Conservatism and social policy: an examination of modern conservative approaches to education policy in Great Britain and the united states

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ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this study is to examine the conservative movements in the United States and Great Britain from the 1980's to the present and to assess conservative education policy with respect to the conservative principles upon which it is claimed to be based. These principles are shown to be divided into two broad categories--traditional and classical liberal--but are discussed in terms of their recent marriage to form what is referred to here as Modern Conservatism.

Education is used as the focus in this discussion because it illuminates the debate between pro-state Liberal and Modern Conservative ideologies and principles as they relate to different structural and methodological approaches in education. To this extent, then, this thesis looks at certain issues such as traditionalism, progressivism and egalitarianism in education and relates them to the larger debate between the two differing ideologies. Finally, as part of this analysis an assessment will be made of how well conservative principles have translated into actual Modern Conservative education policies from the 1980's to the present.

CONSERVATISM AND SOCIAL POLICY: AN EXAMINATION OF MODERN CONSERVATIVE APPROACHES TO EDUCATION POLICY IN GREAT BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES

BY

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DECLARATION

No portion of the work referred to in this thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification at this or any other institute of learning.

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INTRODUCTION

In the multi-faceted debates over social policy and education in the United States and Great Britain there is a fundamental division between "conservative" and "liberal" conceptions of modern society and the ideals which should be used to shape and to guide it into the future. While both sides argue from similar grounds of producing conditions which will best benefit society and the individual, the "Liberal"[1] argument (including arguments from Crosland, Tawney and others) consists of notions of social "homogenization" whereby greater central-government control and direction is seen as the means for lessening (if not, in some cases, eliminating) social divisiveness (as created in large part by social class structures) with the ultimate purpose of creating an egalitarian social structure.

The impact of these various "Liberal" aims has very definite, if inconsistent, implications for education policy as is already evident in many schools in the United States and Britain. For instance, most pro-state Liberals claim that schools are institutions which are an integral part of the process of socialization and social homogenization. For this reason some pro-state Liberals (such as Crosland) seize upon egalitarian aims and as such conceive of an educational system which stresses the importance of equality of opportunity where this is taken to mean the radical equalization of life-chances outside the school in

order to ensure the elimination of the social inequalities deemed to be deleterious to educational advancement. Once social inequalities are controlled, schools can aid further advances towards greater equality by ensuring equal conditions, facilities and learning opportunities for their pupils.

Other pro-state Liberals (such as Dewey), however, while in agreement with the concept of school as a place where social engineering and social homogenization should occur, believe that the child is in the process of defining his own reality and as such, place extreme emphasis on individual, child-centered learning sometimes to the point where no curriculum is designed other than that which the child creates himself.[2] This, in the extreme, means that even if the child wishes to learn nothing at all no pressure is placed upon him to encourage him to do otherwise. These are known as the progressive educationists.

Most educational Liberals, however, combine the aims of both egalitarianism and progressivism in order to create a unified educational position known as progressive egalitarianism. In other words, while most child-centered advocates do maintain that a curriculum (although very socially as opposed to academically oriented) is important to the child's development, and most egalitarians believe in a school system where children are streamed (or tracked) according to their abilities, the end result is still the same--the children will leave school and enter into a society where the State has already insured total social equality at all significant levels (private, occupational, industrial, in terms of social status, and so on) through the powers of an

immensely large and powerful central government. Further, the progressive egalitarian position is one which employs a combination of concepts which, as will be shown, are contradictory and thus damaging to society and to the concept of individualism.

The conservative stance takes a quite different view of society and education (as is demonstrated herein by Hayek, Oakeshott, Buckley, Murray and others). By placing much emphasis on individualism, the natural distinctions (or inequalities) among men, tradition, diversity, community, history, habit and so on, it sees a large centrally-controlled government as an unnecessarily coercive and destructive force on these qualities which are seen as the fabric of democratic societies. Unlike liberals, conservatives are not optimistic about the reasoning abilities of man and, therefore, place great distrust (at best) in the abilities of government to create an egalitarian utopia--a concept of society that conservatism strictly opposes anyway. Government, instead, is viewed as a body whose purpose is to act as the keeper of the framework (laws, customs and so on) of democratic society so that all free men have equal opportunity and freedom to operate within that framework to the best of their abilities even if they are sometimes destined to experience failure in their endeavors.

Further, because conservatives do not believe in the constructs of a utopian society or in the de rigeur of an all-encompassing central government necessary for its maintenance, they find the idea of a non-selective welfare state, with all its attendant trappings, as unsustainable, undesirable and reprehensible. In contrast, they advocate a much smaller, but more effective welfare

state which is predicated on the idea of a means-tested, selective welfare safety net where services can be more appropriately and efficiently targeted on the needy rather than on a healthy general population at large.

In education, Modern Conservative ideals are reflected in traditional, as opposed to liberal-socialist or progressive, education. The aims in this case are to teach children (through the instruction of specialized educators) fundamental facts and figures based within the conventional traditional curriculum (such as the three Rs, science, history and so on). Conservatives, too, endorse the practice of streaming, but they differ from the liberal scheme in that when children leave school, it is important that they enter a society which recognizes diversity and inequality among each of them and allows for each school-leaver to be as successful or as unsuccessful in his life as his abilities, opportunities and misfortunes might dictate. As such no attempt is made to 'level' all individuals socially or economically in an effort to maintain equality.

Outline of the Thesis

In order to discuss several major areas such as social policy, economic policy and the welfare state, Chapter One identifies and defines Modern Conservative and pro-state Liberal conceptions of society, the role of government, citizenship rights, equality, and liberty within society. In establishing this ideological groundwork, valuable insights are provided for the subsequent

chapters which will examine, more specifically, areas of primary and secondary education as they relate to these contrasting philosophies.

Chapter Two examines the impact of Liberal and conservative philosophies as they pertain to differences in approaches toward education. In both cases it is demonstrated how education can be (and is) used to promote those ideals of society which each philosophy maintains as being most appropriate and desirable. Where Liberal education is concerned, these notions are manifest in egalitarian and progressive techniques (although a combination of the two is often evident in practice) where socialization and social homogenization are viewed as prime directives of the education process. From the conservative position, "traditional" methods are examined as the primary objective in directing formal education.

Building from the discussions on educational structures introduced in Chapter Two, Chapter Three discusses educational processes. In the first half of this chapter, child-centered approaches to learning are examined as an element of progressive egalitarian education. The curriculum that this approach provides is compared with that of the knowledge-centered, meritocratic approach as endorsed by traditionalists. The second half of this chapter discusses the differing views about child discipline in conjunction with issues about the curriculum in terms of the requirements of society as both philosophies conceive of it.

Chapter four examines national conservative education policy since 1980 as a means of determining how successful both

Conservative parties (in Britain and the U.S.) have been in putting their traditional ideologies into practice.

Finally, Chapter Five concludes the thesis by providing a brief summation of the main conservative arguments as they endorse traditionalism and attack progressive egalitarianism in education.

NOTES

1. Much of the terminology that appears throughout this thesis is properly defined in Chapter One. However, as the term "liberal" is used here before the reader has been given the benefit of that definition suffice it to say that, in this case, although most socialist would in no way classify themselves as liberal, the definition here is used in its American context in that it connotes a strong attachment to "pro-state" or "social democratic" ideals.

2. In this day and age where the idiosyncratic (if not outright paranoid) views of the political left have engendered in society those conditions in which "political correctness" now abounds and where offense is often inferred where none is implied, ism "head-hunters" are ever ready to claim their next unassuming victim. To abate any possible claims of sexism let the assurance be stated here that, as certain nouns and pronouns (i.e. man, men, he, his, etc.) are used in a generic context, they are not intended to convey gender dominance. They are gender neutral and are used for purposes of expediency in compliance with a traditionally accepted form of writing.

CHAPTER ONE:

CONSERVATISM VERSUS PRO-STATE LIBERALISM: VIEWS ON SOCIAL POLICY AND THE WELFARE STATE

Social Policy in the United States and United Kingdom:

Overview

It is a contention of this thesis that the egalitarian ideals of the "Great Society" are the embodiment of socialist-style ideologies in an age when nations around the world are realizing the immense shortcomings and are moving to abrogate in favor of more capitalist approaches.

While the majority of this thesis targets the area of education, it is first important to create a foundation on which the conservative arguments that follow are to be built. It is necessary, therefore, to examine various philosophies of the welfare state and social policy as set forth by the major critics of conservative views. In the United States the primary opposition is seen as emanating from the Democratic party, whereas in the United Kingdom both the Labour Party and the Liberal Democrats offer alternative views on the role of the welfare state.

Here a brief discussion about the major political parties is warranted. Where the conservative parties in both the United

States and Britain are reasonably alike, in that they both support limited government intervention to ensure social and moral stability combined with a free-market liberalism, so too are the Liberal Democrats of Great Britain and the Democrats of the United States on similar ideological ground. That is to say that both advocate a stronger role for government in the atmosphere of a mixed economy where (while the importance of a healthy free-market system is recognized as a requisite to healthy social and economic policies) state intervention is also seen as necessary in terms of controlling welfare and the economy.

Unlike the Conservative and Liberal Democratic parties in Britain, the Labour Party has no serious equivalent in the United States (although some left-wing Democrats would certainly fit the Labour mold). It is a party whose ideological framework revolves around socialist doctrine. It argues for a strong, corporatist government, regular state intervention in economic affairs, a degree of nationalization of some industry, state intervention in investment and a strong, state-controlled welfare system. More recently it has made what is seen as a rather abrupt departure from its past ideology toward one which accepts an expanded role for the free market as an alternative means of establishing redistributive welfare policies. At the very least it was an abandonment of past philosophies which signalled a gentle, if not silent retreat towards the political center. This argument, however, will not be undertaken in this thesis.

In each of these discussions on the various political philosophies the following questions will be examined: What is

the nature of the welfare state? What role, if any, should the state play? What is the relationship between equality and liberty? What effect does this relationship have on the creation of social policy and the welfare state?

Models of the Welfare State

Julia Parker (1975:4-15) identifies three models of welfare. These models are especially useful here as the discussion that follows is not one of examining party politics per se (although party identification will occasionally crop up with reference to certain social and political policies). It must be remembered that the purpose herein is to examine the broader questions of the major conceptual underpinnings of New Conservative policies, and of their critics; first with respect to the welfare state, and in subsequent chapters with specific emphasis in the area of education.

The first model she terms "laissez-faire". Although this model is most closely identified with by Conservatives, Parker avoids using the term "Conservative" because, she says, "the conservative tradition in Britain has not been laissez-faire." (1975:15n) As was implied earlier, while neither the British nor the American conservative tradition has advocated strict laissez-faire policies (as this would be more indicative of the radical right than of conservatism), British Conservative policy (whose tradition has been to demonstrate more tolerance of government than their counterparts in the United States), especially since the coming of

the Thatcher government, has been to place more emphasis on individualism and less on government activities on welfare.

> If laissez-faire means that government withdraws from those functions in society which the citizens must not or cannot try to perform for themselves, then the Tory Party is not, never has been, never can be, the party of laissez-faire." [emphasis in the original]
> (Powell 1972:4)

What Enoch Powell states here about the Tory Party in Britain is equally applicable to the Republican Party in the United States. However, although the label is deceiving, as Parker admits, it will be adhered to here for the purposes of her discussion, but the above exceptions to this label must be carefully noted and kept in mind throughout.

This first model, then, is characterized by its belief in a minimum of interference from government. It emphasizes freedom of choice for individuals and expects government to become involved only when standards "fall below the minimum for subsistence or threaten the rest of the community.... [T]his kind of approach is linked to an absolute rather than a relative conception of poverty." [emphasis added] (Parker 1975:4) The object, Parker explains, is to "encourage and persuade" people on a course of self-dependence as government intervention is seen as an encroachment on the liberties and freedoms of free individuals in society. (1975:4-5)

The second model is the "socialist" approach. She describes it as being in contrast with the "laissez-faire" model in that

> it stresses the value of equality and common rights to take part in political, social and economic activities.

> Individual freedom," she says, "is...emphasised but...[is] interpreted...[as] 'freedom to' rather than 'freedom from'.
>
> (Parker 1975:4)

In this model, government plays the central role in ensuring that everyone is offered the same opportunities

> for making positive choices and to provide comparable standards of amenity, rather than limiting its activities to preventing acute destitution. Distribution is according to need [rather than ability to pay] so that in a perfectly working system poverty would not exist.
>
> (Parker 1975:4-5)

This paradigm would be most appropriately placed with the Labour Party in Britain, and with some left-wing Democrats in the United States.

Parker labels the third model as the "liberal" strategy to the welfare state. This strategy, which uses the notion of "relative deprivation", lies between the first two. In America and Britain these policies are most closely allied with the Democratic Party and the Liberal Democratic Party, respectively. Briefly, she summarizes:

> It emphasises opportunity and individual freedom and attaches great importance to the market as a method of social distribution.... [It also, however,] admits government responsibility for guaranteeing minimum standards which are not determined by the essentials for subsistence but related to the living standards of the rest of the community. [emphasis added]
>
> (Parker 1975:5)

Insofar as British conservatives must contend with both of these

differing ideologies, American conservatives, in the two-party political system, have only the Democrats with whom they must contend. To explain further, Huntington (1981:36) describes the differences in the political scene between Europe and the United States by illustrating the polar differences, as indicated by radical movements, in their respective political spectra:

> In Europe, the nationalist or fascist Right and the socialist or communist Left have favored a strong state. In America...radicals at both ends of the political spectrum have tended to be more individualistic, antistatist, libertarian, and in favor of decentralization and popular control. They have shared a desire to reduce, not to enhance, political authority. Thus, in each case, what extremist movements carry to an extreme is the prevailing political disposition of their own society.

This statement, as it is used here, is not intended to suggest that the Democratic Party or the Liberal Democratic Party are by any means "radical" in their stated political philosophies (the Labour Party is intentionally omitted here because, in America, their socialistic philosophies would be considered as a form of radicalism as are many left-wing Democratic ideas); it is merely used to show the political and social differences in order to enhance the understanding of where the Conservative philosophies stand in relation to these others, and to understand the national differences, similarities and tolerances between the Conservative parties in Britain and in the United States.

Hoover and Plant summarize the divisions this way: conservative capitalists in the United States during the Reagan years generally held the opinion (it is still popular today) that, "liberals

were...statists whose institutional remedies to the inequalities of capitalism in fact worsened the problems by stultifying free enterprise and encouraging false expectations of social justice." [emphasis added] (1989:10) Whereas in Britain under the Thatcher government the focus of criticism fell on previous attempts to combine capitalism and socialism via the implementation of state-directed policy in order to form "social and democratic capitalism." [emphasis added] (Hoover and Plant 1989:10)

Modern Conservatism and the Conservative Tradition

Within the Conservative tradition, Russell Kirk (1988:43-44) discusses six core elements:

> 1. Belief that a divine intent rules society as well as conscience.... Political problems, at bottom, are religious and moral problems.
> 2. Affection for the proliferating variety and mystery of traditional life, as distinguished from the narrowing uniformity and egalitarianism and utilitarian aims of most radical systems.
> 3. Conviction that civilized society requires orders and classes [a recognition of the "natural distinctions among men"]. The only true equality is moral equality; all other attempts at levelling lead to despair, if enforced by positive legislation.
> 4. Persuasion that property and freedom are inseparably connected, and that economic levelling is not economic progress.
> 5. Faith in prescription and distrust of 'sophisters and calculators'. Man must put a control upon his will and his appetite, for conservatives know man to be governed more by emotion than by reason. Tradition and sound prejudice provide checks upon man's anarchic impulse.
> 6. Recognition that change and reform are not identical, and that innovation is a devouring conflagration more often than it is a torch of progress. Society must alter, for slow change is the

> means of its conservation...but Providence is the proper instrument for change.

Although Kirk is very much an American traditionalist, his interpretation of the key components of the Conservative movement is, by and large, accepted within Modern Conservatism.

The purpose of this chapter is to identify two prevailing strands, and to define their place in Modern Conservative social and economic policy in the U.S. and U.K. As will be demonstrated, although the direction in terms of economic policy is very similar in both countries under their respective Conservative leaderships, there are differences between the traditional strands of the Conservative equation.

Another major part of this chapter is to identify those "Liberal" positions which oppose conservatism.

Defining Terminology

Before beginning these examinations into conservative thought a brief, although very significant, discussion must be included so as to clarify certain terminology.

In the United States, all of the strands which are combined to create and promote the political, social and economic ideas of Modern Conservatism often are collectively referred to simply as "conservatism". Further, given the American perspective of the author of this thesis, this collective term is at times juxtaposed with its American political converse--the Democrats--whose policies generally reflect a more socially and politically progressivist, pro-statist approach, and whose views (in the U.S.)

are commonly referred to collectively as "Liberal". However, as this thesis also discusses social and political aspects of British society, it is important to provide definitions which accurately depict contemporary British political categories.

While the terms "conservative" and "Liberal" have their all-encompassing meanings in the American context, in Britain, where the political history is much deeper and the main political traditions are more diverse, greater precision is required in these definitions. To this end of providing a more lucid clarification of the terminology used herein, the discussion of Modern Conservatism (or the New Right as it is also known) takes into account two strands: classical liberalism, which emphasizes the values of traditional liberal individualism, limited government and the importance of the free market and Authoritarian Traditionalism, which seeks to secure order and authority in society according to traditional values, religion and moral conservatism. W.H. Greenleaf (1983:195) describes these two strands as being reflective of Conservatism's "twin inheritance of ideas in respect of the tension in our political life between libertarian and collectivist tendencies."

Although a recognition of many other strands is present within the Conservative tradition, these two strands in particular are of the greatest use for the purposes of this thesis.

Just as the term "conservative" has its different meanings, so too does the term "liberal". For instance, in Britain it does not carry the same progressive, pro-state connotations that it does in

the United States. In fact, Authoritarian Traditionalism, as will be shown, claims a great need for the powers of the State in order to ensure domestic tranquility and to uphold certain moral Christian values within society. This is especially evident in Chapter Four where the national curriculum (as part of the education reforms in Britain) is secured through the powers of the central government in order to ensure that the aims of traditional education are fulfilled. Greenleaf (1983:194) explains of the pro-state Conservative position that

> however much a collectivist Conservative might be prepared...to admit or encourage state intervention, he would always do so with certain important reservations in mind, the most significant of which would be that, in principle, the rights of property must be respected. Yet the extent to which many Conservatives have been prepared to entrench on private rights in the general interest (through redistributive taxation, for instance) has in practice been considerable. So much so that, on a wide range of issues, the views of many Conservatives are well-nigh indistinguishable from those of their opponents, Liberals...and...many Socialists.

Classical liberalism is often engaged in the discussion of the latter of Greenleaf's two categories in which it is seen to argue for a limitation of the powers of government in such a way that natural rights and individual freedoms tend to displace some of the more traditionalist requirements for society. For these reasons classical liberalism, too, is often discussed in terms of its "Liberal" stance relative to the traditionalist positions.

Modern Conservatism

What is Modern Conservatism? Charles Kesler (1988:6-9) identifies three different strands of conservatism in the United States. First there are the traditionalists who are characterized in part by their stand in maintaining individual culture and heritage as characterized by traditional communities. Perhaps the most prominent person in this camp is Edmund Burke, whose concern for natural rights, especially as characterized by those events surrounding the French Revolution, demonstrates another major hallmark of the traditionalists.

The second strand, whose supporters include Friedman and Hayek among others, concentrate their efforts on the superiority of market forces and individual liberty. Kesler (1988:7) sums their position:

> The only morality worth the name was voluntary, not coerced; and this morality of free choice...is immanent in the network of transactions...that free men make in the marketplace. Any transcendent or objective ideological morality is an imposition on human freedom, depriving man of the possibility of genuine moral choice.
>
> [F]or the libertarians the crisis of the West consisted not in the eclipse of community [which is where traditionalists tended to focus especially as they saw community threatened by Communism] but in the growth of collectivism, of the interventionist state distributing rewards and punishments according to abstract standards of virtue.

In other words, where it is conceivable that traditionalists might

see a stronger role for government to uphold and to protect a certain moral standard for individuals and community (as they often do), libertarians argue that any power which is assumed by government is coercive if it extends beyond that which is necessary to protect and defend the rights of free men to make their own decisions, moral and otherwise. In the U.S. context this libertarian theme is given assurance through various sections of the Constitution (for instance the separation of church and State, which will be discussed later).

Allen Guttmann (1967:159) similarly describes the New Conservatism as a combination of traditional and libertarian themes whereby the latter "seek to conserve the heritage of nineteenth-century Liberalism," while the traditionalists derive their conservatism "from Burke and other opponents of Liberalism." Guttmann argues that

> the two movements have in common their opposition to social democratic tendencies in domestic politics.... Proposals for civil rights legislation, for increased Social Security benefits, [and Communism]...all are liable to be received wrathfully by the New Conservative....

Kesler (1988:7-8) notes that just as the traditionalists are trained in history and literature, and libertarians have groundings in economics and philosophy, a third strand, the Neoconservatives, tend to be trained social scientists whose primary concern "was prompted by the New Left's open insurrection against [in this case] American middle-class democracy and the American University." The Neoconservatives are the latest

contributors to conservative philosophy. Their roots stem primarily from the ideological social conflicts that developed during the 1960's. Kesler (1988:8) adds that Neoconservatives, like most traditionalists, have a great distrust for political ideology and "rationalist" political theory in general: they see these as "the enemy of freedom at home and abroad." [emphasis in the original] Because of this distrust, American Neoconservatives advocate a more pragmatic view of politics which tends to conform to the general belief in the promotion of individual freedom which pervades U.S. conservatism.

Emphasizing Traditionalism: Differences Between U.S and U.K. Conservatism

Insofar as conservatism is composed of several strands, there are, as Frank Meyer (1965:5) observes, some areas of varied emphasis between "tradition and virtue, on the one hand, and an emphasis on reason and freedom on the other." He stresses, however, that these "differences are but differences of emphasis...within a common consensus, not sharply opposed points of view." [emphasis added] Again, these same observations are evident among conservatives in the United Kingdom.

With the exception of Neoconservatism, the strands which make up the Conservative Party in Britain are similar to those in the U.S. In other words, where the term "Neoconservatism", according to Kesler and others, is used to describe a particular strand of Conservative thought in the U.S., the term in Britain is used more

accurately to describe the recent innovative combination of traditionalism and classical liberalism under the Thatcher governments. Other differences between U.S. and British conservatism include the latter's greater acceptance of a positive role for the State. The understanding of these differences become particularly important in Chapter Four where recent education reforms are discussed.

One main reason for the differences between the two countries is due, in large part, to the different historical foundations upon which both countries are built. Without examining these foundations in any great detail, a statement by Huntington (1981:46) provides an adequate appraisal of their modern characteristics: "Both the United States and Great Britain are democratic and pluralistic, but the United States is also egalitarian, individualistic, and populist, whereas Britain is hierarchical and collectivist."

It is primarily because of the hierarchical and collectivist nature of British society that government tends to exhibit a more authoritarian-style traditionalism than the United States where a codified constitution (absent in the former) demands, for instance, the separation of church and state. Insofar as this separation is not present in Britain, the Authoritarian Traditional strand can assert its position for a strong central government that has sufficient power to ensure that its paternalistic qualities remain intact. In fact, it is this strand coupled with classical liberalism which has led many people such as Professor Maurice Peston to conclude of the British

Conservative Party that it is comprised of two contradictory themes:

> On the one hand there has been 'a benevolent paternalism and a recognition that government must govern'; on the other, 'there has been right-wing radicalism,...seeing a minimal role for government.'
> (quoted in Greenleaf 1983:193)

Samuel Huntington (1981:36) explains several contrasts between American and European attitudes toward the state. The one which is relevant here is the "success [in early-nineteenth-century America] of the movement to eliminate what remained of religious establishments and erect a wall of separation between church and state." He suggests further that this movement is not only cited as evidence of the commitment to freedom of religion in America, but also as "evidence of the American commitment to the limitation of political authority." He continues, "In Europe, state churches historically performed the function of reinforcing and legitimizing political authority." This role for a strong State church is robustly endorsed by Roger Scruton who, although conservative in his approach to social policy and his defense of the free-market economy, demonstrates the degree to which British Authoritarian Traditionalism supports the role of a strong central government as well as an undisguised hostility towards the idea of natural rights. He writes:

> The Conservative Party...has begun to see itself as the defender of individual freedom against the encroachments of the state, concerned to the return to

> the people their natural right of choice, and to inject into every corporate body the healing principle of democracy.... The result has been, either transitory and unmeaning urges to reform, or else wholesale adoption of the philosophy of [nineteenth-century?] liberalism, with all its attendant trappings of individual autonomy and the 'natural rights' of man. In politics, the conservative attitude seeks above all for government, and regards no citizen as possessed of a natural right that transcends his obligation to be ruled. Even democracy...can be discarded without detriment to the civil well-being as the conservative conceives it.
>
> (1980:15-16)

Gauging Scruton's position by traditionalist perspectives in the United States, Authoritarian Traditionalism in Britain is much more pro-state (i.e. "Liberal" in American terms). In other words, there is an obvious difference in attitude between the two traditionalist positions whereby the Burkean emphasis on natural rights (present in the non-centralized U.S. context) gives way to a more centralized ethos in Britain in which the role of the state is seen as paramount to sustaining order and morality in society.

Modern Conservatism (referred to by some as 'New Conservatism' maintains much of its similarity with its identity of the past, but it also introduces a sense of "newness" in its renewed commitment to the family and its economic liberalism. Kesler (1988:9) writes:

> [P]erhaps the most important change brought about by the political demand that economics and morality should intersect [a product of monetarism and supply-side economics which encourage entrepreneurship, productive activity, investment and thrift] has been the rediscovery of the family as an economic and social unit, alongside the "individual."

In this way Kesler demonstrates the concern of American

Neoconservatives with the increase in government social programs; particularly those of the welfare state which, however well intended, have in their opinion "damaged poor families...almost beyond repair; and have sent the economy of the inner city [specifically in America], and the welfare system itself, spiralling downward out of control." (1988:9)

Finally, with respect to the nature of British collectivism, as Huntington explained earlier, the British Conservative Party, who parallel their American counterparts in their commitment to the most substantial of social classes--the middle-class--have made a decisive break from the ideal of a collectivist state. (Norton and Aughey 1981:159) This break suggests a movement toward the populist ideal which is characteristic of the United States. A break such as this which ignores the conservative policies of the past presents "awkward problems" for the credibility of Modern Conservatism. As Ian Gilmour (1977:12) points out:

> If Conservatives, who almost by definition have some reverence for the past, discountenance both the country's and...their own past, there is not much left for them to conserve. A decisive break with what has gone before is obviously congenial to a revolutionary or an extreme left-wing party....

Given this statement, however, a reconciliation with the Party's past is certainly possible under the Oakeshottean pragmatism and emphasis on real politik as expressed in, Rationalism in Politics (1962). Further, this break was in fact a step away from rationalist politics, which is condemned by Oakeshott and by the

Conservative tradition in general, under the confrontational direction of Thatcher.

> Speaking about the 'New Conservatism' championed by Margaret Thatcher, Nigel Lawson...was of the opinion that it was not 'revolutionary' but getting back to the straight and narrow of capitalist economics and traditional British freedoms.
>
> (Norton and Aughey 1981:158)

Modern Conservatism in Britain is similarly fashioned with that in the United States according to Norton and Aughey who describe it as "proud Tory populism" whose commitments (since 1975) have been to "return to the principles of that middle-owning part of society" and to the family by reasserting [they quote David Howell], 'the supreme importance of personal ownership to every family, however modest the scale--[which is] an understanding that had been lost during the years of swelling state power and possession'." (1981:160) Similarly stated, what was new about the Modern Conservatism, according to Lawson, was the reintroduction of "an old common sense [monetarism] into the consideration of economic affairs 'that is wholly in harmony with the everyday experience of the ordinary family.'" [emphasis added] (Norton and Aughey 1981:161)

To sum up this section, then, Norton and Aughey describe the role of the state as it pertains to the expectations of Modern Conservatism:

> The role of the state is to maintain order and harmony while allowing the community to express its own preferences and to develop its own diversities. In this way does the community have a real existence.... It is not dominated by the State, rather the State expresses in law, conventions, customs and developments in institutions the real life of the community.

Chapter One: Conservatism Versus Pro-State Liberalism

> Between the two extremes of State absolutism and anarchy the Conservative Party wants to follow the middle way.
>
> (1981:281)

This brief definition of the two strands (traditionalism and classical liberalism) which are embodied in Modern Conservatism is the essential foundation upon which the following arguments concerning social policy and the welfare state will be built.

Conservatism and the Modern Welfare State

Conservative Arguments Against the Modern Welfare State

The idea of the welfare state, ideally, appears to be an institution whose purpose revolves around aiding those people in society who are in need of public assistance programs. Within pro-state Liberal policies, however, the needy people themselves become institutionalized. This happens for several reasons: first, unlike most conservatives, pro-state Liberals tend to treat the welfare state as a means of attaining an egalitarian society; secondly, by reason of the first, they tend to consider the welfare state as a temporary condition whereby it will no longer be necessary after social equilibrium is achieved; and thirdly, they assume that all those people who have been designated, by government definitions, as being needy actually need or even desire government assistance to alleviate their condition.

In support of these three points William F. Buckley, Jr.

(1959:7) identifies ten aspects of pro-state Liberalism:

> [1] [T]he human being is perfectible and [2] social progress predictable, and that [3] the instrument for effectuating the two is reason; that truths are [4] transitory and [5] empirically determined; that equality is [6] desirable and [7] attainable through the action of state power; that social and individual differences, if they are not rational, [8] are objectionable, and [9] should be scientifically eliminated; that [10] all peoples and societies should strive to organize themselves upon a rationalist and scientific paradigm. [emphasis added]

Insofar as these aspects do not constitute an empirical definition of pro-state Liberalism (as William Gerber [1987:110] points out) this thesis agrees with Buckley that they are elements which are contained therein and as such will be acceptable here. In contradistinction to these aspects of pro-state Liberalism, Conservatism argues

> the recognition of imperfection as an ineradicable fact of the human condition [and implies]...a limited conception of the changes that may be achieved by political activity. It...does not attempt to create a new man, nor does it attempt to create a society of universal virtue.
>
> (Norton and Aughey 1981:19)

In regard to an increase in state action and power, the Liberal and Labour schemes provide little or no incentive for self-sufficiency. Assuming someone qualifies for public assistance under these pro-state Liberal schemes and is given assistance there is no further incentive to go beyond that level of government dependency. In fact a system such as this can be seen as actually giving positive reinforcement to some people thereby rewarding them for their condition. While in our democratic

society a person may freely make decisions as regards his preferences to the type of lifestyle he wishes to lead, it is not the responsibility of government to subsidize or encourage that lifestyle through public spending. This is not to say, however, that there are not some conditions in which some people are "victims of circumstance". In fact, the entire Modern Conservative argument about the welfare state is based on the acknowledgement that certain unavoidable circumstances do occur and that those who find themselves personally involved in these circumstances need some sort of a safety net which will provide a minimum standard of welfare in order to meet their needs. (Minford 1992)

Conversely while most pro-state Liberals tend to agree on the basic nature of the free market where most commodities are concerned, they also believe in a strong, centrally-controlled government that possesses the manipulative ability to control the economy in such a way that it can subsidize those policies and programs that it deems necessary for what it perceives to be the well-being of its citizens, and to establish equality among them.

In further support of this notion, King (1987:55) says, the enactment of the core elements of the welfare state, coupled with the policies of Keynesian economics, provided government with the leverage to extend what amounts to an open invitation to increase public spending, taxation and public employment. "The government," he says, "could now alter its current and capital public expenditure as well as altering tax rates. Further, the

government could vary the money supply...."

In these ways then it can be seen that pro-state Liberal government tends to subsidize certain problems where, ideally, it should be encouraging an escape from them. From the Modern Conservative point of view, Joseph (1976:71) stresses the importance of freedom of choice and the dangers of government interference in that freedom:

> What we, who prefer a free market economy, oblige ourselves to remember is that any attempt to relieve the difficulties of human existence by destroying freedom of choice under stable rules, destroys the humanity of men. Those who urge us to try for perfect security, are urging us to pretend to be able to escape from human limitations.

In this statement Joseph illustrates the great strength with which Modern Conservatives emphasize individual liberty and freedom without government interference.

Conservative Conceptions of Liberty and Equality in Social Policy and the Welfare State

The fact that there is a relationship between equality and liberty in social policy and the welfare state is evident throughout all of the political philosophies under discussion. The purpose here is to examine the expressed differences that relationship and its effects has on Modern Conservative social policy relative to the pro-state Liberal ideologies to be considered below. It will be argued that while certain pro-state Liberal ideals strive to eliminate inequalities in order to extend

and equalize the degree and level of liberty shared by all members of society, Modern Conservative ideology tends to celebrate many inequalities as the way in which true liberty is maintained. In fact, Modern Conservatives argue, given the pro-state disposition of Liberal ideology, increased equality equals a necessary increase in State regulation--and thus coercion--in order to provide perpetual maintenance of that equality, all of which can only have the ultimate effect of reducing liberty.

Obviously, volumes could be (and have been) written about the nature and effects of equality as is argued by egalitarians and anti-egalitarians. As such the complexities and intricacies surrounding these arguments must yield to a more general analysis here.

Anti-egalitarianism

Contrary to the egalitarian stance as mentioned above, anti-egalitarians do not conceive of government as the ultimate ensurer and protector of equality, but as a creator of policy to govern men; policy which is judged according to its merits and not (as egalitarians argue) according to how well it serves society by way of distributing equality as ends in all social arrangements among men. Letwin (1983:66) explains of the anti-egalitarian:

> Far from desiring inequality, he must refuse to regard either inequality or equality as ends. Policies intended to establish inequality and policies intended to establish equality he should regard alike as misguided....
>
> For the consistent anti-egalitarian, both equality and inequality count as by-products only, lacking the

> character of ends in themselves, because...no persuasive argument exists to endow them with that character.

It is reasonable to add, however, that when and if those by-products prove to be intolerable then and only then should the policy which created the intolerance be changed or abolished.

The Case for Liberty

Given the anti-egalitarian argument expressed by Modern Conservatives, the question of the case for liberty is an issue which must be addressed. In some egalitarian camps "equality" and "liberty" are virtual synonyms. In fact, it is often argued that wherever the two concepts conflict liberty must always yield to the course of equality (Nisbet 1974), because through total equality equal liberty may be experienced. Antony Flew (1978:161) expresses concern here when he writes: "For them [egalitarians], equality and not freedom or even welfare is the name of the game."

It is often argued (with much distress), by egalitarians that some people in society have more liberty than others to pursue their goals and interests. Nisbet (1974) interprets one aspect of the egalitarian view that as human beings in any given society are equal partners in their participation of that society they all should have equal shares in liberty. This view obviously endorses, as it must, endless redistribution policies covering all areas of social and private interaction from income to education and beyond. The reasons behind why some people have more freedom than others, egalitarians argue, are due to a number of

inequalities within social and economic areas (i.e. discrepancies of childhood backgrounds, neighborhoods, parental income and support, schools, career opportunities, and so on) all of which create differences and inequalities in life-long opportunities. Even inheritance and the family unit (in the extreme argument) are looked upon as variables which increase inequalities and as such should be abrogated. (Letwin 1983)

To be sure, some people are in a better position than others when it comes to providing for their own provisions, and for providing resources to different organizations and charities of their choosing. Anti-egalitarians argue, however, that such inequalities are natural products of society and cannot be consistently regulated. This argument is further illustrated by Hayek (1976) who writes of the artificiality of 'social justice'. Joseph (1976:76), too, states simply that, "people differ in their capacity to retain that which they have...[they are] equal at dawn; unequal at dusk." There is no plot by the "aristocracy" to keep the less well endowed "in their place" by somehow limiting their freedom. In fact, in the Conservative opinion, if society were subjugated to egalitarian rules no one would have the liberty to pursue his own interests, as to do so would be to allow inequalities of all kinds to be exercised; hence, destroying the egalitarian society. J.R. Lucas (1977:93) explains:

> [Radical egalitarians] envisage a society in which each man does his own thing, but the important equalities between different people [such as income, social status, education, and so on] are not upset by the different things they do.

In such a society there would be no person worse off than any other--theoretically (in reality, however, truth would almost certainly be to the contrary)--but there also would be no liberty to improve upon the conditions in which a person finds himself. For all are to be equal at all times. Furthermore, where people are allowed to make choices (no matter how insignificant) in an egalitarian society, inequalities are bound to occur. "Where [people] are permitted to make choices, their choices will not always be in the same sense; and such differences cannot but produce...inequalities." (Flew 1978:157)

Lucas (1977:93) expresses these inequalities as they relate to social stratification:

> In any society there must be some shared values, and therefore some shared assumptions about what is to anyone's advantage or disadvantage, and so some common standard of success [hence, social orders tend to develop].... We want to succeed not only in our own eyes but in the eyes of other men too: we are competitive creatures, who value goals not because we have assessed them independently on our own account, but because others do and we want to outdo them. If we allow men liberty in things that matter, they will soon establish inequalities that signify. Hence, if we value liberty at all, we cannot abolish all inequalities, but only, at best reduce their impact by multiplying them.

Inconsistencies of Egalitarianism: Provision and Monopolization

In view of what has to this point been discussed, anti-egalitarians view the egalitarian argument as riddled with contradiction. Again, on this single topic volumes could be written, however, two questions here will further illustrate the

scope of such inconsistencies. The first question asks: "How well are people in society served by egalitarian policies?" The answer, bluntly, is: "Not very well." As has been shown, the foundation of egalitarianism is to create equality among citizens in society either through individual levelling of economic, social, educational, political, and other factors, or through the less radical concepts based on relative deprivation. Either way no one would be better off than anyone else because they would all be equal. Since choice and diversity would be minimized or eliminated in all of the areas listed above, the needy (there would still be disadvantaged people due to biological, emotional and other factors) would get no more attention (if the system were consistent) than anyone else for to do so would create some of the very inequalities egalitarianism sought to destroy. In this case the needy would be worse off than the others.

Flew (1978) addresses these issues as he explains not only the immense costs involved in providing non-selective services (where everyone qualifies) relative to the costs of providing a means-tested safety net, he also demonstrates how the non-selective scheme can develop into one in which all goods and services become monopolized, thus, severely choking individual liberty while permitting the ultimate goal of equality of outcome to establish itself.

Further, he suggests, given the cost differentials between the two systems, a means-tested program can certainly provide a more substantial variety of services by having more resources to

allocate. Also, due to its selectivity, it invariably must be the system which is most capable of delivering the best possible goods and services where they are most needed.

> If we admit selectivity and permit choice, we can the more easily afford to provide a higher and more extensive floor. A steady opposition to such selectivity, and...choice, is therefore likely to be motivated by something other than a simple compassionate concern to relieve the most urgent human needs.
>
> (Flew 1978:161)

The second question, although brief, is nonetheless crucial to the argument on liberty, equality and the inconsistencies of the egalitarian position. In the not unlikely event that non-selective services would become monopolized in order to ensure, under a centralized structure, that shares were distributed equally, the few who held the power of the monopoly over the whole of society "must in itself constitute the greatest possible offence to any ideal either of personal equality or even equality of outcome," thus, leaving the question: "Who will equalise the equalisers?" (Flew 1978:163). Joseph responds:

> Egalitarianism destroys not only prosperity but freedom and culture. The fewer the individuals with independent resources, the greater the dominance of government. Moreover, real freedom--in religion, in politics, in art, in enterprise--depends upon there being many possible sources of financial support. If government becomes the only patron, then freedom--and quality--will die.
>
> (1976:78)

Classical Liberalism: Providing for the Minimal Welfare State

Just as Modern Conservative ideology (as regards social policy and the welfare state) differs from the Liberal, state-based arguments, so too are there differences in the approaches to providing the necessary funding for the maintenance of the welfare state. In fact, while Keynesianism, as will be discussed in the next section, provides the Liberal answer to the question of funding, Modern Conservatives (as should be expected) criticize not only the extent to which egalitarians seek to expand the welfare state, but also oppose Keynesianism and instead, rely on the classical liberal principles of monetarism and supply-side economics.

Modern Conservatives view the pro-state Liberal idea of the welfare state as having an insatiable appetite for resources. It is something that never stops growing. The Liberal notion of egalitarianism, as was stated earlier, creates a chronic dependence on government social programs, rather than promoting a spirit of self-dependence free from government subsidies. It is only a sin to covet a neighbors belongings, not to try to outdo them.

To tax the citizenry in an effort to keep pace with the precipitous costs of the pro-state Liberal welfare state is a key function of Keynesian economics. Modern Conservatives contend, however, that this brand of economics is finding Liberal government hoist by its own petard. In other words, where income taxes are concerned, government imposes taxes upon the citizenry (each according to his gross income). This taxation creates a tax

base for governmental spending--of which welfare provisions take a large share. If these provisions are increased so too must individual income taxes (and other forms of taxation) be proportionally increased. An increase in income tax means less productivity and, perhaps more importantly, less incentive to attain a higher status or pay grade (by working harder and using more initiative) since, obviously, the more money that is made the more that is taxed. In this case the economy has a great tendency to stall as private spending is greatly curtailed. Jame Alt and Alec Chrystal (1983:60) give this explanation of Keynesian policy:

> Government expenditure is a direct demand for goods. For any gross income, higher income taxes reduce private spending by leaving individuals less to allocate. Income taxes reduce the 'disposable' income available for consumers to spend. Aggregate demand in the economy is increased by either lowering taxes (and thus raising disposable income and consumer spending) or increasing government expenditure. Both increase national income through the famous 'multiplier', so named because in theory an increase in exogenous expenditure can lead to a larger increase in income.

In other words, it is not the free-market system that controls aggregate demand, but the government.

The converse of course, as explained by Paul Craig Roberts (1988:221), Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for economic policy in the first year of the Reagan administration, is this:

> The concept of the 'balanced-budget multiplier' illustrates the primacy that Keynesians give to spending as the determinant of production. According to this concept, government can increase total spending and, thereby, GNP by raising taxes and spending the revenues. The reasoning is as follows. People do not pay the higher taxes only by reducing their spending (consumption); they also reduce their savings. Therefore, when taxes are raised, the decrease in

> private spending is less than the increase in government spending. Conversely, a cut in tax rates, matched by a decrease in government spending, would result in a reduction in total spending (i.e. saving would increase), a fall in GNP and a rise in unemployment.

Roberts continues by pointing out the fact that when marginal tax rates increase, individuals opt for additional leisure and consumption over additional current and future income:

> As work effort and investment decline production will fall, regardless of how great an increase there might be in aggregate demand. Such a recognition of disincentives implies a recognition of incentives.... Once one recognizes that people produce and invest for income, and that income depends on tax rates, one has reached the realization that fiscal policy causes changes not just in demand but also in supply. [emphasis in the original]
>
> (Roberts 1988:221)

Monetarism is the Modern Conservative answer to Keynesian economics. As Nigel Lawson (1980:18) states:

> [The principles of] monetarism [are]...obvious: if you produce too much of something, its value falls. If you borrow too much, you're likely to get into trouble. It is Keynesianism which seems to stand everything on its head, which is the difficult esoteric doctrine.

This discussion of economics will be encountered at other points in this chapter as it is an indispensable factor in the discussion of social policy and the welfare state.

Pro-State Approaches to the Welfare State

The emphasis on individualism and economic freedom as expressed through Modern Conservative ideology are in stark contrast with state-based approaches to the welfare state which (as has been illustrated) generally include many of the notions described above such as citizenship and equality as secured through state intervention.

Pro-State Aims of Egalitarianism

When examining the theories behind egalitarian thought it becomes clear that a multitude of factors and strands are combined to create the unified concept known as egalitarianism. What is common among all these strands, however, is an element which seeks to demolish, or at least reduce to a minimum, structural inequalities as they exist in society. Equality among men is therefore seen as crucial in the creation of the best of all possible societies.

William Letwin (1983) identifies three aims upon which all egalitarianism rests. The first maintains that all men should be equal with respect to availability and access to general and vital goods and services. This, Letwin says, requires and includes equality of income, wealth, esteem, political power, legal rights and education. The second aim argues the feasibility of an egalitarian society: since society makes otherwise equal men unequal it is incumbent upon government either in its present form or through radical restructuring to affect social change in such a way that most, if not all, social inequalities are supplanted by

policies which will bring about total equality. Finally, the third point simply states that among all duties and responsibilities of government the pursuance of social equality must be paramount.

While even the most fervent egalitarian would not argue that men must be equal in all ways (i.e. physically, intellectually, emotionally), they do demand that government strive for social equality in those policies which are designed to guide, limit (restrict), enable (liberate), protect and serve; that every man would be equal to every other.

Keynesianism: Providing the Means for the Redistribution of Goods and Services Within the State-Controlled Welfare State

The concept of Keynesian economics lies at the heart of the state-interventionist welfare state. Keynesian policies were intended to, among other things, expand the role of government, provide for a mixed economy (public and private ownership of industry) and to create vast welfare state provisions with government-controlled demand-management techniques. These are its main components.

> The essential role for government implied by Keynesianism is responsibility for maintaining a sufficient level of aggregate demand. Of the four components of expenditure in the economy--personal consumption, investment, exports and government spending--it is the last over which government policymakers have the greatest influence and can control to some degree.
>
> (King 1987:54)

Since tax changes and tax rates are two areas under which government economic policymakers have the most control under Keynesian policy, King says, the Budget is seen as crucial to government economic policy: "It is much more difficult to alter government expenditure levels (as both current regimes [Reagan and Thatcher] are discovering) than to make changes in the tax rates." (1987:54) Further, King points to how government can stimulate aggregate demand

> by deliberately running a deficit in the short-term balanced by surpluses in other years.... [T]he nineteenth-century assumption of the annual budget as something to be balanced is discarded under Keynesianism as the Budget becomes a key instrument of government economic policy.
>
> (1987:55)

Through Keynesianism, then, the vast amounts of money needed to sustain an egalitarian society would, theoretically, be made available.

Citizenship Rights: Justifying Egalitarianism

In a critical appraisal of the New Right, Desmond King (1987) looks to sociologist T.H. Marshall for a breakdown of the types of citizenship rights. Although Marshall did not believe that an egalitarian society was possible (as a collectivist he was mostly concerned with the degree to which social, as opposed to economic, rights could be achieved via the welfare state, and the degree to which this would create homogeneous communities) his writings are

influential among egalitarians (as they extract their own meaning from Marshall's writings) insofar as they, too, argue not only for economic equality, but for social equality as well. Therefore, in citing these rights King argues their necessity for reducing social and economic inequalities to achieve egalitarian ends. Marshall distinguishes between three main categories:

> Civil Rights, refers to the rights associated with individual freedom (...freedom of speech, the right to own property, equality before the law...); political rights, comprising the rights associated with democracy ([such as] participation through universal suffrage...); and social rights, which refers to economic and welfare rights (...guarantees of a certain educational level, economic security, public welfare...health provision...).
>
> (quoted in King 1987:3)

These rights, King says, have their inveterate roots reaching as far back as the early nineteenth century with the area of social rights being the most recent (post-war) addition. Where King and others depart from conservative opinion is in their insistence that, "citizenship rights reduce inequalities in the political, social and economic spheres of society, and move toward a genuinely egalitarian social order." As was demonstrated earlier Modern Conservatives tend to believe that the move to "reduce inequalities" and create a "genuinely egalitarian social order", in fact, neuters society and the economy. In other words, it tends to make society more phlegmatic (by making it more dependent on government schemes), less competitive and, hence, less healthy economically.

Expanding the Welfare State: Pro-State Liberal Arguments for Public Provision, Equality and Universal Benefits

Julian Le Grand (1982) argues that, through public expenditure on social services, a greater equality for citizens can be successful but more so if transfers were distributed in the form of cash instead of in the form of services. Under the current administration of the welfare state, Le Grand argues, the allocation of non-income transfers provides greater benefit to those people who are more affluent than it does the poor. Tawney (1964:122), too, writes:

> the pooling of [the nation's] surplus resources by means of taxation, and the use of funds thus obtained to make accessible to all, irrespective of their income, occupation, or social position, the conditions of civilization which, in the absence of such measures, can be enjoyed only by the rich.

In his "Introduction" to the 1964 edition of Equality, Richard Titmuss (1964:22) writes in support of Tawney who argues against the forces of the free market and in favor of nationalization of industrial and service sectors in order to diminish the effects of market mechanisms on social inequality:

> [W]hile both countries [United States and Britain] are committed to economic growth it is still not realized that growth is synonymous with change and that if we value growth we must accept change as an inevitable concomitant. Many of these changes, left to themselves

> and the marketplace, must mean more inequality, more hardship, more neglect of people and the social environment.

In making this argument Titmuss endorses an increased social services bureaucracy where social equality can be ensured.

J. F. Sleeman (1973:11), too, believes that government not only has an obligation to provide social services but, "should go beyond the provision of a bare minimum towards ensuring that all have equal opportunity, so far as the country's resources allow."[1] What "the country's resources" means exactly is not entirely clear in this case. If these resources include monetary resources, as they most certainly must in many cases, then the Keynesian model of running a federal deficit to fund such services, theoretically, adds an almost unlimited perspective to these allocations both in cost and in number.[2]

Conservatism: The Last Word

Most conservatives would acknowledge that a minimum standard of services must be maintained by the state for those people who are disabled, elderly, and so on, and who absolutely do not have the means to obtain them on their own. Viewed in this way, then, it appears that apathy lies with the redistributionists because, by pursuing universalist social policies, valuable resources that could be used (more appropriately) to maintain services to assist the genuinely needy are, instead, intended for equal and universal

distribution to all citizens.

> In principle most of us provide some kinds of assistance gladly, for intuitively obvious reasons. We provide other kinds of assistance for reasons that...are extremely hard to defend on either moral or practical grounds. An ethically ideal social policy--an intuitively satisfying one--would discriminate among recipients." [emphasis in the original]
>
> (Murray 1984:197-8)

A free market economy is not a device used to suppress the poor and disadvantaged. Indeed, it is a two-edged sword that can promote, and even encourage, the very things that most people want--prosperity--not equality. In fact, neither is it wholly against redistribution. That is to say, redistribution to the needy and not to the population at large. "Egalitarians should face the fact that equality and prosperity are incompatible.... [E]quality, and even any imposed approach to equality, is the enemy of more." (Joseph 1976:77)

Indeed, it is not the creation of equality, but the accumulation of individual wealth (which egalitarians oppose) that can raise living standards for everyone including the poor. Industrialized democracies such as the United States and the United Kingdom depend on certain inequalities for their survival. If these inequalities were reduced or obliterated then the ability of the market to act and react would be severely limited or completely eliminated; not to mention the austere confines that would be placed on individual freedom and the pursuits of liberty. It is the very environment that democracies create that a person is given the opportunity to "gamble" on such things as

entrepreneurial endeavors and to create either his success or failure.

This sentiment is shared by Margaret Thatcher who argues for an increase in individual choice:

> In housing...health...education...union affiliation, individuals were to be allowed to exercise their own judgement and to assess their priorities. The nonsense of equality should not be allowed to deprive one of the ability to choose and to make one's own provision for better or for worse. The right to fail was also as important as the right to succeed. In the economy the disciplines of market economics and monetary control would allow the strong to...flourish and encourage others along that road. In social life the people would regain these opportunities for self-improvement appropriated by the collectivist State.
>
> Norton and Aughey (1981:163)

Further, these individual freedoms are vital to the economic success of Modern Conservatism. Again, as Norton and Aughey state, the Conservative belief is that the production of wealth must come from individuals as it does not come from government:

> Stress was laid upon the limitations of governments, not upon their powers; upon the responsibilities of employer and employee to get on with wealth creation, not upon government incentives or planning agreements; upon the uncertainties, not the certainties, of policy.
>
> (1981:162)

A crucial point in the understanding of most Modern Conservatives when they argue for a free market economy is that they are not opposed to government intervention. There is a balance between the individualist ethos of classical liberalism,

as Joseph 1976:70) illustrates:

> When we oppose the kind of interference that socialists [egalitarians] advocate, we are not denying the importance of what [only]...governments alone, can do. We are advocating a particular conception of government as a maker of rules for men who want to fashion their lives for themselves...not to be mere drones who "serve the national interest" or "increase production."

and the traditional ethos of state-maintained law and order as explained by Peele (1976:25):

> The State's role in a plural society is clearly to provide the basic necessity of civil peace and to encourage...reciprocal restraint on the part of groups and individuals.... [A]t any given time there is bound to be an imbalance between groups and forces.... The State therefore--which can claim to speak for society as a whole from time to time--does have the right to intervene to restore the balance between forces and groups and to act...as a "countervailing power."

Norton and Aughey reflect the combination of these two strands when they write in support of the Modern Conservative idea which declares that the role of government is to protect the rights of each person in the pursuit of their own interests, while also allowing them to develop their own talents within the framework of law without government direction or interference.

Conclusion

By identifying and examining certain issues such as the two conceptions of social provision, equality, liberty, freedom and the level of state involvement in society between Modern Conservatives and pro-state Liberals, this chapter has prepared

the ideological groundwork for the subsequent chapters as they focus more specifically on aspects of education in the United States and in Britain.

Chapter Two is the "Structure Chapter". It begins the education arguments by examining the differences in educational structure and delivery methods between traditionalism, progressivism and egalitarianism, and demonstrates how the latter two are often used in conjunction with liberal-socialist ideals in order to continue the struggle (against the Modern Conservative notions of individualism and the natural distinctions among men) towards a future egalitarian society.

NOTES

1. "Equality of opportunity", in this case, has two meanings depending on who is using it. Here it is used to support an egalitarian stance and as such reflects that position. In other words, where equality is evenly distributed throughout all of society all members of that society, by definition, have equal opportunity and equal access. In contrast is the conservative, Burkean definition (Frankel: 1971) which defends an open system in which everyone capable of doing so is free to climb the social and economic ladders as high as his abilities and good fortune take him. It also, however acknowledges the risk of failure--the possibility of falling into the welfare safety net.

2. It should be noted that although Keynes was not a member of the Labour Party, he was associated with the Liberal Party in Britain many of whose "New Liberal" ideas were adopted by the 1945-1951 Labour government.

CHAPTER TWO:

INFLUENCING SOCIAL CHANGE: TRADITIONALISM, PROGRESSIVE EGALITARIANISM AND STRUCTURES OF EDUCATION

About the Chapter

This chapter introduces the concepts of Modern Conservatism and pro-state Liberalism in education as they each endorse different delivery methods within the framework of very different educational structures. As such the discussion of primary and secondary education in the United States and the United Kingdom begins in earnest. As the title indicates, at issue here are the arguments surrounding progressive egalitarian and traditional philosophies of education inasmuch as educational structure can have a tremendous influence on the shape of future social orders, social growth and individuality.

As an account is taken of the educational aims of progressivism and egalitarianism in Britain and in the United States, examinations into both of these areas will be discussed. An obvious example of the egalitarian argument (in the British context) is presented here primarily by Anthony Crosland. From the American side of the argument, John Dewey epitomizes the progressive stance. His theories (as will be discussed), although progressive, also are often found supporting egalitarian

positions.[1] Following these are traditional arguments in which progressive and egalitarian educational ideologies are criticized and their alternatives are introduced.

Overview

Education, like the broader question of the welfare state, is not free from conflict. It, too, is engulfed in controversy over how to best meet the educational and social needs of school-aged children. Further, these arguments are, not surprisingly, similar to those discussed in Chapter One. In fact, they are nearly a continuance of deliberation on a more localized level. Also, again like Chapter One, although there is a recognition of a number of variations of different educational structures, it is not practical to search for, identify and discuss all of these. Instead, the discussions here seek to explore and highlight the prevailing social and ideological implications of pro-state Liberalism and Modern Conservatism on educational theory and practice. As this chapter develops it will become clear that issues such as equality, progressivism, competition, variety, freedom, and others, play an important role in the debate on the shape of future education policy in the United States and in Britain.

Since schooling in democratic societies is compulsory to a certain age, educators, administrators and policymakers who hold pro-state Liberal convictions often are seen advancing the ideals of social equality and cooperation through progressive egalitarian

methods which seek to supplement traditional understandings of education with a further 'socializing' role. The idea of education as a social experience to which all children must have access is placed alongside traditional understandings of the education process as essentially about the acquisition of basic skills and knowledge. It is this traditional role of education (as opposed to the progressive) that Modern Conservatives tend to favor. G.H. Bantock illustrates the dichotomy between these two prevailing views:

> [T]here has been the polarization of school ethos--between those who...see the function of the school as primarily academic and those who see it as largely socialization.... [Which] at times...results in schools which are either predominantly meritocratic or socially oriented in nature.
>
> (1975:17)

Although he is referring to the British educational system, the same could be applied with equal conviction to American education. To this end, then, many educators stress such things as the importance of cooperation over competition. They tend to view the grading of students' work, testing of academic knowledge, placement of students in classes with others who are academically equal (known as "streaming" [in the U.K.] or "tracking" [in the U.S.]), and so on as too competitive and, as such, repressive. They also tend to see them as unnecessary practices in the future egalitarian social order for which they are striving.[2]

Progressive Education and the Egalitarian State

Often included in discussions on progressive education is the issue of egalitarianism. While Stephen Ball (1990) points out the error of making an unequivocal link between the two concepts, Caroline Cox and John Marks (1980) explain how both concepts, although incompatible, often are found attempting to operate in unison in many schools (especially comprehensives). These concepts, say Cox and Marks, are incompatible because while the primary egalitarian aim is to "create an educational system in which all shall be treated as equally as possible" (p. 21) (thus requiring totalitarian constraints on some students), progressive aims are to encourage individuality (rather than social equality), discovery learning, abolition of assessments or examinations, with little (if any) mention of constraints such as authority, timetables and so on. They explain further:

> When separated the two strands of the 'progressive egalitarian' package are clearly very different. Uniformity and the imposition of a single monolithic structure are not compatible with extreme pupil-centeredness and the weakening of all authority. Yet inconsistent as they are, the two strands are often found together and they can form a particularly damaging combination.
>
> (Cox and Marks 1980:22)

Crosland, Equality and the Comprehensive School

For Anthony Crosland greater social equality and the reduction of class envy were major goals in the creation of comprehensive schools.

> The object of having comprehensive schools is not to abolish all competition and all envy...but to avoid the extreme social resentment caused by failure to win a grammar (or...public) school place, when this is thought to be the only avenue to a 'middle-class' occupation.
>
> (Crosland 1956:272)

Before comprehensive schooling in Britain there existed a tripartite system of education which consisted of grammar, technical and secondary modern schools. Aside from "public" schools (which are actually private schools in the American vernacular), grammar schools were considered to be the most academically superior, followed by technical schools (very few of these were actually created), with secondary moderns falling well below the standards of either of the former.

This system, Crosland argued, heavily favored middle and upper-class families insofar as their socio-economic backgrounds were such that they could either better afford to send their children to the better private schools or provide a domestic environment in which the emphasis on the importance of education naturally favored their children's chances for high achievement at the state grammar school level. Working-class families (who did not possess such positive socio-economic advantages), on the other hand, were often relegated to the comparatively inferior secondary modern schools. These conditions, especially in the case of independent schools, often led to far better social and occupational prospects for those students whose parents were able to afford better schooling for their children. Further, Crosland suggested that

employers offering high-paying or high-status jobs often narrowed the list of perspective employees simply by determining what type of school they came from. Especially in the case of independent schools Crosland claimed:

> This advantage is attributable partly to the widespread belief...that public school products are more dependable and self-reliant: partly to the still important...factor of the right accent, bearing and manners: [sic] and partly to the fact that persons now in authority, and responsible for selecting and promoting, have commonly themselves been to public schools, and so have a natural bias.
>
> (1956:261)

These conditions, he argued, led to increases in social inequalities and further fueled those conditions which were the impetus of class envy.[3]

In order to bring about greater equality of opportunity in the social, economic and educational spheres Crosland sought to reduce the advantages which brought about these inequalities. Where the state tripartite system was concerned Crosland argued that all three types of school should be combined under one roof. With respect to independent schools he was even more resolute in his goal of securing equal opportunity.

> [W]e shall still not have equality of opportunity so long as we maintain a system of superior private schools, open to the wealthier classes, but out of reach of poorer children... This is much the most flagrant inequality of opportunity, as it is the cause of class inequality generally in our educational system; and I have never been able to understand why socialists have been so obsessed with the question of the grammar schools [which often admitted only the cream-of-the-crop in the state system], and so indifferent to the much more glaring injustice of the independent schools.
>
> (Crosland 1956:260-261)

His remedy in this case was typically socialist; not insofar as he argued for policies which would bring about "100% competitive entry", but in the sense that he sought this goal even if it required putting the responsibility "both financial and administrative" on "the central government." (1956:264)

It is in these ways, then (by creating greater social heterogeneity), that Crosland envisaged greater equality of opportunity; educationally, socially and economically for all children and for all of society. As he wrote: "half the object...is to present social contrasts under a single roof, in order ultimately to narrow them." (1956:264) In other words, paradoxically, he argued for increased heterogeneity in order to create greater homogeneity.

The other side of the coin in the comprehensive argument does not seek to destroy comprehensive schools, but maintains that greater variety than that which is afforded by many pro-comprehensive advocates is needed in order to best meet the needs of children. Flew explains:

> Whereas most of the militant proponents certainly are resolved to impose universal compulsory, comprehension--even maintaining that nothing is truly comprehensive if anyone is allowed to escape--none of the active opponents has ever wanted either to prevent the establishment of any comprehensive schools at all or to abolish the lot if once established. For us it has always been, and remains, a matter of what particular arrangements best meet the <u>strictly educational</u> needs of the children.... [emphasis added] (1987:52)

This sentiment is in direct contrast to many socialists who argue for the destruction of independent schools. One such person is Shirley Williams (Secretary of State for Education in the Labour government of 1974-79), who claims that "the maintained system of education and the economy itself are crippled by this socially segregated system." (quoted Flew 1987:58). Another such advocate was Titmuss who wrote:

> Until we, as a society, can rid ourselves of the dominating influences of the private sector of education we shall not have the will to embark on an immensely higher standard of provision for all those children whose education now finishes when it has hardly begun. Nor shall we have the moral conviction to search more intensively and more widely for greater equality in all spheres of our national life.
>
> (1964:24)

Finally, in relation to socialist claims of the damaging social divisiveness created by a selective, independent educational system, Flew writes:

> There is not one scintilla of evidence to show that the Comprehensive Revolution has made possible the release and development of such a torrent of previously wasted working-class talent.
>
> (1987:53-54)

In fact, he argues that

> [F]ar from providing a grammar school education for all [which is a common socialist claim], the Comprehensive Revolution has in fact deprived large numbers of children, and those largely children of working-class homes, both of the peer-group stimulus and of the A-level teaching from which under the old regimen they could have benefited [sic] so greatly.
>
> (Flew 1987:90)

With these arguments broadly outlining the debate surrounding comprehensive schooling, it is now the intention to examine more closely these arguments as they relate to Dewey and educational progressivism.

Dewey: Progressivism, Knowledge and Society

To comprehend progressivism fully, either theoretically or as applied in school curricula, it is vital to examine the influences of the philosophical writings of John Dewey as he is considered the father of progressive education.

Where education is concerned Dewey's concepts revolve around the encounters people experience in their daily lives:

> When it is said that education is development, everything depends on how development is conceived.... [L]ife is development, and that developing, growing, is life. Translated into its educational equivalents, this means (i) that the educational process has no end beyond itself...and that (ii) the educational process is one of continual reorganizing, reconstructing, transforming. [emphasis in the original]
>
> (1937:59)

Dewey attacks the rigid practices of traditional education and calls for their replacement with subjects which are more socially (as opposed to personally) relevant:

> The notion that the 'essentials' of elementary education are the three Rs mechanically treated, is based upon ignorance of the essentials needed for realization of democratic ideals.... A curriculum which acknowledges the social responsibilities of education must present situations where problems are relevant to the problems of living together, and where

> observation and information are calculated to develop social insight and interest.
>
> (1937:226)

Furthermore, Dewey states that education cannot dissociate itself from the social context in which it operates without destroying the concepts of "associated living" and "homogenization" of society. As superficial as it may sound, Dewey believes that education takes place and is most beneficial when it arises out of an individual's need to attend to those immediate issues which face him. In so doing, the individual can deal with and relate his experiences to the larger social context in which all education, according to Dewey, must be integrated for the good of all of society. Dewey disagrees with the idea of the attainment of individual knowledge solely for the purpose of serving the individual's aspirations without also serving society as well:

> The conception that the result of the educative process is capacity for further education stands in contrast with some other ideas which have profoundly influenced practice. The...conception...of education in terms of preparing or getting ready for some future duty or privilege [is an aim whose evil effects divert]...attention of both teacher and taught from the only point to which it may be fruitfully directed--namely, taking advantage of the needs and possibilities of the immediate present. [emphasis added]
>
> (1937:79)

In his "technical definition" of education, Dewey writes: "It is that reconstruction or reorganization of experience which adds to the meaning of experience, and which increases ability to direct the course of subsequent experience." (1937:89) [emphasis

added] Therefore, according to Dewey, societies can be successfully homogenized provided its educators, parents and so on have also been "psychologized" (Dewey's nomenclature as used by Bantock) in such a way that they can influence those experiences of the younger generations for the "good" of society. To give further understanding to his meaning of education it is interesting to note that he states this definition under the subheading "Education of Reconstruction" which tends to add a notion of social brainwashing to it which does not appear to be out of the question when progressive methods are scrutinized.

To elucidate, Dewey's combination of social homogenization as it applies to his concept of education (as an end in itself) culminates in a society in which all members share a common understanding of things via the establishment of common meaning within that society. In Dewey's words:

> [T]o have the same ideas about things which others have, to be like-minded with them, and thus to be really members of a social group, is to attach the same meaning to things and to acts which others attach.
> (quoted in Bantock 1975:15)

In relation to social control Bantock states that

> For Dewey it is the <u>social</u> situation which provides the great tool of the educator: 'In social situations the young have to refer their way of acting to what others are doing and make it fit in. This directs their action to a common result, and gives an understanding common to the participants. For all <u>mean</u> the same thing, even when performing different acts.' [emphasis in the original].

In discussing Dewey's position, Irwin Edman explains that democracy consists of more than simply a form of government. While he is correct on this point he continues by suggesting that, in a homogenized social order where each individual must "refer his own action to that of others, and...consider the action of others to give point and direction to his own...barriers of class, race, and national territory which kept men from perceiving the full import of their activity" must be broken down (Edman 1955: 158). Here Edman explains his fear:

> Obviously a society to which stratification into separate classes would be fatal, must see to it that intellectual opportunities are accessible to all on equable and easy terms. A society marked off into classes need be specially attentive only to the education of its ruling elements.

Edman's statement strengthens the argument pursued here by illustrating how education is being used to further both progressive and egalitarian causes.

Traditionalism: Arguments Against Progressive and Egalitarian Ideology

Knowledge, Society and Individualism

Bantock (1975:15) describes Dewey's theories as being perched "uneasily between a liberal, individualized past and a collectivist, homogenized future" in which he embraces, like Rousseau before him, the notions of instrumentalism and democracy: instrumental in that he conceives of knowledge as an instrument of

freedom for man better to direct and control his own environment in order to serve society's needs (progressivism); and democratic not only where government is concerned, but also in the form of a homogenized community relationship (egalitarianism). "[Democracy] was not only a question of 'associated living' and 'freer interaction between social groups'; it was also a matter of the homogenization of significance in communication." (Bantock 1975:15) In other words, by ensuring both progressive and egalitarian aims, such as are commonly striven for in the non-streamed, comprehensive curriculum, everyone would be similarly educated (insofar as each child would be afforded the full benefit of self-expression while simultaneously would not be permitted to exploit or to excel in his interests to the point of creating significant inequalities between himself and his fellow classmates), and thus, would be educationally equal to one another. In this way a form of "democracy," however twisted, could be established.

This idea of common understanding (of which the homogenization of communication is a part) puts severe limitations on the independent growth of the individual and thus implicitly limits the potential of the society to expand its knowledge beyond these narrow bounds which it has established and declared as acceptable.[4] The sense of social control becomes even more heavily pronounced after considering the psychological theory of tabula rasa which Dewey seems to embrace. Under this theory it is believed that man is born with a "blank mind" which becomes filled

as he proceeds through life and is influenced by whatever factors with which he may come into contact.

Hayek, too, argues against Dewey in that he explains knowledge as an individual matter where individual and social growth come about as a result of the individual seeking knowledge of his own accord and thereby contributing to social growth.[5]

In other words, society benefits most when the individual retains the freedom to acquire knowledge independent of social needs. The knowledge and progression of individuals is not necessarily reliant upon society for provision, but the progression of society is necessarily reliant upon the individual's attainment of knowledge for his own ends. Further, when knowledge is sought in this way (for individual edification) society is best served because an ever-expanding pool of intellectual wealth is created from which that society may choose to draw in an effort to improve it in future. This, in turn, creates more opportunity for debate among individuals in society on that future than would otherwise be afforded under a centrally controlled system of social policymaking or seeking of knowledge for social as opposed to individual gains. Hayek writes:

> It might be said that civilization begins when the individual in the pursuit of his ends can make use of more knowledge than he has himself acquired and when he can transcend the boundaries of his ignorance by profiting from the knowledge he does not himself possess. [emphasis added]
>
> (1960:22)

He later states, again in contrast with Dewey that,

> Knowledge exists only as the knowledge of

> individuals.... The sum of the knowledge of all the individuals exists nowhere as an integrated whole [i.e. "society"].
>
> [I]t is largely because civilization enables us constantly to profit from knowledge we do not possess and because each individual's use of his particular knowledge may serve to assist others unknown to him in achieving their ends that men as members of civilized society can pursue their individual ends so much more successfully than they could alone.
>
> (Hayek 1960:24-25)

Further, it must be understood that while man has certain obligations he is expected to fulfill in a democratic society, it is not obligatory that he deny his individuality for the sake of serving or acting in a way that is at all times beneficial to, or in conformity with, everyone in that society. In fact, these are the ingredients for socialism not democracy. Hayek expresses one of the dangers in a society which endeavors to attain social conformity:

> If what we do is to be useful and effective, our objectives must be limited, adapted to the capacities of our mind and our compassions. To be constantly reminded of our 'social' responsibilities...must have the effect of attenuating our feelings until the distinctions between those responsibilities which call for our attention and those which do not disappear. In order to be effective...responsibility must be so confined as to enable the individual to rely on his own concrete knowledge [as acquired through traditional educational methods] in deciding on the importance of different tasks, to apply his own moral principals to circumstances he knows, and to help to mitigate evils voluntarily. [emphasis added]
>
> (1960:84)

In this passage Hayek attacks the notion of the development of knowledge for purely social motives and, again, asserts the

importance of the development and freedom of the individual to seek his own goals. While some individual knowledge may have specific social implications and benefits it must not be demanded that it be developed only for social reasons. The individual whose knowledge may be socially useful must be allowed freedom to do as he wishes with that knowledge, without coercion, even if he decides not to use it at all.

> There is perhaps no more important application of our main theses than that the advance of knowledge is likely to be fastest where scientific [and academic] pursuits are not determined by some unified conception of their social utility, and where each proved man can devote himself to the tasks in which he sees the best chance of making a contribution. [emphasis added]
>
> (Hayek 1960:393)

Another important point to note here is, by allowing children who are gifted in any area (constituting an inequality) to explore and excel as individuals for individual (as opposed to social) motives, society is better served as it has not denied the children their innate gifts. If, on the other hand, they are discriminated against and are denied the development of their gifts in place of developing more mediocre children (equality of outcome), and are held back for these reasons rather than encouraged, it is much less likely that society will benefit fully, if at all, from such creative giftedness.

The Ephemeral Comprehensive Curriculum and the Promotion of Social Equality

A unified outrage is expressed by non-progressives over the

structure of school curricula as formulated by Dewey and as practiced by his followers. H.G. Rickover (1959) defines the comprehensive school as one which offers a wide array of courses from which a child is expected to make rational decisions. The student is expected to reflect upon his future and to choose those courses which would best suit him in his pursuit. Despite the fact that Dewey does not recognize education as a means of planning for the future, society expects children to emerge from its educational institutions with skills which will allow them to find employment and to serve as capable citizens. Rickover describes the curriculum:

> [S]ome [courses are] useful to everyone (physical training), some [are] useful to college-bound children (mathematics and sciences), some to future parents...beauticians...fishermen and what have you. Out of this mass of subjects the child then chooses his fare. No wonder he gorges himself on sweets instead of taking solid meat that must be chewed.
>
> (1959:143)

The comprehensive school, Bantock says, has become the educational result of Dewey's "social argument" in which "social cohesion" and control are administered:

> A powerful element in the comprehensive lobby sees [the comprehensive school] as a vehicle of social justice [such as the egalitarian conception of equality of opportunity] and as a means of doing away with...damaging 'divisiveness' [such as competition] in our society.
>
> (1975:15)

In fact, John P. White makes no attempt to disguise the fact of

the aims of comprehensive schools when he writes that, "Comprehensive schooling is an integral part of the socialist vision. As such, it follows...that its curriculum and objectives must equally be a product of that vision." (1979:60) Increasingly, statements such as these have been the source of great concern to Modern Conservatives as they serve to illustrate the politicization of education as part of a process to facilitate the socialist utopian vision while simultaneously undermining traditional values and morals, and threatening national security. In illustrating part of this process Scruton explains some common curricular adjustments:

> First, difficult and disciplined parts of the subject are removed or downgraded, so that educational achievement can no longer be represented as the mastery of a body of knowledge. Second, texts and subjects are chosen, not for their intellectual or literary merit, or for their ability to further pupils' intellectual grasp, but for the political attitudes which are conveyed in them, and pupils are taught to consider the acquisition of such attitudes as the true mark of educational success.
>
> (1985:8-9)

Flew provides an even more ominous perspective when he writes:

> Those of us who knew National Socialist Germany in the 1930s will recall that the name for similarly totalitarian policies there was 'Gleichschaltung', which, being translated, is 'making uniform of [sic] homogeneous', 'forcing into line' or--most succinctly--'equalising'. We cannot but remember; and shudder.
>
> (1987:52)

Again, as regards education curriculum, many progressives have seized upon the literal interpretation of Dewey's "living for the immediate present," as was his intention, and have been highly

successful in adapting it accordingly. The belief, Rickover says, is that any subject a child chooses will allow him to grow. "[T]here is no aristocracy of 'subjects'...[they are all peers.... One subject will do as much for [the student's] mind as any other." (1959:143) Bantock adds to this:

> Temporary interest and immediate need are the guiding principles implicit in the attempt to 'psychologize' learning; for the emphasis on motivation and endogenous development too easily degenerate into a magpie curriculum of bits and pieces, unrelated and ephemeral. In the interest of temporary relevance a more permanent and deeper comprehension is often sacrificed. [emphasis in the original]
>
> (1975:16)

Similarly, Rickover argues that education, when viewed in this way, expresses the belief that it is exclusively for "effective living now", and that the purpose of the student is not to absorb knowledge, but to use it as a means of guidance for his life. The progressive aims of education "'are [to provide] lines of growth not subject matter to be mastered.'" (Rickover 1959:143) White (1979:60) verifies this purpose by stating that the progressive curriculum (in the comprehensive schools), aims to provide "Activities, not knowledge; freedom of choice, not teacher dictation; development from within, not imposition from without...." Conversely, however, Cox and Marks explain:

> True creativity can only flourish in the tension between spontaneity and disciplined rigorous study.... And real freedom to learn involves being given a systematic and coherent introduction to well established skills and bodies of knowledge.
>
> (1980:22)

With respect to the absence of the 'aristocracy of subjects,' which Rickover (1959) mentions as a tenet of progressive ideology, Bantock (1975:17) adds, further, a note of contradiction in Dewey's conception:

> At the same time [Dewey]...asserts that: 'We cannot establish a hierarchy of values among studies. It is futile to attempt to arrange them in an order...[of least worth]...to that of maximum value;' [he also makes the assertion that], 'the curriculum must be planned with reference to placing essentials first and refinements second.'" [emphasis added]

With this it is clear that there exists an agenda to strengthen social control and conformity at the cost of manipulating the curriculum so as to deny the individual the right to pursue "refinements" as he chooses, before the (social) "essentials". In further support of this, Dewey (1937:225) states (again, contrary to his notion of not arranging knowledge hierarchically): "With the wide range of possible material to select from, it is important that education...should use criterion of social worth." This statement implies not only the social cohesion and social control mentioned earlier, but it also tends to imply the imposition, by an "elite wisdom" of a "state moral structure." For example, in the United States the Supreme Court ruled that obscenity (that material which is seen as prurient and, thus, having "no redeeming social value") is a matter on which individual communities have been given the freedom to define the parameters for by themselves. In this way, what is deemed "acceptable" in some districts of New York City may not be

acceptable in others. Decisions such as this would not be possible in a system in which "criterion of social worth" could be established and decided on independent of a community consensus. In other words, as decisions such as these may not be in harmony with total "social conformity" if left to individual communities (they would certainly differ as they do at present, and any difference runs contrary to conformity): it would become the responsibility of some "elite" bureau to oversee, in this case, community conduct to ensure conformity and equality in all cases.

Progressivism and Egalitarianism as Hindrances to Growth

The very means by which progressive egalitarians seek to permeate society with equality is, necessarily, a denial of that society to realize the full potential with which it may ascend towards excellence--either individual or social. This point is emphasized because (as was mentioned in Chapter One), where the traditional view (as expressed through Modern Conservatism) maintains that, while it may be worked towards, this excellence will never and can never be achieved to perfection by a society consisting of imperfect human beings; the progressive egalitarian view (as expressed through liberal-socialist ideals) is that society can reach such perfection and that a necessary step in that direction is to centralize policymaking and power into the hands of specially trained central-government "experts". This point further illustrates that statement which was made in Chapter One about the Liberal conception of the welfare state as one which

is temporary and can be eliminated.

In a discussion on creativity and civilization Hayek attacks the theories of the "perfect society":

> Perhaps it is only natural that...scientists tend to stress what we do know; but in the social field, where what we do not know is often so much more important, the effect of this tendency may be very misleading. Many of the utopian constructions [such as Crosland's and Dewey's] are worthless because they follow the lead of theorists in assuming that we have perfect knowledge."
>
> (1960:23)

He also states that since man cannot know for certain what the future holds in store, civilization must allow for flexibility in planning and of the individual in society if that society is to grow and progress. Further, a system that is constantly undergoing change must be allowed room for that change. Progressive egalitarians, with their belief in the perfect system want to begin to put constraints on society in order to direct it, in their infinite wisdom, toward this utopian dream.

Conclusion

Advocates of progressive egalitarian philosophy see its educational methods as the only way society's children should be taught, and as such many teachers utilize them; sometimes despite objections. Further, they tend not to recognize the competing philosophies, as the progressive egalitarian philosophy is one whose very structure not only dictates the elimination of much competition, but is viewed ultimately as the "only right and

perfect way"--there can be no substitute. Hence, the point of competition is mute. Cox and Marks illustrate:

> Despite...problems [associated with incongruities], the 'progressive egalitarian' package has been very influential...because its advocates have campaigned strongly for its primary aims of social equality and individual self-expression, aided by an emphasis common to both strands of the package, on co-operation rather than competition.
>
> (1980:22)

Teachers are often the first contact children have with mainstream adult society outside of the home or church. Educational traditionalists argue that children need adult direction, supervision, discipline and goals to provide them with necessary structure if they are going to be able to perform adequately in society as adults. These are expectations society has for children. The teacher must accept the responsibility of presenting himself as a representative of adult society to the child so the child will begin to grasp what society expects of him as he exits childhood and enters into the world of responsible adulthood. If the teacher acts only as a "childminder", allowing students to do "whatever makes them happy", those will tend to be the types of values they will demonstrate (unapprovingly) in society.

Schools can be fun and can provide the student with certain decision-making skills. Schools are not, however, necessarily intended to provide for those needs which make children happy; they are, in the traditionalist opinion, institutions whose main

purpose is to provide serious academic guidance and instruction. This style of education is far from what children are receiving where progressive methods are used. Bantock notes the following about the decay of European schools via progressivism:

> The schools currently reflect an analogous impoverishment as a result of the impact of progressivism--which is...only the pedagogic manifestation of a general cultural debilitation. The concern for...collectivity in education [is a specific example] of a general movement towards reductionism and homogenization which constitute[s] the present threat to the future of European culture in a mass age. What has taken place is a shift in man's metaphysical image of himself--from a self that has to be made, to a self that simply has to be expressed.
>
> (1975:20)

In summary, low standards of academic achievement are of little concern where progressive instruction is used. In many cases children are discouraged from competing and from giving their all in an effort to be the best that they can be academically and otherwise. Schools and teachers frequently refuse to accept the responsibility and accountability for this decay because they, in the progressive case, do not perceive it as arising from their methods. They see their system of instruction, with its stress upon social uniformity, as a good step towards realizing an egalitarian-socialist utopia.

Just as Chapter Two examined traditional and progressive egalitarian approaches to education, Chapter Three will examine certain educational processes within those approaches. In particular, the purpose here is to illustrate the shortcomings, as defined by traditionalist views, of progressive egalitarian

education as it relates to "open-learning" techniques and the lack of child discipline. It will be argued that progressive egalitarian methods are not only lacking in adult authority and instruction, but are negligent in not providing these valuable boundaries as these are the very things children need in order to feel secure.

NOTES

1. The reason Crosland (UK) and Dewey (US), in particular, are discussed in this chapter (aside from the fact that each is a prime representative of his respective country with regard to his philosophies on education and society), is in part due to the way in which the arguments of each reflects his country's historical and social differences with the other (as explained early in chapter one); and in part due to the enormous influence each has had on education theory, policy and practice in general. For example, where some of the prevailing concerns, historically, in Britain have revolved around social inequalities and class differences (as Crosland's emphasis clearly reflects), the United States, having broken away from and taken a decisively different social direction than Britain, has sought to evade such problems by focusing more on the freedoms and liberties of all of its citizens (as Dewey's emphasis illustrates).

2. As a precursory clarification it should be understood here (as will be discussed) that those arguments which endorse progressivism in education (represented herein by Dewey), and those which argue for greater social equality (represented by Crosland) are two separate and distinct arguments which are often seen as contradictory ideals. Nevertheless, despite the original arguments on both sides (especially in the case of Crosland [1956:273] who directly criticizes "excessive attachment to Deweyism and 'life adjustment' education) and the contradictory notions therein, many contemporary non-traditional educationists and education theorists argue from the standpoint where an obvious (although suspect) reconciliatory hybrid is in evidence.

3. For reasons outlined early in chapter one, these class conflicts per se did not exist in the United States.

4. With respect to homogenization, it could be understood that traditionalism endorses this concept as it, too, seeks to place limits on the kind of learning that children should receive. However, traditionalism, unlike progressivism, intends to provide the child with specific knowledge so that he has a solid base on which to continue building after he leaves school. In other words traditionalism provides the groundwork on which the student, after leaving school, can operate freely in a free market and excel to his potential, whereas progressive egalitarianism seeks to level all significant inequalities from the outset (the earliest years at which a child enters the sphere of formal education) as a way of strengthening and maintaining a homogenized, egalitarian social order.

5. A note of clarification is necessary here and must be kept in mind throughout the discussions on Hayek. Although Hayek argues in favor of the individual in pursuit of knowledge for individual gains (as is similar to progressive arguments in child-centered education), he is speaking of individuals outside of the school setting. Obviously, as a conservative he endorses traditional

methods of education. Far from endorsing progressive techniques, it is clear that Hayek implies that there is much more to be gained by studying and learning established bodies of knowledge at primary and secondary schools via directed instruction rather than through open-learning techniques. Similarly, Cox and Marks (1980:22-23) argue:

> We think that the main purpose of education should be to provide reasonable access to worthwhile bodies of knowledge and advanced skills for all our children; that the 'progressive egalitarian' package has downgraded this major purpose; and that there is much to be gained by analysing the established principles and values which are involved in the acquisition of most authoritative bodies of knowledge. [emphasis in the original]

CHAPTER THREE:

CHILD-CENTEREDNESS AND CITIZENSHIP: TRADITIONALISM'S CRITIQUE OF THE PROCESSES OF PROGRESSIVE EGALITARIAN LEARNING TECHNIQUES

The discussion to be considered in this chapter involves the controversy over child-centered or "open" learning. Child-centered learning is an element of progressive egalitarian education and, while it has many opponents throughout the political spectrum of the western world, it faces perhaps its most vociferous and powerful objections from modern Conservatives.

Progressive Egalitarian Education and Society

To begin, Amy Gutmann provides a cyclical definition of the purpose of education in a democracy.

> Education, in great measure, forms the moral character of citizens, and moral character along with laws and institutions forms the basis of democratic government. Democratic government, in turn, shapes the education of future citizens, which in a great measure, forms their moral character. Because democracies must rely on the moral character of parents, public officials and ordinary citizens, democratic education begins not only with children who are to be taught but also with citizens who are to be their teachers.
>
> (1987:49)

Bruce Fuller (1991:xi), too, states the importance of education in order to "defend or alter a society's fundamental forms of life." With these statements this thesis has nearly come full circle

because, obviously, when a political philosophy considers its stance on social policy it must also consider its education policy, and in order to make coherent and consistent judgements in this area it must first consider what type of society it wants to create and perpetuate, and then educate its children accordingly. With progressive egalitarianism as the Liberal platform for social and political change it can be argued that education in some schools is being used to bring about liberal-socialist changes in order to alter society's fundamental forms of life, while Modern Conservatism, through educational traditionalism, is defending a long established order.

Child-Centeredness as Progressivism in School

The progressive philosophy is by no means new to schools. It came to blooming fruition in the 1950s. The fact that educational progressivism was taking hold in Britain is indicated by Peter Cunningham who says that as early as 1949 the Ministry of Education (MoE) was recommending the child-centered approach to the public and to those in the teaching profession. He writes

> The three Rs were to take second place to the development of the child's personality, and the practice of the arts was to encourage this by cultivating the child's interest and extending concentration and self-discipline; through the arts, too, children were to find their own personalities.
> (Cunningham 1990:7)

The recommendations of the MoE for the adoption of child-centered policies, later gave rise to the Plowden Report which

advocated "a more child-centered pedagogy...which sought...a freer more individualistic approach to classroom activity, with an emphasis on creativity and discovery learning."

Cunningham celebrates the notion of the liberal alteration of society when he writes of the Plowden Report:

> It was of major significance in highlighting the impact of social disadvantage on educational opportunity and advancing a policy of positive discrimination in the redistribution of educational resources to compensate for social and economic deprivation. [emphasis added] (1990:10)

Kirk Koerner (1985:11) explains that in the interests of removing social and economic "hindrances to individual self-determination and self realization," modern liberals "have favoured and furthered universal education, universal welfare and a large measure of economic and social planning." The essence of these goals are further evident in the aims of progressive egalitarian education. However, Koerner states the now familiar conservative warning that "universalism in politics is founded upon 'universalism proceeding from reason.'" (1985:197) He continues: "Conservatives tend to distrust reason. They place greater trust in tradition and it is for this reason, above all others, that conservatives seek to preserve the particular, the heterogeneous, the diverse."

In this way then, progressivism is seen by most conservatives as an unstable and unreliable reactionary philosophy whose aims, in effect, undermine conservative values in society by attempting to replace them with the homogeneous values of their own. Even when

so-called "liberal pragmatists" such as R.F. Dearden express the educational need to maintain some continuity with the past, a semi-structured classroom environment, and some degree of discipline, they also, nevertheless, maintain a strong hold to the philosophies of growth theorists such as Dewey. In this way they also support to some degree the idea of school being a center for social engineering. Further, Dearden (1972:66) admits to being committed to the child-centered philosophy inasfar as it treats education as "a process of growth" and therefore "must be regarded as non-transferrable." In other words, the process of learning must first be initiated by the "inner child". To explain his position further, Dearden (1976:54) lists what he calls the three "relational aims" of child-centeredness:

> (i)intrinsic interest (eagerness, curiosity, learning to learn, absorption, etc.); (ii) self-expression (expressing one's own individuality, being oneself, etc.); (iii) autonomy (making independent judgements, choosing with self-confidence, self-direction, learning by discovery, etc.).

Finally, a cornerstone of child-centered education is a belief in the notion that play is the "work" of the child. Through play the uninhibited child tests and explores the environment around himself and incorporates what he learns into his developing sense of reality. This theory is proposed by most progressive educationists as basic to the nature of children and, therefore, play in the classroom is seen as the most appropriate way for children in primary schools to learn.

Conflicting Theories of Education

Traditional and Progressive Educational Theories Outlined

Another argument which focuses on the dichotomous values of traditionalism and progressivism in education is provided by Don Parker who outlines the conflicting philosophies. In his quest for a "middle ground" he is both sympathetic with and hostile towards certain areas of each. He defines the swings from traditional to progressive education, or as he states, "away from education for life, to education as life" as troublesome. [emphasis in the original] (Parker 1963:18) He argues that "these wild swings from traditional to progressive to traditional schooling are, to say the least, inefficient. Instead of fostering sane experimentation and development, they keep teachers in a state of confusion." (Parker 1963:19)

The issue of confused educators, however interesting, digresses from the main theme of this thesis which, among other things, maintains that children must be educated in such a way that they will emerge from school and enter society as reasonable, responsible, functional citizens. It also maintains that the best approach for achieving these goals stems from a traditional, knowledge-centered approach rather than from a progressive, child-centered style of "learning".

Parker (1963:62) outlines the differences between the two philosophies in this way:

Traditional	Progressive
* subject-centered	* child-centered
* basic education	* life adjustment
* perennialism: certain immutable truths; man's unchanging nature	* instrumentalism-experimentalism: truth is in the consequences
* Plato: being (basic truths)	* Aristotle: becoming (science always new truths
* the cultural heritage	* the learner's interests and the current problems of a changing society
* mental discipline	* self-discovery
* intellect	* whole child
* European [descent]	* American [descent]
* two level: college, noncollege [sic]	* many levels: a continuum of ability, as in society
* extrinsic motivation	* intrinsic motivation
* teacher a subject specialist	* teacher a learning consultant
* content	* process
* schooling: acquisition of skills and knowledge; emphasis on education <u>for</u> life	* schooling: discovery of need for and acquisition of skills and knowledge; emphasis on education <u>as</u> life
* orderly	* dynamic

Obviously, as Parker points out, the reader may well find himself jumping between both sides picking and choosing from each category whether he is of a traditional or progressive frame of mind. It is nonetheless very difficult, however, to find suitable reconciliation between these two schools of thought as their very foundations greatly differ. In other words, where traditional methods aim to equip the child with knowledge from past and present sources, and to provide structure via an established curriculum (as directed by specialized educators) in order to prepare him to be successful in his role as an adult citizen, progressivism provides the student with only a small amount of structure and direction (if any in some cases), as the progressive

"educators" view their role more as consultants to children who are left to negotiate their own way into their own future as full-fledged adult citizens. A further basic distinction between the two methods is that while progressivism focuses on the socialization of the child, traditionalism views the acquisition of knowledge through traditional means as the most important aspect of schooling.

Progressivism and Traditionalism: Conflicting Views of the School Curriculum

Progressivism and the Coercive Curriculum

A prominent American educator and proponent of the child-centered philosophy is John Holt. Holt (1964), in many ways epitomizes (often in the best of Dewey traditions) the progressive style of education in primary and secondary schools. In How Children Fail, he dismisses the idea of an established, constant curriculum as absurd and attacks traditional teaching methods. He proclaims: "since we can't know what knowledge will be most needed in the future, it is senseless to try to teach it in advance." (Holt 1964:175) He suggests that the reason children fail in school is because they are threatened and coerced, through the use of fear tactics (supposedly employed by traditional educators) to study and learn certain subjects whether they want to or not. He writes:

> Fear is the inseparable companion of coercion, and its inescapable consequence. If you think it your duty to make children do what you want, whether they will or

> not, then it follows inexorably that you must make them afraid of what will happen if they don't do what you want.
>
> (Holt 1964:179)

Ackerman (1980:162), too, concurs with this position by stating that "any system in which the elder generation uses its supreme power to 'educate' the young is coercive." [emphasis in the original]

In view of his beliefs on the connection between the teacher-directed curriculum and coercion, Holt (1964:179) offers his child-centered alternative. Since, as he states, no one can know better than the individual child what knowledge that child needs in order to make his own sense of reality complete, it is the teacher's (indeed the adult's) responsibility simply to show the child a variety of different artistic, intellectual and athletic activities and allow him to choose his own best way; and to allow him to learn as much or as little as he feels is necessary to meet the needs-criteria within his own self-established sense of reality. In this way, Holt conceives of an educational environment in which children and educators are moral and intellectual co-equals.

These ideas are very much in line with Dewey's philosophy of allowing children to learn that which might be important to them today without worrying about other bodies of knowledge which may or may not hold any particular relevance to the child at the present or in the future.

Holt does tend to step beyond Dewey, however, with respect to the use of a curriculum. In The Dewey School, Dewey (1900)

discusses the use of a "curriculum", albeit expansive with seemingly limitless bounds, as a tool to help educators guide children according to the child's interests. In the "Dewey School" experiment Dewey attempted to create a school atmosphere in which the principles of total democracy were to be practiced by everyone--teachers, administrators and students. Even in this setting, however, as Gutmann (1987:93) explains, the teachers met weekly with Dewey "to discuss curriculum and other educational matters" and met amongst themselves daily "to discuss their work with other teachers." She continues:

> Students did not have the same freedom, authority, or influence as teachers over the curriculum or the structure of their schooling, but they too were encouraged to engage in far more collective deliberation and decisionmaking than is common in most primary schools.

Holt, by contrast, completely expels the idea of curriculum-based learning. He argues from the vantage point that where there exists a curriculum there also exists, necessarily, boundaries which might inhibit learning. Also, as was shown, Holt claims that where there are boundaries (no matter how insignificant or far displaced), there must also exist coercion. He explains that whether the coercion manifests itself in the form of harsh words and threat of punishment or,

> subtly, smoothly [and] quietly, by withholding acceptance and approval which...children [have been trained] to depend on...[they] will feel more and more that life is full of dangers from which only the goodwill of adults...can protect them, and that this

> goodwill of adults is perishable and must be earned anew each day.
>
> (1964:180)

In an attempt to add credibility to his child-centered philosophy, Holt recounts how he briefly outlined his ideas for limitless exploration by children in whatever areas they wanted and in whatever quantity they wanted to a sixth-grade student (the age of a sixth-grader in the United States is usually 11-12 years old). He writes her response: 'Oh, yes, it would be wonderful!'...'You know, kids really like to learn; we just don't like being pushed around.' "No they don't," he adds, "and we should be grateful for that. So let's stop pushing them around, and give them a chance." (Holt 1964:180-181) It should come as no surprise that someone who puts as much trust in the reasoning abilities of children as Holt does, would also seek the acceptance and approbation of children to try and demonstrate some measure of validity and the potential for success in his education philosophy.

Traditional Education and the Knowledge-Centered Curriculum

Although Holt dismisses the idea of a set curriculum, many (if not most) progressivists argue in favor of some sort of structure such as that used in the "Dewey School" experiment. The differences in curricula content between the two philosophies is, however, still very great. The fact that this is so can be demonstrated simply by analyzing the definition of each

philosophy. Simply stated, if viewed from a politico-educational perspective, the traditional (conservative) educative purpose is to teach facts and figures from the past and present in traditional subjects such as math, history, reading, writing, science and so on, independent of social pressures. This is not to say that traditional methods ignore social needs as these ubiquitous needs tend to permeate all institutions at every level and therefore cannot and should not be entirely eliminated from the classroom. What is meant here is that Modern Conservatives recognize that the alleviation of specific social needs arises out of a system whose foundations are firmly grounded in traditional, moral and historical precedence.

Where traditional education teaches children to "know, the...progressive [way is to teach students] to know how to know." [emphasis in the original] (Parker 1963:63) Parker explains:

> [A]s soon as men like Copernicus, Galileo, and others began to turn the light of scientific enquiry on old beliefs about man and his universe, the traditional 'knowledge of the day' was shaken to its foundations. Further the flood of new knowledge generated from scientific discovery became too much to cope with in a 'pass-it -along-to-succeeding-generations manner.

Although this passage illustrates the progressive point of view of not teaching about what is not relevant in the present, it adulterates the traditional stance which fully expects (and in some cases surely hopes) some truths to be challenged and shown to be false. Traditionalists, in fact, are better prepared for these challenges than progressivists. Again, because they are not "teaching" children by simply allowing them to learn through their

own experiences and observations, traditional education tends to be more abstract because children not only are learning things they never knew, they are learning the nature of such things, and how they apply to other things in the past, present and future. For these reasons challenges to conventional wisdom are often expected and welcomed. Even if a "truth" is discovered at some point to be false it may still be (and often is) important (even if only historically) to know why it is false.

On the other hand, many progressivists are quite at ease with the prospect of "burying" such "useless information" and relying on the "new" truth. In this respect, then, if progress is measured by how far a thing has advanced, and its direction is reliant upon knowledge of where it has already been, then traditionalism, with its ever-expanding view of the past, is most capable of steering into the future. Progressivism, conversely, cares less about the lessons of the past and more with the offerings of the here and now and, hence, is a willing prisoner of a perpetual present without the benefit of the stability and maturity that comes from having a firm grasp on the past.

Of pro-state Liberalism, the embodiment of progressivism, Koerner (1985:14) provides this conservative argument:

> All too anxious to impose an unwarranted uniformity on man and society, liberals have forgotten humanity's diverse needs, differentiations and fundamental limitations. Totally preoccupied with the reckless pursuit of progress at almost any price, liberal society subordinates all other activities to the selfish pursuit of material gain; unconcerned with excellence, tradition, continuity, community and diversity, liberal society...leaves the individual isolated, rootless and on his own in a competitive web of commercial relations.

Alternatively, Koerner (1985:6-7) explains from the modern Conservative perspective where

> experience, prejudice, history, habit and tradition...[are seen to provide] more valuable guides to present and future conduct...[and] allow for variety, diversity and circumstance, [and are, therefore, superior to the liberal aims of]...universal norms and a priori speculation.

In fact, drawing from the foundations of modern Conservatism as a result arising out of the French Revolution, Koerner (1985:7) writes of Joseph de Maistre who warned: "Under the axe of abstract reason...'general and individual morality, religion, laws, revered customs, useful prejudice, "must be destroyed," nothing is left standing, everything falls before it; it is the universal dissolvent.'"

Most modern Conservatives would agree that with the stated aims of child-centered education as they are, the feelings of "isolation" and "rootlessness," as described above, begin no later than when a child is introduced into such a progressive atmosphere. The next section, which addresses the expressed modern Conservative views on the need for structure and discipline in schools, will illuminate these points further.

Traditionalism, Progressivism and Secondary Education Curriculum

Since traditional education maintains a subject-based format throughout the primary and secondary years, it is the much more socially oriented progressives who begin to converge on the

traditional curriculum-based concept of learning in secondary schools.

If the progression from primary to secondary school is viewed simply as a series of interlocking building blocks, it follows that the direction that secondary education will take is necessarily predicated on what has gone before. In other words, the traditional model would consist of a foundation (primary school) of curriculum-based, knowledge-centered activity with the proceeding level (secondary education) looking much the same with the possible exception of a wider variety of subjects to be taken and greater degrees of independence and responsibility for the student. Here the level of discipline is different, as will be seen, because as the students mature they are expected to exhibit greater degrees of self-restraint and self-discipline.

Progressive education, however, when viewed in light of the aforementioned traditional criteria, is seen as tantamount to building a house from the rooftop down without, first, the benefit of walls or a solid foundation. Practically speaking, it begins at the primary stage with many of the characteristics found at the secondary level in the traditional model. From there it is not until the secondary stage (in some cases) that any form of curriculum is introduced (albeit in most cases a more socially-oriented curriculum than its traditional counterpart) and students who were once unleashed and encouraged to explore anything and everything (or nothing) in order to create their own sense of reality, suddenly are asked to exercise self-discipline and self-control.

Furthermore, where traditionalism provides a curriculum to be followed by students, progressivism, Ackerman suggests, in essence allows the student to devise his own curriculum:

> As the child gains increasing familiarity with the range of cultural models open to him in a liberal society, the choice of his curriculum should increasingly become his responsibility rather than that of his educators. More and more, the educator, like the parent, becomes simply a guide whose authority depends solely on his greater experience with the flood of meaningful symbol and action generated by a liberal society
>
> (1980:158)

This passage not only confirms outright a liberal political agenda (through the inclusion of phrases such as "cultural models" and "liberal society" in the context of what and how children are to be taught in accordance with liberal-socialist expectations of society), but also suggests that the student is left alone in choosing his own path into the future. In other words, it has already been shown that at the primary level in a child-centered program the child is left to pursue his own interests to suit his personal needs, but Ackerman demonstrates that as the child gets older he is encouraged even more to pursue whatever interests him. At best this suggests that the levels of authority and discipline are nebulous; not only in terms of liberal education itself, but must also be so for the children who, at the primary level, require the security of such enforced boundaries in order to give shape and direction to their developing personalities.

Traditional and Progressive Views on Authority

Traditionalism: Learning to Submit

Another dimension of the traditional (qua educational conservative) argument in favor of child discipline and authority is provided by James Dobson, who argues that children not only require such constraints, their emotional make-up is such that they demand them. Moreover, he declares: "Adult leadership is rarely accepted unchallenged by the next generation; it must be tested and found worthy of allegiance by the youngsters who are asked to yield and submit to its direction." (Dobson 1978:15) Children need to know that they are in a secure environment. Furthermore, by learning to respect the boundaries of their security they also learn to respect the authority-makers of the present and those of the future society they are being trained to enter. Dobson (1978:30) likens this testing to a "policeman who turns the doorknobs" of businesses at night after they have closed:

> Though he tries to open doors, he hopes they are locked and secure. Likewise, a child who assaults the loving authority of his parents is gently reassured when their leadership holds firm and confident. He finds his greatest security in a structured environment where the rights of other people (and his own) are protected by definite boundaries. [emphasis added]

When a child deliberately misbehaves, Dobson explains, he is simply testing the limits and security of the established boundaries.

Because of the nature of children to first test those

authorities to whom they have been asked to submit, Dobson explains that a teacher who enters a classroom with the intention of loving the students as a way of controlling their behavior will fail miserably because the children will not reciprocate on terms of love alone.

> Those teachers who try to spread love in September and discipline next January are destined for trouble....
> Students simply cannot accept a teacher's love until they know that the giver is worthy of their respect. [emphasis in the original]
>
> (Dobson 1978:182-183)

John Wilson (1981:46) shares and illustrates Dobson's view:

> A fortiori with children, particularly young children, they may come to recognize and accept the authority of teachers and parents without the constant need for demonstrations of power; but if that power were not there as a background they would not be so accepting of an authority.

Although much of Dobson's discussions on discipline and authority revolve around the family, the same principles can be applied (as he has just illustrated) to the classroom. As most people would agree Dobson portrays the home environment as the first crucial step in childhood development. However, he says that from the 1950s onward attitudes toward child development began to change rapidly and dramatically in relation to previous decades. The children of modern times, he claims, have access to better medicine, education, food, entertainment and so on, than at any other time in history yet still they have gone awry. (Dobson 1970:21)

In contrast with progressive ideology (as will be shown) Dobson

explains that children learn to submit to social forms of authority in their adult years by first learning to submit to that of their parents. In making this claim he emphatically states that "the two concepts [power and authority] are as different as love and hate." (1978:171) He explains: "Parental power can be defined as a hostile form of manipulation in order to satisfy selfish adult purposes.... Proper authority, by contrast is defined as loving leadership. [emphasis in the original] (1978:179) In other words, a parent (or in this case--teacher) has the authority to discipline a child in better knowing and serving the child's best interests, and has the power to enforce that discipline for the good of the child in terms of his future as an adult.

Wilson also explains the power-authority relationship:

> It is sometimes said that good discipline has no necessary connections with power wielded by teachers; after all teachers have sometimes had plenty of power...but nevertheless discipline was very bad. Hence, we might think, it is not so much power but rather authority that matters; that is, the acceptance by the clients that X has the right to obedience (not just the strength to enforce it). Indeed if it were just a matter of power, the motivating thought in the client's head would be 'I had better obey, or else I shall get clobbered', and that...is not the characteristic thought of good discipline. The correct thought is 'Because the authority says so.' [emphasis in the original]
>
> (1981:45)

In this way Wilson argues "if authorities do not have the power to make the rules stick they have become (pro tanto) advisors or representatives of ideals rather than authorities." This concept of teacher as advisor, however, is precisely the role child-

centered policies have intended; but traditionalists argue that without the proper teaching of discipline children will not likely be fully capable of fulfilling their adult obligations as employees, parents or even citizens. Further, Dobson (1970) explains that it is the first six teachers (referring to the first six years in school) a child has that will largely shape his attitude towards authority in the future. If this is coupled with the earlier fact that children have an essential need for discipline and authority and that that learning process will help them cope with social forms of authority, then it clearly is imperative that parents and teachers begin to instill the appropriate values in children at the earliest possible stage of the child's development.

Finally, Wilson (1981:44) explains three main points as regards the need for discipline in the family, in schools and in society at large:

> 1. It is inevitable that children...will spend some years in a situation which is tightly structured.... The family is a group of this kind--so is the classroom and the school as a whole. Notions like obedience, duties, allotted tasks...are here inexpellable notions. If a child did not grasp and act upon the principle of discipline, of established obedience to authority, he could hardly survive at all, and a proper grasp of it is an <u>essential</u> enablement for the child to learn other things.
> 2. Because of this, 'discipline'... is inevitably a crucially important area. The family and the school necessarily form the arena of the child's first encounter with...rules and authority. If he does not grasp the relevant points in this area, <u>it is unlikely [at best]...that he will do so later</u> when he comes to wider and less structured contexts in which the word 'discipline' is less applicable.
> 3. Although not many social groups are 'military', a great many more are like a peace-time army than they are like (say) a university or a collection of bohemian

> artists. We may legitimately speak of 'discipline' in groups of people building bridges, making cars, [etc.]...and a large number of other cases. It is clear enough that, be our or any other society as 'liberal' as it may, we should not survive very long without adequate discipline in such contexts. And these are the contexts in which most of our pupils will operate. [emphasis added]

Progressivism and Minimal Authority

Most progressive educationists agree that some limitations be placed on children in the classroom. In keeping with the progressive ideologies within child-centered education, discipline is a tool which is used to mark the outer boundaries "beyond which student welfare and growth would be endangered." (Rich 1982:61) Even when a student breaches those outer confines he is most gently steered back within them so as not to disturb his sensibilities or to make him feel at all uncomfortable or embarrassed. In short, he is treated with "kid gloves" in order to ensure that his developing idea of reality is not adversely affected by the disciplinary measures enforced upon him. Ackerman (1980:159) argues:

> After all, these children are citizens of our liberal state. Although they may be subjected to special limitations when necessary to assure their future standing as citizens, they may not otherwise be denied the right to pursue their own good in the way they think best. For are they not at least as good as we are? [emphasis added]

Dearden (1976:54) also states that while its aims are "very important," the deficiency of child-centeredness...is surely to be found in what it neglects rather than in what it celebrates." This major deficiency, as Dearden sees it, in the child-centered

philosophy is in "its failure, or perhaps refusal, to come to terms with the need for adult authority." (1976:58) Aside from authority he also diverges to a degree with some progressivists insofar as he does not share the humanistic belief in the innate goodness of man, and therefore departs with the views of some of his more radically liberal colleagues in his views on the value of authority as a necessary instrument in directing children in both educative and disciplinary ways. (1976:59)

Traditionalism, then (it would superficially appear), would find its primary argument with Dearden over his concepts regarding self-direction, discovery-learning and his concept of curriculum which is "liberal in its balance and scope." (Dearden 1976:59) Given, however, that Dearden discusses curriculum and authority from a pro-progressive standpoint his methods become suspect. For instance, where authority is concerned Ackerman, too, expresses the need for its use in school, but he tends to equate authority with power in such a way that children need to be enlisted as co-discussants as to the appropriate uses of it lest they be victimized by the "power-holders."

> Liberal dialogue...seeks to control the exercise of power in <u>all</u> its forms, insisting that...uses of power be justified in a way consistent with the dialogic rights of those who happen to be powerless [in this case--children]. [emphasis in the original]
>
> (1980:160-161)

In making this connection between power and authority, Ackerman undermines the traditional control of parents and teachers over children.

Conclusion

The ideals of traditionalism are not difficult to understand. Paralleling many of those ideals found in Modern Conservatism, traditional education ideals seek (among other things previously addressed) to preserve moral standards, authority, tradition, a sense of community (as opposed to universal homogenization) and social order. Conservatism recognizes that:

> man...is a creature of instinct, passion and emotion, capable of both good and evil. [As such] the preservation of civilized society requires order, authority and hierarchy [social as well as authoritative]. Society, moreover is [recognized as] the mysterious product of chance and circumstance [and whose]...laws embody age-old wisdom....
>
> (Koerner 1985:7)

Furthermore, Modern Conservatives criticize pro-state Liberalism for its optimistic outlook on the perfectibility of the human condition, for defining man as a creature who is basically good in nature and is not capable of evil until he is taught to do so, and for confiding, by way of these beliefs, in the reasoning abilities of man for the good of mankind and society in general. Koerner again affirms this conservative criticism:

> [M]odern conservatives find liberals too sanguine about human reason, too optimistic about human nature, too anxious to devise vast and comprehensive social programmes, forgetful of man's evil propensity to sin, unaware of the fundamental distinctions among human beings and in large measure responsible for a culture that is commercial, conformist, ugly and tasteless.
>
> (1985:14)

Charles Murray looks to Adam Smith for a conservative explanation of human behavior:

> Reason and virtue might fail to govern human behavior, but 'the subtlties--approbativeness or self-esteem or emulation or all three together--are by the beneficent dispensation of Providence, capable of producing the same effects in outward conduct as reason and virtue themselves.
>
> (Murray 1988:168)

In this way Murray explains that most men are driven by a "moral sense" to seek approbation from his fellow man. (1988:167) Therefore man is not acting out of reason detached from a divine-centered moral sense and as such his fallacy-prone reasoning must be subject to moral scrutiny. It therefore follows, given the distrust by conservatives of human reason and the relative security they express in the preservation of tradition, that the moral standards which are to be expected are those which have their foundations stemming from age-old wisdom rather than from modern-day liberal-socialism.

It is common, therefore, for traditionalism and conservatism to be termed "old-fashioned", but in a very real sense that is exactly what they are.

Progressivism, as Boyd (1989:3) writes, attacks even these qualities of traditionalism:

> As an ideology of schooling, child-centeredness was a reaction against the authoritarian ethos, narrow skills-based curriculum and social control emphasis of the nineteenth-century elementary schools in Britain and the USA on the part of educators concerned with early childhood education.

Whether exercised by parents or teachers, the degree to which morals, discipline and authority are used as boundaries with children to define for them the parameters of acceptable behavior in preparation for their full participation in citizenship is treated with contempt by many progressivists. In fact, progressivism often serves to undermine the efforts of traditional authority figures. As evidence of this fact Ackerman (1980:157) suggests an educational regimen which consists of an "elaboration of life options relatively close to those with which the child is already familiar." In this way he explains, a child can begin to "grasp the idea that his resistance to parental commands may not...be the sign of perversity but may instead represent a more satisfying way of expressing his developing self-understanding." [emphasis added]

Statements such as these tend to suggest that children be treated as "little adults"; that they not only are capable of choosing what is best for themselves, but have every right to accept or reject (as they see fit) the discipline, authority and morals as put forth by their elders.

Conservatives, however, hold a quite different view. Oakeshott (1972:47) explains that the world consists of countless "understandings, imaginings, meanings, moral and religious beliefs, relationships, [and] practices" all of which must first be learned before they can be properly understood. "To be initiated into this world is learning to become human; and to move within it freely is being human, which is a 'historic', not a

'natural' condition." [emphasis added] This is not intended to imply in any way that children are any less than human before they learn these things, but, rather, that the human condition is one that needs to be learned in order to be fully appreciated and as such requires that children be placed under disciplinary, moral and authoritarian constraints by their elders (who have already travelled that road) in order that the children themselves learn that which is required of them when they reach adulthood.

Bantock (1980:45) addresses the fact that "knowledge...is an essential part of experience: [however,] mind is selective and left to itself focuses meaningfully on what it already knows about." In this statement Bantock demonstrates one of the strengths of traditional education over progressive education in that the former teaches students by instruction in various traditional subjects whereas progressivism allows children to learn what they want (if anything), and hence the mind "focuses meaningfully [only] on what it already knows about."

Again, where progressives argue that formal education is not mere cultural indoctrination, and that each child must be given every opportunity to "define his own ideals with a recognition of the full range of his moral freedom" (Ackerman 1980:162), conservatives argue that without the imparting of moral responsibilities and the expectation of a child's adherence to them, the child is made increasingly susceptible to failure on both social and personal grounds.

"Respect for leadership is the glue that holds social organisation together, without it there is chaos, violence and

insecurity for everyone." (Dobson 1970:92)

Progressivism, as de Maistre would conclude, is the very dissolvent of that glue.

CHAPTER FOUR:
CONSERVATIVE REFORMS IN EDUCATION: 1980-1992

Up to this point various arguments over social policy and education have been presented. Throughout these discussions it is by now obvious that those arguments which convey Modern Conservative and traditional education ideologies have been favored over all of the others. This final chapter, however, will examine how well the traditional education ideals have been translated into the actual Modern Conservative policies from the 1980s to the present.

The chapter itself is divided into two distinct parts which examine British and U.S. policies respectively. In the case of the former, the 1988 Education Reform Act is the primary focus. Whereas in the latter several recent events have helped to shape the future of education. The latest of these developments is the America 2000 Education Reform Act of 1991.

Before proceeding with these examinations of recent education reforms it is useful to first provide a brief recapitulation of the main points introduced in the previous chapters as this will have the effect of further attenuating the understandings of Modern Conservatism and its policymaking particularly as it applies to education. It will also allow for a more focused assessment of how well these policies reflect the Modern Conservative ethos.

Chapter Four: Conservative Reforms in Education

In defining Modern Conservatism and discussing how the various strands have been melded together in order that they might act under a unified ideology, Chapter One demonstrates conservatism's deep commitment to (among others), tradition, pluralism, liberty, individuality and a small central government whose purpose is to ensure that all free citizens are given equal opportunity (in the Burkean sense), while also ensuring that law and order are maintained. In the reform movements to be discussed these commitments are expressed in a number of different ways.

In Chapter Two conservative arguments identify progressivism and egalitarianism in education as part of a liberal-socialist approach whose aim is promote equality in all significant spheres of social life and virtually to undermine the very values which, conservatives argue, promote individuality and growth within society. Further, as traditional teaching methods and subject matter are seen as the most appropriate avenue toward building solid, responsible citizens, child-centered and progressive egalitarian teaching methods (the focus of Chapter Three) are viewed with much contempt in that they allow children the freedom to pursue their own interests and, as such, do not require the level of authority that conservatives argue is necessary in order to create responsible future adults. Because of the perceived decay of educational standards, which traditionalists blame on progressive egalitarian teaching methods where children often are not expected to adhere to the more rigid standards of a meritocratic system and, instead, are directed on a path where socialization and social equality are the main emphasis,

conservative-led reforms in both countries have included a return to courses being taught in traditional subject matter. Insofar as these basic core courses require the child to learn what is being taught, greater emphasis (than that which is afforded under progressive methods) is placed on classroom discipline and adult authority. Further, where it has been discussed that testing of academic knowledge is discouraged in the progressive egalitarian system because testing practices promote neither egalitarian nor progressive aims, the recent reforms do support such tests as a measure of how well each child is performing and to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the children so that they can be directed to improve their academic standings in the basic core subjects.

With these main points being reemphasized it is now appropriate to look at the education reform movements and to assess them with respect to the conservative criteria they seek to satisfy.

British Education: The Education Reform Act 1988

The Education Reform Act of 1988 (affecting England and Wales) is the largest piece of educational legislation in British history. It also introduces the most important and comprehensive reforms in modern British education since its predecessor--the 1944 Education Act. As this legislation is so exhaustive it is not possible, nor is it necessary, to examine every aspect of it in this chapter. What will be important, however, are those issues such as the curriculum, the level of autonomy afforded to

schools in terms of their freedom to control their own day to day operations and budgetary affairs, the degree of central and local government intervention and so on, many of whose themes have already been introduced and maintained throughout this thesis. Another point to be considered throughout this chapter is the way in which the British reforms differ from those in the United States. In other words, while the two countries are similar in their classical liberal approach as regards education policy and the freedom from government interference, the British reforms (through the Authoritarian Traditional strand of British Modern Conservatism) take a decisive pro-state stance with regard to the national curriculum. State intervention to this degree would not likely be found in Modern Conservative policy in the United States, but would, instead be more indicative of the Democrats. For these reasons, parts of the education reform movement in Britain are very "Liberal" in American terms, but are, nonetheless conservative in British terms. This serves as an example of Greenleaf's statement in Chapter One where he described many British Conservatives as "well-nigh indistinguishable from...Liberals and...many Socialists.

Modern Conservative Education Reform: Increasing Centralization and Levels of Autonomy

The aims of the 1988 Act are many as they encompass all areas of state education from the primary level through further and higher education. Of primary concern, however, was the widely accepted view among politicians (such as Former Prime Minister James

Callaghan who addressed this very issue in his 1976 Ruskin speech, the Black Papers, and others) and the public alike that state education in Britain was in a state of decay, and that unless measures were taken to reverse this damaging trend, Britain's future as a major participant in global affairs would be in grave jeopardy.

David Coulby, a critic of the Education Reform Act in general, writes:

> The popular rhetoric of the day concealed the fact that the proclaimed, "decentralization" of schools...was actually a delocalization and a centralization--bluntly nationalization. Central government was poised to take control of schools...away from local education authorities. (emphasis in the original)
>
> (1989:17)

While this statement is accurate prima facie it is not entirely so for several reasons. In order to secure both a traditionally-based curriculum and an increased level of autonomy for schools, the Conservative government, as explained by Sheila Lawlor (1988), sought to break the local education monopoly. This was accomplished by shifting the emphasis of government involvement from local to central control. This move, however, while it would be contradictory to the Modern Conservative ethos in the United States context, is not ironic in the British Modern Conservative context where the ethos of the Authoritarian Traditional strand permits and endorses such state interventionism.

Further, with respect to the national curriculum and the ten mandatory subjects required therein, while it is wide-reaching in its requirements, it was never intended to consume 100 percent of

the available learning time of every school day. In fact, in a 1987 speech in the House of Commons, the then Secretary of State for Education, Kenneth Baker said that while he expected the curriculum requirements to take up no less than 70 percent of available time, the remaining time would allow for flexibility in terms of allowing other areas of study to be pursued such as "home economics, Latin, business studies, careers education, and a range of other subjects." (quoted in Haviland 1988:3)

In essence, then, what the Conservative Government sought by implementing the national curriculum was to reestablish what it considers to be a more academically sound practice of education which is based upon traditional education principles while, at the same time, show (to some degree) its commitment to the principles of freedom by recognizing these and allowing individual state schools to introduce students to other areas of study.

The Act also demonstrates Modern Conservatism's commitments to the principles of classical liberalism by its inclusion of a move which would allow for schools to become grant-maintained. This move has greatly <u>increased</u>, if anything, the level of autonomy for those schools who choose to opt out and has lessened the extent to which those schools fall under the control of government--both local <u>and</u> central. Although they, as all state schools, are still required to teach according to the conditions outlined in the Reform Act, they will have greater independence in deciding how best to meet these criteria. Furthermore, it is very important to understand that schools are not required to opt out, but are given the opportunity to do so if they wish. In this way, the

commitment to individual choice is also accounted for as parents (who cast the deciding votes) are given greater powers of influence with which to shape their children's education.

Finally, as Brian Caldwell points out, through the Education Reform Act

> Conservative government [seeks to change the old] arrangements [of education] with greater centralisation on the one hand (a national curriculum) and greater decentralisation on the other (budget powers at the school level, greater choice and access, and provision for schools to opt out of LEAs).
>
> (1987:14)

The National Curriculum: The Authoritarian Traditionalist Emphasis

As has been demonstrated, according to Modern Conservatives and traditional educationists, one of the main culprits of massive educational decline is the adoption by many schools and liberal-socialist educationists of progressive, egalitarian and child-centered techniques whereby socialization, the creation of an egalitarian utopian society and the education of the "whole child" are seen as paramount responsibilities of the formal education system. In an Authoritarian Traditional effort to thwart these deeply entrenched changes in state education and to ensure a return to a more traditional ethos, the National Curriculum was devised and incorporated into the Act.

Under the direction of the Secretary of State, the Act ensures that every state primary and secondary school is to provide a curriculum which consists of three "core subjects" (math, English and science) and six "foundation subjects" (history, geography,

technology, music, art and physical education). (HMSO 1988:2) Once a child reaches the secondary level an additional requirement to study a foreign language is also added to the nine other national curriculum requisites. In relation to these foundation subjects and the newly established powers of the central government, the Secretary of State is not only responsible for the implementation of courses, but:

> may by order specify in relation to each of the foundation subjects--
> (a) such attainment targets [established at four "key stages" at the ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16];
> (b) such programmes of study; and
> (c) such assessment arrangements; as he considers appropriate for that subject.
>
> (HMSO 1988:3)

Also, in order to increase the accountability of schools to the academic performance of their students, the publication of test results of the "key stages" is required.

In addition, despite the fact that religious education was not included in the original text of the bill, it is represented within the language of the Act itself, thus demonstrating even further the strong influences of the Authoritarian Traditional strand of Modern Conservatism in Britain.

With these points, then, broadly outlining the new mandatory curriculum requirements, the national curriculum was designed to:

> (a) [promote] the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society; and
>
> (b) [prepare] such pupils for the opportunities responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

(HMSO 1988:3)

In a hostile summary David Coulby (1989:57) writes:

> The legislation on the curriculum represents a significant change in the organization of education in England and Wales. The curriculum is now determined by national legislation and by the Secretary of State.

Opting Out and The Creation of Grant-Maintained Schools: The Classical Liberal Emphasis

Another way in which the Education Reform Act has impacted state primary and secondary education is the way in which it has allowed "larger primary schools" (300 or more students) and secondary schools more autonomy by allowing them to "opt out" of local education authority (LEA) control and become "grant-maintained" schools.

Before the Reform Act made opting out possible, all state schools and their employees were managed, directed and otherwise maintained by the LEA bureaucracies. Furthermore, because the LEAs had complete control over the affairs of schools they could see to it that the schools were organized in accordance with their own agendas and those of various politically powerful interest groups such as teacher's unions and the like (both of which, many conservatives contend, are oriented toward maintaining of progressive, egalitarian and child-centered ideologies). In these ways funds could be allocated and teachers, head teachers and administrators could be selected in such a way so as to tailor the education children receive accordingly. According to widespread claims, this was often done with little or no regard to what

parents wanted for their children in terms of providing more educationally sound programs based upon traditional education foundations. Further, since the emphasis on these agendas often differed from one LEA to another it meant that national educational unity was being sacrificed. In fact, in a 1987 Department of Education and Science (DES and Welsh Office) document it was clearly stated that the Education Reform Act would create educational continuity nationwide.

When a school decides to opt out and become a grant-maintained institution this continuity remains intact as it is still obligated to the conditions of the national curriculum. What then are the advantages to opting out? First and foremost, it gives more power to parents, as it is they who will ultimately decide (by secret ballot) whether or not they want their children's schools to become grant-maintained.[1]

Secondly, by cutting out the middle-man--the LEAs--the school receives its funding directly from the Secretary of State and may spend it in such a way as it (the governing body of the school) thinks is best. In the words of the Act (1988:53):

> [T]he governing body of such a school shall have the power to do anything which appears to them to be necessary or expedient for the purpose of or in connection with the conduct of the school...including in particular power--
> (a) to assume the conduct as from the incorporation date in relation to the school of the school as constituted immediately before that date, and for that purpose to receive any property, rights and liabilities transferred to the governing body...;
> (b) to acquire and dispose of land and other property;
> (c) to enter into contracts, including in

particular contracts for the employment of teachers and other staff;
(d) to invest any sums not immediately required for the purposes of meeting the expenses of conducting the school or any liability transferred to the governing body...;
(e) to accept gifts of money, land or other property and apply it, or hold and administer it on trust, for any such purposes.

Writing in favor of the opt out provisions, Lawlor explains how state schools have been given greater choice in how best to meet the educational needs of children:

> If the local authority hinders heads [i.e. head teachers] and governors from running their schools as they wish, and if it fails to provide parents with the education and schools they want and believe to be best for their children, then schools will choose to be rid of their shackles....
>
> Not only should heads and governors be given the right to choose the staff and services they need to use their budgets in what they believe to be the best interests of their schools, but they should be given the powers to match their responsibilities. Heads, governors and teachers will all be glad of the opportunity to become independent of the wasteful and frustrating control of local authorities. Grant-maintained status will be welcomed by all who wish to rid themselves of unnecessary bureaucracy--and not just those under the yoke of left-wing...authorities.
>
> (1988:6,7)

Battlegrounds of the Future: Improving Education Further

Obviously the 1988 Education Reform Act goes some distance towards creating an educational environment that is in total agreement with Modern Conservative ideology. It satisfies some Authoritarian Traditional ideals by requiring and securing a return to the teaching of traditional subjects and by allowing the

imparting of morals and tradition through mandatory religious education "which shall be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character." (Education Reform Act 1988:5) It also satisfies, to a degree, the classical liberal or free-market strand of conservatism through its inclusion of "Local Management of Schools (LMS), which devolves control of major proportions of school budgets directly to heads and governors," and grant-maintained schools "whereby schools are allowed to opt out of local authority control." (Seaton 1991:3)

Neither strand, however, is wholly satisfied as the Act itself is partly a compromise between the libertarian ethos of freedom from central government and the Authoritarian Traditional strand which allows for central government to exercise its influence when it is thought to be necessary in order to maintain society's cultures, traditions and heritages.[2]

On the other hand it is also compromise which is based on a politically pragmatic premise whereby these advances are certainly preferable to "pushing for the whole ball of wax" at the risk of losing everything and alienating valuable voters in the process. As Sexton (1987:30) writes: "For a very long time the state has both provided and decided, and we need to create, over a period of time, a climate where individual choice and responsibility returns as being the right and only sensible course to follow."

While the 1988 Act is a compromise, though, it can nonetheless, as Sexton (1987) argues, also be an intermediate step towards an even greater degree of liberation and devolvement to the consumers rather than the producers of education--namely a voucher system

whereby funding for education of children is given directly to parents for them to decide how and where to spend the money, thus giving the parents greater choice and influence in directing the education their children receive. If this course toward devolvement is taken, it will create (as was mentioned above) a greater degree of balance between the two strands of Modern Conservatism in Britain in that it will allow not only for greater personal and economic freedoms for schools and parents, but will create conditions whereby the parents will have the power to decide what type of education is best for their children. If the widely- held contention that parents desperately want their children to have a traditional education (as many--if not most--parents do), then the traditional strand will also be satisfied without the need to exercise its authoritarian muscle.

No matter what type of system ultimately evolves (if any), government will have a role to play. Even where the education voucher scheme is concerned, government must be involved in order to administer the appropriate funds to parents for their children's education.

What, then, are future debates over education likely to include? Nick Seaton provides sources for many such battlegrounds, some of which--like vouchers--are being argued over even now, while others are questioning the effectiveness of the 1988 Act itself. Of the Education Reform Act, Seaton writes:

> The 1988 Education Reform Act carried the hopes of the nation that something major was being done to improve state education. Now...in spite of some valiant attempts to retrieve the situation, many of these hopes are turning to disappointment.

> This is because almost every component of the intended reforms has to some degree been undermined by the power and influence of the state educational establishment.
>
> (1991:3)

Seaton also explains how the national curriculum is being high-jacked and undermined by progressives:

> The present Government's hope of raising standards by means of the National Curriculum is in danger because the National Curriculum Council (NCC) [which was created by the 1988 Act to advise the Secretary of State on the curriculum] has followed a 'progressive', child-centered educational philosophy, rather than a philosophy emphasising content and knowledge.
>
> (1991:6)

In view of these kinds of complaints Seaton (1991:1-2) suggests some objectives and recommendations, which are generally designed to (1) raise academic standards according to traditional educational principles as secured by the national curriculum; (2) provide greater choice to all parents by offering educational vouchers and;(3) to improve upon the standards of the teaching profession.

Similar debates and reforms are occurring in the United States as Modern Conservatism is attempting to disencumber the education system of its progressive egalitarian inheritance and, instead, replace it with the discipline, methods and practices conducive to traditional education principles. With the major British movements now addressed, these U.S. issues can now be introduced.

Unfortunately, as in the discussion on British reforms, the sheer volume of material that addresses education reform in the United States makes it prohibitive to discuss all of them in any

great detail. However, every effort has been made to focus on providing a well-balanced perspective of the changes.

Education Reform in the United States

Similarities and Differences with British Education

The conditions which brought about the real push towards educational reform in the United States are similar to those in Britain in that there were (and still are) great concerns over the quality and condition of education from the earliest of primary levels through further and higher education. These two reform movements are, broadly speaking, also similar in that the conservative-led governments in both countries have provided the initial means and impetus for reform. One major difference in the design of the reforms, as will become evident herein, is that while the United States (like Britain) has taken steps to create an overall national strategy (represented in this case by the America 2000 Excellence in Education Act of 1991), its success depends heavily upon the actions of state governments and local school boards to implement their own initiatives in order to meet the new (proposed) federal standards. Another difference is that while British legislation concentrates on state education only, the United States reforms take into account private learning institutions as well.[3]

If, the reforms in Britain are, as Sexton argues, an intermediate step towards an even greater degree of parental choice and school autonomy than that which is currently afforded

under the 1988 Act, and if a free-market voucher system which is unfettered by central government direction (as advocated by the Hillgate Group) are established, then the British education system will have matched the United States (if it, too, establishes a voucher scheme) in its quest to provide the ultimate level of choice to parents in choosing the education which best meets the needs of their children.

If, however, Seaton's recommendations, which allow for a lesser degree of freedom and choice, are pursued in ongoing reforms, then the British education system will lag far behind that of the present U.S. system in terms of providing an educational regime which is not to be interfered with by the central government.

In either case it would appear that education in Britain will continue its reforms, however, the direction it will take remains uncertain. In other words, while the Hillgate Group seeks to open the entire education system in Britain to the forces of the free market, Seaton, too, looks beyond the present boundaries of the 1988 Act and argues for increased freedoms for schools and parents from government, but he does so within a framework where the Authoritarian Traditional strand of British Modern Conservatism still lingers, as his recommendations continue to demonstrate the need for central government intervention. For instance, while Seaton maintains that there should be high educational standards based on the principles of educational traditionalism, he argues that these principles are something which must be enforced by central government and that only after schools have demonstrated equal or greater standards should they be allowed to escape

central government controls. This would indicate that the individual rights of parents are not as great as they would be if the government were to allow schools to develop their own curriculum as directed by the parents. As the Act now stands it is the central government, and not the parents, who are responsible for making such decisions.

Also, in this way the education voucher system (if adopted in both countries), as advocated by Seaton, would certainly carry a different meaning in terms of the scope of its provision of choice than it would in the U.S. (or in Britain under the Sexton paradigm). For example, in Britain, where all state schools are forced to conform to identical standards, Seaton's system would effectively provide parents with a choice between choosing either a state school or a private school (whose standards are not required to conform to the conditions set out in the Act.)

With the United States historically committed to the ideals of individualism, this is the type of choice that would be created if it were to adopt a voucher scheme. In the United States, however, where the education system is decentralized and where individual states and local communities make their own decisions as regards education planning and reform of state education, the central government acts only as a provider of incentives for change rather than as an ensurer of standards (as is clearly the case in the present British system). In fact, any attempt to reform state education in the U.S. through the powers of the central government would be viewed as an infringement on the rights of individuals and, therefore, more conducive to pro-state Liberal ideology than

to the principles which embody American Modern Conservatism.

It is because of this decentralization that a voucher system in the United States would provide parents not only increased choice between private and state schools, but would allow them to dictate the type of curriculum they want for their children as it would be directly from the parents that the schools would receive their revenue and, hence, to the consumers of education that the producers must yield.

By examining the differences in the systems of government, between Britain and the U.S. it is evident that where Modern Conservatism in the former presently relies upon the Authoritarian Traditional ethos in which the regulatory powers of the central government ensure that the education reforms are followed in the name of parent choice, the latter (while committed to the principles of traditional education) rely more on the classical liberal, free-market individualist ethos by ensuring that the rights of individual states and local communities are not overrun by the will of the central government.

Freedom From Central Government in U.S. State Education: Defining State and Federal Roles

Throughout U.S. history education is one area where if reforms have taken place they have done so at the level and on the initiative of individual states and local communities with little help from the federal government. For these reasons it is necessary briefly to explain the U.S. education system.

The U.S. system is different from that in Britain in that it is

much less centralized. Although, local authorities in Britain have, until recently (1988 Education Act), been relatively free to make their own decisions as regarded the curriculum and meeting local needs and so on, the central government has taken much of that power from them as was demonstrated in the last section. By comparison, schools in the United States are much more dependent upon the local communities they serve which, as will be discussed, is actually preferred by the states and their communities as their schools can maintain a greater amount of autonomy and better serve the local needs and interests. This difference with Britain is, again, primarily due to the different historical background of the United States as was discussed in Chapter One:

> As a decentralized enterprise, public education in the United States is an anomaly. The U.S. Constitution, unlike those of many nations, made no mention of education in setting forth the functions of the federal government. Thus, under the Tenth Amendment, Article X, education was one of the many functions left by default to states. Public schools from colonial days onward were founded and largely supported by local initiative.
>
> (National Association of Elementary School Principals [NAESP] 1987:23)

Given this, though, as the NAESP illustrates, despite the fact that no state has total control over local education, the control that they do possess is used to varying degrees by different states. For example, some states such as New York and Delaware maintain a strong hold over state education through certain controls such as mandatory state testing of all students, while other states such as Massachusetts delegate almost all of their authority to local school boards. (NAESP 1987:23) In any case the

funding of schools is primarily the responsibility of the state and the individual localities which (contributing nearly equal portions) make up approximately 91 percent of the total budget (by the early 1980s) with the federal government (while not constitutionally obliged) making up the other 9 percent (which had fallen to 6.2 percent in 1985-86). (NAESP 1987:23)

Working within these federal and state parameters, U.S. Modern Conservatism seeks to reform education in such a way that it replaces progressive egalitarianism with traditionalism.

Identifying Educational Decline in the United States

Education reforms in the U.S. began taking a decisive turn away from progressive egalitarianism and towards educational traditionalism in the early 1980s under the Modern Conservative leadership of former President Ronald Reagan, and they continue today with President George Bush providing direction. This section lends itself to a discussion of events which have helped to shape these reforms.

A Nation at Risk: Assessing U.S. Educational Decline

In 1981, under the direction of the Reagan administration, the National Commission on Excellence in Education (NCEE) was created to assess the extent of the decline of education standards in the United States and to give recommendations based upon those findings. The research involved in this study was extensive as it examined education from the primary level up through technical and

further and higher education and also looked at educational achievement relative to other industrialized countries. The results were published two years later in A Nation at Risk. (NCEE 1983) It is largely on the findings of this report that many of the educational reforms that have either been proposed or implemented thereafter have been based.

The report began by affirming the nation's fears of educational decay:

> We report to the American people that...the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation and a people. What was unimaginable a generation ago has begun to occur--others [countries] are matching and surpassing our educational attainment. (NCEE 1983:5)

The evidence that the Commission cite for statements such as this is great and it indicates the degree to which the United States is not only being paralyzed by major educational deficiencies, but is also tending to find itself increasingly isolated internationally in terms of academic excellence.

In its discussion on the indications of educational decline the report indicates a multitude of factors which demonstrate widespread illiteracy.

Commission Findings and Recommendations

Many of the contributing factors to the marked decline in U.S. educational standards and attainment are directly related to many of those which have already been addressed in previous chapters insofar as they are attributable to progressive egalitarianism.

Among these factors are: (1) failure of schools to require more from students in terms of curriculum requirements needed for graduation; (2) the system's low expectations of students to meet high academic levels and; (3) inadequacies in the teaching profession. These three areas, according to the Commission, constitute a very substantial percentage of what has gone wrong with state education in the United States. Where the curriculum is concerned the report concludes:

> Secondary school curricula have been homogenized, diluted, and diffused to the point that they no longer have a central purpose. In effect we have a cafeteria-style curriculum in which the appetizers and desserts can easily be mistaken for the main courses.... This curricular smorgasbord, combined with extensive student choice, explains a great deal about where we find ourselves today.
>
> (NCEE 1983:18)

In the area concerning the system's low expectations of the students which the Commission (NCEE 1983:19) defines in terms of

> level of knowledge, abilities and skills school and college graduates should possess...[As well as] hard work, behavior, self discipline, and motivation...essential for high student achievement,

their research demonstrates what they refer to as "notable deficiencies".

Finally, of the overall condition of the teaching profession the NCEE report identifies problems similar to those in Britain:

> The Commission found that not enough of the academically able students are being attracted to teaching; that teacher preparation programs need substantial improvement; that the professional working

> life of teachers is on the whole unacceptable; and that serious shortages exist in key fields.
>
> (NCEE:22)

The recommendations which the Commission has proposed in each of these cases (NCEE 1983:23-31) are typically traditional in nature in that they advocate, among other things: a secondary core curriculum which consists of the "New Basics" (English, math, science, social studies and computer science, with at least two years of a foreign language for those students who wish to continue their education at a college or university); raising admission requirements of 4-year colleges and universities (which would have the effect of forcing secondary schools also to increase their academic standards and graduation requirements); extending the school day (and school year if necessary) in order to meet the new higher standards as represented in the "New Basics" curriculum and; to assign much more homework to students than that which is currently being assigned.

Where teachers are concerned the report suggests moves that would seek to secure and maintain higher educational and professional standards; provide increased competitive, market-sensitive, performance-based, professional salaries and; provide longer annual contracts (11 months) in order to meet the goals set forth in the new core curriculum proposals. (NCEE 1983:30) In addition to these the Commission also recommend the implementation of various incentive programs in an effort to attract "outstanding students to the teaching profession" especially in mathematics and

the sciences where there are massive shortages of qualified professional teachers. (NCEE 1983:31)

Shocked Into Action: The National Response

The effect of A Nation at Risk on the American public was profound, as it not only confirmed what many citizens had already known in terms of the decaying condition of state education, it went beyond that point and provided them with tangible evidence of deficiencies and recommendations for improvements. Further, in making its recommendations, although the Commission did not state how the changes should be implemented, the federal response demonstrated the U.S. Modern Conservative committment to non-interference in state matters. In other words, rather than securing the principles of educational traditionalism through central government intervention (as in the British case), it allowed the states and individual communities to initiate their own responses. Not only did these responses (as directed by state and local residents) illustrate the recommitment to the principles of educational traditionalism, but, because there was no federal pressure to conform, there was no resentment of the federal government.

While some states had begun making changes similar to those proposed in A Nation at Risk well before the report came out, virtually every state in the nation joined in the reform process after it was published. One U.S. Department of Education publication which reported on the various reforms being undertaken within individual states after A Nation at Risk highlights the

U.S. Modern Conservative commitment to state's rights:

> State leadership is one of the hallmarks of this reform effort. As of April [1984], the Education Commission of the States counted 275 State-level task forces working on education in the past year.... The confluence of these State and national activities explains in large part the success of the reform movement.... For example, of the 51 jurisdictions [the District of Columbia makes 51]:
> * Forty-eight are considering new high school graduation requirements, 35 have approved changes.
> * Twenty-one report initiatives to improve textbooks and instructional material.
> * Eight have approved lengthening the school day, seven lengthening the school year and 18 have mandates affecting the amount of time for instruction.
> * Twenty-four are examining master teacher or career ladder programs [to enhance the quality of teachers], and six have begun statewide pilot programs.
>
> (U.S. Department of Education 1984a:15-16)

In addition to these, the report shows Ohio having either enacted or was at the time considering proposals in all of the 20 categories listed as moves toward educational reform; Florida taking action on all but one of the reform suggestions; California, South Carolina and Tennessee just behind Florida in approving or considering similar moves in 17 of the same 20 categories and; 39 other states and the District of Columbia acting on or considering 10 or more of the reforms. (USDE 1984a:144-146)

In seizing on this already growing tide of state initiatives the Bush administration has created America 2000 which seeks not only to reform the curriculum, but also to change the entire perception of education. In so doing, the plan is to place all Americans

back into the ranks of being among the most highly educated people in the world by the year 2000.

America 2000: National Education Goals to Reform Education by the Year 2000

In his campaign speeches of nearly four years ago and early in his years as President, George Bush made it clear to the American people that he wanted to be known and remembered in history as "The Education President." In 1990 Bush, with the support of the National Governors' Association, sought to capitalize on the education reform momentum which was set into motion with the publication of A Nation at Risk, to unveil his own timely and unprecedented America 2000 education reform act. The Act is unprecedented because it proposes six ambitious goals aimed at restoring educational excellence by the year 2000. Never before in U.S. history have national education goals been established. The overall strategy of the Act is to transform "'A Nation at Risk' into 'A Nation of Students' by continuing to enhance the knowledge and skills of all Americans." (U.S. Department of Education 1991a:29) However, it also introduces notions of centralization. First, this centralizing tendency is noticeable in the way that it offers federal incentives for change where traditional change was already taking place. Secondly, the manner in which these incentives are offered, tend to force schools to conform to the "voluntary" standards, lest they lose federal funding and other support. Finally, because of the pressure for

schools to conform, parents are losing some of the freedom of choice that they had enjoyed under Reagan administration.

As discussion in this area can be very lengthy, a summary of the goals and objectives as discussed and adopted by the members of the National Governors' Association at their February 1990 education summit (1990:3-6) include measures which are designed to (1) ensure that all children start school ready to learn; (2) raise completion rates in secondary school to at least 90 percent; (3) increase competency and performance in "New Basics" traditional curriculum at all levels (especially at certain age groups throughout primary and secondary levels); (4) ensure that students meet or exceed top standards in science and mathematics achievement; (5) create a 100 percent literacy rate among adults, to increase the number of vocational and technical training centers and to increase the number of students attending institutes of higher education and; (6) create a drug-free, violence-free atmosphere in all schools.

Local Initiatives and Federal Incentives

State and Local Roles

Although the goals are very broad in scope they are designed specifically to give states sufficient room to design their own initiatives and to serve the local needs of every community. In fact, a very important point to keep in mind is that the America 2000 program in no way changes the arrangements discussed earlier

whereby states and localities control their own educational systems. America 2000 is an Act designed to provide an overall framework within which it is hoped that education throughout the nation will vastly improve.

> America 2000 is a national strategy, not a federal program. It honors local control, relies on local initiative, affirms states and localities as the senior partners in paying for education and the private sector as a vital partner, too. It recognizes that real education reform happens community by community and school by school and only when people come to understand what they must do for themselves and their children and set about to do it. [emphasis added]
>
> (U.S. Department of Education 1991b:1-2)

Where funding is concerned the Department of Education reports that although over 90 percent of all education funding is provided by state and local resources, it is "a responsibility that both the president and the governors have concluded should not be altered," as it is not expected that the America 2000 program will increase current expenditure levels. (USDE 1991b:29) The report continues: "The answer does not lie in spending more money on old ways--but to redirect our resources and our energies to new approaches." (USDE 1991B:29)

The Federal Role

This is not to imply, however, that the federal government does not assume any role in the strategy. In fact, it plays a much larger role than that which was assumed during the Reagan Era.

Although America 2000 is hearalded as a "national strategy" as opposed to a federal program, parts of it are, in fact federalized

in that it relies to some extent on Congress in passing federal initiatives such as 535+ which aims to build at least 535 new schools by 1996 in areas designated by the National Governors' Association and with the help of federally approved funds. The federalizing effect is especially noticeable here in that it assumes that more schools are necessary in order to improve the condition of state education. Under the Reagan plan these schools may have proven to be necessary, but such decisions would not have been mandated at the federal level. Moreover, under the voucher system and the undoubted effects of the reshuffling of students to private schools, the building of state schools would have been a monumental catastrophe.

Another program requiring federal funds is the Presidential Schools of Distinction ("Merit Schools") awards. These, too, will act as an incentive to encourage change in that the awards (in the form of money) will be given to states to award to schools "that demonstrate significant progress toward the national education goals." (U.S. Department of Education 1991a:26) A similar plan to award "America 2000 Communities" is also proposed, hence, also rewarding the community efforts to improve education.[4] Again these awards demonstrate, further, a commitment (albeit more modest in scope than 535+) to forcing federal education initiatives as they will act as an incentive for communities to adopt the six national goals.

Yet another federal responsibility will be to report on and assess the progress of America 2000 state by state in an annual National Report Card. Based on these report cards additional

direction and support may be given.

Voluntary Testing: Incentives and Rewards

Among the criteria for assessing whether a school is worthy of a Presidential Schools of Distinction award is the degree to which it is capable of demonstrating success in implementing the "New Basics" curriculum. This and other criteria will also act as a guide by which the overall national success and progression of America 2000 can be measured.

In the respect that a specific curriculum content is seen as necessary to improve the learning and achievement of all students, the "New Basics" curriculum is similar to the national curriculum in Britain, however, one crucial difference remains: "The president and the governors oppose a national curriculum or federalizing our education system." (USDE 1991a:25) In this respect, although the tests (developed and made available to schools by the National Education Goals Panel for testing of students in the fourth, eighth and twelfth grades) are voluntary as is the curriculum itself, the financial incentives for a school to perform at its greatest capacity under the federal strategy makes it a more compelling alternative than many other educational regimes. (USDE 1991a:25)[5]

Similarly, at the personal level, students who distinguish themselves as high academic achievers will also receive a Presidential Citation for Educational Excellence. (USDE 1991a:25)

Enforcing Change: Federal Intervention in State Education

While the intentions of the America 2000 program are clearly good and honorable, they are, nonetheless, a step back from the direction of the Reagan administration which sought to expose the faults in education and to allow states and localities the freedom to rectify these problems in their own way. This approach, as has been demonstrated, was successful in that it encouraged parents (on the consumer-producer level) to demand greater quality from schools (even in terms of providing a more traditional curriculum). Insofar as these reforms were already being initiated in all states independent of central government involvement or direction, the encouragement by the Bush administration, to inspire greater change by introducing federal incentives, can only be seen as a series of measures which have the effect not only of increasing the level of federal involvement in state education, but of coaxing states to comply with federally endorsed standards. In fact, the next logical step after the market-based measures of the Reagan administration, given the enthusiasm with which school programs were being reformed by force of parental insistence, would have been an all-out voucher system. This would likely have had not only the same (if not greater)influence as the Bush administration program, but it would have secured these measures as a direct result of the will of parents, and not that of the central government.

Further, the measured results of the America 2000 program may be

very misleading. In other words, since it was introduced in the midst of a flurry of traditionally-based educational changes, the success of these changes may well appear to be attributable to America 2000 when, again, based on the enthusiastic nature of change before America 2000, may in fact be the result of the education system being reformed through the combined efforts of parents, localities and states.

Finally, although much of America 2000 is very educationally traditionalist in its aims, there are concerns over its future success in meeting those aims. For instance, where the Democrats hold a majority in both houses of Congress, a recent (February 1992) Senate vote (which split along party lines) effectively saw to it that a measure that was designed to give aid to poor families in order that they could afford to send their children to private school was defeated, hence lessening the factor of increased parental choice. It is feared that these funds will instead be used (in a liberal-egalitarian approach) to bolster programs which enhance the public comprehensive school system. If the Bush administration had continued to work off the accomplishments of the preceeding administration and pursued the voucher system instead of America 2000, then the conditions which brought about this Democratic defeat of individual choice would not have been given the golden opportunity, in this instance, to reaffirm its commitment to the progressive-egalitarian cause.

Another fear centers around the ambiguity of the first goal of America 2000 which makes the assertion: "By the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn." While this

goal is admirable, it calls into question just what is meant by the phrase "ready to learn," and if government will be given greater powers to secure this goal by invading the privacy of families and individuals to ensure that an adherence to some set of federal standards are being met. Through such measures, not only could liberal-egalitarian aims be satisfied, but the size of government would increase at the cost of a decrease in individuality, diversity and individual choice.

What the Reagan Years Gave, the Bush Years Are Taking Away

In conclusion, despite the rhetorical claims made by the Bush administration that America 2000 is going to reform education and put Americans back among the ranks of the most highly educated people in the world, it is ironic that this very program is threatening to imperil the independent traditionalist advances that were already under way before America 2000 began. Intervention through the Bush initiatives seek to provide federal incentives for change where traditional changes were already well under way, independent of central government involvement. Further, because it introduces new federal legislation (mainly in terms of funding) America 2000 actually takes some of the power of parents to make their own choices, which the Reagan administration had given, and hands it back to federal pundits in Congress.

In short, unless the progress, made under the Reagan administration to allow individual states, localities and parents

to create their own remedies for the educational woes which plague them, is allowed to continue in the same free-market spirit in which they were intended, then all may well be lost.

NOTES

1. The fact that there were large numbers of parents seeking such autonomy is made evident in the DES (1987) consultative document, Grant-Maintained Schools.

2. This, again, is not to say that the Reforms are contradictory to Modern Conservatism in Britain, but that there is still room for a more equal distribution of emphasis between the two strands; whereas in its present form the Act appears to favor Authoritarian Traditionalism (the possible reasons for which will be discussed).

3. Even though it is widely acknowledged that many private schools offer a vastly superior education and demand much higher standards from students than many state schools, it is certainly hoped that by including the private schools (especially where academic achievement awards are concerned), standards in state schools will be under great pressure to meet or exceed the best private schools in any given community. Further, since America 2000 is only a framework (as opposed to a required national program as in Britain) to encourage academic excellence at all levels, it does not infringe upon nor is it biased towards state or private institutions as it equally extends the same incentives to each.

4. These communities must meet four criteria: (1) They must adopt the six national goals; (2) create their own community-wide strategy for achieving those goals; (3) develop a report card which reports on the progress being made and; (4) be willing to support a "535 school" in their community. These efforts are then referred to the National Governors' Association who ultimately decide which communities are most deserving of such an award. (U.S. Department of Education 1991b:25)

5. According to the Department of Education (1991a:25),

"These American Achievement Tests will challenge all students to strive to meet world class standards and ensure that, when they leave school, students are prepared for further study and the workforce. The tests will measure higher order skills (i.e., they will not be strictly multiple choice tests.)"

CHAPTER FIVE:

CONCLUSION

Throughout this thesis many conservative arguments concerning education have been examined. In each of these arguments it is clear that there are great concerns over the mission of progressive egalitarianism of which liberal-socialism is the driving force. Not only are progressivism (which stresses individuality and child-centeredness) and egalitarianism (which stresses social equality) incompatible, as Cox and Marks claim, but together they lead to an inconsistent and incomplete educational system whereby high academic standards are often sacrificed as these standards are of little concern in the ultimate goals of progressive egalitarianism. In other words, if viewed separately, the purpose of progressivism is to allow the student to direct his learning in a way that he can make complete his own sense of reality, whereas the egalitarian goal is to ensure (as much as possible) that all students are academically equal to one another throughout the course of their education. The element common to both strands, again as Cox and Marks explain, is the emphasis on cooperation rather than competition. Therefore, many of the elements which are celebrated by traditionalists such as academic excellence (on an individual basis as graded against a student's peers) and the testing of

students' academic knowledge and proficiency, are often seen as unnecessary, unproductive and even damaging to the students.

In contrast to the progressive egalitarian aims, traditionalism (which finds its support through the principles of Modern Conservatism) seeks to ensure that all students study and exhibit, to the best of their ability, a degree of mastery in the basic disciplines such as science, mathematics, reading and writing, so that they can attain the "concrete knowledge" (Hayek's terminology) necessary to serve as capable citizens in their adult lives. In conjunction with the traditional style, competition among individuals, schools, school districts, and so on, is often encouraged and (especially in the U.S. reform package) rewarded in the belief that competition can be a useful force in encouraging even greater levels of academic achievement from all students and greater levels of service from all schools.

Also, in connection with the introduction in the reforms of a more traditional curriculum, is the issue of authority as discussed in Chapter Three. Where it has been demonstrated that many progressive egalitarians discourage the use of most (in some cases all) forms of discipline, as this may hinder the child in his pursuit of discovering and further creating his own sense of reality, the traditional curriculum demands each child's undivided attention. In addition, as traditionalism changes the emphasis in education from an <u>internal</u> to an <u>external</u> mode of learning, discipline plays a much larger role in the child's education as he is no longer discovering himself, but is <u>being taught</u>.

One area of emphasis which is not as evident in these reforms as

many Modern Conservatives would like is the commitment to the idea of greater devolvement of power from government to schools. Although the historic relationship in the U.S. over educational control has been expressed through devolvement of power to states and localities, this relationship is in danger as America 2000 is attempting to transform formal education in order that it would meet federally designed standards rather than those as dictated and driven by parental choice. In Britain, too, where local governments had traditionally filled the roles of administrator and planner, certain schools are being allowed to opt out of this arrangement so that they can have the freedom to conduct their own affairs without LEA interference. However, for those schools which choose to opt out, they are then made directly accountable to central government (and not necessarily parents) for their actions. In either case it is clear that there are movements in both countries which are attempting to create those conditions in which the greatest amount of choice is offered to parents while the power of central government is reduced.

This notion of greater devolvement and the reduction of state power runs contrary to the arguments set forth earlier by Tawney, Crosland and other liberal-socialists who argue that through increasing State power and State ownership, greater accountability can be achieved. In contrast, these reforms acknowledge the power of the market in which the conservative sentiment is expressed that through greater devolvement, a larger and more diverse power base is established in which the producers are held directly accountable to the consumers as it is to the consumers (and not

government) to whom the producers must answer. Again, this arrangement is particularly noteworthy in the British reforms because the legislation specifically endows parents with greater power to decide how their children's schools will operate in the future and who will be responsible for that operation.

Insofar as arguments such as Coulby's which suggest that the British reforms (as concerns control of schools) are nothing more than a manoeuver to transfer power from LEAs to central government, these are inaccurate as they run contrary to the stated Conservative principles of reducing the powers of central government. Although schools that opt out of LEA control are then under the jurisdiction of central government, it has been illustrated with arguments by Sexton, Seaton and others, that these changes are unlikely to be the end result of the Conservative plan to reform education, but are, more precisely, intermediate steps on the way towards achieving even greater standards brought about by greater autonomy from all governmental influence with consumers ultimately taking the lead in deciding which schools provide the best education for their children's needs. In other words, the reforms in both countries are being used to reestablish a traditional foundation for formal education in which academic excellence is the primary objective, and to give the consumers of state education greater power in deciding how best for schools to meet their educational obligations.

It is clear that in Britain and in the United States education is taking a new direction. A direction which leads them away from the progressive, egalitarian, child-centered and often moral

neutral methods of the not-so-distant past, and towards a much more traditional philosophy where issues such as increased parental control, traditional curricula and academic excellence are taking over the leading role of formal education. Whether this trend is indicative of a much larger and overall social movement away from pro-state Liberal ideology in general, is not for this thesis to speculate although it is suspected that history may well judge it in that way.

What is certain, however, is that there are movements in both countries which are distinctly conservative in nature and are attempting to put education (and as such, society in general) back on the track where individuality, the natural distinctions among men, tradition, diversity, community, history, habit and all of the other qualities which Modern Conservatism embodies, are again part of the national way of life and provide the guiding light toward a prosperous future for all of their respective citizens.

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