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# **Bildungswesen im Spannungsfeld von Demokratisierung und Privatisierung: das Beispiel England**

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## *Abstract*

This paper presents a view of the reality of education in English schools in the maintained sector since the passing of the Education Reform Act 1988 and legislation subsequent to it. It does so by using a framework of ideology, policy and practice. The last of these is of particular significance because of the changed professional roles of heads and classroom teachers and the consequences for the education of schoolchildren.

## **1 Introduction**

Since the passing of the 1944 Education Act it is probably true to assert that the changes and developments (not by any means synonymous) in education have increasingly taken place against a background of diminishing consensus among the formulators of policy and the practitioners (i.e. professionals). At the same time there has been an increase in rhetoric imbued with a particular ideology, which finds expression in a language that has its own dynamic, thrust and contains words that have taken on a new significance. Many of them have a new connotation, all of them are used frequently and slavishly. Examples of but a few of the most frequently occurring of these are: quality assurance, evaluation, appraisal, monitoring, accountability, assessment, self assessment, testing, standards, excellence, competition and market forces. The formal procedures which these words imply must be undertaken in a "robust" (another much used word) manner in order to ensure excellence. There is almost the suggestion that the ideas they describe have been reinvented, certainly the gap between rhetoric and reality appears to have widened considerably. If the broad aims of education have not changed throughout this century, the means by which the aims are to be achieved certainly have – and radically so. Recent changes have for the most part not been the result of genuine debate nor educational research. There is a sense of powerlessness among educators in schools and colleges at not being able to contribute distilled, professional wisdom to the formulation of policy and influence change in a

balanced, consistent and coherent way. The politicisation of education has increased and with it the pace of legislation.

It is the sheer volume of legislation and changes to initiatives which have given rise to a sense of discontinuity, fragmentation, short term planning and instability. This has taken place most notably since 1988. The scope of the Education Reform Act which was passed in that year has already been well documented by, for example, Flude and Hammer (1990), Maclure (1992), Chitty (1992) and a factual account of some key educational developments are outlined in Statham et al. (1989). The 1988 Act (nearly twice as long as the 1944 Act) has 238 sections and 13 schedules affecting all aspects of education from primary schools to the universities. Four major elements affected schools: the introduction of the local management of schools (LMS) and thus devolved budgets; the introduction of the National Curriculum; opportunities for schools to opt out of Local Education Authority control and become Grant Maintained; and open enrolments to allow parents (as consumers) greater choice of school for their children. Four years later the Education (Schools) Act 1992 was passed, providing requirements relating to the inspection of schools and provisions about their performance. It established the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED). A year later the longest education act to date was passed: the Education Act 1993, which has 308 sections and 21 schedules. It both rewrote and improved previous legislation on GM schools, special education needs and school attendance orders and also introduced new issues.

The ideology which gave rise to the policies of the eighties and nineties developed over a relatively long period and was in part a reaction against what were conceived to be the dominant progressive and egalitarian ideas of the late sixties and seventies. These were associated with the emergence of comprehensive education and in accordance with Circular 10/65 the establishment of comprehensive schools, replacing the broadly tripartite grammar, technical and secondary modern structure. Very soon criticisms of mediocrity were levelled at comprehensive schools together with grave concerns that standards were in decline. The growth of what was popularly called the child centred approach to learning in primary schools, particularly since the publication of the Plowden Report (1967) was similarly excoriated. A polarisation of views emerged and an alternative ideology developed, which was expressed most starkly in the so called Black Papers (1968) whose authors were politically right of centre. A protracted debate ensued which included some theory and even more rhetoric, the consequences of which are evident today. The genesis of the policies which ultimately emerged during the eighties linking in a new way the relationships between education and training, work and the economy has been well documented by Knight (1990).

The intentions of the government were in due course made clear in the White Paper (Better Schools, 1985) which presaged much that was contained in the 1988 Education Reform Act. Its opening sentence set the scene, "The quality of school education concerns everyone". Every aspect of education affecting schools was covered in detail and the concluding section drew together four linked initiatives:

"pursuing broad agreement on the objectives of the curriculum; introducing reformed examinations together with records of achievement; improving teaching quality in all its aspects; harnessing the energies of parents and others in a reformed system of school government."

The final sentence encapsulated both a market forces and competitive ideology: "The prize to be won is a better, more prosperous future".

As the government's intentions were being relentlessly implemented consequent upon the 1988 legislation a new White Paper, *Choice and Diversity* (1992) appeared. It identified five themes which had characterised educational change since 1979: quality, diversity, increasing parental choice, greater autonomy for schools and greater accountability. The proposals in the White Paper both consolidated and built on the measures in the 1988 Education Reform Act and formed the basis for the 1993 Education Act. It detailed the transformation in education that would take place throughout the next decade with the laudable aim of creating a stable system of education having the hallmarks of diversity, choice and excellence and setting international levels of excellence. Few would argue with all of this. However the logic of the statement made in the concluding section, "Our aim is a single tier of excellence" is certainly curious.

The consequences of the legislation are a clearly identifiable central control both of funding for schools and the National Curriculum; an inspection regime at national level with increased powers dominated by a bureaucratic and mechanistic approach to education; a reduction in the professional autonomy of teachers; competition among schools for pupils and resources at a time when school rolls (and class sizes) are increasing and finance diminishing; and arguably a reduction in the teaching and learning in schools as teachers attend increasingly to tasks required of them other than teaching.

## 2 Intentions and Reality

In some ways the gap between intention and reality is expressed in the title of this article as the tension between democratisation and privatisation. It is possible to envisage a relationship in which the one reinforces the other. Indeed the intention of the policy makers is that both should do so: an increase in privatisation being accompanied by a corresponding increase in democratisation. This would be the ideal and intended or theoretical relationship. However it is equally possible to identify a quite different relationship rooted in harsh reality. Increased privatisation has led, within an overall democratic process, to certain small groups and individuals becoming empowered to make decisions and adopt practices that are not democratic (an example of this is the QUANGO, whose members are unelected). All too frequently decisions are taken without the genuine involvement of those professionals, who not only possess the knowledge and expertise but are also engaged in implementing the policies. What in practice follows from this reality can be called the unintended but actual relationship between privatisation and democracy. Of course at the extremes the issues become highly speculative because they relate to what would be unworkable in practice. The relationships can be shown diagrammatically. The space between the two curves (A and I) represents the *Spannungsfeld* and the actual *Spannung* (or tension) is at its highest where the two curves are furthest apart; it reduces to zero where the two curves intersect. At this point (D,P) it could be argued the optimal balance exists, i.e. one where a relatively low level of privatisation is accompanied by a relatively high level of democratisation. This would certainly be true for areas such as education, health and social welfare although it might arguably be less so for public utilities.

The ideology is that in an education system increasingly privatised schools will become more efficient and competition among them will lead to improvement. Whatever it leads to it results logically in winners and losers, successes and failures; and how does this square with the notion of a single tier of excellence? It leads in practice to a preoccupation

with second order tasks, to divisiveness and self interest on the part of both individuals and schools, which in turn runs counter to the aim of social harmony, surely one of the prizes of a successful education system. Furthermore is competition appropriate for individuals and institutions experiencing disadvantage for a complex variety of reasons?

The establishment for the first time in English education of a National curriculum was a key element of the 1988 Education Reform Act, and its implementation which commenced in 1989 dominated the life of schools. The principles and intentions behind it were readily accepted by teachers but it has been accompanied by so much change and an unacceptably high level of bureaucracy and emphasis on testing that it demotivated teachers. Eventually, as a consequence of considerable pressure, the Secretary of State requested a review of the National Curriculum with a view to slimming it down. All the recommendations made in the ensuing Report (The National Curriculum, 1994) were accepted in full by the Secretary of State and the National Curriculum was indeed considerably slimmed down, meeting many of the criticisms of teachers. However assessment and recording as part of the National Curriculum continues to occupy a dominating position and together with planning and the requirement of copious documentation in all subject areas frequently deflects teachers from their teaching role. Assessment is undertaken in order to provide feedback on teaching and learning and identify attainment. Recording attainment is important in the acquisition of knowledge and skills and as part of the learning process. But to get the balance wrong is to allow the tail to wag the dog. This happens all too frequently in schools, because of the requirement to supply so much documentary evidence during inspections. A centralised control of content and procedures rather than teacher autonomy in the process of education has characterised the implementation of the National Curriculum and this viewpoint is well represented by O'Hear and White (1991 and 1993).

### 3 Inspection and Quality

The evidence of the annual reports of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools provides a formal picture of the quality of education in schools. The 1993 report, the last to be based exclusively on HMI judgements, noted, *inter alia*, that the past year had been turbulent and successive legislation and policy developments had been accompanied by considerable tension. It went on to state that 70% of the teaching in primary schools and 85% for post sixteen students was satisfactory or better. However it pointed out that there remained unacceptable variations among both primary and secondary schools in similar circumstances and with pupils of similar backgrounds. It reported that clear improvements could be seen from the gradual implementation of the National Curriculum but noted that there was evidence of overload. Unlike its predecessors the latest report (Standards and Quality, 1995) is based largely on 900 contract inspections carried out by a much more diverse group. This report indicated that as in previous years the standards of pupil achievement were satisfactory or good in the majority of schools and went on to note (unsurprisingly) that the largest single factor contributing to the generally healthy situation is the quality of the teaching. Specifically it judged the quality of teaching in nearly one third of all lessons in Key Stages I and II and over 40% in Key Stages III and IV to be good or very good. A further 40% of teaching at each Key Stage was assessed as satisfactory. However the quality of teaching in 25% of lessons in Key Stage I, 30% in Key Stage II, 19% in Key Stage III, 17% in Key Stage IV were judged unsatisfactory or poor. Records of

pupil attainment were found to be unsatisfactory in over half of primary schools and one sixth of secondary schools. In the majority of primary schools pupils' standards of achievement in both English and Maths were judged satisfactory or better; it was noted that a significant number of children were failing to master basic literary skills. At key Stage II unsatisfactory standards in reading were found in one in ten schools and in writing in one in four schools. The report urged that teachers' expertise in teaching basic skills be improved. It also criticised the over-use of individualised work as an obstacle to progress, "because it limits pupils' opportunities to receive the kind of sustained instruction and explanation from the teacher which is more possible in group and whole class teaching" and urged the use of diagnostic assessment in planning subsequent work. Whilst the provision of resources in overall terms was judged to be satisfactory information technology equipment in many primary schools was dated and in a quarter of primary and over half of secondary schools there were book shortages. It was found that in one in four of the secondary schools inspected accommodation in one way or another constrained the delivery of the National Curriculum and indeed accommodation problems were affecting the standards and quality of teaching in too many secondary schools. In view of national concerns about the paucity of resources and the judgement of inspectors that as few as half the schools were deploying their resources appropriately they urged that headteachers and governors clearly justified any accumulated budget surpluses.

Inspection and professional guidance (based on sound collective judgement) must be two sides of the same coin. But in the present inspection regime there is inspection without advice and the inspection teams themselves, whilst made up of educationists experienced in their fields, do not comprise a homogeneous group of professionals. The teams are led by registered inspectors who have tendered for their work and have in their number at least one lay person with no professional experience of education. Those on the receiving end of inspection have grave misgivings about the credibility of the inspection process. The intention is that all schools will be inspected over a four year rolling period in accordance with the Handbook For Inspections and that "failing" schools will be identified as will those showing most improvement. Following the inspection an analysis is provided by the inspectors of the school's performance and judgements are made. Both a verbal and written report are given to the staff of the school and it is for the Head and governors to act and subsequently to respond formally. No advice and support are provided.

The reality is that inspections are extremely stressful for staff in schools primarily because of the enormous amount of documentation they are required to produce, the disruption caused to educational work and the spectre of adverse judgements against which there is hardly any redress and which can be used destructively against the school (as part of a "political" agenda). It diverts teachers during the long period of preparing for the inspection (about a year's notice is given of the inspection which lasts a week) and also during it from their teaching as teams carry out checking and controlling tasks. This is educationally distorting. Not only does the professional autonomy of teachers suffer under the current inspection system but also their creativity as educators. To some considerable extent this last criticism can also be applied to the implementation of the National Curriculum.

It would of course be quite false to stress only the negative aspects, after all inspection focuses the mind, demands careful attention to all aspects of a school's organisation (particularly documents indicating policies and providing precise evidence as required in the Handbook) and can be a challenge and motivator. It is by no means

unreasonable to require of teachers that the quality of education in the schools in which they teach is good and that educational standards are appropriate also that all resources are being efficiently used and that there is proper spiritual, moral, cultural and social development of pupils. Indeed it is precisely on these that the inspection focuses. It is of course important to have impartial inspection as part of accountability. But the attainment of “improvement through inspection” (OFSTED’s motto) is hollow rhetoric unless there is a supportive dialogue between teachers and inspectors, which provides advice and practical guidance (on both the process of education as well as the organisation of the means of delivering it) that can be usefully drawn upon by teachers and incorporated into ongoing development. Seen from the inspectors’ viewpoint there is an almost impossible list of tasks noted in the Handbook for them to accomplish and taken with the special preparations and activities of teachers under scrutiny a week of what could fairly be described as charades takes place. Of course to this must be added the contradictory (and unquestioned) views of inspectors and if not the reliability at least the validity of these must be questionable. *Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?* This is an important question when applied to OFSTED, for whilst its work has been monitored the validity of its inspection judgements have not. Inspection as it currently exists is expensive (approximately £100m is spent annually on it) and it is also misguided because it does not focus attention on “weaker” schools and provide support as part of a clear strategy. Most importantly there is no evidence at all that inspection is actually improving education in schools. What can be said is that as a consequence of inspection schools receive a statement about their strengths and weaknesses and become labelled. Whether this helps the cause of improving the teaching and learning in schools is very debatable.

#### 4 Educational Funding and National Concerns

The evidence of current concerns about funding is provided in the leading articles and front pages of the Times Educational Supplement, the most widely read organ of the educational press. Whilst adducing such evidence is obviously not strictly scientific it provides a broad picture that is balanced and informed. A careful reading of weekly issues during the first few months of 1995 indicates that the dominant concern continues to be educational funding cuts for schools. The reality of job losses for thousands of teachers and the resulting increase in class sizes is reported on front pages under often challenging headlines. The unevenness of the reserves held by some schools is also noted, although it is clear that most of these are held by Grant Maintained (GM) schools. Indeed on this matter the Funding Agency for Schools is being required to investigate the large balances held by some GM schools, probably against the contingency of funding staff when further cuts occur. Even the measured tones of the leader articles are loud and clear on the worrying issue of funding. On 10. February under the title “Beware Parent Power”, the leader article observed that the media has recently been, “dominated by an extraordinary outburst of passion and dismay” and went on to note that there are genuine fears that schools’ budget cuts and losing teachers will result in class sizes running out of control. The following week the leader article was even more strident in asserting, “The middle classes have never been so angry about education” and in view of the indicators on future spending it forecast, “next year will be worse”. On 3. March it referred to the outrage of parents, governors and local government leaders over the spending cuts.

On the 7. April under the leader headline "Funding Failure" it considered the evidence, noting the active participation of the Prime Minister as well as the Secretary of State in the debate, and concluded that perhaps national funding formulas for schools are coming nearer.

Perhaps most eloquent testimony to the direness of the funding situation was provided by the letter (leaked to the Times Educational Supplement and printed by it on 20. January) from the Secretary of State for Education to the chairman of the cabinet committee considering funding for 1995-96. After pointing to the need to look carefully at the political implications for schools the letter continued:

"Pupil numbers next year will go up by 1.5 per cent, so an increase in ESS (educational spending) of 0.3 per cent implies a cash fall, other things being equal, in expenditure per pupil of 1.2 per cent (for Grant Maintained and council schools alike). So the ESS increase could make no contribution towards any pay award: staffing ratios will have to be tightened to balance the books before LEAs even start to consider how to fund the pay settlement." It stated later:

"If teachers' pay went up by 2-3 per cent, schools would need to find the resources equivalent to the loss of 7,000-10,000 teaching posts to fund it. This further tightening of staffing ratios would mean class sizes would shoot up." The letter concluded:

"We affirmed at the party conference that education is a priority programme. I am sure colleagues will consider carefully next Tuesday whether the proposals before them reflect that commitment."

In the event teachers were awarded a pay increase of 2.7% with effect from 1. April and staffing cuts through early retirements and redundancies started to be implemented from the end of the Easter term (i.e. during the school year). The evidence suggests that parents, governors and teachers are coming together to articulate powerfully the argument that education needs to be better funded. It is an irony that the empowerment of parents and governors in particular through legislation which increased their representation and responsibility in the school sector and the Parent's Charter is likely to boomerang on the government. This is because these groups possess first hand and irrefutable knowledge of the state of funding in schools. This issue will not fade away and it is accompanied by other serious concerns, which are represented consistently in the educational press, that include the conviction that there is no real long term planning in education and there is widespread disillusionment among members of the teaching profession.

The evidence of a survey undertaken for the Times Educational Supplement by Smithers and Robinson (1995) is disturbing. It was carried out in January and February 1995 and using a sample of 2% of primary and 10% of secondary schools it predicted teacher job losses of 5,060 for 1995 and 8,964 for 1996 (i.e. 1.2% and 2.2% of posts respectively) with a correspondingly steep rise in pupil:teacher ratios. Put another way one fifth of schools are expecting to cut posts by July 1995 and one third are anticipating teacher losses in 1996. The consequences of the educational cuts are that measures taken by schools to protect teaching posts (their most precious resource) include reducing spending on books, equipment, repairs and buildings. Overall primary schools expect to spend one third less on books in 1995 and cut expenditure by a further half in 1996 with equipment spending being reduced by 38% and an additional 55% for the same periods. In addition heads are hiring cheaper (i.e. younger) teachers, encouraging early retirement for those over fifty and reducing the number of allowances paid to teachers. Reasons given by schools for the expectations of income loss over the next two years are lowered allocations



from the LEAs to their schools and insufficient compensation (nationally and locally) for the recent teachers' pay increase. It must be noted that GM schools have fared marginally better – for the moment at least.

What must also be pointed out, however, is that there is evidence of a surplus in schools' budgets aggregated nationally and at the time of writing approximately 50% of primary schools and 60% of secondary schools have reserves of varying amounts. But these reserves are not transferable between schools and once used are gone forever. The concern about reserves has been expressed by one of the major teacher unions: the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT)(1994) who pointed out that by schools withholding money they were signalling with national and local politicians a need for less money for education. Their evidence from a survey of 6,896 schools in 1991-92 was that 30.91% of secondary schools and 48.98% of primary schools were holding back up to 5% of the money received from the LEA; at the 3.5% level these figures rise to 49.00% and 62.41% for secondary and primary schools respectively. A year later from a survey of 12,705 schools it was discovered that 39.9% of secondary schools and 60.7% of primary schools were holding back up to 5% of the money received from the LEA; at the 3.5% level these figures rise to 52.4% and 72.7% for secondary and primary schools respectively. The Audit Commission (1993) also expressed concern at the holding of large balances by some schools for no clearly identified reason. For 1991-92 they found that an average of 5% of primary school funds and 3.5% of secondary schools funds had been held back. But there were wide variations amongst individual schools with significantly high amounts of money being held by some secondary schools and GM schools tending to hold the larger balances. They noted that most schools held balances as general contingencies and identified two factors: uncertainty about the future and the possibility of future funding reductions; as the financial and academic years are not co-terminus unspent balances can be used to avoid disruptive changes to staffing during the academic year. It was, they suggested, appropriate for schools to hold balances both for contingencies and specific projects outlined in their development plans.

The increased stringency of the terms and conditions of employment contained in the Schoolteachers' Pay and Conditions document and the consequences of legislation since the Education Reform Act of 1988, the Education (Schools) Act 1992 and the Education Act 1993 have profoundly affected the working lives of teachers. Concern within the profession about this is considerable and great strength of feeling was expressed often forcefully at the annual conferences of the teacher unions held during April. The focus of the discussions centred on three main issues: funding, unreasonable workloads of teachers and the resulting stress being experienced by them.

## 5 Teachers' Workloads

The School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) recently reported on teachers' workloads. It confirmed the concerns expressed by all the teaching unions, which have been reported widely in the press. The first STRB Report (1994a) indicated a disturbing trend, which as the Survey noted, confirms previous research (for example two workload surveys undertaken by the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers, NASUWT in 1990 and 1991). This is that as the responsibilities of teachers increase their term time hours of work increases whilst the hours they actually spend teaching decreases.

The Report provides a detailed breakdown of the hours undertaken by teachers whilst attending to a range of activities (for example teaching, teaching related, pupil related, school management and curriculum related, administrative, professional and other) below are shown the totals.

#### Weekly Average Total Hours Worked by Full Time Teachers

	Primary	Secondary
Headteachers	55.4 ( 5.1)	61.1 ( 2.7)
Deputy Heads	52.4 (16.8)	56.9 ( 9.0)
Heads of Dept.		50.7 (18.8)
Classroom Teachers	48.8 (19.4)	48.9 (19.9)

(Figures in brackets are hours spent teaching.)

The percentage of the time which teachers actually spend teaching pupils based on the above is :

#### Teaching Time %

	Primary	Secondary
Headteachers	9.21%	4.42%
Deputy Heads	32.06%	15.82%
Heads of Department		37.08%
Classroom Teachers	39.75%	40.70%

(Source: School Teachers' Review Body Report July 1994)

The School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (1994) requires that full time teachers shall be available for work on 195 days per year of which 190 days will be for teaching pupils in addition to other duties. The total hours for such work in any school year are 1265. However paragraph 38.6 states that a teacher is required to "...work such additional hours as may be needed to enable him to discharge effectively his professional duties, including, in particular, the marking of pupils' work, the writing of reports on pupils and the preparation of lessons, teaching material and teaching programmes. The amount of time required for this purpose beyond the 1265 hours ... and the times outside the 1265 specified hours at which duties shall be performed shall not be defined by the employer but shall depend upon the work needed to discharge the teacher's duties".

However from the above data, assuming teachers work only their contractual 195 days (i.e. not taking into account school work done during the holiday periods) then it follows that the annual hours of work is in reality:

## Hours Worked per Year

	Primary	Secondary
Headteachers	2160.6	2382.9
Deputy Heads	2043.6	2219.1
Heads of Dept.		1977.3
Classroom Teachers	1903.2	1907.1

The second STRB Report (1994b) summarised the findings of interviews and discussions relating to teacher workloads. The cumulative effect of the impact of recent educational developments was most notable in delivering the National curriculum, the local management of schools (LMS), school development plans and teacher appraisal. Not unexpectedly the National Curriculum was the main item eliciting comment from classroom teachers; these concerned mastering new and changing requirements, planning their implementation and meetings in relation to curriculum coordination. Teachers made positive comments about the impetus given to curriculum planning and coordination. However in view of the trend towards increased class size teachers commented that these were more demanding to manage, particularly where pupils required individual attention. It was emphasised by teachers that larger classes meant increased marking, record keeping, report writing, liaison with parents and planning because of the wider range of pupil ability. Head and deputy headteacher roles have changed substantially due to recent initiatives and workloads have grown correspondingly. These changes have affected indirectly the workloads of other teachers. In particular headteachers now have less time to support other staff and spend with children and there has been a drop in their teaching commitments. However LMS has been generally welcomed because of the increased budget flexibility.

A pilot study of primary schools (NFER 1995) focussed on the organisation and resourcing of the curriculum at Key Stage 2 and also asked "barometer" questions in order to monitor changes in school perspectives over time. The main areas of concern for headteachers (in rank order) were school budgets, inspection and curriculum change. Heads indicated that were they to be given an hypothetical increase in budget their top spending priorities would be on teaching staff and classroom/welfare assistants. (The latter is particularly interesting in view of the Government's initiative, announced in Circular 14/93, on courses to prepare classroom assistants to support the teaching and learning of basic skills in primary schools). About two thirds of headteachers expressed concern that their schools were inadequately resourced in terms of facilities for science, technology and physical education. About one third of headteachers considered their schools to be inadequately resourced in terms of reference/library books, textbooks/ published learning schemes and computers and music keyboards. These comments confirm the findings of OFSTED noted above. Whilst nearly 60% of headteachers considered class size at Key Stage 2 to be inadequate for the delivery of the National Curriculum their greatest concerns centred on the lack of non contact time for teachers. In primary schools this is very limited and found only when pupils are together in assembly or when classes are combined for certain activities.

The main ideas discussed above can be represented in note form as follows:

#### POST 1944

**IDEOLOGY** – Schools have the responsibility (and autonomy) for teaching and learning and the education of the young. High standards are important, so are maximising educational opportunities. Low political profile of education.

**POLICY** – Decentralised control of education and a partnership between national and local government. The LEAs have a key role in the administration of the education system and providing advice and guidance to schools. A substantial part of HMIs role is to provide guidance, advice and disseminate good practice as well as reporting to the (then) Minister of Education on the health of education in schools.

**PRACTICE** – (Headteachers) The major professional function is to provide educational leadership, undertake some teaching, manage, organise and administer the affairs of the school.

(Classroom teachers) Teachers enjoy considerable autonomy in curriculum matters and have professional accountability. There is considerable emphasis on teaching, learning (with the child at the centre of the learning process) and pastoral care; minimal administration and bureaucracy.

#### POST 1988

**IDEOLOGY** – Competition, diversity, market forces, value for money, accountability, choice, visible high standards and quality. High political profile of education.

**POLICY** – Centralised control of education as the powers of the Secretary of State are increased; the powers and role of LEAs are reduced. There is local management of schools, a huge increase in the powers of governing bodies of schools, establishment of QUANGOs. The role of OFSTED is to inspect as the major mechanism of quality control. The emphasis is on pragmatism and usefulness in education, raising standards through competition, choice, diversity and an involvement of parents and representatives from business and industry. Educational decisions are made less by professionals and more by bureaucrats and lay people, and the dominant language is that of the extended market place with an emphasis on measurable outcomes.

**PRACTICE** – (Headteachers) Now have a predominantly managerial role, a reduced educational leadership role, hardly any teaching. New functions are as chief executive, accountant, entrepreneur, public relations expert, and also preparing for OFSTED inspections. There has been a huge increase in bureaucratic tasks and cosmetic exercises.

(Classroom teachers) Now have reduced professional autonomy, greater prescription of duties and conditions of work. Delivering the National Curriculum dominates classroom teachers' work; teaching and learning are task centred with an increased emphasis on testing, measuring, assessment and recording and increased administration and bureaucracy. Much time is spent preparing for OFSTED inspections. There is bureaucratic rather than professional accountability. Teachers are now involved in appraisal and there is a new ITT function for schools.

## 6 Conclusion

Certainly it must be recognised that the intentions behind the wide ranging Government policies are sound. It must also be accepted that the changes stemming from their

implementation are now quite simply too entrenched for them to be halted. To attempt to de-invent them would be to create greater instability. But what must happen is that further developments are steered using the collective wisdom and expertise of professionals.

Of course there are many viable alternatives to the education policies currently being implemented. In Tomlinson (1994) are presented a variety of ways forward and the National Commission on Education (1993) has produced a major study that offers both ideologies and possible strategies for the future. Of fundamental importance to these alternatives is the view that education should not be seen as a competitive prize.

There is no real need for the current emphasis on the cosmetic elements which now adorn education such as the glossy dissemination of information and documentation that is both wasteful (of time and other resources) and doesn't directly improve education in schools. There is an over-emphasis on the products of education and advertising these. (The governing body of every school in the public sector is required under the Education (School Information) Regulations (England) 1994 to publish information in a prospectus. These regulations are explained in the Circulars 14/94 and 15/94 and Prospectuses must be published at least six weeks before the final date for application for admission to a school.) The disparity between the time teachers spend teaching and attending to other tasks has been clearly identified by the School Teachers' Review Body. It is therefore most salutary to note that the evidence of research (1995) into parents' views of league tables indicates that whilst they are more in favour of testing at 7, 11 and 14 than seven years ago a significant minority ignore examination league tables and only one quarter of parents were influenced by them in their choice of secondary schools. Furthermore most parents are either indifferent or opposed to the government's opting out policy (encouraging schools to become Grant Maintained). What can be drawn from this is that much of the Government's expenditure on providing such an information overkill could be better utilised actually funding the process of education.

The statement by the Prime Minister at the weekend of the 1. April to the conservative Central Council that education will be at the top of the Government's priorities as soon as the economy delivers further growth plus the likelihood that the Secretary of State's predictions noted above are borne out provide reason to believe that something may be done to secure better funding for schools. At the annual (Easter) conferences of the teacher unions the Secretary of State in a variety of keynote speeches hinted at the possibility of more funding a year hence. The reality of educational provision in the public sector makes this a sine qua non for the attainment of the educational aims note above.

Implementing the reforms in schools has not been cheap and the true total costs to the nation of the changes will not become clear until a generation hence. Value for money, cost effectiveness and competition might well be laudable objectives, especially when applied to business and commerce but there is a point beyond which market forces arguments and practices applied to schools and colleges becomes anti-educational. Put simply this means making essentially educational decisions for fundamentally economic reasons. This point has now been reached in England and it must be a salutary reminder to those who would wish to apply similar policies that the road although signposted with good intentions in fact leads up many blind alleys. Privatisation has brought with it increased tensions, challenges to democracy and a pattern of new problems which in their turn must be resolved. The role of teachers in the developments that lie ahead has never been more crucial.

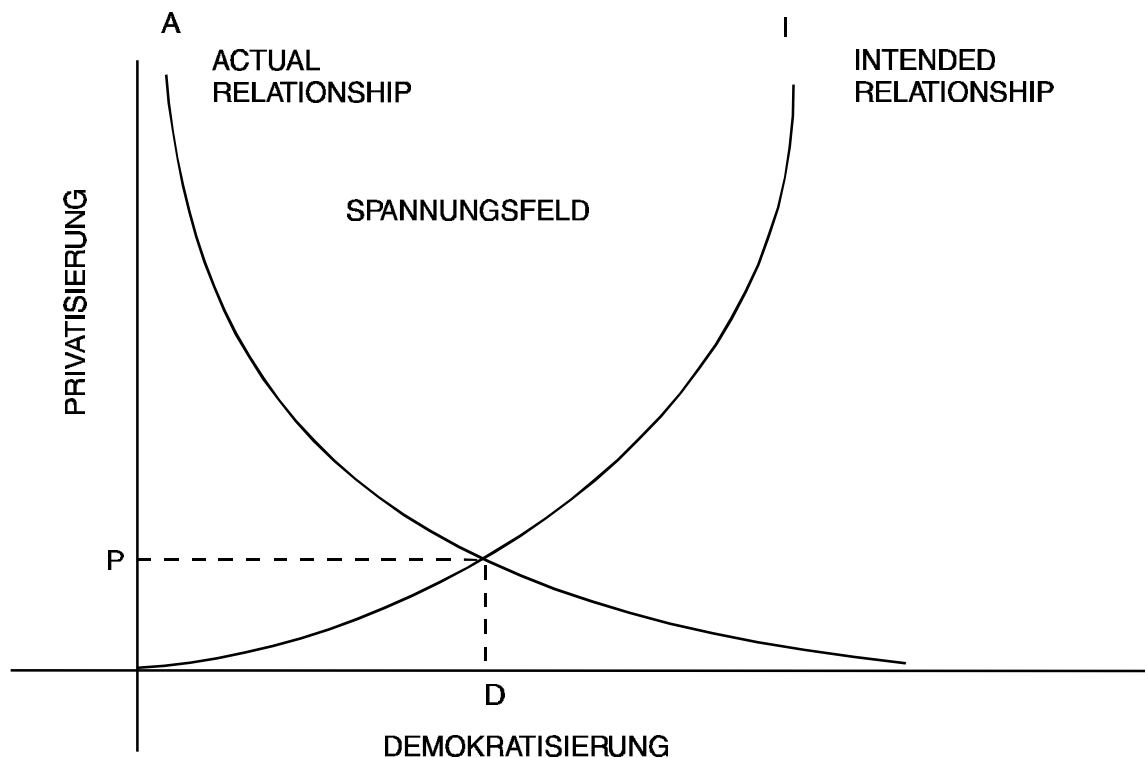


Figure 1: Spannungsfeld von Demokratisierung und Privatisierung

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## GLOSSARY

Accountability (Rechenschaftspflichtig)

Appraisal (Bewertung)

Choice (Freie Wahl) for parents, pupils, students regarding educational institutions and courses.

Competence (Kompetenz)

Competition (Wettbewerb)

Democratisation: Demokratisierung i.e. to make democratic (rule of the majority; control of an organisation, group, etc. by their participation in decision making)

DES: Department of Education and Science (became the DFE)

DFE: Department for Education (created on the 6.7.92)

Diversity (Mannigfaltigkeit)

Efficient (Leistungsfähig)

Effective (Wirksam)  
 Evaluation (Auswertung)  
 FAS: Funding Agency for Schools  
 GMS: Grant Maintained Schools. These schools receive 100% of their budget direct from the FAS in England  
 HMCI: Her Majesty's Chief Inspector  
 HMI: Her Majesty's Inspector  
 ITT: Initial Teacher Training  
 LEA: Local Education Authority  
 LMS: Local Management of Schools. Schools receive most of their budget direct from the LEAs. The amount varies but it is usually more than 80%.  
 Monitoring (Überwachung)  
 NCC: National Curriculum Council (replaced by SCAA)  
 NFER: National Foundation for Educational Research in England and Wales  
 OFSTED: Office for Standards in Education. It is the Office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and was established on 1. September 1992. It is responsible, inter alia, for a four year rolling programme of school inspections, which began in Autumn 1993. These inspections are carried out by a Registered Inspector assisted by a team of inspectors, which must include one lay inspector who has no professional experience of school education. Inspections take place in accordance with the requirements of the Handbook for the Inspection of Schools.  
 Privatisation: Privatisierung i.e. private ownership of nationalised bodies; also the practice of private firms undertaking work formerly carried out by both local and national public bodies (e.g. in Local Education Authorities, schools, hospitals, prisons, etc.). Many of the service offered to schools are privatised.  
 Quality (Qualität)  
 QUANGO: (Quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisation) These are funded by government money and run by government appointees. Examples are OFSTED, FAS, and the TTA. There is growing concern that QUANGOs operate as instruments of Government policy; therefore there is a move towards advertising for membership of them in the interests of genuine democracy.  
 Review (Nachprüfung)  
 Robust (hier streng)  
 SCAA: School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (established on 1.10.93 to replace both the NCC and SEAC)  
 SEAC: School Examinations and Assessment Council (replaced by SCAA)  
 Spannungsfeld: area of tension  
 STRB: School Teachers' Review Body  
 TTA: Teacher Training Agency