86) Furthermore, the survey found

that three-quarters of teachers adopted a mainly didactic approach and only five per cent had a mainly exploratory approach, a finding which was not in tune with the alarm bells that had been rung about informal methods. What was of greater concern to HMI was the poor work which was taking place in other subjects, such as science, history and geography. The Chief Inspector for Primary Education, Norman Thomas, was determined that the survey should be followed up, so that it did not lie on shelves gathering dust, as is the fate of so many educational reports. He therefore said that he needed the equivalent of ten HMIs working on post-survey dissemination for two years after publication and he organised conferences and courses around the country. Priorities also had to be considered: 'We had to make up our minds what influence the survey should have and then point it in that direction. We decided, on the basis of the evidence, that the thing to push for was science. ... The primary survey made teachers feel guilty if they weren't doing science.' (87)

A year later the results of the secondary survey appeared in Aspects of Secondary Education in England. The preparation was as careful as its counterpart in the primary sector and its net was cast wide - ten per cent of secondary schools were visited. It concentrated on four areas of the curriculum - language, mathematics, science and personal and social development. On the whole, the schools were found to be doing well in these four areas, although the mathematics and science for less able pupils were strongly criticised. The report also criticised the schools for allowing examinations to exercise an undue influence on teaching, with the result that many lessons and much pupil writing were mechanical and lifeless. Option schemes for 14 and 15 year old pupils were wide and lacked coherence, a finding which has done much to influence HMI thinking on the

need for a common core curriculum (88):

> The evidence of this survey suggests a need for all pupils to carry forward a broader programme of studies to the end of the basic period of compulsory education, with a corresponding reduction in the number of 'options' taken by individual pupils and a limitation on the range from which they are drawn.

Roy Wake's group had been planning a curriculum which would meet these criticisms. This was described not in terms of traditional school subjects, but in eight areas of experience - aesthetic and creative, ethical, linguistic, mathematical, physical, scientific, social and political, spiritual. (89) A ninth area - technological - was subsequently added to the list. In 1976 HMI had negotiated with five Local Education Authorities - Cheshire, Hampshire, Lancashire, Nottinghamshire and Wigan - to run a project which would develop programmes of study for the 11 to 16 age group which would deliver the HMI's 'entitlement curriculum'. The results of this project were not published until December 1983 (90) - the gypsy caravan of curriculum change was edging forward, Sheila Browne told the British Association Conference in 1982, but there was a sense of frustration in the Inspectorate at the slow progress and the reluctance of the education system to embrace change. (91) The Times Educational Supplement considered that 'this was the Inspectorate's fault for pussy-footing' and noted that the politicians, who tended to work to much shorter, politically expedient, timetables of reform, were becoming impatient. (92)

One consequence of this impatience was Circular 14/77 which was sent by the Department of Education and Science to Local Education Authorities, demanding an account of their curriculum policies. Only one LEA - Kingston-upon-Thames - refused to answer the DES curriculum questionnaire, stating that 'some questions were about things the DES had no real need to know and cut across local autonomy.' (93) The results of the DES survey of LEA

curriculum policies were published at the end of 1979, revealing not only a great variation across the country, but a lack of knowledge within many LEAs of what was happening in their schools. (94) Two months later the DES published A Framework for the School Curriculum (1980), which outlined a six subject core, but which had not had any input from HMI who, very shortly afterwards, published A View of the Curriculum, extending its previous work on areas of experience. The superiority of the HMI document over the Framework was widely commented upon. Whereas the Framework had been 'an openly centralist discussion document, extremely bureaucratic and technicist in style, ... the HMI view was fundamentally different from that of the DES ... and there was clearly a growing tension between HMI and the DES on the questions of curriculum content and control.' (95) The trend towards central influence, if not control, of the curriculum continued with the publication in 1981 of The School Curriculum, a DES document on which there had been consultation with HMI. This was followed by Circular 6/81 which asked Local Education Authorities to review their curriculum policies and to make plans in line with The School Curriculum. Circular 8/83 kept up the pressure by asking LEAs what steps had been taken and informing them that HMI would keep the curriculum under review.

Having produced surveys of both primary and secondary education, HMI turned its attention to middle schools, producing reports in 1983 and 1985. (96) Pupil rolls were falling in middle schools and a favourable report by HMI was needed if the decline in the number of such schools was to be arrested. An insufficient proportion of the schools was found to be satisfactory to stimulate opinion into halting this decline.

At the start of 1984 Sir Keith Joseph, who had taken over from Mark Carlisle as Secretary of State in 1981, made a well-received speech at the

North of England Education Conference. He proposed that the 16+ examination should move away from norm-referencing towards a greater degree of criterion-referencing, so that the rise in standards of attainment which he hoped for would be revealed in improved examination grades for many pupils. The levels of attainment were to be determined by grade-related criteria. He outlined the minimum levels of attainment to be achieved by 80 to 90 per cent of pupils and reiterated the messages of HMI that all primary school pupils should study science and that there should be no premature dropping of subjects by 14 year olds. The curriculum should remain broad and balanced up to the age of 16, with greater differentiation and more relevance to life outside school. He concluded that 'there is now no serious dispute that the school curriculum is a proper concern not only of teachers, but also of parents, governing bodies, LEAs and the government.' His speech was clearly an attempt to build a consensus which included the teachers, about whom he had some complementary things to say. (97) One commentator later remarked that, in the secret garden of the curriculum, David Eccles had never come out of the potting shed, whereas Sir Keith Joseph was now tramping all over the flower beds. (98)

The Senior Chief Inspector was making similar speeches which advocated a national curriculum and was expressing the view that the trend towards a highly managed and centrally controlled system was irreversible and inevitable. Eric Bolton felt that the autonomy of individual schools was particularly difficult to justify at a time when resources for education were scarce. (99) The option schemes in secondary schools would, he expected, be replaced by a common curriculum of eight or nine subjects, taking up almost all of the week's timetable. He anticipated an increase in the time devoted to technology and design and a greater relevance to the

outside world. (100) Turning his attention to the primary school, Eric Bolton advocated more subject-specialist teaching for children of nine and upwards, especially in science and mathematics. (101) In subsequent speeches, Eric Bolton, senior primary HMIs and the Secretary of State himself set out a blueprint of the primary school, with teachers acting as subject consultants and older children taught for part of the week by these specialists. They also advocated a broad curriculum, appropriately differentiated and with clear progression, in which topic work was better integrated with the whole curriculum plan of the school. (102) This message was supported in the DES document Better Schools (1985), which set out the content to be covered in primary education. The Secretary of State, his Department and the Inspectorate were now moving forward together on the primary curriculum and Sir Keith Joseph quoted extensively from HMI documents such as Education Observed 2 and The Curriculum from 5 to 16. (103) In this latter document, the Inspectorate returned to the areas of experience and outlined a curriculum based on clearly defined aims and a range of teaching strategies. In this model it was to be left to schools to determine how best to fulfil these aims, although the subsequent papers in the Curriculum Matters series, which dealt with individual subjects and set targets for achievement at 7, 11 and 16, were more prescriptive than The Curriculum from 5 to 16.

Throughout the 1980s the Inspectorate had been advocating a national curriculum framework around which the teachers, using their professional judgment, would build the detailed curriculum of the school. HMI had been saying that there were some problems in both the primary and secondary phases of education which were so widespread that they could only be solved by having a national curriculum which would inevitably limit the freedom of

individual schools and teachers.(104) The Schools Council had been replaced in 1982 by a Schools Examination Council (SEC) and a Schools Curriculum Development Council (SCDC) and, although the SEC was strongly led by Sir Wilfrid Cockcroft, the SCDC was a weak body, so that Eric Bolton had some justification in claiming that the front runners in the curriculum debate in the mid-1980s were 'the government and DES in terms of executive action and policy development and HM Inspectorate in respect of the professional debate and advice.' (105)

Although HMI was doing its curriculum planning around areas of experience and the DES talked only of school subjects, this was a period when HMI, DES officials and politicians were largely in harmony, agreeing about the problems of the education system which had been identified in HMI reports. As a result of its improved national organisational structure, HMI was able to provide the government with answers to the questions which Ministers were asking. Sir Keith Joseph's pronouncements on the curriculum were therefore underpinned by the solid professional evidence of the Inspectorate. The new General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examination was successfully introduced, although the teachers claimed that the timescale for the introduction was too short and were not pleased when HMI commended the 'cascade' model of in-service training which had been used as a means of establishing the GCSE quickly. (106)

The point at which the DES and HMI diverged in their progress towards a national curriculum was when Kenneth Baker became Secretary of State in 1986 and concluded that the only way to make a national curriculum work in all schools was to legislate. Eric Bolton, who had said in April 1987 'Teachers must not allow politicians to take control of the national curriculum' (107), could not oppose government policy publicly, but came

near to this in giving evidence to 1987 Commons Select Committee on Education, when he warned that the introduction of national tests could be fraught with difficulties, labelling many children as failures and tying schools to the passing of tests. He pointed out that HMI could not oppose a government policy, such as the introduction of tests, but that it would be the inspectors' duty to provide evidence if the tests led to a narrowing of the curriculum. (108) We do not know what the Senior Chief Inspector was telling Kenneth Baker in his internal briefings and policy papers, but Eric Bolton continued to use the public platform to tread carefully the line between warning about the possible consequences of government policy and outright opposition to the policy itself. Many people would have liked him to speak out more clearly against some of the more extreme measures in the Education Reform Bill, but he knew that this would have destroyed the independence of the Inspectorate and therefore confined himself to warnings such as 'The national curriculum could end up as a damaging 'Frankenstein' if the sensible and constructive voice of education did not make itself heard.' (109)

The pace at which HMI had been working towards a national curriculum was clearly too slow for Kenneth Baker who first announced in a Sunday television interview that there would be legislation for a national curriculum. (110) The SEC exercise to define the grade-related criteria for GCSE had run into difficulties and the Secretary of State realised that he would have to legislate in order to make progress. On two further occasions Kenneth Baker unveiled more of his plans, first defining a national curriculum of five subjects for all pupils up to the age of 16 and then, in evidence to the 1987 Select Committee, increasing this to seven subjects with testing at 7, 11 and 14. (111) He cited the conclusions of HMI reports

to back his claim that this type of legislation was necessary. The National Curriculum Council and the School Examinations and Assessment Council were formed and the NCC, under the vigorous leadership of Duncan Graham, rushed in to the creation of a detailed national curriculum on the ground where HMI had been treading gingerly for many years. In the same way that they had been involved with all the work of the Schools Council, HMIs were attached to all the committees and working parties of NCC and SEAC. They were influential not only in providing breadth to the discussions, but in bringing their daily experience of school inspections into bodies which contained few active school teachers. In one case their influence was such that committee members complained of 'too much direction from Her Majesty's Inspectorate.' (112)

Evidence to Select Committees

Apart from the 1968 Select Committee, which investigated the Inspectorate itself, HMI gave evidence to a number of other committees of the House of Commons. Of particular interest was the formation in 1979 of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Education, Science and the Arts. Its first chairman was Christopher Price MP, who deliberately set out to make the work of HMI more public through its evidence to the Committee. (113) In 1981 two groups of inspectors gave evidence to the Select Committee's inquiry into the secondary school curriculum and examinations. (114) The first session began with a discussion of the nature of the independence of the Inspectorate before moving to the HMI report on local authority expenditure in which the level of provision of some LEAs had been severely criticised. Of the LEAs in which provision had been found to be low in the

previous year, it was known that four had made further cuts. The Senior Chief Inspector, Sheila Browne, was pressed hard by the Select Committee to identify the four local authorities, but she was unwilling to do so as she had carried out the survey under a promise of anonymity to the LEAs. (115) The inspectors commented on the effects of falling pupil rolls and on the other judgments which they had made in their report on the LEAs. (116) Their answers on the curriculum focussed on the variations in the curriculum of pupils in the 14 to 16 age range. They considered that it was realistic to aim for a guaranteed curriculum for all pupils, although Sheila Browne stated that curriculum-led staffing policies and self-evaluation in schools were pre-requisites of such a guarantee. (117)

The Select Committee members were clearly impressed by the HMI evidence and they recommended that, where judgments of inadequate provision were made by HMI, the onus should be on the Secretary of State to say why he was taking no action. They also recommended that HMI should become financially independent of the Department and that the Senior Chief Inspector, and not the Secretary of State, should decide whether or not to publish HMI reports. (118)

The Senior Chief Inspector gave evidence to the Select Committee on several occasions in 1984. The first of these was Sir Keith Joseph's introductory meeting with the Select Committee after the General Election. (119) The Select Committee members were mostly new and the Senior Chief Inspector had a private meeting with them before the Secretary of State gave evidence. HMI reports were frequently quoted by the MPs in their questions.

Later in 1984 the Select Committee called Eric Bolton to give evidence to one of its Scrutiny Sessions and revealed a difference of opinion

between the Senior Chief Inspector and the Secretary of State. In discussing the role of the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) in Non-Advanced Further Education, an MP asked about inspection procedures. Eric Bolton stated that concerns about these were well founded as there were 'parts of MSC activities which HMI do not have a locus to inspect.' He was referring to those parts of the Youth Training Scheme (YTS) which occurred in the workplace. When Sir Keith Joseph was asked whether the government would expand the remit of HMI in order to cover all the educational work of the MSC, the Secretary of State said that he would not propose this, since the power to enter employers' premises 'would change the whole basis of HMI.' (120)

The Select Committee then turned its attention to primary education and an HMI team was asked to give the first evidence to the Committee. Both Eric Bolton and the Chief Inspector for Primary Education, Geoffrey Elsmore, emphasised the need for a flexible style of teaching and a broad curriculum. For the older primary children they recommended a more discrete approach to learning, but they did not suggest a full programme of subject teaching, as in secondary schools. They were concerned about the levels of expectation which teachers had of children of average and below average ability. They were also worried about the lack of curriculum breadth in small rural primary schools and they suggested the clustering of schools for some specialist teaching. Eric Bolton hoped that HMI was 'beginning to be much clearer in articulating what are the necessary but not sufficient characteristics of teaching quality.' (121) By the time that the HMI team returned to give further evidence on primary education, Geoffrey Elsmore had died. However, the Inspectorate now had a clearer vision of the primary curriculum and Eric Bolton stated that HMI firmly believed that there was

too much variation in quality and provision and in curriculum and achievement. He concluded that 'there is a need for a broad national framework for the curriculum with broadly agreed norms of what children ought to be achieving and we are pursuing that line.' (122)

During the 1980s the Select Committee considered a wide range of issues and frequently called for evidence from HM Inspectorate. The Select Committee members were able to draw out the HMIs who asserted their professional independence to make public statements about matters which previously would have remained as confidential advice to Ministers. The Select Committee system pulled back a little the curtain of government secrecy and the HMIs who gave evidence were able to help the Committee in this respect. However, the Select Committee had no power to require the government to act on its recommendations.

The Independence of HM Inspectorate

The apparently innocuous proposal to appoint inspectors of schools in 1839 attracted considerable opposition, both political and religious. The political critics argued that inspection would make the schools and teachers 'completely subservient to the caprices, the crochets and arbitrary orders of the Committee of Council on Education.' (123) The Church authorities insisted that any oversight of the Anglican schools could only be exercised by ordained men who were ecclesiastical nominees. The weakness of Melbourne's administration and the power of the Church combined both to modify the proposed position and to delay the appointment of the inspectors. Eventually a compromise was reached between the government and the Church and, although it was no part of their intention,

the Bishops by this Concordat had also realised the aims of the political opposition. (124) The inspectors' 'subservience to the Committee' was much mitigated by the refusal of the Church to surrender control to the secular authorities.

The independence of the inspectors, thus enhanced by the need to placate the Church, was however essentially a function of the constitutional position of education in England at the time. In contemporary Prussia and Holland, where there were already inspectors of schools, there were also Ministers of Education and detailed educational legislation. With a powerful political master and precise laws to monitor, the Prussian and Dutch inspectors were inevitably state officials with executive functions. In England the situation was very different: there was no Minister and no specifically educational legislation. At government level responsibility for education was vested in a Committee of busy men, all of whom had more important duties, and there were no laws for the inspectors to enforce. The 'Instructions to Inspectors' of 1840 reflected this situation: the inspectors were 'not intended as a means of exercising control, but of affording assistance'. (125) In the circumstances it is difficult to see what other role could have been assigned to them. It is also clear that, since these were their duties, there was no reason for the government to feel any compelling need to exercise close control over the inspectors. Not surprisingly, nobody appears to have given much thought to this point.

The early inspectors used their independence expansively, recognising that educational progress was dependent on social conditions - their reports give a fascinating account of early Victorian England. The Minutes of 1846 and the Revised Code of 1862 both extended the duties of HMI and

made them more precise. The Education Department could now reasonably require the inspectors' reports to deal with those matters that were specified in the Code. What was much more debatable was their power to restrict the reports to those matters. This was the basis of a dispute in 1858 between C.B.Adderley, the Vice-President of the Committee of Council, and Rev W.H.Brookfield HMI, who acted on behalf of the inspectors. The controversy culminated in a parliamentary debate which vindicated the inspectors. When Adderley was succeeded by Robert Lowe, a man who positively relished a quarrel, the issue revived. Lowe's position was clear: the inspectors were servants of the Committee of Council and it was intolerable for a government department not to have control over its subordinates. In his evidence to the Select Committee which was set up to investigate the matter, Lowe stated (126)

> It is not [the inspector's] duty to enter avowedly into a controversy with the Department. ... I think there needs no Minute to set aside such reports as those; it is a mere matter of common official subordination that they should not be printed.

The failure of the Department to sustain this position had a number of causes, partly to do with the nature of the Department and partly with the nature of the Inspectorate. The central authority was weak, there was still no Minister and the Committee of Council was an amorphous body which seldom met. The examiners, whose duty it was to scrutinise the inspectors' reports, occupied a slightly anomalous position within the Department, a state for which they compensated by doing no more work than was absolutely necessary. The Permanent Secretary was an administrator who lacked credibility to exercise judgment on purely educational matters. Equally important, though less tangible, was the calibre of men who became inspectors. As was noted in chapter 1, the careers of those who became

HMIs between 1840 and 1870 exhibited a remarkable uniformity. (127) Their patrician background, which was essential if they were to deal on equal terms with the managers of schools, had two important consequences. First, although a surprisingly large number of the early HMIs had had some contact with education outside the universities, they had no previous experience of teaching and learning in elementary schools and so there was no temptation to require conformity to their own classroom techniques. Secondly, this career pattern gave inspectors a large measure of intellectual and economic independence from the Department. Many of them pursued with distinction spare time activities in poetry, theology, science, history and other fields of scholarship. In terms of career, for most of them there was always an alternative. If they felt that the restrictions placed upon them were improper or irksome, they could and did resign, becoming Rectors, Prebendaries, Archdeacons, Deans or Bishops. This ability to stand above and apart from the elementary schools and the Department gave many of the inspectors a wide view of their role. J.P.Norris, writing in 1855 (128), believed that the duties of an inspector were twofold, 'the one a duty which he owes to the central authority from which he holds his commission, the other a duty which he holds to those among whom his work is carried on.' Forty years later another of the great early inspectors, Joshua Fitch, wrote in his biography of Matthew Arnold (129) that the inspector's

> first duty is to verify the conditions on which public aid is offered to schools and to assure the Department that the nation is obtaining a good equivalent for its outlay. But this is not the whole. He is called upon to visit schools of very different types, to observe carefully the merits and demerits of each, to recognise with impartiality very varied forms of good work, to place himself in sympathy with teachers and their difficulties, to convey to each of them kindly suggestions as to the methods of discipline and instruction he has observed elsewhere, and to leave behind him at every school he inspects some stimulus to improvement.

The events of these early years are both important and instructive. For this was the formative period when the distinctive ethos of the Inspectorate emerged and the precedents were established. In the years since 1870 both the structure of the Inspectorate and the duties which have been assigned to it have undergone substantial alteration, reflecting the development of the national education service as a whole. The question is how much of the nineteenth century legacy has survived these changes.

During the Second World War, HM Inspectorate was given a large amount of administrative work in order to monitor educational provision throughout the country. As was noted in chapter 2, this enabled the Board of Education to delegate some decision-making and so avoid unnecessary delays. The Norwood Report regarded the Inspectorate as an educational advisory service, a view of the role of HMI which was still widespread at the end of the 1960s in evidence to the 1968 Select Committee. The independence of the Inspectorate was not being challenged; it was in danger of withering away.

It had nearly disappeared a decade earlier at the time of Martin Roseveare's retirement as Senior Chief Inspector. On 2 April 1957 it was announced that, because Part III of the 1944 Education Act had become operative, 'the Minister has decided that certain changes will be required in the manner in which HM Inspectors are employed.' Roseveare would therefore be retiring early in order to make way for a new Senior Chief Inspector who would see through the changes. It gradually became known within the Inspectorate that Roseveare had not resigned voluntarily and that he had, in effect, been dismissed by the Permanent Secretary. On 16 April the Chairman of AHMI, P.M.Burns, wrote to all inspectors above the main grade: 'There are no known reasons either of personal scandal, of internal discipline or of major differences of policy which would appear to

justify the use by the Permanent Secretary of exceptional powers of enforced retirement after the age of fifty.' (130) Burns had spoken to Roseveare, who had asked that no representations should be made on his behalf, lest they undermine his successor, Percy Wilson, who had already been appointed. The confidence of HMIs was 'gravely shaken' by this episode and one inspector, F.T.Arnold, wrote to Burns (131) observing that, if the Permanent Secretary could get rid of HMIs as if they were any type of civil servant, 'then all this talk about the independence of HMI is moonshine, and the sooner we all know it the better.' There was clearly a feeling among HMIs that there was a group of civil servants who were anti-HMI and who wanted the Inspectorate to be under the control of the Department. There was also a frustration because they felt that the published reason for Roseveare's departure was not the whole story.They had been assured by Roseveare himself that no scandal was involved, although it was known that he had separated from his wife who petitioned for divorce in January 1958.

Percy Wilson took a more limited view of the independence of HMI than other SCIs have done (132):

> This is a very delicate matter, HM Inspector is appointed by the Crown but is employed by the Minister of Education. On some occasions he acts as the Minister's representative and conveys the Minister's instructions; on these occasions, which are to be clearly distinguished from his reporting and advisory role, he is under departmental orders, like any other civil servant. Quite apart from these occasions he is, at all times, bound by the educational policy of the Minister.

He went on to describe how the freedom of HMI, which is not absolute, was a privilege which should be used reticently and was comparable to the freedom which other senior civil servants had in speaking their minds to their permanent or political superiors.

HMIs are appointed by the Queen in Council but this historical

difference from normal civil service appointment procedures is irrelevant to the question of their independence. The point was discussed by the Select Committee in 1968. After hearing evidence the Committee concluded: 'We do not consider appointment by Her Majesty in Council to be of any great significance ... that HM Inspectorate is wholly independent of the Department is a myth'. (133) The appointment by the Queen, as Sir Herbert Andrew, then Permanent Secretary at the DES, put it in his evidence to the 1968 Select Committee, 'delights the people who enjoy it'. (134) Since it made no other difference there was no point in embarking on the complicated legislation necessary to change it. The nearest that HMI had ever come to losing its royal prefix was in 1901 when the Department decided to abolish the prefix and it was only saved when Sir Robert Morant's Private Secretary pointed out to Morant that it was in the Department's interest to retain a distinction between government and local authority inspectors. (135)

There have been other attempts to limit the influence of HMI. At the time of the Rayner scrutiny, it was widely rumoured that the Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, considered HMI to be too large and to spend too little time inspecting. Nevertheless, as was noted in chapter 4, the report largely praised the work of HMI and any criticisms of its role at the centre were directed at the DES rather than at HMI itself. In particular, the professional independence of HMI and its value to the education service was commended. The report described how the independence of HMI had no constitutional basis, since the duty to inspect schools lay with the Secretary of State and was done on his behalf. Moreover, the Permanent Secretary, as accounting officer for the Department, was responsible to Parliament for all DES expenditure, including the cost of the Inspectorate. The Rayner Report went on to describe the independence of

HMI as threefold: first, SCI's right of direct access to the Secretary of State; secondly, although the Secretary of State decided whether to publish HMI documents, they were always published as the inspectors wrote them; and thirdly, HMI managed its own programme of inspection. (136)

Because the relationship between HMI and the DES is complex, there are bound to be tensions and, as education becomes more politicised, these tensions are likely to increase, particularly where the Inspectorate produces reports which do not accord with the policies or rhetoric of the government. Several examples occurred under the Conservative administration in the 1980s. Sir Keith Joseph asked HMI to investigate allegations of Marxist bias in courses at North London Polytechnic; the inspectors criticised the courses, but not because of Marxist bias. A second example, which was recounted in chapter 6, occurred when the race relations advisers employed by the Brent LEA were the cause of Kenneth Baker sending HMI to inspect education in Brent; the advisers were given a largely clean bill of health, but the inspectors criticised the educational standards in the borough. Thus, if the Secretary of State required advice from HMI and the Inspectorate felt that, in order to provide this advice, it needed the evidence of inspection, then that inspection must take place, but the professional independence of HMI meant that the Secretary of State did not always receive the message that he wanted to hear. To that extent, HM Inspectorate could be a thorn in his side; HMIs did not criticise government policy directly, but they commented on its effect and left the government (and the public) to draw the conclusions. This was not always welcome to opponents of government policy who would have liked to hear HMI supporting their cause. As Eric Bolton said (137):

> This puts HMI in danger from their friends who want them to speak out against government policies. HMIs have to bite their bottom lip

> sometimes. This means that, if HMI sees a policy which they think will put education under threat, they can only speak out against it by putting at risk the whole future influence of the Inspectorate. HMI should not be anybody's trusty bedfellows. We are a pretty unreliable lot.
> I hope that I will leave the Inspectorate as strongly independent as I found it. The ways in which it is independent have become clearer and I have come to believe more and more that the central feature to maintain is the constitutional link between HMI and the Department. It is the job of being the important voice inside the Department that is telling Ministers professionally what is actually going on. Whether they like it or not is another matter. Publication is not the central part of its independence, which is the delivering of those solid, well-founded, perceptive, professional messages that say to Ministers, 'If you go down that route, then I have to tell you professionally that you are on very thin ice.'

There can also be a difficulty for HMIs when they have to explain government policy at conferences and meetings. There is a fine line between promoting or criticising government policy and explaining it. This line becomes more blurred when the policy is contentious and the explanation can easily sound like a supportive defence. This situation was particularly difficult for HMI when, during the passage of the Education Reform Bill in 1988, the Department took a stand at the Ideal Homes Exhibition in order to explain government policy to the public. The First Division Association advised HMIs not to take part, but a rota of 39 HMIs, including Eric Bolton, each spent an awkward few hours in the public gaze. (138)

The Senior Chief Inspector has made many public speeches and sometimes has used the occasion to comment on the likely effects of future government policy. In his evidence to the Commons Select Committee in 1987, Eric Bolton warned that a system of national testing could lead to a narrowing of the curriculum. (139) Such warnings were often coded but his 1989 Annual Report spelled out in unusually plain language the extent of the teacher shortage problem and its likely consequences for the introduction of the national curriculum. (140) In these cases the Senior Chief

Inspector has extended the boundaries of normal inspectoral comment, but he has taken care not to stray across the line between the expression of such warnings and outright opposition to government policy, which would be outside the permitted limits of an inspector's role.

Independence has been one of the major differences between HMI and local authority inspectors. Normally HMI District Inspectors worked closely with Chief Education Officers but, as was observed in chapter 6, HMI fell foul of local politicians in the mid-1980s. After the critical reports had been published on a number of LEAs and the annual expenditure surveys (141) had linked spending levels with educational standards, a group of Conservative Chairmen of Education Committees put pressure on the government to curtail the independence of the Inspectorate. There followed a correspondence in the Times Educational Supplement, which published an editorial encouraging the Secretary of State, Sir Keith Joseph, 'to continue to demonstrate, publicly, his determination to defend the Inspectorate's independence even when what HMIs say is embarrassing or inconvenient.' (142) The local politicians had failed to understand the diffference in the relationship between HMI and the DES and that between local authority inspectors and their employing LEAs. Legally, the two types of inspector have the same relationship with their respective employers; the difference lies in the traditions which have developed over the years. LEA inspectors are firmly under the control of the Chief Education Officer, whereas HMI has preserved a professional independence within the civil service.

The publication of HMI reports and the increasing interest of central government in education have both created greater pressure on the independence of HMI. The evidence base provided by the Inspectorate for the

Department is now more open to public debate than it has ever been and yet HMIs have to be very careful to remain outside the party political debate. The closeness with which HMIs have worked with civil servants has created dangers and, if a civil servant tried to interfere with the advice of an HMI with whom he was working, the inspector may have to say 'I'm doing my job. You do yours.' A further risk to the independence of the Inspectorate came through the large number of issues in the political programme on which the Department required advice. The timescale for this has often been perilously short and such pressure may prevent the Inspectorate from selecting a sufficient proportion of its own targets for inspection. (143)

It is evident from a consideration of both the historical evolution and the present position of the Inspectorate that the relationship with the DES cannot be defined in legal terms. It has been determined by a constellation of less precise but potent factors. It has rested on mutual respect for established traditions, conventions and practices; on recognition of complementary roles and expertise. Its precise nature at any one time has been modified by the qualities and the personalities of the individuals involved. This situation, so characteristic of English constitutional arrangements, has certainly offered scope for the Inspectorate to assert a greater independence than the administration was prepared to concede and for the politicians to demand a greater conformity than the inspectors were prepared to tolerate. But it is improbable that either side actually perceived the matter in quite these terms. Any serious differences of opinion have been settled behind closed doors before new policies were made public. Until the government's proposals in 1991 for the decimation of the Inspectorate (134), neither side was willing to destroy a relationship which had endured so long and proved so valuable.

Notes

1. Times Educational Supplement, 12.10.46.
2. N.Thomas, 'The Inspectors', in S.Ranson & J.Tomlinson (eds), The Changing Government of Education, Allen & Unwin, 1986, 70.
3. Interview with Sheila Browne.
4. S.Maclure, Educational Development and School Building: Aspects of Public Policy 1945-73, Longman, 1977.
5. P.H.J.H.Gosden, The Education System Since 1944, Oxford, Martin Robertson, 1983, 57-60.
6. Ibid., 66.
7. Ibid., 69.
8. Ibid., 73.
9. Ibid., 30. Times Educational Supplement, 11.9.48.
10. Times Educational Supplement, 6.10.50. See also ibid., 4.8.50.
11. PRO Ed.158/19, 21.1.54, 19.4.55.
12. P.Wilson, op.cit., 1961, 16, 107.
13. L.Clark, op.cit., 1976, 190.
14. PRO Ed.147/209, speech to NUT Conference, 13.4.55. Ministry of Education, Secondary Education For All: A New Drive, HMSO, 1958, 5.
15. E.Boyle & A.Crosland, The Politics of Education, Penguin, 1971, 188.
16. Times Educational Supplement, 10.7.87.
17. Ibid., 2.12.60.
18. E.Boyle & A.Crosland, op.cit., 1971, 130.
19. J. Blackie, op.cit.,, 1970, 55. Sir William Pile, Permanent Secretary at the DES, stated that the working relationships between administrators and professionals were 'exceptionally close', which he attributed to the small size of the DES by comparison with other government departments, W.Pile, The Department of Education and Science, Allen & UNwin, 1979, 227.
20. N.Middleton & S.Weitzman, op.cit., 1976, 354, 357.
21. See above, chapter 4.
22. Interview with Norman Thomas.
23. P.H.J.H.Gosden, op.cit., 1983, 198, cites a memorandum as early as 1947 from a civil servant to the Permanent Secretary explaining why Alexander was so frequently consulted by Ministry officials and working parties. PRO Ed.136/807, 16.1.47.
24. R.A.Manzer, Teachers and Politics: The Role of the National Union of Teachers in the Making of National Educational Policy in England and Wales Since 1944, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1970, 24. Manzer describes the similarly close relationship which had existed up to the end of the Second World War between Sir Maurice Holmes (Permanent Secretary 1936-45), Sir Frederick Mander (NUT General Secretary 1931-47) and Sir Percy Sharpe (AEC Secretary 1925-45).
25. E.Boyle & A.Crosland, op.cit., 1971, 45.
26. M.Kogan, Educational Policy Making. A Study of Interest Groups and Parliamant, Allen & Unwin, 1975, 142.
27. Department of Education and Science, Education: A Framework for Expansion, HMSO, 1972, 3.
28. Times Educational Supplement, 29.11.74.
29. Interview with Norman Thomas.
30. E.Simpson, 'The Department of Education and Science', in S.Ranson & J.Tomlinson (eds), op.cit., 1986, 28. For a discussion of the effect of the publication of these reports, see above, chapter 6.
31. Department of Education and Science, op.cit., 1982, 38-42, paragraphs

5.2-5.6. The formation of the PGI is discussed in chapter 4 above.
32. D.Lawton & P.Gordon, op.cit., 1987, 112-4.
33. Interview with Rhodes Boyson.
34. C.Knight, The Making of Tory Education Policy in Post-War Britain 1950-1986, Falmer Press, 1990.
35. Interview with Rhodes Boyson.
36. Interview with Eric Bolton.
37. Interview with Colin Richards.
38. Interview with Eric Bolton.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid.
41. M.Kogan, 'Advisers in Conflict', Times Educational Supplement, 5.4.74.
42. Ministry of Education, Handbook of Suggestions for the Consideration of Teachers and Other Concerned in the Work of Public Elementary Schools, HMSO, 1946.
43. Ibid., 3-12.
44. Ibid., 149.
45. D.Lawton, The Politics of the School Curriculum, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980, 22.
46. Ministry of Education, Primary Education, HMSO, 1959.
47. Ministry of Education, Secondary Education for All: A New Drive, HMSO, 1958. For the criticism of HMI, see E.Boyle, 'The Politics of Secondary School Reorganisation: Some Reflections', Journal of Educational Administration and History, iv no.2, 1972, 32.
48. J.Hudson, 'Whatever Happened to Technical Schools?', Times Educational Supplement, 3.10.86.
49. M.Kogan & T.Packwood, Advisory Councils and Committees in Education, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974, 33.
50. Ibid., 41.
51. Ibid., 76.
52. Ibid., 79,83.
53. Interview with Sheila Browne.
54. Interview with Norman Thomas. See also N.Thomas, Primary Education from Plowden to the 1990s, Falmer Press, 1990, 64-66.
55. Times Educational Supplement, 15.11.85.
56. M.Kogan, op.cit., 1975, 33.
57. R.A.Manzer, op.cit., 1970, 91.
58. M.Kogan, The Politics of Educational Change, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2nd edition 1978, 63.
59. Times Educational Supplement, 14.10.66.
60. Department of Education and Science, Study of HM Inspectorate in England and Wales (Rayner Report), HMSO, 1982, 28, paragraph 3.41.
61. House of Commons, op.cit., 1968, q.474. For a summary of Sibson's evidence to the 1968 Select Committee, see above, chapter 4.
62. Times Educational Supplement, 13.7.73.
63. Interview with Norman Thomas.
64. D.Lawton, op.cit.,, 1980, 23.
65. Times Educational Supplement, 11.12.81.
66. R.F.Goodings, op.cit., 1983, 48.
67. C.B.Cox & A.E.Dyson (eds), Fight for Education: A Black Paper, London Critical Quarterly Society, 1969.
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70. D.Lawton & P.Gordon, op.cit., 1987, 41.
71. See above, chapter 6.
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73. Interview with Sheila Browne.
74. Interview with Norman Thomas.
75. Secretary of State for Education and Science, School Education in England: Problems and Initiatives, 1976. Edited extracts were published in the Times Educational Supplement, 15.10.76.
76. Ibid., 29.4.83.
77. Interview with Sheila Browne.
78. Times Educational Supplement, 29.10.76.
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80. Times Educational Supplement, 22.10.76.
81. B.Donoughue, Prime Minister: The Conduct of Policy under Harold Wilson and James Callaghan, Jonathan Cape, 1987.
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84. Ibid., 13.9.76.
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86. This was later confirmed by the findings of the Leicester University ORACLE Project under Professors Ray Galton and Brian Simon, Times Educational Supplement, 4.4.80.
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90. Department of Education and Science, Curriculum 11-16: Towards a Statement of Entitlement, HMSO, 1983. This was Red Book 3.
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93. Ibid., 11.8.78. The Chairman of the Education Committee in Kingston-upon-Thames was Angela Rumbold, who was elected to Parliament in 1979 and became Minister of State in the Department of Education and Science at the time of the Education Reform Bill, arguably the most interventionist education measure ever proposed by a government which had little regard for local autonomy.
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97. Education, 13.1.84, 28; Times Educational Supplement, 13.1.84.
98. Times Educational Supplement, 27.9.85.
99. Education, 13.4.84, 300.
100. Times Educational Supplement, 20.1.84.

101. Ibid., 18.5.84, 1.6.84.
102. Ibid., 28.9.84, 2.11.84, 26.7.85, 25.10.85, 23.5.86.
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104. E.Bolton, The Control of the Curriculum, Durham, Durham University School of Education, 1987, 24. See also Eric Bolton's speeches calling for a national curriculum, Times Educational Supplement, 8.3.85, 22.11.85.
105. Ibid., 8.
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107. Times Educational Supplement, 17.4.87.
108. Ibid., 8.5.87; Education, 5.6.87, 493.
109. Times Educational Supplement, 4.3.88. See also Education,16.9.88, 257.
110. Times Educational Supplement, 12.12.86.
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112. Independent, 30.11.87.
113. Christopher Price, 'Inspecting the Inspectors', AMMA Report, vol.6 no.3, November 1983, 7.
114. House of Commons, Second Report of the Education, Science and Arts Committee 1981-82: The Secondary School Curriculum and Examinations with Special Reference to the 14 to 16 Year Old Age Group, 2 vols, 1981.
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116. Ibid., q.260ff.
117. Ibid., q.484.
118. Ibid., paragraph 9.21, xcix.
119. House of Commons, Education, Science and Arts Committee: Introductory Meeting on All Aspects of the Secretary of State's Responsibilities, 21.2.84.
120. House of Commons, Education, Science and Arts Committee: Scrutiny Session, 17.7.84., 8-9.
121. House of Commons, Education, Science and Arts Committee: Achievement in Primary Schools, 26.6.84, q.2-10.
122. Ibid., 14.5.85, q.379.
123. See above, chapter 1. For a further discussion of the independence of HM Inspectorate, see R.F.Goodings & J.E.Dunford, 'Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Schools 1839-1989: The Question of Independence', Journal of Educational Administration and History, xxii no.1, January 1990, 1-8.
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132. P.Wilson, op.cit., 1961, 75-76.
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137. Interview with Eric Bolton.
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141. Department of Education and Science, Report by Her Majesty's Inspectors on the effects of local authority expenditure policies on educational provision in England - 1983, 1984.
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143. Interview with Sheila Browne.
144. See below, chapter 9.

CHAPTER 8

INSPECTION OF FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Further Education

By requiring Local Education Authorities to submit schemes for further education, the 1944 Act created a system of further education in which HMI formed the link between Local Education Authorities and the government. In the following year ten Regional Advisory Councils were established with a Regional Staff Inspector (RSI) as assessor to each of them. These were coordinated by a National Council of Technology and there was a National Academic Board to coordinate examinations and awards. HMI was represented on both of these national bodies. The Percy Report of 1945, which had recommended this structure 'was the work of technologists and technical HMIs who were committed to the advancement of technology in all its educational and professional contexts.' (1)

During the 1950s and 1960s there was a considerable expansion of further education and HMI played its part in this. The emphasis was on building up resources, rather than on quality, and HMIs who acted as general inspectors to colleges were seen as friends of the colleges, sometimes talking of 'my building programme', and being on close personal terms with college principals. (2) In retrospect it can be seen that HMIs were too closely identified with the colleges during this period, acting as college visitors, rather than inspectors. There were no formal Notes of

Visit and so no database was established on the colleges. Even more than the schools' Inspectorate at this time, the further education inspectors were in an advisory role which, owing to the absence of LEA advisers in further education, was welcomed by colleges and by Local Education Authorities. (3)

The role of RSI in the course approval system was not so welcome. They were seen as the commissars of the system, 'God disposing' and 'St Peter with the keys'. (4) This degree of resentment was created because it was not usually known how RSIs assessed local demand for courses and how they reached their judgments. The procedure for starting new courses was for the principal to speak to the college's general inspector, who would ask a specialist HMI to visit. By this time the college would have elicited the support of local industry, which would have established the demand for the course. The college would complete Form FE 21 concerning the resources for the course and would usually claim that the course could be started 'within existing resources', especially during the 1970s when there was considerable spare capacity in the further education system. Operating through this formal mechanism, and without visiting the college, the RSI would discuss the matter with the college general inspector and perhaps with a specialist inspector before indicating whether or not approval was given for the course to start. It was possible for colleges to appeal to the Regional Advisory Council against the decision of the RSI and, because there was usually no solid basis of inspection in RSI judgments, colleges which were able to produce evidence of demand could sometimes win their appeal. There was some support for the RSI system, since it brought a measure of coordination into further education which would not otherwise have been present, but even its supporters recognised that it placed too

much power in the hands of individual HMIs. (5) RSIs were seen to be acting neither as agents of the weak Regional Advisory Councils nor of the Department. Many would have preferred the RSIs to have acted as agents of government policy, but this would have required the policy to be much clearer. (6) Unpopular with colleges and LEAs, the RSIs were capable of generating a similar degree of unpopularity with their colleagues. Less experienced HMIs could be intimidated by them and sometimes felt that they obstructed progress. Since the most powerful people in the Inspectorate at that time were the Divisional Inspectors and the RSIs, and not those at the centre, there was little that individual HMIs could do to counterbalance this. The RSIs became administrators who did not fit into the structure of the Inspectorate.

A series of reports and White Papers in the 1950s and 1960s criticised an over-reliance on evening classes and emphasised the need for expansion of full-time courses, reflecting long-held HMI views. (7) This expansion was driven by the Department of Education and Science. Maurice Kogan maintained that it was easier for the Department to make changes in further education and in public sector higher education than in the schools or university sectors (8):

> In principle, the local authority creates its own school system and the DES does no more than monitor it. Further education is different. No polytechnic can be created without the Secretary of State's designation. No advanced course can run without the approval of the Regional Advisory Councils and the Department of Education and Science's Staff Inspector for that region. The examinations are run, at the national diploma and certificate levels, by joint committees consisting of professional institutions working with HMIs. Many Circulars from the DES are concerned with the development of particular subject areas or with the organisation of the further education institutional structure. The reasons for centralised development are plain. Further education, particularly in the sciences and technologies, is expensive. It usually has consequences well outside the area of the providing local authority and, indeed, many of the polytechnics are now national institutions. But there are other reasons which cannot be documented. HM Inspectorate is more

> powerful, clear in its objectives and accepted by the system as a determining force within the further education sector than within the schools. Two recent Chief Inspectors who later became Senior Chief Inspectors led an able team of perhaps a hundred. They advocated further education's point of view in the Department of Education and Science and did the detailed work in order to secure further education's place.

If Kogan's analysis is correct, it is therefore surprising that progress was relatively slow until the establishment of the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) in 1974. Within the Department HMI had always promoted technical education, but the civil servants did not understand it and the MSC moved into the vacuum left by the Department which had 'consistently neglected technical education despite the advice of successive generations of HMI.' (9) The Inspectorate must accept some of the responsibility for this situation, however, since it had produced very few publications on further education. The MSC established a reputation for speedy action, often without consultation, which led to the Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP) being started in 1979, the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) in schools from 1982 and the Youth Training Scheme (YTS) of 1983, which was extended from one year to two in 1986. HMI played little part in these MSC initiatives, but had some input to the influential Further Education Unit (FEU) publication A Basis for Choice (1979).

When the Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, announced the TVEI pilot scheme, only a very small number of senior civil servants in the Department of Education and Science and the Department of Employment knew about this ministerial initiative and senior HMIs were said to be 'bitterly hostile to the encroachment' of the MSC into education in this way. (10) When the Inspectorate later carried out an extensive survey of the TVEI pilot, they praised the level of resourcing and drew attention to its beneficial effects on styles of learning and enhanced personal development of pupils,

but the report also commented on the poor planning and preparation of the scheme which had led to problems of accommodation and misdirected expenditure. (11)

HMI also inspected the educational component of the YTS, about which the Inspectorate was initially very critical. By 1988, however, the inspectors were praising the role of further education colleges in responding to the needs of YTS managing agents and trainees. (12) The MSC had its own Training Advisory Service, which in 1987 employed 32 training standards inspectors. Unlike HMI reports, their reports on the implementation of the YTS remained confidential to the managers of the inspected scheme and to the MSC itself. (13) It has been pointed out that cooperation between the Training Advisory Service, HM Inspectorate and LEAs would have helped to preserve the central-local partnership in what was rapidly becoming a centrally controlled system. (14)

Between 1980 and 1983 the further education inspectors carried out a survey of day-release courses in 41 colleges. (15) To the embarrassment of government ministers, who had just announced their intention to transfer 25% of the funding for non-advanced further education from LEAs to the MSC, the survey found that most colleges had good links with employers, but that the employers adopted too passive a role in their liaison with colleges over course content. This was not in accord with the government view that colleges were insufficiently responsive to the needs of employers. The survey was particularly significant for the FE Inspectorate, which had previously looked at course structure and resources in colleges, but which had done little inspection. 'This was the start of the FE Inspectorate learning how to inspect again and to deliver the kind of specialist information which was required for a report of this kind. They had also

forgotten how to write, with the consequence that the burden of re-drafting the report fell on a small number of senior HMIs.' (16) During the second half of the 1980s the FE Inspectorate produced an extensive series of booklets, including the survey NAFE Non-Advanced Further Education in Practice (1987) and ten surveys of individual NAFE subjects (1987-88). In contrast to the government criticism that colleges were not responding to the needs of employers, this survey again found that colleges provided 'a flexible and responsive service, thus revealing the lack of an accurate database in the MSC on which its rapid series of initiatives could have been properly planned.' (17)

The Rayner Report noted that the further and higher education inspectors had a separate identity within HMI and this remained the case up to 1991. All the Rayner recommendations for the FHE Inspectorate have been carried out, except the appointment of a Chief Inspector for 16-19 education. The senior HMIs rejected this because 'the Inspectorate can never be in front of the field. It must always reflect what is happening in the field - and the field was not organised on a 16-19 basis. (18) Co-ordination therefore relied on liaison between the Chief Inspector for FE and the Chief Inspector whose responsibilities included Schools 16-19.

Higher Education

The 1966 White Paper A Plan for Polytechnics and Other Colleges led to the development of the higher education sector along binary lines. One of the features which divided polytechnics from universities was inspection. Whereas HMIs inspected by right all aspects of the work of polytechnics, they did not go into universities except by invitation to visit university

departments of education (UDEs).

In their inspections of public sector higher education, HM Inspectorate has produced reports on individual departments and faculties, subject surveys across the sector, reports on institutions and more general publications on broad aspects of the work of polytechnics and colleges. For example, Degree Courses in the Public Sector of Higher Education (1983) reported on a four-year survey and praised the sector for courses which developed the practical skills which employers required. It criticised the teaching which had been found to be over-formal and unexciting. Smaller inspections included a well-publicised inspection in 1983 which was initiated in response to a request from Sir Keith Joseph after allegations of political bias on two courses at the Polytechnic of North London. An example of a wider survey was Engineering in Polytechnics (1984), which criticised the standard of accommodation, the quality of equipment and the lack of recent industrial experience of staff in Engineering departments, but praised much of the teaching, except for the emphasis on extensive and tedious notetaking. As well as polytechnics, colleges of higher education are the concern of the HE Inspectorate. In this field, an important report in the mid-1980s arose from inspections of former colleges of education which had diversified their degree courses. (19) The HE Inspectorate also inspected adult education.

In 1989 the results of 150 HMI reports over a period of six years on higher education in polytechnics were summarised in The English Polytechnics: An HMI Commentary. This publication highlighted the quality of much of the teaching and learning in this sector, although it drew attention to the spoon-feeding and factual recall on which some courses relied. The penultimate paragraph of the report contained messages for the

government and the universities, as well as for the polytechnics themselves (20):

> The polytechnics developed during a period of increasing demand for higher education. Faced with a difficult choice between improving access or maintaining their unit of resource, they gave a higher priority to access. Over the same period the universities, by and large, took the opposite view. The polytechnics increased their student:staff ratios without reducing quality. At the same time they were able to develop their quality control procedures, broaden their range of provision, with particular emphasis on job-related courses, and develop strong links with industry and commerce. They have, however, been increasingly handicapped by a failure to invest sufficiently in buildings and equipment, with the consequent steady deterioration in the quality of the stock. If polytechnics are to meet the challenges they now face, an improved level of investment in buildings and equipment is essential.

This conclusion drew some criticism for 'its complacency and Pollyanna tone in the face of deepening crisis in the polytechnics ... which stems from a refusal to recognise either existing quality decline or the seeds of an accelerating future decline.' The writer pointed out the relationship between the decline in unit costs and the over-dependence on formal teaching methods. (21) A less comprehensive survey on higher education in local authority colleges, published a month later, found much to praise. Its criticisms focussed mainly on buildings and resources. (22)

For many years it had been felt that it was not realistic to embark on a programme of full inspections of polytechnics. This policy was changed in the mid-1980s and HMI decided to inspect the largest first (23):

> The Manchester Polytechnic inspection cost 500 HMI days, perhaps a thousand in reality, and we could not keep up this commitment. But once we had inspected Leicester and Plymouth Polytechnics as well, which each took 300 HMI days, we could see how to cut down on manpower and still carry out an effective inspection.

The programme of full inspections of polytechnics continued at one per year. New methods of inspection were devised, which concentrated less on detail than school inspections, in order to achieve the breadth of coverage

which was required for such large institutions. Planning began almost a year in advance and this gave the institution, as well as HMI, much more time to prepare than a school is given. During this time course documentation may be produced, equipment purchased and buildings decorated, as might happen before a Royal visit. Although individual HMIs may visit at other times, most of the inspection is carried out in two separate weeks. During the first week the inspection of teaching and learning takes place and the HMIs later return to look at institutional issues.

The inspection of public sector higher education was, until 1984, under the Chief Inspector for further and higher education. The new Senior Chief Inspector, Eric Bolton, felt that the job of Chief Inspector for FHE had become too big. The holder of this post, Ned Norris, who had started many of the changes in the inspection of further and higher education, became Chief Inspector for higher education and a new Chief Inspector, Terry Melia, was appointed to lead the further education Inspectorate. On Norris' retirement in 1986, Terry Melia became Chief Inspector for higher education. In 1985, the central team, which had comprised Norris and two Staff Inspectors, was expanded to include three Staff Inspectors for each of further and higher education. A survey of Part-time Advanced Further Education (1985) was completed within a year.

The funding of the polytechnics and colleges from 1982 to 1988 was carried out by the National Advisory Body (NAB), but the emphasis on the advisory role of HMI in this sector and the relatively small number of inspections meant that HMI had an insufficiently strong database on individual institutions to be able to make quantitative judgments which could influence the funding decisions of NAB. The HMI input to NAB was therefore mainly through the committees which decided on bids for funding.

This contrasted with the HMI role in funding decisions made by NAB's successor, the Polytechnics and Colleges Funding Council (PCFC). For two years before the PCFC began work, senior HMIs were planning how they could quantify their qualitative judgments. This process culminated in 1989 in a conference at Heythrop Park at which Terry Melia outlined the proposed system for judging quality in public sector higher education. (24) In a typical inspection of a course or department inspectors evaluated aims and objectives, organisation and management, resources, range and appropriateness of provision, teaching and learning, outcomes, and quality control arrangements. Each course was given one of five grade descriptions:

- Generally good or with some outstanding features or with many good features
- Some good features and no major shortcomings
- Sound but undistinguished, no significant extremes, or good features balanced by shortcomings
- Some shortcomings in important areas
- Many shortcomings, generally poor

The overall judgments concerning the quality of work in an institution were then derived from the five areas of management and quality control, staffing, equipment, building, and teaching and learning. There was broad acceptance by those attending the conference of the criteria which the Chief Inspector had identified, although there was concern that the HMI information on which the PCFC would make its funding judgments would not always be up to date. (25) Unlike schools, where inspection judgments are also made on a five-point scale, quality in higher education was to be judged against published criteria. In a speech in 1991, Terry Melia amplified the process outlined at Heythrop Park. He identified the principal objectives of HMI inspection in higher education as (26)

- to provide Ministers and Department of Education and Science officials with independent professional advice on the state of higher education
- to provide quality and other advice to the PCFC and others

responsible for operating the system and to monitor PCFC's performance
- to identify and disseminate good practice through reports, conferences and courses
- to monitor and report on
  * institutional quality and effectiveness
  * the response of higher education to access policies
  * the impact of the research and enterprise initiatives on higher education
  * the impact of funding policies in higher education on
    - the quality of teaching and learning
    - the capital building and equipment stock
    - the quality of continuing education and training and its success in updating the workforce
    - access and participation
  * quality control and the work of the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) and the Business and Technician Education Council (BTEC) and others
  * the development of performance indicators

He acknowledged the limitations of the five-point rating scale, warning that HMI had to be cautious in their application lest they 'give a spurious impression of precision which will not stand up to critical scrutiny.' Nevertheless the HMI scale has been adopted by the PCFC for funding purposes and this is an open process in that the judgments are being made against published criteria. This openness was reinforced by the PCFC which produced its own report on the conditions for achieving good quality teaching. (27) A series of reports, beginning with Higher Education in the Polytechnics and Colleges: Engineering (1989), summarised the findings of inspections in eight subject areas. With these published reports and the open criteria for judgments which were reflected in PCFC funding, the polytechnics and colleges could acquire the knowledge to expand substantially in the late 1980s without a loss of quality for the students.

Neither openness nor any guarantees of teaching quality existed in the university sector, any interference in which has always been cited as a potential attack on academic freedom. Until the 1980s universities had been regarded as institutions of quality and few questions had been asked

concerning how that quality might be assured. There was enormous variety within the university sector, both in teaching and research, and this became an issue when the University Grants Committee and its successor, the Universities Funding Council (UFC), began to grade the quality of research in individual departments as a factor in allocating research funds. The Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP) foresaw that it was a short step from grading research to the grading of teaching and the CVCP decided to devise its own solution to this problem before a system of external inspection could be imposed. First, a committee under Professor Philip Reynolds drew up a list of the areas which could be monitored. Then another committee, under Professor Stewart Sutherland, proposed that the universities should establish their own Academic Audit Unit. The Secretary of State, Kenneth Baker, had added an urgency to the work of the Sutherland Committee when, in a speech to the CVCP in 1988, he implied that there had been a degree of complacency in the Reynolds Report and suggested to the Vice-Chancellors that they should look to the Netherlands and France where external inspection of teaching in universities took place. The proposed Academic Audit Unit was to have a small Directorate and a pool of secondees who would carry out the audits of universities' internal quality control mechanisms. The Times Higher Education Supplement welcomed the Sutherland proposals, believing that they would alleviate some of the concerns which were felt in the DES and UFC that universities were complacent about their teaching standards, which had to be taken on trust and which came a poor second to research priorities. The leader writer saw the Academic Audit Unit as a last chance to avoid the inspection of university teaching by HMIs (28):

> But sending in the inspectors would not work. Already in polytechnics they are operating at the limit of their expertise, or even beyond

> it. In universities they would be embarrassingly outclassed by those they were sent to inspect.

This ignores the fact that each new area into which HMI has stepped in the past has led to a major recruitment of HMIs who were well qualified for the new task. There are many former higher education lecturers in the Inspectorate and there would be many lecturers who would apply to join a high status university Inspectorate, although they would possibly be shocked by the workload of an HMI. Sir Christopher Ball, formerly Warden of Keble College, Oxford, and Chairman of NAB, felt that similar arrangements should be made for the inspection of polytechnics and universities (29):

> The universities are not accountable to anybody, they just have to please themselves. Why should they not want external help? I think it is a combination of snobbery, fear and cost. Snobbery, which is despicable, fear because external control might show up weaknesses, which is an appalling argument, or you might do it wrong, that is a timidity typical of the universities. The only real argument is cost.

However, the Times Higher Education Supplement saw the Academic Audit Unit as a model which polytechnics, which were no longer public sector institutions, could aspire to follow. 'Then HM Inspectors could negotiate an honourable retreat from the polytechnic and college sector.' The designation of some polytechnics as universities in 1992 means that quality control in higher education will become a major issue. This is discussed in the next chapter.

Teacher Training

HMI has been involved in the inspection of teacher training since the Pupil-Teacher Minutes of 1846, soon after which the first inspector of training colleges was appointed. During the Second World War it was proposed in the Green Book Education After the War that teacher training courses should be three years long, with the second year spent out of college. The training colleges were opposed to this and so R.A.Butler established the McNair Committee, with Miss E.C.Oakden HMI as assistant secretary. The McNair Report, which was published in 1944, was very critical of the training colleges, which were seen as low status institutions. The committee put forward two alternative schemes, A and B, of which Scheme A proposed stronger links between colleges and universities. After difficult negotiations with the Committee of Vice-Chancellors, a version of Scheme A was adopted. (30) The Minister of Education, Ellen Wilkinson, agreed to some diversity between arrangements in different areas, but among the conditions she set were the right to appoint HMIs as assessors to each Area Training Organisation (ATO) and that all teacher training colleges and departments should be open to HMI inspection. (31) HMIs had never had access to universities and the right of HMIs to inspect UDEs was regarded by the universities as an invasion of academic freedom. For example, when discussions were taking place with the London Institute of Education in 1947, plans nearly foundered on the unwillingness of London University to allow HMI the right of entry. Eventually a compromise was reached by which inspectors could attend classes 'for the purpose of elucidating any points that may have arisen in the course of consultations with the university authorities, but not for

the purpose of reporting on the work of an individual teacher of the university.' This agreement was reaffirmed in the Concordat of 1960, but HMIs still visited UDEs only at the invitation of the university. (32) Whereas colleges and polytechnics had a general inspector, an HMI acted merely as a liaison officer with each UDE. (33)

Between 1945 and the early 1970s HMI had to play its part in the rapid expansion of teacher training. Immediately after the Second World War the emergency training colleges were established, but some preconceptions did not change to meet the exigencies of the situation - when, at a conference of HMIs and Ministry officials, Robin Tanner HMI spoke about the interest in primary school teaching among men, he was howled down. (34) In 1960 an extra year was added to the two year teacher training courses and HMI saw this as an opportunity to increase the academic standard of teachers. (35) In 1971 the James Report recommended the abolition of the ATOs, which was carried out after the 1972 White Paper which aimed to create an all-graduate profession through three and four year B.Ed. degrees. Colleges moved closer to polytechnics and universities prior to a major contraction of teacher training in the mid-1970s. The post-war bulge in population had now passed through the school system. Fewer teachers were required and, when this was followed by falling rolls in schools, the expansion of teacher numbers was replaced by the prospect of teacher unemployment. A programme of college closures took place and, although the evidence of HMI visits was available, there appeared to be no clear relationship between the quality of work in a college and the decision by the DES on whether to close it. (36)

During the late 1970s there was an increase in the amount of inspection which HMI carried out in teacher training institutions. This resulted in a

major publication on the PGCE in the Public Sector (1980), which identified dangers in the growth of experienced-based courses - a surprising and rather conservative conclusion. The appointment of Pauline Perry as Chief Inspector for teacher training coincided with a considerable increase in the volume of HMI output on this subject. A series of conferences with teacher trainers was summarised in Teacher Training and the Secondary School: The Implications of the HMI National Secondary Survey (1981). This criticised the passive learning style which was prevalent in many teacher training courses and recommended that students should be encouraged to see their subject not in isolation but in the context of the whole curriculum. It also emphasised the importance of in-service training for teachers and encouraged teacher training institutions to prepare for the time when this became more school-focussed. In Teacher Training and Preparation for Working Life (1982), HMI stated that teacher trainers did not have enough experience of industry and, furthermore, that the courses contained too little about the world of work.

A particularly important publication was The New Teacher in School (1982), which found that nearly a quarter of the probationary teachers who were seen by HMI were 'poorly or very poorly equipped for the task they are given to do.' Some of the sample 'were temperamentally ill-fitted' for teaching. (37) The inspectors blamed the colleges for allowing these people to pass their training course and also blamed the schools and LEAs for giving the probationers inappropriate work and training in their first year.

In 1983 the Inspectorate published a discussion document on teacher training, which recommended an extended 36-week PGCE course, improved criteria for selecting students, with serving teachers being involved in

the selection process, more teaching practice, more time spent by lecturers on teaching in schools and a wide range of topics which should be included in courses. (38) A White Paper soon appeared which included proposals about many of these matters and which aimed to establish criteria against which teacher training courses should be assessed. (39) Within four months of the appearance of the White Paper, the Advisory Committee on the Supply and Education of Teachers (ACSET) had agreed these criteria. In this respect ACSET was acting as the stalking horse for HMI and DES officials who had known for a considerable time the criteria which they would like to impose on the teacher training colleges and departments and who were well represented on ACSET.

On the selection of students for training the criteria included the presence of experienced practising teachers at interviews, a list of desirable personal qualities of candidates, Ordinary level in Mathematics and English for all intending teachers, and Advanced level and two years' higher education in their specialist subject for intending secondary teachers. On the content of courses the criteria included a recommended balance of subject teaching and education studies. On professional aspects the minimum amount of teaching practice was laid down and the length of the PGCE course was extended to 36 weeks. It was also a criterion that teacher trainers must have recent and relevant experience of school teaching.

The Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (CATE), under the chairmanship of William Taylor, Vice-Chancellor of Hull University and formerly Director of the London University Institute of Education, had the task of assessing whether teacher training institutions measured up to the criteria. DES Circular 3/84 had made it clear that, in reaching its decision on an institution, CATE must have access to the findings of an HMI

visit. Within a period of four years, teams of teacher training inspectors would have to visit over one hundred colleges and departments. Unlike HMI reports on schools, publication of the reports on HMI visits to UDEs was at the discretion of the institution. Any reluctance to invite an HMI visit which might have been felt by a university rapidly disappeared since, without the visit and a satisfactory HMI report on the criteria, the UDE could not be accredited. When many institutions found that they were not meeting the criteria, the university professors of education, acting through the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET), began to complain about the way in which HMI were carrying out the visits. This caused the Senior Chief Inspector, Eric Bolton, to comment: 'The universities haven't been visited before and some seem to think they have some sort of veto. They see our visits myopically as all to do with teacher training - what the inspectors bring is a view of what the schools need.' (40) Nevertheless, the inspectors were finding it difficult to relate their judgments on the criteria to the overall quality of the course. Giving evidence to the Select Committee, Pauline Parry stated that there were instances where institutions failed to meet all the quantitative criteria, but where HMI's qualitative analysis indicated that students were being well prepared for their career in teaching.(41) In teacher training institutions there was considerable disquiet about the CATE accreditation process. The primary teacher trainers were particularly concerned at the effect of the requirement that at least two years' course time had to be devoted to the study of a subject at higher education level. The UDEs were alarmed at the way in which the government, operating through HMI and the CATE accreditation process, appeared to have taken over the planning of teacher training courses (42):

> What must have astonished anyone following this story (and not least the government itself) was the alacrity with which the institutions of teacher education abandoned their own views on the curricula of teacher education and replaced them by those of a government. On the whole these institutions fell over themselves to do as they were told: some of their management took to heart Ralph's comment in Joseph Heller's novel Good as Gold - 'I can do whatever I want once I get permission from my superiors. I'm my own boss.'

From 1846 to 1890 HMI had exercised control over every aspect of teacher training; many believed that the Inspectorate's part in the CATE process was a return to this level of influence over the system. The House of Commons Select Committee recommended the abolition of CATE, stating that 'there is a serious and potentially damaging breakdown in understanding between the Secretary of State, HMI and CATE on the one hand and the training institutions on the other.' (43) However, CATE survived and in 1987 the Liverpool Institute of Higher Education became the first institution to lose funding as a result of an HMI report on a course which did not meet the CATE criteria, when the Secretary of State withdrew approval for its B.Ed. with Psychology course. (44)

The teacher training Inspectorate continued to publish extensively. The debate about the content of teacher training courses continued and HMI publications played a major part in this. In a generally encouraging picture, HMI pointed to the need for closer relations between institutions and schools and for an increased concentration of study in the one-year PGCE primary course. (45) As in all HMI reports, a balanced picture emerged from these publications and those who sought to criticise teacher training were able to cite evidence to support their case.

The scope of the work of the teacher training Inspectorate, which contained about 25 HMIs, extended beyond the inspection of teacher training establishments to all aspects of the professional development of teachers.

It had a major role in postgraduate matters, such as probation, induction, articled and licensed teachers, appraisal and in-service training of teachers. Since the mid-1980s in-service training has been a particularly large area of activity, as the government has directed funding at national priority targets through a frequently changing structure, each with its own acronym - TRIST, GRIST, LEATGS, GEST. A Staff Inspector had overall responsibility for the inspection of in-service training. Another major area of activity for the teacher training HMIs in the 1980s was teacher supply, a particularly sensitive political issue which required a good basis of HMI evidence. HMI reports on this topic included work on teacher shortages and supply teachers. Teacher training for further and adult education was also the responsibility of this team of inspectors, working with their colleagues in the FE Inspectorate.

HMI Influence on Further and Higher Education

On joining the Inspectorate the teacher training inspectors all had extensive experience as lecturers in higher education and teachers in schools and they spent a proportion of their time in the inspection of schools. Recruitment to the higher education Inspectorate was from those who had taught in the higher education sector, many of whom had also taught in further education. Few problems have been experienced in recruiting people of sufficient calibre.

Up to the early 1970s inspectors in FHE and teacher training had an easy-going job. There was little pressure on them to publish or to provide the solid base of inspectoral evidence on which government decisions could be made. The system was expanding and the HMI role was more in giving

advice on the provision of sufficient quantity than in assessing the quality of the system. They were acting as visitors, rather than as inspectors.

When the system moved into a period of contraction, HMI were called upon to make judgments about quality and this brought them much closer to the political debate which continued to rage about teacher training and public sector higher education. During the 1980s the Inspectorate published extensively in the field of further and higher education and teacher training. These publications had considerable influence, both on central government policy and on individual institutions. In public sector higher education and in teacher training, however, the influence of HMI went much deeper, because of the association of funding and of course accreditation with the results of inspection. This link gave a sharper focus, which was not always welcomed, to HMI visits. Since the criteria for HMI judgments were known, however, institutions were much clearer about their objectives and could respond to the criteria. Although the Inspectorate was only sampling the system, its coverage was relatively much wider than in the schools sector, and therefore its influence in the drive for quality in further and higher education was much clearer. In all three areas of further education, higher education and teacher training, the degree of central control increased greatly during the 1980s and the Inspectorate was used as an arm of this growing centralism.

Notes

1. M.Kogan & T.Packwood, Advisory Councils and Committees in Education, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974, 54. See also D.Lawton & P.Gordon, op.cit., 1987, 72 ff.
2. Much of the information in this chapter was obtained from discussions with HMIs, especially Terry Melia, Chief Inspector for Further Education 1985-86, Chief Inspector for Higher Education 1986-91 and Senior Chief

Inspector from 1991.
3. House of Commons, op.cit., 1968, evidence to the Select Committee from the Association of Teachers in Technical Institutions (ATTI), paragraph 5.
4. Interviews with Chief Education Officers.
5. House of Commons, op.cit., 1968, evidence to the Select Committee from the ATTI, paragraphs 5,13. See also the evidence of S.T.Broad, Chief Education Officer for Hertfordshire, q.647.
6. Ibid., q. 969.
7. D.Lawton & P.Gordon, op.cit., 1987, 72-73.
8. M.Kogan, Educational Policy Making. A Study of Interest Groups and Parliament, Allen & Unwin, 186.
9. Ibid., 74.
10. G.Low,'The MSC: A Failure of Democracy', in M.Morris & C.Griggs (eds), Education - The Wasted Years? 1973-86, Falmer Press, 1989, 220.
11. Times Educational Supplement, 15.11.85.
12. Ibid., 13.7.84, 15.4.88.
13. Ibid., 20.11.87.
14. B.Taylor, 'A National Service: Strengthening the Centre', in S.Ranson & J.Tomlinson (eds), op.cit., 1986, 152-160.
15. Department of Education and Science, Education for Employees. An HMI Survey of Part-time Release for 16 to 19 year olds, HMSO, 1984.
16. Interview with Terry Melia. See also Times Educational Supplement, 30.3.84.
17. Times Educational Supplement, 17.4.87; G.Low, op.cit., 1989, 224.
18. Interview with Terry Melia.
19. Department of Education and Science, Diversification Ten Years On, HMSO, 1985.
20. Department of Education and Science, The English Polytechnics: An HMI Commentary, HMSO, 1989, 16, paragraph 52.
21. Times Higher Education Supplement, 24.11.89, letter from Professor Nicholas Garnham, Polytechnic of Central London.
22. Department of Education and Science, Aspects of Higher Education in Colleges Maintained by Local Education Authorities, HMSO, 1989.
23. Interview with Terry Melia.
24. Department of Education and Science, Quality in Higher Education. A Report on an HMI Invitation Conference, 1989, 3-15. See also Department of Education and Science, In Pursuit of Quality: An HMI View, HMSO, 1990
25. Department of Education and Science, Quality in Higher Education. A Report on an HMI Invitation Conference, 1989, 55.
26. 'Quality in Higher Education. An HMI Perspective', Speech delivered to a conference at Birmingham Polytechnic, 30.1.91.
27. Polytechnics and Colleges Funding Council, Teaching Quality. Report of the Committee of Enquiry Appointed by the Council, PCFC, 1990.
28. Times Higher Education Supplement, 13.10.89.
29. Independent, 25.8.88.
30. D.Lawton & P.Gordon, op.cit., 1987, 79-80.
31. P.H.J.H.Gosden, The Education System Since 1944, Oxford, Martin Robertson, 1983, 102.
32. Times Educational Supplement, 27.7.84.
33. W.Pile, The Department of Education and Science, Allen & Unwin, 1979, 123.
34. R.Tanner, op.cit., 1987, 133.
35. K.Evans, The Development and Structure of the English School System, Hodder & Stoughton, 1985, 181.

36. D.Lawton & P.Gordon, op.cit., 1987, 83.
37. Department of Education and Science, The New Teacher in School, HMSO, 1982, 80. See also, ibid., 1987.
38. Department of Education and Science, Teaching in Schools: The Content of Initial Training: A Discussion Paper from Her Majesty's Inspectorate, HMSO, 1983.
39. Department of Education and Science, Quality Teaching, HMSO, 1983.
40. Times Educational Supplement, 15.11.85.
41. Ibid., 25.4.86.
42. Education, 22.5.87, 458. See also ibid., 31.1.86, 106; ibid., 7.2.86, 127.
43. Ibid., 22.5.87, 458; Times Educational Supplement, 25.9.87.
44. Times Educational Supplement, 13.11.87.
45. Department of Education and Science, Quality in Schools: The Initial Training of Teachers, HMSO, 1987. See also Department of Education and Science, Initial Teacher Training in Universities in England, Northern Ireland and Wales, DES, 1988.

CHAPTER 9

INTO THE 1990s:

HM INSPECTORATE IN THE POLITICAL BATTLEGROUND

The Education Reform Act, 1989

In chapter 7 the role of the Inspectorate in the move towards a national curriculum was traced. As Sir Keith Joseph had done, Kenneth Baker frequently cited the conclusions of HMI reports in support of his programme of curriculum reform. (1) The Education Reform Act, which introduced the national curriculum in much greater detail than the framework which HMI had been advocating, established NCC and SEAC to determine the programmes of study and testing arrangements. Apart from the curriculum and testing, there were two other areas which had implications for the work of HM Inspectorate. First, schools were to be allowed to opt out of local authority control and take grant-maintained status, with their income coming directly from the Department of Education and Science. Secondly, all except small primary schools were to have greater financial autonomy through Local Management of Schools (LMS).

When local authorities put forward reorganisation plans, HMIs normally visited the schools and reported to the Secretary of State on the anticipated effect of the proposals. An application to the Secretary of State by a school for grant maintained status, if agreed, has an effect on other local provision and therefore the Secretary of State is likely to

require HMI advice which may involve a visit to the school. In practice, such visits have not taken place on every application. (2)

When a school opts out of local authority control, it is no longer subject to LEA inspection. This puts a greater responsibility on HMI to inspect grant maintained schools. Similar considerations apply to the City Technology Colleges, legal provisions for which were also in the Education Reform Act. The first City Technology College (CTC), in Solihull, attempted to combat criticism that its intake would have a high proportion of the most able pupils by saying that its admissions would be regularly monitored by HMI, but there appears to have been no basis for this claim, although the early CTCs were frequently visited by HMI and the CTC at Solihull was given a full HMI inspection in 1991. (3)

The quality of management of a school and the way in which it deploys its resources are commented upon in all HMI reports on school inspections. Since LMS started on 1 April 1990, it has resulted in a greater proportion of the time in schools being devoted to resource management, a trend which has to be reflected in the way in which schools are inspected. The emphasis is on management, rather than finance, and the lack of financial expertise within HMI is no disadvantage.

The testing arrangements for national curriculum subjects have been the subject of much discussion and the Inspectorate has played a part in the SEAC committees which have overseen the planning and preparation of tests. The testing of children in the national curriculum subjects developed in a way that will not give HMIs the daily grind that radically changed their role under the Revised Code in the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, with the Revised Code having played such a large part in the history of the Inspectorate, it was not surprising that Eric Bolton warned that the system

of testing should not be narrow or rigid and must not lead to a narrowing of the school curriculum. (4)

The responsibility for monitoring the delivery of the national curriculum, both nationally and in individual schools, was a matter of considerable doubt. Under Clause 6 of the Act it is the duty of the LEA, governing body and head teacher to secure the national curriculum. No mention was made in Clause 6 of inspection, nor in the following Clause concerning the powers of the NCC. Clause 14 stated that schools would be required to make certain information available to the public and this could be used to publicise its arrangements for the teaching of national curriculum subjects. Clause 15 required LEAs to establish procedures for the consideration of complaints concerning the failure of a school to discharge its duties under Clause 6. Apart from these statutory provisions, however, the role of HMI and of local authority inspectors in the monitoring of the national curriculum was uncertain. In July 1987 a DES Deputy Secretary hinted that local inspectors would have a role in policing the national curriculum; in September the DES told LEAs that 'it had not been decided who is to employ the people who are going to monitor the national curriculum.' A month later Mr Baker was assuring LEAs that he had no plans to nationalize their inspectorates and that ' no special provision is necessary'. In December the Secretary of State rejected the recommendation of a House of Commons Select Committee that HMI should appraise the work schemes of all primary schools. (5) The speeches of the Secretary of State in January 1988 and of the DES Permanent Secretary in June reassured the LEA inspectors that they would have an extensive role in the introduction and monitoring of the national curriculum. Education Support Grants would be used to finance centrally the appointment of a

further 300 local authority inspectors. The role of local inspectors was seen as complementary to that of HMI, who would continue to monitor educational provision on a national basis. (6) One of the early HMI reports on the national curriculum resulted from 500 visits to primary schools, where the inspectors found that implementation was proceding satisfactorily, although they drew attention to the relative lack of time being spent on subjects other than Mathematics, English and Science. Assessment procedures were also criticised. (7)

In the aftermath of the Education Reform Act, the Inspectorate focussed its work mainly on national surveys, rather than on institutional inspections. This emphasis on the national situation had two effects which were germane to the subsequent debate on the future of HMI. First, the surveys were reporting directly on the effects of government policy and this was not always comfortable for the Ministers in the DES. Secondly, it placed HMI in a weak position to respond to the political pressure for the raising of educational standards through more frequent inspection of schools. Following the Act, the Inspectorate should have carried out a thorough review of its functions. At least three developments could have been considered. One possibility was to forge a closer working partnership with LEA inspectors; another option was for HMI to be responsible for the systematic monitoring of the work of LEA inspectors; and thirdly, the Inspectorate could have put forward a case for an increase in the number of HMIs to enable more institutional inspections to take place. One precedent for such an internal review was the establishment in 1977 of the First Call Centre, when the management of the Inspectorate decided that it needed a greater national focus to its work. (8) In the conclusion to chapter 4, it was noted that these internal changes, rather than the recommendations of

the external reviews, had a significant effect on the strengthening of the role of the Inspectorate.

The high priority which education was taking on the political agenda ensured that political parties and pressure groups put forward a range of proposals for inspection in general and for HMI in particular. In June 1989 the Labour Party outlined a proposal for an Education Standards Commission on which it published details two years later. (9) This Commission would take over the inspectorial work of HMI and would establish guidelines for LEA monitoring of schools. The inspection role of HMI would be separated from its role as adviser to the government.

In spite of Sir Keith Joseph's belief that 'a market solution [for the system of state education] could only proceed (and succeed) in conjunction with a paternalistic Inspectorate', the right wing of the Conservative party was keen to reform HMI. (10) In May 1991 several Conservative MPs signed a motion in the House of Commons to abolish HMI and give the Audit Commission the task of monitoring the work of schools and colleges. The MPs were led by former Ministers Sir Rhodes Boyson and Bob Dunn who regarded HMI as a 'self-perpetuating oligarchy' which represented the interests of the producers of education, not of the consumers who should be represented on inspection teams by parents and business people. Bob Dunn described HMI as

> an area of the education system which has remained virtually untouched since Victorian times. I feel that their free-wheeling method of operation is no longer relevant to the reforms which are taking place and they are in need of re-jigging and reformation. ... Consumers want to know which schools are failing and why. They want more precise, statistical information.(11)

Within the education service HM Inspectorate is widely admired, as the Rayner scrutiny found in 1982. (12) Its breadth of knowledge and its

ability to draw conclusions from a mass of evidence earns professional respect, but politicians can find this uncomfortable, especially when the HMI judgments relate to an education system over which they have extended their control. It is the desire of all governments to have as much education as possible, of high quality and low cost. It is part of the task of HMI to point out where the inconsistency of this approach leads to a poor standard of provision. Nowhere has this been done more forcefully than in the Annual Reports of the Senior Chief Inspector in 1990 and 1991. (13)

Another Review

In 1991 Eric Bolton retired as Senior Chief Inspector to become a Professor at the London University Institute of Education. The process of appointing his successor was suspended by Kenneth Clarke in order 'to carry out a thorough internal review of the structure and role of Her Majesty's Inspectorate.' (14) Mark Neale, an assistant secretary at the DES, and Judith Phillips HMI were given two months to produce a report. The terms of reference for the review offered three options. HM Inspectorate could become an agency independent of the government, or a semi-independent agency responsible to the Secretary of State, or it could remain part of the Department of Education and Science.

According to Education magazine (15), the review was superceded by events at 10 Downing Street where a confidential Treasury-led inquiry had concluded that 'HMI provided both value for money and an important guardian of education standards'. The Prime Minister's interest in the reform of HMI stemmed from his newly announced 'Citizen's Charter', under which school inspection teams would include lay people to represent the parent and

consumer interests in schools. The influence of the right-wing Conservatives was evident in the Charter, which was published in July 1991, the month when the DES internal review of HMI was supposed to appear (16):

> If an Inspectorate is too close to the profession it is supervising there is a risk that it will lose touch with the interests of people who use the service. It may be captured by fashionable theories and lose the independence and objectivity that the public needs. Professional inspectorates can easily become part of a closed professional world.

The educational component of the 'Citizen's Charter' was amplified in the 'Parent's Charter', published three months later. Apart from lay members on all inspection teams, the proposals included a four-year cycle of inspections, carried out by teams whose services would be bought by individual schools with money transferred from the LEA budget to the schools' budgets. The LEAs would no longer need to finance their inspection and advisory bodies, since the local authority inspectors would be selling their services to the schools on a commercial basis. It was not clear what would become of the advisory function of LEAs. It was also proposed that the size of HM Inspectorate would be reduced from 480 to 175, although these figures did not compare like with like, as the larger figure included the 135 inspectors of further and higher education and teacher training, for whom different arrangements were likely to be made. The major role of HMI would be the accreditation of the inspection teams, whose work they would also monitor. HMI would also carry out a small amount of inspection, including responding to requests from the Secretary of State to inspect particular schools. Their advice to Ministers would be based not primarily on the results of the inspections which they carried out themselves, but on a compilation of the results of the inspections carried out by the teams of accredited inspectors. (17)

In press interviews and in an article in the Times Educational Supplement, Eric Bolton attacked the proposals. (18) He was suspicious of the ministers' claim that HMI was being strengthened while their numbers were being drastically cut. He felt that making HMI totally independent of government would make them irrelevant, an outcome which he saw also in the Labour Party's proposals for an Education Standards Commission: 'I fear that HMI is to be shunted into a siding.' The focus of its work would be shifted away from the DES and into the schools and it would no longer have the evidence of its own inspections to feed into the policy-making procedures of the Department. Nor would HMI be sufficiently involved at the centre in order to plan an inspection programme which would inform debate about future policy intentions. Professor Bolton wrote:

> Most of the influential HMI reports and publications of recent times could not have been produced by some kind of regulatory, non-inspecting HMI, as is envisaged, with anything like the authority and credibility they had. ... Conspiracy theorists may well suspect some link between reducing HMI's capacity to inspect and report directly to government about the state of education and the fact that much of what is currently occurring within the education service arises from the policies of successive Conservative governments over the past twelve years.

Given a limited budget for inspection and the unlikelihood of the Conservative government relying on LEAs to organise the inspection, Eric Bolton could see no objection in principle to the Charter's proposals for carrying out a greatly increased number of school and college inspections. The great danger which he saw in the proposals was the separation of HMI inspection from the Inspectorate's contribution to the policy-making process. He could not imagine that such a regulatory role for HMI would attract the high quality education professionals who had been recruited to HMI in the past. He was also sceptical of the usefulness of lay inspectors, whose lack of credibility could lead to a challenge in the courts by a

litigious school which had received an adverse report. Unlike HMI, lay inspectors would not be able to cite their professional expertise in defence of their educational judgments.

With a General Election due to take place within a year and education near to the top of the political agenda, it seemed that the policy unit in 10 Downing Street was more influential than the recommendations from reviews in the Treasury or the Department of Education and Science. The results of the Treasury inquiry were apparently ignored and all copies of the DES review were said to have been shredded. In November, however, the review was leaked to the Independent newspaper and this has provided the only record of its report. (19)

According to the Independent, the review praised the work of the Inspectorate and noted the public confidence that existed in its independence. The review mentioned the extent to which the Department was dependent on the professional advice from HMI on policy matters, school reorganisation proposals, DES circulars to LEAs and the detailed development of the national curriculum. The central question addressed by the review team was how to adapt HMI to the situation in which schools had to be inspected on a four-year cycle. Each school, the review stated, should be inspected regularly by people who are 'independent and objective' and who carry a 'wider perspective' of the system than experience of the work of only one school and who can apply 'consistent and hard-edged criteria' to judge the quality of education. Those who were consulted by the review team felt that HMI was the best body to carry out this job, as the quality of LEA inspectors was deemed to be too variable and many were considered to be too parochial.

The review team discussed three options. The first was for HMI itself

to carry out the increased number of inspections or to contract others to do the work, as the Audit Commission contracts private accountancy firms to carry out some of its audits of local authorities. This option was seen to be attractive because of the reputation and independence of HMI, which could have been increased in size without the need for legislation. However, the option was dismissed as unworkable because the central administration of HMI could not follow up 8000 individual school reports each year. It was also thought that an increase in HM Inspectorate to 2000 would be 'unwieldy and less responsive'.

The second option was for the responsibility for the regular inspections to be handed to local authorities. In view of the criticism of LEA inspectorates and the observation that many have no inspection policy and no systematic programme of school inspections, it is perhaps not surprising that this option was rejected.

The third option, which found favour with the review team, was for school governors to hire teams of inspectors accredited by HMI. A national inspection code covering procedures, criteria and reporting conventions would be written by HMI. The inspections would be monitored and moderated by HMI, who would carry out at least one of the inspections that each agency would normally conduct.

It is not entirely clear why the Secretary of State refused to publish the report of the review team, although it appears that the review was superceded by the work of the Prime Minister's policy unit, which embraced the proposal to reduce the size of the Inspectorate to 175. Without reading the review team's report in full, it is impossible to identify the differences between its proposals and those in the Charter which might have been politically embarrassing if revealed.

An Influential Paper

By the time that the review team's report had been leaked to the Independent, the Schools Bill had already been published. Just one week earlier, a paper appeared from the right-wing Centre for Policy Studies, which was known to have the ear of John Major, as it had done of Margaret Thatcher. (20) It had been written by John Burchill, the Chief Inspector for the London Borough of Wandsworth. It was a paper of astonishing brevity and generalisation, unsupported by evidence. The unsubstantiated nature of some of its assertions about HMI was matched by the naiveity of some of its recommendations concerning the process of inspection.

The central recommendation in the paper - that inspection should be carried out by competing teams of 'professional consultant inspectors' (including lay members) licensed by a reduced HMI - was so close to the recommendation in the Prime Minister's Charter that there can be little doubt that it came from the same source. It would seem that the source was Mr Burchill, acting through the Centre for Policy Studies.

The report began with a superficial analysis of 'the problem', stating that there was scepticism about HMI and LEA inspectorates and

> concern that they are preoccupied more with imposing recent theories than with reporting on standards in education. Reports are thought to be too vague and often based on personal judgment unsupported by hard evidence,

an assertion which would more accurately describe Mr Burchill's report than those by HMI. In discussing options for the future, the paper rejected the expansion of HMI on the grounds 'of doubts about the independence and objectivity of HMI; there is not much confidence in their reports as a basis for improving schools.'

In rightly pointing out that rapid growth in the number of grant maintained schools - if responsibility for inspecting them remained with HMI - would create a major problem for the management of HMI time, John Burchill stated that the emergence of new forms of institution, such as grant maintained schools and City Technology Colleges, reflected 'a lack of confidence in the way in which schools have in the past been monitored, both nationally and locally.' It would be interesting to know the evidence for linking this cause and effect.

On the nature of inspection, the paper described the model in John Burchill's own local authority, Wandsworth, where 'judgments are based on fact - pupil assessment and examination results, punctuality, attendance, improvement or deterioration in standards - not on the opinion of the inspectors.' More open criteria for inspectorial judgments on schools were advocated in chapter 5 above but, in the words of a former HMI, (21)

> it will never be possible for [inspectors] to depend exclusively on checklists, blueprints or performance indicators. If inspection is to be of real value it must involve the inspector in making judgments. ... There is no single path leading to successful teaching and learning.

It is not clear whether lesson observation was included in the type of inspection advocated by John Burchill, since his paper stated merely that 'when reports allude to work in classrooms and the quality of learning, the criteria upon which judgments are made are explicit.' In a previous article Mr Burchill had made the same point, but appeared to rule out much lesson observation (22):

> Judgments such as 'satisfactory' or 'less than satisfactory' are properly a matter for those commissioning the reports rather than those who are writing them. ... With the national curriculum and assessment, local management and teacher appraisal in place, the observation of learning processes and the way lessons are taught will be addressed most appropriately through internal monitoring procedures.

The Education (Schools) Bill 1991

In chapter 7 above it was noted how little legislation had been enacted concerning the role of HM Inspectorate. Even Section 77 of the 1944 Education Act did not mention HMI by name. Yet, of the 17 substantive clauses of the 1991 Schools Bill, 15 related to inspection. Kenneth Clarke argued that this legislation therefore strengthened the position of HMI. The Bill proposed that the Chief Inspector of Schools in England (HMCI) and his counterpart in Wales should be appointed by the Secretary of State on a renewable five-year contract, which gave little confidence in the independence of the new organisation. The duties of HMCI were to be

- to keep the Secretary of State informed about the quality of schools, their educational standards and the efficiency of the management of their financial resources
- to advise the Secretary of State on matters at his request, including the inspection of certain schools, or classes of school
- to maintain a register of the leaders of inspection teams
- to give guidance to inspection teams on good practice in connection with inspections and reports
- to review the system of school inspection and to ensure that legal obligations are fulfilled by inspectors, LEAs and governing bodies
- to encourage competition in the provision of services by registered inspectors
- to make an Annual Report, and such other reports as he considers appropriate, to the Secretary of State and to arrange for these reports to be published in such manner as he considers appropriate

HMCI would also be responsible for the work of the remaining HMIs who would

be entitled to inspect all schools. HMIs and members of registered inspection teams would have the right of entry to schools and a right to inspect all school records. It would be an offence to obstruct an inspector in the course of his work. HMCI would also be given functions relating to the training of teachers and, in exercising all his functions, HMCI 'shall have regard to such aspects of government policy as the Secretary of State may direct.'

The powers and duties of the teams of inspectors were similarly defined. These provisions did not apply to independent schools, nor to the inspection of religious education in denominational schools. HMCI may place conditions on the appointment of registered inspectors and may remove them from the register for various reasons, including the production of an inspection report 'which is, when taken as a whole, seriously misleading'. All members of inspection teams must undergo training by HMI.

Local Education Authorities were specifically empowered to offer an inspection service on the same terms as other registered inspectors, but must charge the full cost of providing the inspection. Parts of Section 77 of the 1944 Education Act were repealed and this appeared to have the consequence of removing from LEAs the right of entry to a school.

Governing bodies will be obliged to invite tenders from at least two registered inspectors. This may come to resemble the 'Gabelle' in pre-revolutionary France, by which the unfortunate peasantry were obliged by law to purchase stated amounts of a commodity - salt - which they did not want and could not properly afford. If the governing body fails to ensure that the school is inspected at due intervals, an inspection may be arranged by the LEA (in the case of a maintained school) or by the Secretary of State. After an inspection report has been received, governing

bodies will, within a prescribed period, have to produce an action plan to say how they propose to respond to the report.

In one respect, at least, the government scheme may differ from the proposals put forward in the Centre for Policy Studies paper. The Secretary of State said that 'inspectors will talk to parents, look at what goes on in the school, inspect what is taught and what is learned.' So it would appear that classroom observation will remain part of the inspectors' brief, although it would be possible to interpret this instruction so narrowly that only the curriculum plan and the test results were inspected. It would have been clearer if the Secretary of State had said 'inspect the teaching and the learning.'

The Independent newspaper, which advocated reform of HMI, was highly critical of the Bill and of the lack of consultation which preceded it (23):

> Mr Clarke is expecting his party's MPs to drive through a piece of ill-considered legislation, without giving them any real chance to contemplate the consequences or canvas alternative options. Once enacted, it will be difficult to undo the damage. Mr Clarke is a serious politician who is on the brink of making a serious mistake.

The Times Educational Supplement (24) was also critical, noting that many important details of the new scheme remained in doubt - the civil service status of HMCI, the administrative difficulties for HMCI of publishing over 6000 inspection reports per year, the ability of both HMI and LEA inspectorates to carry out any duties other than inspection and the apparent lack of support mechanisms for failing schools. The paper also found it hard to see how, with so many inspectors, the comparability of inspections which had been guaranteed under the tightly-knit HMI could be sustained under the new arrangements. Others expressed reservations about the possible cosiness of the relationship between a school head or

governing body and the inspection team which had been selected. The figure of £70 million per year, which was the Secretary of State's estimate of the cost of the new system, was thought by some to be too low. Finally, there were fears that HMI would have no basis of inspection for its advice to the government and would rapidly become out of touch with what was happening in schools. At a time when the public debate about education was mainly on HMI's familiar territory - curriculum, assessment, pedagogy and quality - the administrative civil servants would find it more difficult to advise ministers without the benefit of advice based on inspection.

Under a second Education Bill relating to further and higher education, sixth form colleges and colleges of FE would be taken out of local authority control and would be financed by a new body, an FE Funding Council. Polytechnics could elect to be re-named universities and, when the so-called binary line in higher education had thus disappeared, all these institutions would be financed through an HE Funding Council, which would be created by a merger of the PCFC and the UFC. Since HMI had had a role in public sector higher education, but (apart from departments of education) not in universities, it was inevitable that the arrangements for inspection of higher education would have to be changed. Quality assurance, rather than inspection, was the terminology used in the White Paper which preceded the Bill. (25) There were two aspects to this quality assurance. 'Quality audit' would be carried out by the institutions themselves and the Academic Audit Unit of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals visited all universities before the Bill was enacted in order to monitor the auditing arrangements. 'Quality assessment' would be the legal responsibility of the new HE Funding Council, where the Quality Assessment Unit will be staffed largely by the former higher education HMIs. Similarly in further

education, the responsibility for quality assurance would be with the FE Funding Council.

Notes

1. See, for example, Kenneth Baker's speech to the North of England Education Conference, 6.1.88. The role of HMI in the development of a national curriculum was discussed in chapter 7 above.
2. See above, chapter 3. For a further discussion of the effect of the Education Reform Act on the role of HMI, see J.E.Dunford, 'The Curriculum Private Eye', Education, 15.4.88, 315.
3. Times Educational Supplement, 14.8.87.
4. Ibid., 8.5.87.
5. Education, 10.7.87, 21; ibid., 4.9.87, 181; Times Educational Supplement, 23.10.87; ibid., 11.12.87.
6. Times Educational Supplement, 24.6.88. See above, chapter 6.
7. Department of Education and Science, The Implementation of the National Curriculum in Primary Schools, HMSO, 1989.
8. See above, chapter 3.
9. Times Educational Supplement, 2.6.89; Raising the Standard: Labour's Plans for an Education Standards Commission, Labour Party, 1991.
10. C.Knight, op.cit., 1990, 152. For examples of right wing criticism of HMI, see Richard Lynn, Educational Achievement in Japan: Lessons for the West, Macmillan, 1988, 130; Oliver Letwin, 'Blissful Ignorance', Times Educational Supplement, 27.5.88; Geoffrey Samuel, 'Anti-Establishment Attitudes', Education, 7.12.90, 475; John Marks, 'Dogs That Never Bark', Times Educational Supplement, 23.11.90.
11. Education, 17.5.91, 389.
12. See above, chapter 4.
13. See above, chapter 3.
14. DES Press Release, 8.5.91.
15. Education, 25.10.91, 321.
16. Ibid., 26.7.91, 62.
17. Ibid., 4.10.91, 264.
18. Guardian,3.10.91; Times Educational Supplement,4.10.91; ibid.,18.10.91.
19. Independent, 14.11.91. The review report is entitled Review of Her Majesty's Inspectorate July 1991.
20. John Burchill, Inspecting Schools: Breaking the Monopoly, Centre for Policy Studies, 1991.
21. Michael Salter, 'A Matter of Judgement', Education, 4.10.91, 270.
22. John Burchill, 'Inspection that's worth the money', Times Educational Supplement, 14.6.91.
23. Independent, 19.11.91.
24. Times Educational Supplement, 15.11.91.
25. Department of Education and Science, Education and Training for the 21st Century, HMSO, 2 vols, 1991.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION

HMI AND THE FUTURE OF INSPECTION

For 152 years Her Majesty's Inspectorate has been operating as an efficiency inspectorate with very few executive functions and no statutory powers, except the right of entry to educational institutions granted in the 1944 Education Act. (1) This lack of role definition has given the Inspectorate an enviable flexibility and a capacity to respond to the prevailing political and educational climate. In the aftermath of the Second World War the Inspectorate was able to play its part in the rapid growth of the maintained education system; in the 1960s its work reflected the prevailing liberal consensus and partnership approach to education by putting emphasis on advice rather than on inspection; in the 1970s and 1980s the focus of educational policy-making moved towards the centre and HMI therefore operated increasingly as a national body.

The government of education in England and Wales is a complex matter, with individual institutions, Local Education Authorities, non-governmental bodies and central government playing their parts and with inter-relationships which have changed over time. It is hardly surprising that the role of HMI has reflected the complexity of this situation. Not only has the Inspectorate had to adapt to these changing structural relationships, but also to many new types of institution, to many new educational theories and practices and to changing expectations of

educational standards, many of which are themselves unmeasurable.

Within the Department the Inspectorate has had to maintain a delicate balance between professional independence on the one hand and accountability to the Secretary of State on the other. The messages which the Inspectorate has given to Ministers have not always been welcome. The increasing centralisation of educational policy-making, the growth in importance of education on the political agenda and the publishing of HMI reports have together contributed to an increasingly difficult position for HMI in the 1980s. It required a fine judgment to use the professional independence of HMI to give public warnings about the effects of government policy in sufficiently strong terms, but without so offending Ministers that there was a risk of losing the independence altogether.

It is interesting to speculate on whether the changes in policy on, for example, the establishment of a national curriculum have been led or followed by HMI. Being an efficiency and not an enforcement inspectorate, HMI has had to rely for its public credibility on its professional competence. Its influence therefore depends upon the respect which it has earned and the wide acceptance of what it is saying. Since HMIs, either individually or collectively, are not in a position to impose their views on government ministers, LEA officers or individuals in schools and colleges, it has been argued that that they can be neither too far ahead nor too far behind current ideas about education. (2) This analysis helps to explain why some people have portrayed HMI as creatures of educational fashion, but the inspectors can point to instances where they have warned about the consequences of a prevailing trend. (3) They can also cite examples of trends which they have helped to create and Sir Keith Joseph certainly saw them in the role of change agents. Yet they could not be

described as theorists, since their publications, speeches and private advice were always based essentially on the evidence of inspection. At times when this evidence has not been gathered in sufficient quantity the influence of the Inspectorate has been much reduced. Without evidence the respect for the views of HMI faltered and the balance of the 'delicate set of working relationships' (4) between HMI and others working in the education system was disturbed. There have been few such periods since 1944.

In 1990 the Department of Education and Science published a booklet on the work of HMI, giving an account of its impressively wide contribution to the work of the education system at all levels. The booklet concluded with a list of the most important targets for HMI in the 1990s. (5) Within a year the government had made a precipitate decision to change beyond recognition the role of HMI. Since the Education Reform Bill was introduced in 1988 the introduction of a national curriculum and the creation of new types of school had forced a debate about the nature of inspection. Measures of quality such as performance indicators, league tables of attendance rates, examination results and national curriculum assessments, as well as the role of HMI and local authority inspectors, were discussed in the national and educational press. On LEA inspection the government moved its position several times between the important role which it ascribed to LEAs in Sir David Hancock's 1988 speech (6) and the peripheral role of LEA inspection in the 1991 Schools Bill. On HMI there had been no hint of change until the appointment of Eric Bolton's successor was stopped and an internal review set in motion in May 1991.

The 1968 Select Committee recognised that the number of HMIs could be made to fit the work which the Inspectorate was asked to do, but found

that the size of about 500 had remained for many years and the work had been made to fit the number. During the 1991 review the question of the size of the Inspectorate was discussed in relation to both role and cost. There was no dispute that an expanded HMI would be the best body to carry out a more regular programme of institutional inspections, but the cost would be too great and, more important to the government, it would fall on the DES budget. By his proposals in the 1991 Schools Bill, Kenneth Clarke has succeeded in extending the amount of inspection while reducing the cost to his departmental budget. The result may possibly come to exemplify Robert Lowe's mid-nineteenth century dictum about education under the Revised Code: 'If it is not cheap it shall be efficient; if it is not efficient it shall be cheap.'

In changing the primary role of HMI from inspection to the regulation of other inspectors, Kenneth Clarke has shifted the focus of the Inspectorate's work from a national view to that of monitoring the work of individual institutions. In future, therefore, no public body will be charged with the task of reporting on the education system as a whole and on the national effect of government policies. The capacity of HMI to embarrass government ministers has been virtually eliminated. In the FE and HE sectors, only the new Funding Councils will be in a position to conduct national surveys and publish the results, a role which the UFC and PCFC have not traditionally performed. In the schools' sector the only way in which HMCI will be able to survey the system will be to summarise the reports of the diverse registered inspectors and of the small number of HMI inspections. The immense authority which lay behind the Annual Reports of the Senior Chief Inspector will be lost. Also largely lost will be the potential for HMI to advise Ministers and civil servants on policy issues.

Although this will be one of the duties of HMCI, it is difficult to envisage how this will take place as effectively as it has done in the past. On further and higher education policy it is difficult to see how such policy advice will take place at all.

In 1979 the Policy Group for Inspection was formed in order to bring HMI and civil service planning closer. This enabled HMI to plan an inspection programme, the results of which could be used several years later to guide government policy-making. Since the late 1980s, however, the lead-time for legislation has been so short and the consultation processes so perfunctory that the Inspectorate has not been able to plan an inspection programme which could be carried out in time to provide the evidence for legislation.

Two factors were identified in chapter 7 as being conditions for HMI to be influential in government policy-making. First, Ministers have to want to make policies on the sort of topics on which HMI is knowledgable, and secondly, Ministers and civil servants must have confidence in HMI and particularly in its leading members. Since the mid-1970s both these conditions have been fulfilled; indeed, the growth in government interest in the curriculum has been marked during this period. In the 1980s, however, the emergence of powerful right-wing pressure groups has counterbalanced the influence of HMI, which has continued to produce its detailed and balanced reports, leaving others to draw the conclusions and debate the consequences. Although they have come very near to it on occasions, senior HMIs have rightly been unwilling to risk the traditional independence of the Inspectorate by participating in the ensuing political battles. Nevertheless, HMI's evidence has often provided the weapons with which others have engaged in battle.

A national curriculum and an increasingly national system of education requires a national inspectorate, but it does not have to be a 2000+ HMI. The national perspective and the advice based on HMI inspection need not disappear if the government approaches differently the problem of institutional inspection. Eric Bolton has offered one solution (7):

> There is no need to destroy HMI in order to get what the government says it wants. It could be done, as it is in France, by a two-tiered inspectorate consisting of HMI inspecting nationally, and of the regional inspectorate carrying out frequent inspection of schools. The routine inspection would be overseen by HMI, much as is envisaged in the Charter, and its size would be smaller than now, say around 300 inspectors. The two bodies would be formally connected. For example, in national priorities for inspection, such as a concern about the teaching of reading, there could be a specific national survey inspection by HMI, and it would also feature as one of the issues to be addressed in every inspection within a given period of time.

Such a system could embrace many of the aspects of the Schools Bill, but it would retain the national perspective of HMI. It would also retain sufficient HMI inspection for the giving of confident advice to government. HMI would continue to provide a connection between the many different parts of the education system, relating curriculum to assessment and pedagogy, resources to outcomes, and quality to all the other facets. Instead HMI has been sacrificed on the altar of central government cost cutting and condemned for failing to exercise a quality assurance function over all the institutions in the system, a function which it was never intended to perform, but to which it could have adapted with adequate resources.

Notes

1. Gerald Rhodes, Inspectorates in British Government, Allen & Unwin, 1981, 96-119. Rhodes discusses both efficiency and enforcement inspectorates.
2. Ibid., 114.
3. See, for example, Eric Bolton, 'Charter Bears a Closer Inspection', Times Educational Supplement, 18.10.91.
4. Department of Education and Science, Study of HM Inspectorate in

England and Wales (Rayner Report), HMSO, 1982, 5, paragraph 1.12.
5. Department of Education and Science, HMI in the 1990s: The Work of HM Inspectors, HMSO, 1990, 16.
6. See above, chapter 6. This was followed by Education Support Grants for LEAs to enable them to appoint extra inspectors. The debate about the role of LEA inspectors has been conducted in the shadow of a wider debate about the future of the LEAs themselves.
7. Times Educational Supplement, 18.10.91.

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Interviews

The texts of the interviews are held by the author

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23 March 1991	Eric Bolton, Senior Chief Inspector, 1983-91
5 March 1991	Sir Rhodes Boyson, Under-Secretary of State, DES, 1979-83
3 July 1991	Sheila Browne, Senior Chief Inspector, 1974-83
16 April 1991	Jackson Hall, Director of Education,Sunderland, 1976-87
17 February 1991	Peter Harris, Director of Education,Wolverhampton, 1981-87
29 May 1991	Terry Melia, Senior Chief Inspector, 1991-
29 May 1991	Colin Richards, HMI 1983-
29 May 1991	Norman Thomas, Chief Inspector for Primary Education, 1973-81