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Sixth Form Colleges in England with
particular reference to the reorgan-
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County Borough of Darlington.

M. Ed. Thesis

C.J. Ross

October, 1967.

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INTRODUCTION:

This thesis examines the growth of a distinctive educational experiment. The 6th Form College has no roots in the English educational system. Its advocacy is recent and, as far as can be traced, confined to the post-war period. It is the subject of fierce controversy, it cuts across the time-honoured practice of educational continuity in one institution, it separates the 6th Form teacher from his lower school colleague and its benefits are theoretical. Even in mid 1967, only one actually existed. When first proposed in Croydon in 1954 the idea was soundly trounced. Its likelihood of ever being revived was slight.

Yet in Circular 10/65 "The Organisation of Secondary Education" issued on July 12th, 1965, by the Department of Education and Science, this form of organisation was included as one of the recommended alternative forms of secondary reorganisation, albeit hedged with qualifications. Since then most Local Education Authorities have been forced to consider it. In some cases it has been rejected out of hand, in others rejected after long debate whilst, in a handful of cases, accepted as the solution to secondary reorganisation most relevant to the mid 1960's.

This thesis will survey developments in a number of areas and then study in detail the administrative history of implementing the scheme in one L.E.A.

It starts with an account of the "Croydon Scheme" proposed by J. Wearing King, the Chief Education Officer. It then records the response of L.E.A.s to the Circular 10/65 and compares the attitudes

and approaches of different areas. It traces the public debate on the subject and finally considers the administrative implications of implementing a plan for establishing a 6th Form College in one L.E.A.

The source material for this study has been provided, in varying degrees of amplitude and frankness, by the Chief Education Officers of Local Education Authorities. Documents of both a public and restricted nature have been made available accompanied by numerous personal comments of individuals. The author acknowledges his indebtedness for their co-operation. In particular he expresses appreciation to the Chief Education Officer for Darlington, Mr. D. Peter, for numerous personal comments and complete freedom of access to the files of his Department.

PART I

CROYDON AND THE ENGLISH BOROUGHES

The Croydon Plan was presented to the Croydon Education Committee in the latter part of 1954 by their C.E.O. and their Chief Inspector of Schools. It reviewed the organisation of 6th form work in the grammar schools and recommended the establishment of a junior college where "A" level work could be concentrated.

The Croydon Plan was based on arguments relevant in 1954 but less significant in the documentation of 1965/66. 1954 was the era of early leaving which necessitated a special enquiry and the Report of 1954.¹ Croydon grammar schools were not retaining enough pupils beyond "O" level, 6th forms were difficult to staff and uneconomical. Girls' Grammar schools suffered particularly and the proportion of girls studying Science and Mathematics was alarmingly small.

The Report recommended that, for an experimental period of five years from September 1957, "A" level work should be concentrated in one of the existing selective schools whilst the remainder catered for pupils studying to "O" level G.C.E.

The Education Committee set up a special sub-committee to consider the Report which, its authors stressed, reflected their own personal opinions.

The Report provoked immediate criticism from the Association of Assistant Masters. A leading article in their journal² argued that the 6th form provided a stimulus to the lower school and set standards for

1 "Early Leaving" Report of the Central Advisory Council 1954 (H.M.S.O.)

2 "The AMA" Journal of the Incorporated Association of Assistant Masters. Jan. 1955.

junior pupils. It asked how many grammar school staffs would be prepared to confine their work to pupils under the age of 17. It spoke of the homogeneity of the work of grammar school teachers and the implications for the salary structure of the projected changes. It remarked "Who amongst those who teach in established grammar schools can envisage with anything but despair their schools without 6th forms." Finally, "If the experiment fails, what of the victims?"

The President of the I.A.H.M. in a letter to "Education" put a similar case.¹ He described the Croydon proposal as striking a deadly blow at traditions going back to the beginnings of English education. He quoted the Central Advisory Council for Education Report which advocated facilities for grammar school pupils to continue their education to the age of 18.

He criticised the projected break at 15 or 16 when boys and girls at a difficult age would resent a change in environment. Lack of continuity might bring a further drop in the numbers staying on at school.

Finally, he questioned the effect of the change on grammar school staffs. "What attractiveness could there be in a branch of the profession if the opportunity to teach (and often be inspired by) 6th form pupils of that calibre is suddenly withdrawn from 75% of its members?"

1 "Education" 4.2.55.

Although the heads and staffs of the grammar schools opposed the scheme the heads of the other secondary schools submitted a memorandum in its support.¹ Acknowledging that the grammar schools would suffer, they claimed that their pupils would benefit. They felt that pupils transferring to 6th forms after "O" levels in their own schools would gain from the environment of a junior college rather than that of a traditional 6th form.

These views were studied by the sub-committee who consulted with M.L. Jacks, Director of the Institute and Department of Education at Oxford. It was customary in the Croydon Authority when important developments were envisaged to seek the opinion of an outside expert. On this occasion in 1955 the subject was put to Mr. Jacks. His conclusions were unfavourable.² He thought the educational disadvantages outweighed the advantages but suggested that some of the problems which had initially prompted the proposal could be alleviated by grouping some of the 6th form work and allowing the grammar schools to specialise in certain subjects with an interchange of pupils.

In November 1955, twelve months after the C.E.O's. original report the Croydon Plan was rejected by the Sub-Committee which had been established to study it. Even the alternative marginal improvements suggested by Mr. Jacks were not accepted and it was agreed that 6th form work in the borough should continue to be organised on existing lines.

In the ensuing seven years Mr. Wearing King continued to accumulate proof of the unreliability of the 11+ selection procedure as evidenced

1 Reported "Education" 18.2.55.

2 " ibid 25.3.55.

in the academic under-achievement of some grammar school pupils and the success at "O" level of pupils in secondary modern schools. This information was submitted to the Education Committee in a series of reports which were consolidated in 1962 and submitted to Dr. Wall of the National Foundation for Educational Research for a verification of the statistics and to a new arbiter, Mr. Lionel Elvin, Director of London University Institute of Education for comments on the educational principles.

Mr. Elvin suggested two alternatives, either increasing the intakes into the existing grammar school 6th forms or creating a separate institution. "But the second alternative is more novel and might be attractive to a pioneering authority. This would be to start a Senior Grammar school (it might even be called a Junior College) at least for post "O" level study. To give such an experiment a good prospect it should be on a large and carefully selected site, with all reasonable amenities. According to its success or otherwise it could remain a senior grammar school, or be modified into a comprehensive school that had started from the top instead, of, as usual, from the bottom, or be used as one of a group of institutions of higher education. With such flexibility one need not feel over-committed in advance."¹

The Special Sub-Committee's report stated that "they have returned to the proposal discussed seven years ago, and now pursued by Mr. Elvin, for the pooling of this ("A" level) work for all maintained secondary schools in the borough."

1 "Secondary Education in Croydon" A consolidated report July 1962.

Published just prior to the Summer holiday the scheme drew the inevitable reaction from entrenched interests in the grammar schools. "The grammar schools, by and large, are implacably against it, and are doing their best to get local opinion on their side. Last week the parents' association in the largest grammar school held a meeting attended by over 900 anxious parents. They heard evidently, only the headmaster's angle on the scheme, and not surprisingly, all but three raised their hands in protest against it."¹ The objections to this phase of the Croydon Plan were similar to those which were made to later schemes involving 6th form colleges. "The most obvious objections are still the loss of stimulus and example to the main school and of practice in responsibility to the 6th form if the two are separated and the likely difficulty of attracting highly qualified staffs to schools when the oldest pupils will be 15 and 16. And on the material level, Croydon and Burnham just do not mix."² "The full implications of the scheme are far from clear in the public mind and members have been urged to promote as much discussion as possible, not only in Croydon but in surrounding districts. To this end, several meetings have already taken place and they are being given prominence in the press. More are being arranged."³

Whilst not exactly welcoming the Plan, the Times Educational Supplement⁴ in a patrician style editorial suggested it "could be tried out in a comparatively small compass and the rest of us watch what

1 "Education" 5.10.62
3 A.M.A. Journal Oct. 1962.

2 A.M.A. Journal Sept. 1962.
4 Times Ed. Supp. 27.7.62

happens". Its saving grace was the retention of places in direct grant and independent schools for 5% of the age group. The best schools would be retained and "it becomes possible to look with slightly more equanimity on experiments which would remove some of the newer and weaker creations." After pointing out difficulties of recruitment of graduate staff for schools with an upper age limit of 16 and the effect this might have on future university material, the editorial adds, "There is, too, the likelihood that 6th form collegians, having lost the responsibility for the younger pupils, will concentrate overmuch on their studies and pleasures But it is not the time for weakening generally the older and established grammar schools with the independent schools beside them."

"Education"¹ was less sympathetic to the established pattern. "At least one Croydon grammar school head has gone to the lengths of urging boys to persuade their parents to write to their M.P.s protesting against the scheme. All this tends to build up the familiar picture of grammar school conservatism - the contented rut, the vested interest in the status quo, which their critics often attribute to the grammar school. After seeing that Croydon have decided to do no more than discuss these ideas with the Ministry and the teachers, it all sounds like squealing before you get hurt."

In its editorial, "Teachers' World"² described the Croydon Plan as administratively and economically an attractive proposition with something to be said for it educationally. "It offers too many

1 "Education" 27.7.62.

2 Teachers' World - Secondary Education
10.8.62.

potential gains simply to be set aside by prejudice". It cautioned that some of the advantages of concentration might prove illusory if staff ambitions in the new college began to turn towards research rather than teaching. "Looked at from the point of view of educating most efficiently a ruling class of 10% of the population the Croydon Plan must be seriously considered. The comic relief is provided by the fact that the whole scheme has a different aim. The Croydon Education Committee aspires to abolish the 11 plus.... The life we live is a hurdle race, and no amount of human reorganisation will alter its fundamental nature. It looks as though the new Croydon proposal will progressively and ruthlessly sift the sheep from the goats far more efficiently than does the existing system."

As in most other Authorities all interested parties were asked for their comments and observations on the Plan and these were summarised in a document submitted to the Education Committee in February 1963. The tenor of response and argument was strikingly predictive of those used in other Authorities.

The Croydon Plan of 1962/63 was eventually deferred as the London Government Act reconstituted the boundaries of the borough. When plans were drafted under Circular 10/65, the 6th form college remained as one of the alternatives offered to the Education Committee but it was decided not to adopt it. By then, Mr. Wearing King, the Chief Education Officer and principal exponent of the 6th form college concept had

retired though he continued to advocate the idea in lectures and articles.

Probably of greater importance than the retirement of the principal architect was the strength of the Conservative Party on the borough council and its natural animosity to any scheme of reorganisation recommended as acceptable to a Labour government in Westminster.

Late in 1965 a two tier scheme was agreed by the Education Committee then in January 1966 its abandonment was announced at a public meeting called by the "Save our Schools" campaign.¹ Croydon - post 10/65 - gave every indication of proving as reluctant to reorganise along comprehensive lines as any Authority in the country.

This constituted an ironic conclusion to the possibility in 1955 that the Authority might be the first in the country to implement a system of comprehensive schools with 6th form work concentrated in a special college.

¹ Times Ed. Supp. 21.1.66.

THE BOROUGHES

There are 98 county borough education authorities in England including the 20 newly formed London Boroughs. They range in size from the giants, Birmingham, Manchester and Liverpool to the small towns, Wakefield, Chester, Hastings, Lincoln and Darlington. The London Boroughs average around 300,000 in total population, their provincial counterparts being Leicester, Nottingham, Bristol, Newcastle and Southampton.

Administration in a county borough is markedly different from that in a county, elected representatives of compact wards are more closely attuned to public opinion. Political issues are more prominent and other issues acquire political flavour. Policy follows party lines. Whips ensure that group decisions of the political right and left are backed by votes in the chamber.

This is not to decry the impingement of politics on educational issues. Basically educational policy will reflect society's attitude to itself. The political nature of the decision to introduce comprehensive education was bound to rouse resentment in L.E.As. where the local political majority was of opposite colour to that at Westminster.

Under the 1944 Education Act a county borough council must appoint an education committee. Further, it may not implement change without first having given the committee an opportunity to consider it. Ultimately, however, power rests with the borough council as the local education authority. Any education committee must, therefore, unless being deliberately perverse, bear in mind the ultimate power of veto

and amendment embodied in the borough council to which its minutes must be submitted.

Education Committees are encouraged to appoint co-opted members and the number who do not is very small. The size of the co-opted membership varies from one to anything up to ten. It includes teachers - normally elected by their colleagues - clergy and representatives of universities and voluntary organisations. Given a fine political balance, voting by co-opted members can be crucial.

Educational administrators invariably state publicly that their committees are concerned with education, not politics, - and this is true for the overwhelming majority of their business - but the response to Circular 10/65 obviously brought politics to the forefront. Changes of political power at municipal elections have led to plans for comprehensive education being recast¹ whilst authorities lacking sympathy with the idea have evolved plans of doubtful accord or so complex and long-term as to delay action in the hope of a change in government policy.

The response of Chief Officers to an enquiry made in July 1966 was gratifying. Seventeen of the twenty London Boroughs replied and only nine of the remaining seventy-eight failed to answer. On a number of occasions reference has been made in Parliamentary debates and questions, and in the national and in educational press to developments in particular authorities where schemes at draft stage in July 1966 have been altered or confirmed, this has been noted.

1 "Inquiry into local government - Guardian" 3.7.67.

The overwhelming impression from the reports received was that very few authorities saw 6th Form Colleges as a solution to their reorganisation problems. It is not always clear from reports whether the resistance was on ideological, educational or purely practical grounds. Some authorities were already committed to policies based on all-through comprehensive schools, e.g. Coventry, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, Bristol, Hull and Sunderland. Others had, prior to 10/65, decided on variations of two or three tier systems, Doncaster, Middlesbrough, St. Helens, Rochdale and Bradford.

At least one C.E.O. (Oldham) saw 6th Form Colleges as dilution of the purest milk of comprehensiveness and wrote that his authority had no need of compromises. In other areas the advocacy of C.E.Os. was not sufficient to convince their committees.

Some chief officers admitted frankly that 6th Form Colleges had never been seriously considered, others that they had been ruled out at an early stage. In one case which will be dealt with in greater detail below, the idea was ruled out at an early stage and - much to the chagrin of some committee members - re-admitted later emerging as the final proposal. In another authority strength at an early stage gave way to weakness in the face of practical considerations later and eventual exclusion. Ironically the practical considerations were not fundamentally different from those leading to the implementation of 6th Form Colleges elsewhere.

Where the idea was rejected the arguments established a familiar pattern. On the one hand basic considerations of educational philosophy were paramount whilst building logistics excluded it on the other.

One C.E.O. (Doncaster) wrote of his personal inclination - with reservations - to the idea but ^{it} was not developed owing to the impracticability of implementing the scheme with his existing pattern of 3 form entry secondary modern schools precluded by distance from being combined to produce the 6-8 form entry required for a junior high school for pupils aged 11-16.

Another authority (Hastings) reserved judgement on the future of its 6th forms. A small borough with two grammar schools it doubted whether its three tier proposal would support 6th forms in each of its four upper units. The summary of its Working Party questioned the merit of removing 6th formers to a separate institution but was alive to the fact that four comprehensive units, only two of which had 6th forms, would hamper the chance of their gaining parity of esteem. "The 6th Form College attached to one school has all the appearances of a compromise for the sake of administrative convenience. The school concerned would undoubtedly prove a great attraction to parents and their freedom of choice might, in the end, have to be drastically curtailed by means even more suspect than the doomed 11+". (C.E.O.'s report).

Rather more blunt was the C.E.O. (Lincoln) who in his report wrote that the idea "is alien to the English conception of education".

In the face of this pronouncement other authorities (Manchester and Liverpool) had submitted plans two years prior to 10/65 by which a number of 6th form colleges would have been created. The Secretary of State had rejected them and the idea had not been revived in the new round of proposals following the publication of the Circular.

A report of the Working Party of a southern county borough (Reading) published in March 1966 declared that "the weight of teacher opinion throughout the country at large also indicates that, of all possible types of reorganisation, this would be least likely to command support.... Moreover, evidence from other authorities indicates that this type of organisation must be housed in 'custom built' premises to have any real hope of success". This authority finally opted for all through comprehensive schools.

At the other end of the economic and social scale a northern county borough (Salford) discounted the introduction of a 6th form college partly on educational grounds but partly also on the assumption that many of the 5th formers would prefer to move on to the newly built technical college.

Many of the smaller county boroughs would have found difficulty in running a viable 6th Form College because of relatively small numbers of 6th formers in existing grammar schools. These were reflected in the annual Ministry and Department of Education and Science statistics giving details of university and other further education awards,¹ Some boroughs had the further complication of Aided and Direct Grant schools, the subject of separate negotiation before and after 10/65. Often

1 Dept. of Education & Science. List 71 "Selected statistics relating to L.E.As. in England and Wales. Published annually.

denominational in character, these schools, through diocesan policy, insisted on remaining separate.

Equally a disincentive to radical educational change was the traditional role of the grammar schools and newly created technical schools in working class areas as the instruments of social mobility. Pedly pointed out that comprehensive education was less advanced in boroughs where Labour had permanent majorities of long standing than elsewhere.¹

Lip-service to comprehensive reorganisation had been paid for many years and visits made to comprehensive schools in other parts of the country but administrative action to implement the policy was slow in many of these boroughs.

However, one Conservative led borough (Southend) had been considering comprehensive education since 1963 and at one stage 6th form colleges were favoured by the local Head Teachers, partially by the N.U.T. and A.T.T.I. whilst the Joint Four declared for a two tier system with a break at 13 and the N.A.S. for all-through schools.

The C.E.O's. report had an account of advantages and disadvantages with details of building programme proposals which would be necessary to implement the scheme. The arguments were the customary ones. In support it was stated that the 11+ would be abolished, many of the advantages of all through schools would apply to the junior comprehensive schools, less alterations would be required for existing buildings and their

1 "The Comprehensive School" - R. Pedley (Penguin) p.44.

smaller size would offer better educational facilities for different ability levels. Opportunities for G.C.E. "O" level and C.S.E. would be comparable and 6th form college students would be treated as adults. The scheme could be implemented reasonably soon if certain disadvantages, namely the continued existence of a number of small schools for some time were accepted.

The disadvantages however, constituted a formidable list. Grammar schools would disappear, universal co-education might not be acceptable to all parents, a break at 16 might discourage a voluntary extension of school life, a demand might arise for extended courses in the junior comprehensive schools to enable "O" level failures to be retained.

The younger pupils in the junior comprehensive schools would lose the influence of the older ones, the latter in the 6th form college would not have the opportunities to exercise responsibility. It was pointed out that grammar school staff who would be needed to operate the scheme were strongly opposed to it, that there would be some redundancy amongst grammar school staffs who might not be suitable for work with pupils of a lower ability range, and graduates in both schools and college would lack the inspiration of 6th form or lower school work.

As an alternative the Report offered a consideration of sixth form units attached to certain comprehensive schools but accepting pupils from neighbouring schools in addition to the intake from their own base on the Swedish pattern. Ultimately the authority decided to adopt all-through comprehensive schools.

The C.E.O. of a north western County Borough (Wallasey) in a report of approximately 20,000 words devoted a considerable section to the possibility of creating a 6th form college. He stressed the economy of the arrangement and the fact that a 6-7 form entry junior comprehensive school could offer a sufficient range of subjects to "O" level and C.S.E. The break at 16 and the earlier maturity at that age were reasonably argued and an exercise showing how the scheme could be implemented was included in the report. The disadvantages to be overcome in the form of the size of existing small secondary schools were noted but the document lacked the emotive phraseology of some already cited.

In the event the Authority chose a three tier system which had received a similar impartial review in the report.

Definite Proposals: Carlisle.

The narrative so far has referred to a sample of Authorities whose proposals for 6th form colleges have been incorporated in reports alongside other suggestions and disregarded at an early stage - or "dealt with cavalierly" as one C.E.O. wrote. Proposals reached a more advanced stage in other areas before being discarded or postponed.

One instance illustrating the latter is the borough (Carlisle). A sub-committee of the Education Committee resolved - following a memorandum from the C.E.O. - that the comprehensive organisation of secondary education be developed on the basis of secondary schools for pupils aged 11-16 with an Advanced College for pupils aged 16-19 in the premises of one of the existing selective schools.

This plan envisaged the retention of some schools, the closure of others, the transfer of 6th formers to form the nucleus of a College and the declaration of an early date for the abolition of the 11+. Finally the sub-committee was authorised to proceed immediately to consult all organisations and interests concerned by these proposals.

Within a short space of time, the sub-committee met representatives of nine organisations, i.e. five professional, three denominational and one neighbouring county authority. Its minutes were considered by a further four organisations.

The consensus of opinion amongst teachers favoured the abolition of the 11+, and indeed a 13+ or 14+, with all children being educated in comprehensive schools at least to the age of 16. Where they differed was in their approach to education after the age of 16 and in timing

the implementation of the scheme.

The record of the consultations contained a summary of the principal issues which emerged. It pointed out that arguments about the advisability of co-education or single sex schools were finely balanced and then devoted itself to a critical appraisal of 6th form colleges.

It quotes Circular 10/65 that "there are few obvious arguments in favour of comprehensive schools with an age range of 11-16" and comments that "the arguments may be few but they are very compelling", citing Crowther, page 424, in support. Analogies were drawn with two year courses in the technical field to counter the argument that two years were too short a time for a student to develop a sense of community and the need for close links with contributory secondary schools was advocated. Guidance by a number of interested parties for a 16 year old was as valuable as guidance resulting from association with staff from the age of 11 in a traditional grammar school.

The economic concentration of 6th form work, particularly in those subjects where students were few, was stressed. If comprehensive education were to entail the dispersal of 6th form teaching and facilities into each comprehensive unit, the result would be 6th form equivalents of small country grammar schools with the educational disadvantages which such circumstances impose.

The report questioned the assumption "that the most important social responsibility to be learnt by young people is how to control and lead younger boys and girls. It can be argued that in social or human relations young people find opportunities for service to their peers in many forms of organisation, and they may develop social responsibility and social maturity at this age by looking outwards to the world at large rather than backwards to a lower school community".

Finally the summary concluded that the phased programme should appeal to many as a succession of gradual progressive steps towards a known and understandable goal rather than -as some of the plan's critics had strictured - a leap in the dark.

Scrutiny of the minutes of the various meetings held confirm that the summary of opinions stated is a fair one. The defence of the 6th form college proposal was no more biased in its favour than the contrary arguments which secured rejection in other authorities.

When reports of meetings with professional associations are studied in detail there are elements of uncertainty and lack of decisiveness which weakened the case for a 6th form college. The N.U.T. association had held a series of open meetings and had suggested alternative schemes, both of which involved grouping existing schools into comprehensive units, one of which would contain a central 6th form into which it and other units would feed.

When its representatives met the sub-committee at the consultation stage they agreed that secondary schools should accommodate pupils

aged 11-16 and should feed into a central 6th form - but one using existing 6th form facilities in two of the schools. They preferred to defer the decision on a separate Advanced College. They considered that "the Committee's proposals were too cut and dried and could result in secondary education becoming stereotyped". Their proposals, they argued would allow for alternative developments in the future. The discussion on their proposals brought out particular points of detail about certain schools, and the obvious difficulty of status in the eyes of parents involved in some schools having sixth forms to which others could transfer remained unresolved. Finally they expressed the opinion that "it was better to use existing facilities at first rather than an unsuitable building which was not completely designed for 6th form work and that if Advanced Colleges proved to be successful in other areas, then a new Advanced College could be built in the City."

The local branch of the National Association of Schoolmasters emphasised that "whatever system is adopted, it must be one that does not prevent any of the proposed schools from becoming comprehensive in fact as well as in name, through lack of parity with other schools or lack of facilities or incentives". Opinion was divided between support for all-through comprehensive schools and a 6th Form College fed by 11-16 age range schools. They stressed the need for the College to be separate to ensure parity between the contributory schools and for it to be run in co-operation with the technical college. They saw important disadvantages in a separate 6th Form College with a possible tendency to

split the teaching profession into two tiers and they doubted whether highly specialised staff would be more economically used there than in departments of all-through comprehensive schools.

The local Head Teacher Association favoured continuity of schooling from 11 to 16 and a majority favoured continuity to 18.

The local Joint Four expressed "grave misgivings" about the plan for a separate Advanced College. The two years' course would be too short to allow relationships and a sense of community to develop. "O" level results were not necessarily the best predictor of "A" level potential, G.C.E. results at both levels would tend to dominate the work of the college and contributory schools to the particular disadvantage of pupils of lesser ability.

A 6th Form College, they argued, would offer 6th form work but it could not offer the 6th form ethos as they knew it. The demands of adjustment to a totally different kind of environment at the same time as the transition from "O" to "A" level work would place a great strain on pupils. When related to the destruction of grammar schools, rather than their amalgamation and expansion into comprehensive units they felt that the loss in human terms involved in the scheme would be considerable and gains problematical. They proposed, therefore, fully comprehensive schools each with their own 6th forms.

The local representatives of the Association of Teachers in Technical Institutions submitted their Association's national viewpoint that there should not be a division of students in the 16-19 age group between arts and science or full and part-time. Ideally they would welcome a unified system and the close proximity of the technical college

and the proposed 6th Form College should enable an interchange of students between the two institutions if only to avoid waste of equipment and unnecessary duplication. "A purely partisan view would be to extend the technical college to cater for all 16-19 year old pupils ", the report states.

Of the churches consulted, the Roman Catholics had distinctive problems involving schools which were aided or independent, one of which was controlled by a religious order. The Free Churches favoured all-through comprehensive schools whilst the Church of England stood four square for its denominational grammar school which they would only concede to amalgamation with two other schools into a unit with similar denominational status. They disagreed with the idea of a separate 6th Form College on educational principle. Their opinions were echoed and enlarged in the evidence of the Grammar School governors. This body contained the Dean, a Canon and the Bishop who claimed to have been educated in a comprehensive school.

In the event, the original plan for an Advanced College was abandoned and the reader is left to wonder how far ecclesiastical intransigence contributed to this course.

Blackpool:

One L.E.A., Blackpool, devised a scheme similar to the one finally adopted in the preceding paragraphs not as an alternative to a 6th Form College but as a stage in the progress towards one. In its early consideration of the Circular it was agreed to exclude temporary tier

arrangements from its plans and to study the feasibility of all-through comprehensive schools, two tier lower and upper schools and junior comprehensive schools with one or two 6th form colleges.

This L.E.A. had strongly established 6th forms in existing maintained and direct grant schools. The feasibility study indicated that the 6th forms of all-through comprehensive schools would be small, incapable of providing the wide range of subjects and courses and difficult and expensive to staff.

Similar considerations applied to a system of lower and upper schools with transfer at 13 or 14. In the former a two year course would create a staging post instead of a coherent unit, whilst pupils in the latter would have only 2 years of an "O" level course. Again, 6th forms would be small.

The actual proposal for a 6th Form College to cater for 550-650 pupils was accompanied by an appraisal of the advantages which would accrue in the economical use of specialist staff and the concentrated provision of specialist facilities. Equally it outlined the disadvantages and particularly the personnel problems which would arise in the process of reorganisation and amalgamation. Their final study was suggested as a compromise. Although the majority of the members of the study group favoured one 6th Form College, they were able unanimously to recommend an interim arrangement. This entailed each of the secondary - including the grammar - schools admitting an unselective intake and 6th formers taking "A" level work at two of the schools.

This arrangement seemed to satisfy most of the criteria stipulated in the separate 6th Form College proposal. It allowed single sex and mixed schools to exist to give maximum parental choice. The report argued that if in fact a "kind of selective entry might result from parental choice of single sex schools, and of schools with 6th form units, particularly as these schools are, in the main, those now favoured. We would argue that provided the essential conditions for a Comprehensive system are established we should not prevent any school from carrying over into the future any of its past esteem. What matters is that each school should get a reasonable share of ability, and we believe that steps can be taken to ensure this."

Whether the anomalies resulting from a system of selection rooted in unselection will hasten the advent of a separate 6th Form College or contribute to the demise of the idea is left to the future.

Eastbourne:

Doubts over the viability of small 6th forms in all-through comprehensive schools were reflected in another Authority, Eastbourne. Discussion and argument followed a pattern which becomes familiar in the study of reports from various L.E.As.

The heads of the secondary schools (excluding the grammar schools) favoured the abolition of selection at any age and the enlargement of secondary schools to 5 or 6 form entry to cater for the age range 11-16 with an Advanced College superimposed. The heads of the grammar schools, not altogether uncharacteristically, challenged a change from the present system as a retrograde step and stipulated that any reorganisation, if insisted upon, should be as little fundamental as possible. This

would qualify a two tier partially selective system for their approval but not a 6th form college. The consensus of opinion of the staffs of the selective schools echoed these opinions.

The local branch of the N.U.T. favoured the abolition of selection but opinion on the respective merits of two tier systems and a 6th form college was divided and no definite preference emerged except that there was opposition to a break between 11 and 16,

The local branch of the N.A.S. subject to the reservation that none of their members taught locally in selective schools, favoured comprehensive schools from 11-16 and a separate 6th Form College. The A.T.T.I. reflected locally the association's policy nationally and supported comprehensive schools to the age of 16 and a choice at that stage between a 6th Form College and the College of Further Education.

The local Teachers' Council consisting of teachers representative of all branches of the profession had a small majority in favour of introducing comprehensive education with strongest support within that number for small comprehensive schools serving a 6th Form College.

The Joint Four declared that "the complete elimination of selection based on ability is unrealistic" and that "until such time as considerable expenditure on school buildings, equipment and additional staff can be made, replacement of the present system by any of the alternatives could only result in a decline and not an improvement in educational standards".

The final conclusions were that in the short term, i.e. from 1967 to 1970, reorganisation was not possible and selection at the appropriate age should be continued but that in the long term comprehensive education should take the form of 11-16 schools backed by a separate 6th form college. Alternatively, as an interim measure, the sixth form could be attached to one school.

The C.E.O. wrote, "There has been surprisingly little reaction, so far, at any rate, to the proposals which have had a wide publicity locally. Whether this means lack of interest or a general acceptance of them as reasonable in this context, I do not know". Such sentiments were not inappropriate to the salubrious resort which he administered. Many of his colleagues in the ruder north would have been hard pressed to echo his words.

Huddersfield:

Indeed one of his colleagues in Huddersfield enclosing a file of almost a hundred foolscap sheets of reports and summaries covering two years of discussion and debate mentioned that "the green report of November 1963 was discussed with representatives of the schools who raised so many objections to certain aspects of it that it was never in fact submitted to the Education Committee but the pink report of the same date substituted".

In this Authority the proposal for separate colleges for the 16-18 age group was abandoned at an early stage of the discussions only to be revived later and to emerge as the ultimate proposal submitted to the Department. The fortunes of its passage make fascinating administrative

history.

The green report of November 1963 referred to above was a complex paper summarising present day practice and questioning the relevance of the educational "status quo" to then current needs. It broke the ground for some separation at 16+ by emphasising the sociological factors which had impinged on the educational scene in the post war years and quoting a report of a neighbouring authority on the difficulty of catering under one roof for children of 10 years of age with "men liable to military service and women of marriageable age". In addition it reminded its readers of the Authority's high standing as usually third only to Oxford City and Cambridgeshire in the number of state scholarships obtained in proportion to population.

The report proposed a skeleton scheme of reorganisation which would create a pattern of Basic Secondary Schools offering 3 year courses to about the age of 14, High Schools offering 2 year courses to all levels of ability and Intermediate Colleges for students aged 16+ studying for "A" levels and more general courses.

The pink report, referred to above, which was the amended version of the green report, was submitted to the Education Committee with some notable additions and deletions. The merits of the secondary modern schools, their rising standards of attainment and the increasing willingness of pupils to stay on beyond the statutory school leaving age were all added. As if to balance the emphasis on the work of the secondary modern schools a paragraph was added to the effect that although pupils of this calibre would not be seriously affected by the inclusion

in their school of a relatively small number following academic courses, a comprehensive school with small age groups would be disastrous for the brighter ones.

These declarations of interest were reflected in the latter part of the report. Whereas the C.E.O's report had advocated a three tiered system, the discussions with representatives of the teachers produced a two tier Doncaster type system with selection by parental option at the age of 13-14. Despite this the second report warned that the Authority "may have to suffer somewhat abnormal loss of specialist staff who will perhaps seek to continue service in the same sort of school as that in which they are now employed", adding cautiously that "Any such tendency may be offset by the increase in the number of Authorities which are adopting schemes of comprehensive organisation".

After the adoption of this Report as a basis for further discussion there followed the inevitable series of visits to comprehensive schools in other areas. The officials and Heads of one Authority took the opportunity to criticise the inaccuracies of a report by earlier visitors which had received wide circulation. In diplomatic terms the visits provided a thorough exchange of views and an amended Report by the C.E.O. in July 1964 argued firmly in favour of change over the Authority as a whole and not phased by districts, the completion of certain building projects as a prerequisite of this operation and the transfer of all pupils at the final stage - whatever the age finally decided - and continuation of pupils in that stage for "A" level work. The 6th Form College as a separate entity was disregarded.

1 Report on the working of the Leicestershire Plan.
A.M.A. November, 1964.

It was, however, revived in November 1964 in a submission from the C.E.O. to all members of the borough council as an example of a method of reorganisation alternative to the one agreed upon. Work continued during early 1965 on a detailed consideration of accommodation, transfer dates, catchment areas, birth rates, personnel problems and tenure of existing posts.

In September 1965 a Survey of School Accommodation was presented to the Education Committee and passed to the teachers' professional bodies for scrutiny and comment. The assumption in September 1965 was that the three tier plan of Primary, Intermediate and Secondary schools was generally acceptable. The time of decision was approaching. As the report of the Steering Committee stated "It was felt that a further meeting of the Committee would be required before any firm conclusions about reorganisation of schools on comprehensive lines could be reached."

Copies of the Survey of Accommodation were widely distributed and the accompanying letter stressed that it, in itself, was not a plan of reorganisation: only an indication of the ways in which school buildings could be used on reorganisation. This was two years after the issue of the first report.

In the event the Associations sent their comments which, by January 1966 had been summarised and distributed to the Steering Committee. One association drew attention to the Secretary of State's limit on the number of "middle school" schemes he was prepared to sanction, one doubted whether the scheme would maintain or improve existing educational opportunities, one was concerned with parental choice and zoning, one

was concerned with voluntary schools, one questioned the ages and dates of transfer and the wisdom of dispersing 6th form facilities too widely, advocating transfers, if necessary, at 6th form level.

It was, however, the submissions of one association and one group of Heads which - unintentionally on the part of the latter - provoked a fresh consideration of the 6th form college concept.

The association advocated three educational stages, Primary 5-11+, Secondary 11-16 and Advanced 16-18. They opposed intermediate or "middle" schools as too large, difficult to staff, not favoured by the Department and - they believed - conceived as an expedient. They advocated secondary schools, 11-16, in existing premises with others of 8 form entry to be provided in the future.

Their proposal for the 16+ pupils was for two 6th Form Colleges to be created from existing grammar schools to accommodate the 1,200 students anticipated and to work in association with the nearby technical college. The merit of this plan, it was argued, would be that it preserved most of the existing schools, could be introduced gradually, treated older pupils as students and allowed flexibility - possibly with Plowden in mind - over age of entry to the infants' schools.

The Heads of the selective schools, in submitting their comments, had some general reservations over sites, sizes of schools, and the transfer age. They envisaged that the dispersal of 6th form resources over twice the number of existing selective schools would create difficulties. They suggested that the schools should be "paired "

and 6th form facilities provided in separate wings of one school only of each pair following the Mexborough pattern. A variant of this would be for one school of each pair to provide academic and the other non-academic 6th form facilities. Any difference in status which might emerge should be accepted to avoid a decline in academic standards. On co-education as opposed to single sex schools, opinion was divided as it was also over zoning but a reasonable compromise was proposed on the latter.

When these views were circulated a covering report from the C.E.O. suggested that the Steering Committee ought, with reference to one Association's evidence, re-affirm its earlier rejection of 6th form colleges or reconsider the whole matter. Various Associations had expressed doubt about the wisdom of dispersing 6th form work and the suggestions made about concentrating such work - a process which would involve transfer at 16 for some pupils - weakened the earlier arguments on the inadvisability of a break at that age. If continuity of secondary education could not be guaranteed for all, ought it to be available to some? Would not the addition of 6th form facilities to particular schools affect the equality of status between schools which reorganisation was supposed to implement?

The Steering Committee was asked to decide what sort of education it desired for the older pupils so that the previous Survey could be revised and the pattern of the earlier years of secondary education determined as part of a logical progression.

This brought a curt rejoinder from the selective school Heads - duly copied and circulated to members of the Steering Committee by the C.E.O. In parenthesis it might be assumed that had this well known administrative tactic not have been employed the Heads would have sent copies themselves.

Accordingly by February 1966 the Associations had all declared their observations on 6th form colleges. One "practically unanimously regarded 6th form colleges as the worst possible evil". One preferred 6th form colleges if their foundation would avoid the institution of "middle" schools. The selective school Heads and another Association weighed in heavily with strong educational arguments against 6th form colleges. In fact, this was the first appearance of educational argument as opposed to administrative considerations to appear in the reports.

In brief, they stressed the break in continuity, the encouragement of voluntary extension of school life, the loss of valuable social training for older students, the loss of 6th form leadership to the lower school, the difficulty in recruiting specialist staff, organisational problems and the undesirable standardisation of junior comprehensive school courses.

The demise of the Croydon Plan after nine years of discussion and the lack of any precedent for a 6th form college were emphasised. Indeed, the Head of the only institution which could be termed a 6th form college, Mexborough, was of the opinion that a completely separate organisation would not be successful.

The February Report, to which this evidence was attached, contained a second Survey of School Accommodation designed to validate a system of junior comprehensive schools to the age of 16 with Colleges for Young People to accommodate the 16-18 age group. These would be centred on the three grammar schools with the longest traditions and strongest links with the universities and could be called "New Colleges".

A further meeting in February 1966 of the Steering Committee of twenty one teacher representatives and members of the Education Committee failed to agree on any proposed method of reorganisation and the Chairman stated that, in those circumstances a sub-committee of the Education Committee would have to formulate its own scheme.

This is did, and on the 2nd March 1966 the Town Council adopted a scheme of junior comprehensive schools and "New Colleges" for Young People and asked the C.E.O. to prepare a detailed scheme accordingly. This was done and the complete scheme despatched to the Secretary of State in April 1966.

Stoke-on-Trent:

The student of administrative contradictions who ponders on the variety of solutions to the problem common to all L.E.As. in 1965 and 1966 of abolishing the 11+ to the satisfaction of the Secretary of State might well marvel further at the manner in which L.E.As. interpreted their basic problems. Whilst one Authority envisaged a 6th Form College as the best way of preserving its already substantial flow of students to universities, another envisaged the 6th Form College as the only means of increasing that flow. Whilst one Authority spoke

of a College where students of all disciplines and none could mix in a more adult atmosphere another cited Plato's Academy, the academic hothouse, as its ideal.

In this latter Authority, Stoke-on-Trent, reorganisation began to be considered in earnest as early as 1955. The Authority covers a typical 19th century industrial development with large middle class residential estates in the surrounding county area. In social composition it is probably as predominantly working class as any area in the country. By tradition the percentage rate of admission to grammar schools at eleven was below national average as was the progression of pupils to higher education.

Having a substantial and virtually permanent Labour control of the council there had, inevitably, arisen in the post war years the demand for the prestige symbol of a comprehensive school. This was resisted on a number of counts. The grammar schools still retained a warm place in the affections of influential figures who valued their past role as instruments of social mobility, a comprehensive school in competition with existing selective schools would founder on the twin shoals of Ministry support for appellants opposing direction of their children and the esteem in parental eyes of the grammar schools. Finally the Authority would have great difficulty in its heavily undermined area in finding sites for the huge comprehensive schools which were dictated by the educational fashions of the mid 'fifties.

The 1955 Report of the Chief Education Officer proposed the creation of neighbourhood comprehensive schools from 11-16 and transfers

after "O" level to a 6th Form College. The reaction was stormy. All the latent fund of good will accumulated by the grammar schools over the years was harnessed to resist change and as a consequence a compromise was agreed which designated six of the secondary modern schools as High Schools with facilities and staff to undertake "O" level work.

The controversy was resumed in 1959 when a report from the Education Committee outlined two alternative schemes of reorganisation. The first, Scheme A envisaged High Schools catering for the 11-16 age range and a junior college for G.C.E. "A" and "S" levels. The alternative, Scheme B envisaged secondary education consisting of two stages, 11-13 years and 13-16 years including G.C.E. "O" level. The two age ranges would be combined on one site where possible and six of the units would cater for "A" and "S" level work in addition.

The reasons for change were outlined in the Report. Notwithstanding the achievements of the grammar schools, particularly in Advanced and Scholarship work, a number of children admitted at 11+ were not really suited to the rigorous academic life. Equally, other children developed later and the transfer system lacked flexibility.

In addition educational segregation had serious social consequences and "we must look to our education institutions to make a significant contribution to community development." ¹ Not every report on secondary reorganisation has made a point of its function as an instrument of social policy.

1 Committee Report.

The principles of change enunciated in the Report were to preserve the best in the existing system - particularly in the Advanced work - and to enlarge the broad base of educational opportunity for the majority of children. The practice was to invite comment and criticism on the plans with the assurance that the Committee had no intention of reaching any hasty conclusion.

Setting as target date for change the year 1962 the Report ends with the exhortation "But it is confident - given peace and the continued willingness to make sacrifices for progress of education - that by 1970, the centenary of the great 1870 Education Act, 'equality¹ of opportunity' would have a new and more significant meaning".

Ironically, in 1966 the local newspaper reported that it was understood that the original opening date for the Authority's 6th Form College, September 1968 could not be adhered to. The compulsory purchase procedure for the land on which the College would be built had been completed but the chief problem in the case arose because the farmer's lease on the land did not run out until September 1966. The local M.P. was endeavouring to expedite matters.

The 1959 Report led to a prolonged and sometimes acrimonious public debate but in 1963 a new factor was introduced following an 8 weeks' tour of the United States by the Chairman of the Education Committee and the C.E.O. Their description of current American educational practices was published and given a wide distribution, its authors favouring decisively the common High School and 6th Form College pattern for the Authority.

The Education Committee decided to pursue these recommendations and submitted interim and long term proposals for 6 form entry High Schools and a purpose built 6th Form College. The Ministry's reaction was cautious and non-committal. All the legal processes for public notices to be issued to advertise the change of status for each school with rights of appeal and arbitration by the Minister were indicated. This time-consuming process was only just completed when the Labour government came to power. Even then, the Authority had to wait while others who had been pressing their cases with the same urgency were dealt with at the Ministry.

There is no other record of an L.E.A. sending its Chairman and Chief Officer to the U.S. to glean ideas for reorganisation in its own area. The Chief Officer of one of the largest counties, Lancashire, visited Sweden but so, inevitably did the Chairman and Chief Officer of Stoke-on-Trent. Their report, "Visit to Sweden," was published in 1965.

The record of these two visits confirmed their belief in the system they had proposed for their own area. They talked to numerous educators in many parts of the U.S. and Sweden. They visited schools and institutions of higher education and returned with up to date knowledge and informed opinion on a vast range of educational topics. They introduced the concept of "counselling" in schools and the local university was the first to organise full-time courses in the subject. The Authority appointed a Research and Development Officer and pursued enquiries into programmed instruction and educational television.

The evidence from the documentation, public debate and discussions

with officials was that secondary reorganisation there constituted an enthusiastic effort to generate a concept of educational opportunity rather than an administrative exercise adjusting numbers of forms entry to existing buildings. The extent to which this reflected a desire on the part of the area to revitalise itself and rid itself from its grim 19th century heritage, how far it indicated an upsurge of idealism in its Labour conscience and how much it owed to particular individuals are questions for the sociologist.

Perhaps the "Guardian" correspondent was near to the truth when he wrote of its educational plan "Perhaps, at last, this is the city emergent. You hear, and are struck by the logic of it, that the area may well represent what the planners have been trying to create since the war: a city based on neighbourhood units, each with its traditions and communal spirit, each belonging eventually to the whole".¹

If the idea of the 6th Form College originated in Croydon it germinated in Stoke-on-Trent for over a decade before receiving Department approval and if sheer persistence in its planning is any criterion the College should be in the forefront of educational development in the 1970s.

Wigan:

Another Borough (Wigan) with a similar legacy of 19th century industrialism to that of Stoke-on-Trent, carried the Junior College idea to its logical conclusion in proposing a college for the 16-18 age group which would accommodate all vocational, non-vocational and academic full-time courses with three feeder comprehensive schools, 11-16. The

1 -Guardian 22.6.66.

small number of schools was due to the high proportion of aided schools in the borough.

Correspondence with the C.E.O. revealed the only recorded instance of a series of public lectures including one by Mr. Wearing King, the architect of the Croydon Plan. Despite the novelty of the plan the C.E.O. reported virtually no press correspondence on the issue.

As with many authorities a resolution calling for the implementation of comprehensive education ante-dated Circular 10/65 by a few months although the overwhelming Labour majority on the Council would have guaranteed the submission of a comprehensive scheme at any time after 1944.

A working party of 6 teachers and 6 committee members with the vice-chairman of the Education Committee as its chairman was set up. The C.E.O. prepared a short background report which offered two possible alternative schemes for reorganisation, a Leicestershire type with junior and senior high schools catering for pupils aged 11-14 and 14-16-18 respectively, or a system of junior comprehensive 11-16 schools with a 16+ junior college to accommodate 400 - 500 students and provide the widest range of courses.

A further report developed the two themes of the earlier one and dealt in detail with costs. The Leicestershire type scheme threatened to be twice as expensive as the 6th form college one and had an overriding educational disadvantage in that specialist teaching of languages and other subjects would be necessary in each of the junior high schools.

The alternative 6th Form College scheme offered more scope for experiment. It was planned to take into the College the two hundred

students aged between 16 and 18 who were studying for "O" and "A" levels or following secretarial, commercial, engineering or science courses at the local technical college.

A third scheme for three comprehensive schools for pupils aged 12-18 was outlined but costs and site difficulties precluded it from further consideration.

Discussions in the Working Party followed the pattern familiar in other areas, the principal resistance to the concept of the 6th form college came from the selective school teachers who favoured the continuity of secondary education. In the event, the Working Party agreed on a narrow vote to support the junior college and the scheme was submitted to the Department.

Exeter:

Meanwhile, another borough, Exeter, of similar size to Wigan but more favourably placed geographically and of a social composition far removed from that of the industrial north had reached its own decision on a 6th Form College. Again a working party ante-dated the Circular but its original terms of reference to advise on the desirability of abolishing the 11+ and introducing comprehensive education were amended to allow it to recommend the best way of implementing the change.

After consideration of the Circular's alternatives when all-through comprehensive schools were rejected as impracticable and variations on the two tier systems as educationally undesirable, the working party recommended the creation of a 6th Form College with contributory comprehensive schools.

The Boys' Grammar School was suggested as the 6th Form College. Some modifications would be required to accommodate girls and a total roll of between 435 and 500 pupils was anticipated. Admission would be regarded as a privilege rather than a right and facilities would be offered for re-takes of G.C.E. and possibly, C.S.E. subjects.

It was stated that the principal objective of this form of provision was to avoid multiplication of expensive accommodation, staffing and equipment and to give the maximum flexibility in the variety of courses - and possible voluntary activities. This argument was often used in preliminary papers and working party discussions but many individuals have expressed reservations about their validity.

The comprehensive schools would offer mixed or single sex education according to parental choice. The smallest would be 6 form entry, the largest 8 form entry and the whole system of comprehensive education would be introduced in progressive stages from 1967 onwards.

Oxford:

One feature common to most 6th Form College proposals is that they normally took root in small compact areas which were L.E.As in their own right or parts of larger Authorities. Most of them are in areas with populations around the 100,000 mark with the exception of the fairly sizeable cities Stoke-on-Trent, Nottingham and Southampton. Another common feature was the fact that the Labour party was firmly in control of most of these Authorities.

However, advocates of this system might well have paled when it promised to emerge as the final proposal for Oxford, a city not favoured

by repute for the success of the causes it espoused.

Its review committee was established prior to Circular 10/65 to consider a Council resolution of July 1964 that the 11+ should be abolished and an appropriate organisation of education proposed to achieve that purpose.

The Committee composed of 13 teachers and councillors produced its first interim report in May of 1965 in which it reviewed the possibility of various types of reorganisation and narrowed the field to either a series of 10 form entry all-through comprehensive schools or a two tier system with a break at 14.

From this date to mid 1966 the Committee met regularly making the inevitable pilgrimages incumbent on all who were charged with the task of reorganising secondary education in the mid ' sixties. A teach-in organised by the local branch of the Association for the Advancement of State Education showed support for various comprehensive systems fragmented over the whole range of the Circular's proposals and this was one factor which determined the Review Committee to propose two definite alternative schemes for debate rather than pursue consultation more extensively.

Before outlining the proposals the report of the Review Committee drew attention to certain considerations. The voluntary schools, Anglican and Roman Catholic, were co-operative and prepared to adopt the comprehensive principle. The Direct Grant and Independent schools in which the Authority supported a number of pupils were unwilling to integrate and the Committee concluded that the Authority's association with these schools ought not to continue.

On the size of comprehensive schools, it concluded that a 6 form entry school was the minimum size in order to ensure quality of staff recruitment, reasonably homogeneous forms or sets, the provision of adequate specialist rooms and economic deployment of staff. It also recommended, as much from reasons of logistics as from principle, that all the schools should be co-educational.

The Report then analysed three types of colleges for students aged over 16, the "A" level 6th Form College, the more general Junior College which would develop from it as it accepted more students wishing to pursue less academically biased courses and the College of Further Education in close association with which it would operate. In brief, the Junior College would accommodate school type courses, with certain borderline commercial and pre-nursing courses being appropriate to either institutions.

It was assumed that the College would need to provide 710 places and a new building estimated to cost about £300,000 would be sited near the projected College of Further Education. The transfer age would normally be 16 but there would be provision for some pupils to transfer at an earlier age.

The alternative scheme of all-through orthodox comprehensive schools each of 6 forms entry would, it was argued, provide small but viable 6th forms of about 100 each. Any difficulties with small subject groupings could be overcome by rationalisation to encourage certain schools to concentrate on specific subjects.

Finally, the Report specified the principal arguments in favour of both alternatives and left the final decision open.

In the two latter Authorities, both relatively small in population but one having small and the other large existing 6th forms the proposals were for separate 6th Form Colleges. The lack of "A" level candidates in the former would be compensated by creating a comprehensive college.

A variation on the theme of 6th Form College provision in another small Authority (Tynemouth) was to build a 6th form unit on the existing grammar school site which would be used in the transition period by the school and ultimately function independently. The existing grammar school would thus, Mexborough fashion, obtain its badly needed 6th form accommodation until reorganisation was completed. Eventually the use of the existing grammar school would be discontinued.

Like many Authorities, Tynemouth had been considering the question of 11+ selection since 1963 and was by 1965, as the C.E.Os report stated, able to consider the Circular against a background of knowledge which had been built up over an extended period of time.

The first reactions of the teachers to the Circular were hardly promising. Their four associations stated that they were not in favour of reorganising secondary education, at least at that stage, but three of the four favoured alternative (V) of the Circular.

A sub-committee including teacher representatives looked more closely at this and other schemes. All the secondary modern schools were single sex schools each of 450 pupils and built in pairs on adjacent sites. With additional 6th form accommodation and combined to form mixed schools, each would cater for 1,000 pupils but the resulting dispersal of 6th form work could hardly be justified on educational or economic grounds.

Even a two tier "Leicestershire" plan would involve the formation of three or four 6th forms whilst the logic of the situation demanded only one for the 200 existing 6th formers. Even so a 6th Form College of that size could not, on its own, expect to constitute a viable unit, hence the proposal that it should function in association with the existing grammar school until numbers of 6th formers had increased to warrant its autonomy.

Luton:

Whilst other boroughs had proposed 6th Form Colleges as early as the one of mid 'fifties' the first Department approvals for this type of reorganisation was given to Luton whose initial proposals were submitted in October, 1965 and agreed after some amendment. This Authority was also the first actually to appoint a principal of a 6th Form College, the headmaster of a grammar school in another Authority, and the only one at that time to produce a voluntary study group of teachers writing enthusiastically of their "Vision of a 6th Form College". Their report was noted widely in the press and it had extensive distribution in other areas.

The proposal submitted to the Department described, rather than advocated, the two tier system. One factor which it did emphasise in support of the viability of 11-16 schools was the growth of "O" level and C.S.E. courses in the existing secondary modern schools. This would provide a sound foundation for their future with the full, rather than restricted, range of ability. They would each take a 7 or 8 forms entry and all but two, which would remain single sex, would be mixed.

The original scheme of 1965 envisaged two single sex colleges but the Department suggested that a single mixed college would constitute

a more feasible organisation and the plan was amended accordingly. It was not intended that the 6th Form College should accommodate specifically vocational courses which would remain the province of the technical institutions. In fact the original scheme stressed the academic "A" level content of the college's courses with admission generally on a minimum of 4 "O" levels and resits catered for in the area high schools. In consultation with the Department, these limits were made more flexible in the finally approved scheme and a student could be admitted exceptionally if the head of the area high school and the principal of the 6th Form College agreed that the student on admission could cope successfully with a 6th form course with an "A" level content.

Despite the 11,000 signatures on a petition opposing the institution of a 6th Form College ¹ this Authority's college began to function in September 1966 and its principal, Mr. B.D. Dance described his first impressions in an article in the Times Educational Supplement ².

Basically academic in its orientation the College accepted 254 students in 1966 and applications had been received from 350 for admission in 1967. The total of "A" level subjects covered was 26 and variations of syllabus were greater than those possible in the largest comprehensive or more orthodox grammar school.

A course of general studies and English seemed compulsory but otherwise students were individually timetabled. Sports and games covered a wider range than the conventional school.

The students were encouraged to exercise responsibility for organising their own affairs through an elective college council with

1 Reported "Teacher" 25.3.66.
2 "Times Ed. Supplement" 21.7.67.

staff representatives and a system of election which allowed continuity of service. The Council appointed its own officials and controlled its own financial affairs, student amenities and societies.

A group tutor system whereby each student had a member of staff to whom he or she could turn for advice ensured that students should not lose their identity in a large institution in which they would spend the next two or three years. Each tutor had time provided on the timetable for meeting his group collectively or individually. The principal saw the strength of this system as the criterion by which the success of the College would be judged in the future.

Various problems had arisen during the College's first year of existence. Some of these involved accommodation and resulted from the conversion of a boys' grammar school into a mixed college. The principal's conclusion was that development would have been easier with a purpose-built college.

Few of the difficulties foreseen by opponents of the idea had materialised. Although the College was co-educational, experience showed that both sexes desired a degree of privacy and plans were in preparation to provide separate as well as joint common rooms. Clubs and societies were, however, flourishing and the students living and working together as responsible members of a large community.

There was an undisputable optimism in the principal's report. The case for economy in the use of highly qualified staff and scope for the introduction of minority subjects had been proved. Experiments in team

teaching and the application of closed circuit television were under consideration. After one year's existence and during a difficult transitional period the College promised to fulfil the expectations of those who had urged its institution.

Preston:

"For a year or more the debate was lively and sometimes bitter, both in the press and more privately, but the arguments were almost always educational and some people even altered their opinions."¹

At his own initiative the C.E.O. of Preston submitted his reappraisal of the organisation of secondary education in April 1964. Twenty years earlier the Authority had been faced with the formidable problem of 65% of its senior pupils being educated in all-age primary schools, the highest percentage in the country and attributable largely to the unusually high proportion of denominational schools. As a consequence, by 1965 only three of its eleven maintained secondary schools were of pre-war construction.

In his Report the C.E.O. outlined developments during the previous twenty years and re-examined the validity of a policy of separate types of secondary schools. He concluded that it inhibited the work of the primary schools, it did not satisfy parental wishes and that the old elementary schools redesignated as secondary modern schools had not achieved parental acceptance.

Moreover, developments not anticipated in 1944 had occurred in secondary schools. "Advanced" level work had increased beyond expectations,

¹ "Education" 3.3.67.

secondary modern schools were submitting candidates for G.C.E. and some were even beginning to undertake "A" level work. It was obvious that they could not provide the range of courses at this level that were available in grammar schools.

One idiosyncratic feature of this Authority's policy consisted of its refusal over twenty years to call a grammar school by that name. From 1944 onwards they were known as "seven year secondary schools". From these schools, 40% of pupils left after a 5 years course and some 25% went on to universities or some other form of higher education.

The conclusions were that the seven year school was not conducive to the establishment of two separate courses for pupils leaving at 16 and 18 respectively, and that a five year course in a seven year school was less responsive to the needs of individual pupils than the five year course in a five year school.

Investigations to test the validity of the 11+ selection procedure indicated that the prognosis was inaccurate for one in every four children selected for seven year schools and one in every twenty allocated to five year secondary schools. The conclusion was that unless all secondary schools could offer the same educational opportunity, equality of educational opportunity would never be achieved.

From these premises the Report proposed a new system of secondary education. This would consist of high schools catering for all pupils between the ages of 11 and 16 and a 6th form college for the older age group. Admission to the latter would not depend on formal qualifications

and courses would be varied to meet the requirements for admission to higher education. It was anticipated that the 6th Form College would house between 500 and 750 students and that its inclusion in the building programme for 1967-68 would enable reorganisation to be completed by 1970.

Following the publication of this Report in April 1964 there was a protracted period of public debate and it was not until December 1966 that the Borough Council finally approved this system of reorganisation for submission to the Department in accordance with Circular 10/65.

The development of the reorganisation debate in this Authority was punctuated by a series of memoranda reviewing progress. A year after the publication of the first Report the C.E.O. could report that 5,000 copies had been issued, 190 press references made, 40 meetings addressed and representations received from 31 interested bodies.

In terms of policy, by March 1965, it had been agreed that the 11+ should be concluded and the methods of achieving this examined in consultation at all stages with the Churches, teachers and parents.

In the following month a summary of the various methods in which comprehensive education could be organised was circulated to all interested bodies, 170 associations in all. These included churches, teachers, parents and other interested bodies but replies were received from only 20 of them.

The summary had first stated the aims of the education service in the context of the debate on reorganisation. It defined them as the need to free primary education from the inhibiting effects of external

selection procedures, to provide maximum opportunities for secondary school pupils and to improve the range and quality of 6th form courses in a more mature setting. In addition society required trained minds to maintain technological progress and individuals willing to serve the community.

After defining the three basic types of comprehensive organisation: one, two and three tier, the summary examined the feasibility of large comprehensive schools. The town's maintained school system would require two or three large comprehensive schools of eleven or more forms entry annually. This would involve either closing all existing secondary schools except two or three which could be suitably enlarged or amalgamating nine existing schools into two or three large comprehensive units.

The policy recommendation from the C.E.O. was that the Committee should record their intention not to include large comprehensive schools in their planning. This was in accordance with the comments received from the teachers' associations although one or two reserved the right to change their minds.

In the ensuing twelve months discussion continued and a group of head teachers working with the C.E.O. as a Consultative Committee produced a follow up study of the 1959 age group in February 1966.

This was one of the most impressive documents to emerge from reorganisation discussions in any L.E.A. From an 11+ age group of 1,856 boys and girls in 1959, the survey studied the careers of 1,328 at school. The 80 page report gave details of length of school life, reasons for leaving, "O" level results and comparisons with 11+ standardised scores, distributions of total standardised scores at 11+ and head teachers'

assessments of further education potential at 18 and their comparability with 11+ scores.

Compared to the prodigious effort which must have been entailed in this statistical exercise, the conclusions were relatively conventional. They proved the inaccuracy of predicting educational achievement at 16 or 18 from criteria obtained at 11+. They pin-pointed the existence of significant educational potential in non-selected children. They emphasised the need to provide 6th form opportunities for 25% of the age group, 10% destined for universities and 15% for other institutions of further education.

In accordance with previous practice this report was circulated to the 170 representative associations and bodies in March 1966. Only six replied and of these, four entered caveats about the interpretation of the statistics. One was the Joint Four and the other three were closely-associated with the Girls' Grammar School.

In June 1966 the Education Committee approved the general conclusions of the survey and agreed to base future planning on the expectation that 25% of the age group would proceed to higher and further education after the raising of the school leaving age.

At the same time the Committee received a draft memorandum on small comprehensive schools. The emphasis on 6th form work in earlier surveys was present in this brief document. It argued that a wider range of choice was necessary at 6th form level and this necessitated larger 6th forms. If existing secondary schools were made comprehensive they would be too small to provide adequate 6th form opportunities.

The Education Committee were, therefore, recommended to exclude this type of organisation from consideration and to examine the most suitable age of transfer in a two tier system. Of the 170 organisations to which the document was circulated, again 6 replied, of those only one objected to a two tier system. The recommendations in the memorandum were adopted by the Education Committee.

Having eliminated large and small all-through comprehensive schools from further consideration the issue of when to initiate the break in a two tier system was considered. In September 1966 a forty page booklet, Memorandum 5, was issued for public discussion. It explained the different types of two tier systems and posed the three principal issues, the age of transfer from primary to secondary education, whether there should be one or two types of second tier secondary schools and what the best age of transfer from one to the other should be.

The C.E.O's recommendation was that transfer at 11 should continue subject to a review on the publication of the Plowden Report. On the question of selective transfer at some age between 11 and 16 he argued that any system was as fallible as the existing 11+ procedure and that a subjective one involving parental choice would result in inequities not present in the current objective 11+ procedures. He recommended, therefore, that there should be one kind of junior comprehensive school and one kind of senior comprehensive school.

On the best age for transfer he cited cases of transfer at 13, 14 and 16. The first gave too short a period in the lower tier school but could be absorbed in a middle school system. However, such a system was

impracticable in his Authority as there was no spare primary accommodation for secondary age children in the primary schools or for primary age children in existing secondary schools.

Transfer at 14 would give only a two year course for 75% of the age group in the upper tier school and such a school in existing buildings would not provide a large enough 6th form. A junior comprehensive school for 11 to 16 year olds would give the opportunity for pupils to complete a full five years' course without a break in continuity. A senior comprehensive school would provide a break at an opportune time from the viewpoint of physical and psychological development. Equally it would provide a more adult environment and a useful preparation for leaving the support and protection of both home and school on transfer to further education at 18+. It was estimated that some 50% of the pupils would remain in the senior comprehensive school for three years and a small proportion for four.

The C.E.O's recommendation repeated that given two years earlier, namely that on educational grounds the Education Committee should plan a two tier organisation based on general transfer from junior to senior comprehensive school at 16 except for a limited transfer of a small number of pupils at 15. This latter caveat was admittedly debatable on educational grounds but was entered in order to preserve the practice in some of the grammar schools of early admission to the 6th form.

The junior comprehensive schools would be co-educational and cover the range of courses provided in existing selective and unselective schools. It was acknowledged that they should be ideally of 6 form entry

size and it was envisaged that the existing 5 form entry schools could be enlarged. They would present professional problems over courses, minority subjects and examinations but these were not considered insurmountable.

The C.E.O. acknowledged his indebtedness to his Consultative Committee of 14 secondary school head teachers and it would be their task to advise on these unresolved problems.

The senior comprehensive school would require a purpose-designed building to accommodate the 625 anticipated enrolments. It would be co-educational and likewise would present professional problems. Its relationships with institutions of further education offering full and part-time courses for 16 to 18 year olds were considered. The "junior college" catering for the whole age group was dismissed as "an administrative hybrid" but the possibility suggested of the senior comprehensive school occupying the same site as the branch college of further education and the two sharing the same governing body.

The memorandum concluded with a series of appendices giving various options from which the Committee could select to implement its policy. Eventually the voluntary bodies agreed to similar schemes for their schools and the recommendations were adopted and despatched to the Department in December, 1966.

Nottingham:

Proposals for creating 6th Form Colleges generally emerged from the smaller L.E.As., the county boroughs or excepted districts where one college would suffice for all post "O" level work.

One large city authority (Nottingham) where about a quarter of the

total number of 6th formers were drawn from bilateral schools catering for pupils up to "O" level saw "colleges of advanced secondary education" as a natural extension to their existing facilities.

Because of its size, the city's population exceeded 300,000 and in view of the variety of educational provision, grammar, comprehensive, bilateral and modern, the eventual pattern differed according to area. In one of these areas it was proposed to continue provision for "A" level work in the existing boys' comprehensive school which would become co-educational. Pupils from the other 5 form entry schools would undertake "A" level work in the comprehensive school. This area consisted of a large self contained estate of council housing detached from the city itself and in which the birth-rate was showing a sharp decline. Previously its facilities had included in addition to the boys' grammar school three girls' schools, grammar, bilateral and modern.

The older area of the city would, it was proposed, be served by six colleges of advanced secondary education of an average anticipated size of 250. Nineteen secondary schools, predominantly co-educational but retaining some single sex schools initially, would provide education up to "O" level and C.S.E. In size they would range between 5 form and 8 form entry but would in some cases continue as 4 form entry for an initial period.

The most prominent exception to this rule in terms of size was the 2 form entry C. of E. aided mixed grammar school which would become an 11 to 16 school. The existence of one independent boys' school and one direct grant girls' school which admitted 31 pupils annually from the city

might have proved a complication in planning comprehensive education. However, as they constituted less than 0.7% of each age group and as the schools had a long association with educational provision in the city it was decided to continue this arrangement. Selection arrangements in recent years had ensured that children were admitted from all areas of the city and this policy was to continue pending a decision by the central government on the future of direct grant and independent schools.

The planning for colleges of advanced secondary education was based on an existing 1,100 pupils aged 16 to 19 in existing maintained schools and an anticipated increase to 1,600 after the raising of the school leaving age and taking into account the rise in the birth rate. There were also, in 1965, 780 full-time and 5,500 part-time students in colleges of further education and these were expected to increase to 1,200 and 8,000 respectively.

Three of the proposed colleges would be situated in geographical proximity and it was suggested that some co-ordination of teaching arrangements could be effected to create a unit of 560 students. The remaining four would be small compared to most colleges proposed elsewhere.

The difference in approach and method expected in these colleges were outlined in the report. Students were referred to as "young men and women". The colleges would be open from 9.30 a.m. to 8.30 p.m. for continual use of specialist facilities and libraries. Students would be timetabled individually but would belong to tutor sets. The teacher student ratio would probably be 1:13 and some teaching would be assigned to staff of the lower tier secondary schools. There would also be

opportunities for staff of the university and polytechnic to visit and help to bridge the gap between secondary and higher education.

The colleges would be essentially academic and concerned with studies necessary to secure admission to higher education. The relatively high failure rate, 15%, for higher education award holders in the city added strength to the argument that the nature of the colleges would provide a sounder basis for preparation for higher education than small 6th forms of very large comprehensive schools.

There would be opportunities for other students to follow courses of further education of a less arduous character in the colleges and one of them would be available for part-time students pursuing "A" level courses for professional examination purposes. Studies of a vocational nature would, however, be concentrated in the colleges of further education. It was anticipated a considerable expansion in courses for Ordinary National Diplomas in various disciplines would take place and the Authority envisaged an integrated system of education for the 16 to 19 age group allowing for some interchange of teaching staff between colleges of further and advanced secondary education.

The keynote of this plan was flexibility and a readiness to avoid a rigid prescription of function which might inhibit future development in the overlapping fields of secondary and further education. The timing of the first stage of the transition was subject to approval of capital expenditure but, in May 1967, a change in the political control of the council suspended the scheme as the new Committee placed on record their right to review it. Even so their predecessors had, in their comments

on the timing of the scheme, stated that if a choice had to be made between implementing secondary reorganisation and improving old primary schools, especially in the overcrowded areas of the city centre, they would give precedence to the latter.

Southampton:

A pattern of organisation containing four 6th Form Colleges was decided upon in Southampton in 1966. The process began with the circulation in December 1965 of a report originally submitted to the Education Committee by the Chief Education Officer. This was distributed to interested bodies as a basis for discussion and their written comments invited.

Basically the Report consisted of a feasibility study of the application of each of the alternative forms of secondary reorganisation outlined in Circular 10/65. The part referring to 6th Form Colleges emphasised the pressure on existing 6th form accommodation. It was anticipated that by 1969 the percentage of each age group taking a 6th form course would be 18 and that this would rise to 20% by 1971. On this basis, an 8 form entry all-through comprehensive school would produce a 6th form of between 90 and 120 pupils. The total requirement for 6th form places by 1970 would be between 1,200 and 1,400.

Given a transfer of 10% of each age group (3,000) to 6th form colleges at 15+ in addition to normal admissions at 16+ and allowing for 3rd year 6th formers staying beyond "A" level the total number for 1971 could be between 1,700 and 1,800 students.

As the four existing maintained grammar schools had equivalent accommodation for 1,860 6th formers it was feasible that suspended intakes

of pupils over a four years' period would allow building work on adaptations to provide four colleges. Pupils who at the age of 11 had previously been admitted to the grammar schools could be absorbed into existing and projected secondary schools which could become comprehensive.

On staffing, the Report envisaged 6th form teachers with teaching assignments akin to those of college lecturers. A student-staff ratio of 10:1 was anticipated. Equally, the contributory comprehensive schools would require more favourable staffing ratios than the existing secondary modern schools to afford adequate coverage of a wider range of ages and subjects.

This section of the Report acknowledged that schools in certain areas of the city might develop stronger and wider academic courses than those in others by virtue of the proportion of academically able children admitted. Although it would be unfortunate if a hierarchy of comprehensive schools were to develop, difficulties would arise from any administrative solution involving socially comprehensive catchment areas.

After the observations of various bodies had been received the Education Committee set up a professional working party under the chairmanship of the Chief Education Officer to prepare detailed proposals for reorganisation based on unselective comprehensive secondary schools for 11 to 16 year olds followed by 6th form or junior colleges for all pupils desiring continued full-time education after 16, or 15 in appropriate cases.

Comprised of representatives of all the professional associations

and representative heads and assistants from other secondary schools the Professional Working Party published its report in July 1966. They advised transfer from infants' to junior schools at the age of 8+ and transfer to secondary schools at 12+.

On the question of secondary reorganisation they saw the development of secondary colleges (16-19) as logical extensions of the existing traditions and excellence of the maintained grammar schools. Their number and variety would offer scope for the development of experiments already begun in 6th forms.

Other advantages they noted were the postponement of segregation for as long as possible, the fact that secondary colleges with wide catchment areas would offset any disadvantages arising from "neighbourhood" comprehensive schools, the recognition of earlier maturity, the provision of a more adult atmosphere and the prospect of better preparation for universities and further education.

The potential disadvantages were not overlooked. All the 12-16 schools would not have, initially, equality of resources and staffing. Some highly qualified teachers would not wish to teach in schools which offered no 6th form work. Continuity of study would be broken and a 2 years course would be a short time for staff and students to establish worthwhile relationships and build up a satisfactory community. Secondary colleges would constitute yet another stratum into the educational structure, one which might appear to give privilege without responsibility at an age when many were not ready to exercise it. Finally, staffing might prove difficult unless conditions were created comparable

to those operative in universities and colleges of education.

However, the attraction of working in a completely new kind of educational organisation with its opportunities for experiment and the and the development of new concepts was expected to arouse a challenging response from teachers.

The plan was approved by the Secretary of State but the change of political control at the municipal elections of May 1967 prompted a review of the proposals with a view to retaining the grammar schools in their present form.¹

Rotherham:

One of the first county boroughs in the country literally to abolish the 11+ selection procedure in 1966 was Rotherham. During the late 1950's there had been considerable conflict within the Authority when two selective technical schools had been converted into non-selective secondary schools. Compared with this the proposals to create a 6th form college with non-selective contributory comprehensive schools provoked little adverse comment or criticism.

As in many Authorities the process of reorganisation began well in advance of 1965. The original decision to consider a change in the organisation of secondary education was taken in October 1963. Professional associations and other interested bodies were allowed to submit their observations and early in 1965 the Education Committee was advised to develop a system of comprehensive secondary schools of reasonable size

1 "The Teacher" 30.6.67.
"The Guardian" 3.7.67.

for pupils aged 11 to 16 with progression to advanced work in one or more 6th form colleges. The Director of Education was asked to prepare the scheme and to form a working party to assist.

The first recommendations of the working party were presented in October and November 1965. They recommended comprehensive secondary schools of not less than 6 form entry, i.e. 900 pupils and asked for reasonable care in the allocation of zones to avoid social bias emerging in any particular schools.

Although the main purpose of the 6th form college would be to prepare students for university entrance it was anticipated that other courses of a more general nature would be provided. They recommended early transfer for pupils of exceptional ability and that, initially, one college of 500 students should be planned in the premises of the existing grammar school.

Prepared in September 1965, this report recommended early implementation of the scheme by the abolition of the 11+ in 1966, the transfer of all first year 6th form courses in September 1968 and of all sixth form work completely in September 1969.

In November 1965, the Secretary of State's approval in principle was received and the Education Committee decided to abandon 11+ selection forthwith and to proceed with an accelerated plan which involved ending admissions to the grammar school in 1966 instead of in 1967 which had been proposed by the consultative committee.

The latter continued in existence but was divided into four groups

to consider problems of staffing, curriculum, building, equipment and anticipated numbers on roll. The results of their deliberations were similar to those undertaken in other areas with common problems. It was recommended that admissions should be socially balanced if possible and that major alterations should be undertaken in the grammar school/6th form college.

They accepted that minority subjects in the comprehensive schools might present difficulties and two possible solutions were offered: either a peripatetic teacher based on the college or a group of schools or the creation of subject centres which pupils could attend for specialist teaching. The consultative committee were undecided on where pupils should attempt to retrieve "O" level failures and left it to discretion in individual cases for the work to be done in either the secondary school, the 6th form college or the college of further education.

Entrance requirements for the 6th form college would not be stipulated in terms of a specific number of "O" level passes and it was anticipated that the range of "A" level subjects would be broader than that operative in the existing grammar schools.

On staffing, it was assumed that the initial college of 337 students would require a staff of 33 and they recommended that appointments should be made with regard to experience, qualifications and service and the need to ensure a balance of men and women and a balanced age structure.

On the question of movement between college and schools no clear recommendation was made: nor was any made on the designation of the Headmaster or Headmistress. They did, however, propose that the college

be called Rotherham School and that the school day should continue to begin with the customary act of public worship.

As in a number of schemes of reorganisation considered prior to the publication of Circular 10/65 the necessity of weighing the advantages and disadvantages of the various alternatives outlined in the Circular did not arise in Rotherham. As in other Authorities which were in process of reorganisation during the late '50's and early '60's the precise point when one individual or group became convinced that comprehensive schools and a 6th form college were the most appropriate form of secondary education remains an intriguing question.

The London Boroughs

Of the 20 newly created or enlarged London boroughs, half expressed no interest in the idea of a 6th form college and in only one, Ealing, were definite proposals submitted during 1966. Many of them, in their reports on possible ways of implementing Circular 10/65 gave details of the general concept of the 6th form college with the advantages and disadvantages entailed in this type of organisation. For example, the C.E.Os' report for Barnet gave a fair summary of arguments and noted that the Circular was lukewarm in its support for this principle. In Brent where preparatory thoughts on secondary reorganisation began in 1964, a working party of teachers eliminated the 6th form college from serious consideration at its first meeting, a decision prompted partly by the advocacy of grammar school members and partly by building logistics.

In Enfield it was considered alongside other proposals. The Education Committee were given a clear description of the various proposals made in other Authorities and an unbiased assessment of advantages and disadvantages. The Committee were then asked to consider the advisability of locating a college as an extension of an existing school or in a purpose built unit. Following this the question of the range of work it was proposed to cover in such a college was posed. Should it be restricted to "A" level or carried to its logical conclusion and become the centre for the continued education of the 16 to 18 age group?

Doubts were expressed about the possibility of recruiting suitable staff for the junior comprehensive schools without the attraction of

6th form work and it was anticipated that there would be particular difficulties with regard to minority subjects. Finally an exhaustive accommodation survey and feasibility study into various combinations of school sizes and organisation concluded the report and the Committee eventually decided on a tiered system with 6th form facilities in accordance with developments described in Building Bulletin 25.

Haringey was faced with a problem similar to Enfields. Any two tier system involving a break at 16 would inevitably become three tier as existing school buildings were not large enough to accommodate the necessary number of forms entry to create sizeable comprehensive units. Taking into account current limits on capital expenditure any scheme of 6th form colleges would entail creating new 6th form places to compensate for under use of those already in existence.

The Chief Education Officer had presented a report which listed the customary advantages and disadvantages of 6th form colleges but apart from an A.T.T.I. proposal that there should be a new junior college for 16 to 18 year old part-time and full-time students there was little enthusiasm for the idea.

In Hounslow the initial plan produced by a working party of teachers included provision for three 6th form colleges. However, as it was not thought that the three proposed colleges could be adequately filled without seriously affecting the 6th forms of full range comprehensive schools, two were deleted. After further discussion the Education Committee deleted the remaining one and decided on a policy of full range comprehensive schools.

The decisive factor was probably a close acquaintance with existing full range comprehensive schools as much as a lack of any adequate body of experience of 6th form colleges.

During its existence as a division of Middlesex County Council the borough of Harrow had adopted proposals for the reorganisation of secondary education including the establishment of a 6th form college. These had fallen into abeyance during the implementation of county borough status but were revived in the alternative proposals outlined by the Chief Education Officer after the receipt of Circular 10/65.

After stating certain general assumptions such as the raising of the school leaving age, the raising of the age of transfer from primary schools to 12+, the abolition of selection, the limitations of existing buildings, the continuing shortage of teachers and the need for coeducational schools and single sex ones the report offered two alternative schemes of reorganisation.

The first offered six comprehensive schools with a full age range, twelve with an age range from 12 to 16 and one Senior College for 16 to 18+. Transfers within the system would be expected to operate largely at the age of 16 when pupils from the four year schools would have the option of continuing their education either in the Senior College or the full range comprehensive schools. As it was stipulated that the latter would be the first choice of parents prepared to give a firm undertaking that their children would remain at school until the age of 18 it throws some doubt on the calibre of recruitment to the Senior College. Amongst the disadvantages listed in the concluding section of this scheme it seemed

possible that pressure of parental choice on certain schools would result in a certain measure of selection.

The second scheme outlined was, however, more orthodox. It proposed a simple system of common secondary schools of the 12 to 16 age range, High Schools, followed by Junior Colleges to cater for pupils wishing to continue their education beyond 16.

This scheme was based on the strength of grammar school 6th form work, the readiness of 15 and 16 year olds to assume leadership in a comprehensive school and the desirability of providing a more adult atmosphere for the pupils between 16 and 18. Four such colleges, based on existing grammar schools, were recommended to be served by eleven comprehensive schools.

The ultimate fate of this proposal and that of Ealing where three such colleges were proposed has not been announced.

The Counties

Of the 46 counties in England, excluding London County Council, 38 replied to the enquiry. Details of proposals for the remainder have appeared in the Educational press. In June 1966, 14 County L.E.As. were seriously considering the establishment of 6th Form Colleges in parts of their areas whilst one, Yorkshire West Riding L.E.A. had pioneered the provision of separate 6th Form accommodation in one of its maintained Grammar Schools, Mexborough. The Mexborough Plan is considered elsewhere in this study and is different from the types envisaged in the other counties.

Every county L.E.A. as part of the process leading to submission of schemes of comprehensive reorganisation could be expected to give, at least, token consideration to the Circular's alternatives. In addition, a number of counties contain Excepted Districts, compact and sizeable boroughs controlled by their own Education Committees, though bound to the County Council by financial and administrative ties. Each Excepted District has considerable powers in determining the type of secondary school organisation in its own area. Likewise, the Divisional Executives into which many of the larger counties are divided were given varying powers of choice though subject more directly to the policy of the parent Education Committee.

Inevitably, few Counties could produce consistent schemes without variations for particular localities. It could hardly be otherwise when it is recalled that the English Counties cover population ranges from

Lancashire's 2,230,000, the West Riding's 1,730,000 and Essex's 1,055,000 to Rutland's 27,000.

In terrain and social composition they range from Cumberland and Westmorland with their largest towns only 30,000 strong to the densely built up industrial areas of S.W. Lancashire and West Riding, and the agrarian regions of Lincolnshire, Kesteven, and the commuter belts of the Home Counties.

Where a policy of uniformity has been propounded the impression gained from accompanying statistics is that of a declaration of intention which will leave comprehensive education as distant in 1988 as the completion of the original Development Plans of 1946 are twenty years after their submission.

The great majority of the English Counties were not prepared to consider 6th Form Colleges as serious propositions. This was particularly so in the largely rural areas where the absence of towns of any size, say above 50,000 in population precluded a 16 plus selective age group large enough to maintain a separate college. In one (Northamptonshire) "it was felt that this type of organisation was not applicable in rural areas and that even in the urban areas of the county it was doubtful whether a large enough 6th Form College could be produced to form a suitable unit". The Working Party Report for this county does, however, describe an exercise studying the implementation of a 6th Form College scheme based on the catchment area of one of the grammar schools. This report considered "the

3 or 4 form entry 11-16 school too small a unit to provide for the needs of the full ability range, a 5 form entry probably being the absolute minimum which could be considered reasonable". The Working Party opted for a Doncaster type plan where, after two years in common secondary schools, transfer to grammar schools would be at parental option.

. Another rural county, Rutland, narrowed their choice to a two tier system or a 6th form college. A small sub-committee examined the alternatives and produced arguments for and against a 6th form college which were similar to those used elsewhere. Difficulties over small contributory schools in isolated villages, additional expenditure and the Secretary of State's intention to approve only a limited number of such experiments all helped to sway opinion against the idea and to lead to further consideration of a two tier Doncaster type system if the Secretary of State obtained and used legal powers to compel the L.E.A. to reorganise on comprehensive lines.

In Somerset, again the problem of a dispersed population and the necessity to establish wide catchment areas was a consideration affecting the viability of a 6th form college type of reorganisation. The C.E.O. felt that transfer at 16 might discourage staying on and that the smaller 11-16 schools would have difficulty in recruiting staff who might otherwise have been attracted by some proportion of 6th form work.

The teachers' associations were asked what they considered to be the minimum size for 11-16 schools. The extent to which their replies were based on feasibility studies is not known. They certainly illustrate the

full range of opinion from 4 f.e. to 8 f.e. whilst a second question asking them to state the advantages and disadvantages of a 6th form college type of organisation reflected the current of thought in the profession over the country generally. In this county the climate of opinion favoured single all-through 11-18 comprehensive schools.

The C.E.O. of West Suffolk prepared an exhaustive report on reorganisation which summarised the situation in his county and considered various possibilities. This was distributed to every primary and secondary teacher and every school manager and governor in the county. It contained a sympathetic summary of the case for and against the 6th form college and included a statistical table showing the estimated numbers available for 6th form colleges. In this instance the C.E.O. had expected more interest in the establishment of 11-16 schools, with a superstructure of 6th form colleges but a considerable number of secondary teachers had doubted the capacity of the schools to cater well for the full range of ability. They had also expressed concern at the wastage which might occur if a break at 16 were implemented.

In Lincolnshire (Holland) a report from the C.E.O. followed a ballot amongst teachers to assess their preferences. This showed that in the view of those who had seriously discussed the matter two preferences only were considered relevant to the circumstances of the L.E.A., a fairly extensive area with a dispersed population and only two towns of any size.

The schemes preferred were one incorporating a 6th form college, the other a three tier 5 - 9 - 13+ system. The C.E.O.'s document first

eliminated the other alternatives given in Circular 10/65. Comprehensive schools for 11-18 year olds would make all existing buildings redundant and would need to be 1,500 strong to produce a viable 6th forms of 100 or more. The County's percentage of 6th formers was not high, 5% of the secondary school population. Apart from possibly the two main towns, this form of organisation would be impracticable.

Three schemes involving transfers at 13 and 14 and at 11, 10 and 12 invited criticism on educational and practical grounds. A proposal from the governors of one of the grammar schools suggested the implementation of comprehensive education by giving parents a free choice at 11 yrs. Apart from the undoubted complication involved in planning for the unknown the C.E.O. remarked that it was understood that the Department of Education & Science "do not consider it within the spirit of Circular 10/65".

The 6th Form College scheme had, however, the support of a significant majority of the bodies and organisations who had considered the problem including the County N.U.T., the N.A.H.T., the N.A.S. and A.T.T.I. The Report devotes 11 lines to the arguments for, and 40 to criticism of the idea of the 6th form colleges. It is clear from the tone of the comments that this type of organisation was not favoured.

The ensuing section criticised the prescription of minimum standards in G.C.E./C.S.E. as contrary to the comprehensive principle. But to admit all post 16 pupils to one or two 6th form colleges would draw students from existing courses in Colleges of Further Education and lead to a possible duplication of resources and equipment.

However, many 6th form teachers would react sharply against confinement to "ivory towers" and specialist teachers would be scarce in the 11-16 schools

The children would suffer, 6th form teachers spot the academically bright at an early stage and bring them on. The C.E.O. testifies to this truth from his own direct, personal experience as a teacher. Finally the difficulties involved in four year "O" level courses and early transfer to a separate college forced the conclusion that this type of organisation should not be further considered. "It is necessary to agree with the County Joint Four Association that 5-11, 11-16 and 16+ organisation is wrong in educational principle and, for practical reasons, wholly unsuitable for the County".¹ It is only fair to add that, in a letter accompanying the report, the County Education Officer mentioned strong support from the N.U.T. for a 6th form college.

1 Report on Sec. Reorg. by County Education Officer.

Detailed Proposals Herefordshire:

Although it is customary for administrators to claim that politics are not the concern of education committees and that their own political feelings do not affect their actions it is understandable that the political-educational complexion of the committee and the council should determine the decision in matters of secondary reorganisation. Few officials tender advice so unpalatable that its rejection is inevitable. Educational administration, like politics, consists of the art of the possible.

Of the 45 English counties at the time of the enquiry (June 1966) 26 had either considered and rejected the possibility of 6th form colleges or their plans were still at a formative stage and this type of organisation unlikely to emerge as firm proposals.

There were, however, counties where serious thought was being given to this form of organisation, usually in one or two areas where circumstances were favourable.

Herefordshire's plan for the reorganisation of secondary education contained a proposal for a 6th form college in the county town to serve the city itself and the surrounding rural area. The County itself is predominantly rural and likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. Its existing grammar schools were all of two form entry - with one single form entry scheduled for closure. Its secondary modern schools all had G.C.E. "O" level streams and some entered candidates for "A" level.

A Working Party of eleven members, three of whom were teachers was set up in November 1964 prior to the issue of Circular 10/65. Its

first step had been to invite all interested parties to submit their recommendations. These initial invitations were followed by meetings with teachers, public meetings and press publicity which, not surprisingly, revealed that there were many divergent opinions and no general unanimity on the subject of comprehensive education.

The Working Party reported in April 1966 to the Education Committee and 3,000 copies of its report were circulated to all full-time teachers in the county, members of various councils, governors of schools, parent teacher associations and interested individuals. Organisations and individuals were invited to submit observations if they wished.

The Report itself was not untypical of those being produced in Authorities all over the country at that time. What was, perhaps, untypical was the extent of its circulation.

Its early pages summarised the current situation regarding selective schools. Details of their intakes were followed by an analysis of "A" level subject entries and examination successes. Small figures predominated. One small grammar school yielded eight "A" level subject passes in 1965 and although the larger schools had sizeable subject groupings the overall picture was one of teaching resources thinly dispersed over an extensive area. In a sense, this could hardly be otherwise in a rural county although there were a few "A" level entries from secondary modern schools.

The particular problems of a rural county were evident when the Report considered each of the Secretary of State's alternative permanent methods of organising comprehensive education. All-through comprehensive schools of 6 or 7 form entry could operate in only three of the more populous areas of the county. To create comprehensive units large enough

to support 6th forms would involve the extension of existing catchment areas involving lengthy journeys for the children.

A two-tier "Leicestershire" system was not favoured by the teachers and would create small units. One reason for the professional objection to this was the growing prestige of the secondary modern schools. In five years their "O" level entries and passes had more than doubled and there was strong support from the teachers for reorganisation to strengthen this trend by adding specialist accommodation and staff to cover normal grammar school courses to "O" level in the modern schools.

Other factors strengthened the 6th form college argument. The percentage of children remaining at school voluntarily after reaching statutory leaving age was rising quite rapidly and it was predicted that in seven or eight years time the numbers wishing to take advantage of 6th form provision might not be far short of 1,000. A college of this size was considered too large and, if located in the county town, might tend to draw population away from the rural areas. A division of 6th form accommodation appeared more feasible particularly as it would either obviate or considerably reduce the need for boarding education of which many pupils had been reluctant to take advantage in the past.

The middle school system was dismissed in two brief paragraphs, even with a transfer age of 11+ a recent review of the Primary School Development Plan had envisaged at least half a dozen 2 class primary schools with fewer than 50 pupils on roll. The transfer of the 9-11 age group would make them even smaller.

The conclusions of the Committee were that a uniform plan for the whole county would not be possible, that it would not be practicable to specify a date for a change over from the bi-partite system and that considerable research would be necessary before a 6th form college could be introduced. However, a change could be made progressively and phased over a number of years. Reservations were expressed about the expenditure which would need to be incurred in secondary education and the staff required, diverting resources from the primary schools.

The Plan which followed dealt in detail with the implications of reorganisation for different areas and schools. In some areas all through comprehensive schools 11-18 would be provided, in others they would be restricted to the 11-16 age group, in one area a two tier 9-13 and 13-18 system would operate whilst in the county town itself a 6th form college would be formed on the site of one of the existing selective schools with 11-16 feeder schools.

The implementation of this last proposal was proposed to commence in 1968 with a run down of selective intakes into two selective schools and a conjunction of the two in September 1971 becoming a 6th form college in 1973 when the last selective intake had reached the age of 16+.

In the remainder of the report various factors including parental rights under Section 76 of the Education Act of 1944, the appointment of teaching staff and catchment areas were considered. At the time of writing the Department's approval was awaited. In view of exercises by a Department study group on the optimum size for a 6th form college referred to later

(page 119) the small size of the proposed college - 200 students - would attract criticism. There is no evidence, however, that the Department's calculations took into account the size of 6th forms of the type existing in this county in 1965.

Isle of Wight:

Another County L.E.A. which approached the 6th Form College and 11-16 comprehensive schools solution to its reorganisation problems was the Isle of Wight. When consideration began in late 1965 the Education Committee gave the C.E.O. and his staff "carte blanche" to devise a system of comprehensive education in full consultation with the teaching profession in the county. The intention of this was to allow a consensus of opinion to emerge but not for a series of majority decisions to force the issue. The teachers were given every opportunity to participate in numerous study groups set up by the Teachers' Consultative Committee which itself was a permanent body representative of all teachers.

Briefs were prepared by the C.E.O. and ultimate reports of their proceedings were drafted by him. Copies of these reports were circulated to the schools and the C.E.O. and his deputy also met staffs in schools and spoke to meetings of teachers' organisations.

The Consultative Committee asked for a study to be compiled of the feasibility of an 11 - 16 schools and 6th Form College type of organisation for the county and this was duly produced, prefaced by the relevant extract of paragraphs 17 and 18 of the Circular. The study was one of the few documents published by the Authorities which specifically mentioned the

assistance received from the study group at the Department of Education and Science which confirmed that in numerical terms, i.e. a College of 600 students, the project was a possibility.

The study listed impartially the customary arguments for and against the 6th Form College. It cited the literature on the subject as unhelpful and mentions Wearing King's article (see p.148) and subsequent correspondence and the fact that two Authorities had received Department approval.

The general tone of the rest of the study was one of caution and doubt. The growth of extended school life did not entail changes of school under the existing system. "The introduction of a 6th Form College would impose it (change) universally. It must be open to serious question whether this is a move in the right direction".¹

, Furthermore, it threatened "to introduce another layer into an already over-stratified system". This is the only report which predicted the possibility of such a system adversely affecting the average ability group. "The point at which a 6th Form College takes over this stratum of the school population is the point at which the secondary school must begin to diminish its involvement with preparation for the transition from school to life, and this could have a backwash effect, more particularly in the Newsom area".²

Rather less obscure was the point that 15 and 16 year olds - as much as 18 year olds - have little in common with 11 year olds. The two former age groups have more in common with each other and more to gain mutually from education together.

1 C.E.O's report

2 Ibid.

. Perhaps the most telling point in the document - supported by statistics from the Department's Study Group - was that, despite growth in numbers, the normal 6th form remained an integral part of the school and was taught by staff who linked their "A" level teaching with work in the lower school.

"The 6th form does not, therefore, appear as a system which, in a normal evolutionary course, is growing away from the main school, but as a part of the organic whole which is in a state of vigorous growth. It must be concluded that the surgery proposed does not arise from educational necessity but solely from organisational expediency."¹

The lack of enthusiasm for 6th Form Colleges in Circular 10/65 and the likelihood of experiments being sanctioned in areas where they would do least harm, i.e. "where existing weakness in 6th form provision reduces the likelihood of loss from experimental change"², and the fact that one had been envisaged in the county, not as an end in itself but as a means of making 11 - 16 comprehensive schools possible found a sympathetic ear in the Report.

Contributory comprehensive schools would need to be at least 6 form entry (Department conclusions) or 8 form entry (other L.E.A. projects) strong to be viable. Few schools in the county were of more than 3 form entry size. Even if larger units were created the tendency to preoccupation with the academic entry would be intensified at a time when the greatest need was to find extra resources for the less gifted pupils.

1 Ibid.

2 "

Even so, the specialist subject teachers in the existing grammar schools would be thinly spread through the 11-16 schools after sufficient had been retained to staff the 6th Form College. Doubt remained that the 11-16 school would be attractive to good teachers of any kind in competition with comprehensive schools elsewhere. The views of the Study Group were summarised thus. "Whether or not the basic idea is sound, and it has been shown that considerable doubt must exist on this score, to plan on a basis of small 11-16 comprehensive schools would be to plan for maximum fragmentation, for maximum weakness and strain, and minimum margin of energies to meet new and urgent developments. It would involve working against odds that ought not to be presented." Ultimately, the Authority adopted a 3 tier, 5-9, 9-13 and 13-18 system for the county.

Excepted Districts and Divisions of County Authorities occupy a unique place in the administrative structure of education as a result of the 1944 Education Act. The former, particularly, normally enjoy extensive delegated powers and the right to appeal to the Secretary of State in cases of dispute with the parent Authority. Divisions occupy a less strictly defined position and the extent of their delegated powers varies from one county to the next. Indeed, not all counties have adopted this form of organisation. Equally, in some counties the Divisional Education Officer is a professional administrator, graduate and often teacher-trained whilst in others the post is regarded as one which can be occupied by non-graduate clerical/administrative officers.

Scunthorpe, Lindsey:

A number of Districts and Divisions proposed 6th Form Colleges to their County Committees and if all the proposals were accepted the English Counties would have almost as many of these colleges as the Boroughs.

One example is Scunthorpe, an industrial enclave in a predominantly rural and dispersed county. As early as 1963 the inevitable Working Party of four teachers and four education committee members had been set up and asked to advise on the abolition of the 11+ and the formulation of a scheme of comprehensive organisation. They reported in 1964 in favour of a 6th form college of 500+ pupils with comprehensive 8 forms entry high schools to cater for pupils aged 11-16.

The implications of different schemes within the county authority which arose from the provision of grammar school places in the borough for children from nearby villages were examined at a series of meetings between representatives of the borough and the county special sub-committees. In addition public meetings and private meetings with staff involved were held. Ultimately the county education committee, after having been satisfied with arrangements for the advertisement nationally for the headship of the 6th Form College and other details agreed that the scheme was viable and could be supported.

Newcastle-under-Lyme:

Whilst Scunthorpe was a Labour controlled council in a Conservative county, Newcastle-under-Lyme was a Labour controlled council in a county area which had helped pioneer all-through comprehensive schools in the early post-war years. It, too, initiated a proposal for a 6th Form

College for its area.

Its education sub-committee considered and rejected all-through comprehensive schools on the grounds that each would not give rise to a viable 6th form and if "A" level teaching were restricted to certain schools, this would place pupils who had to transfer at a disadvantage and the better qualified teachers would tend to gravitate towards them. Probably not uninfluenced by the example of a nearby borough authority they opted for a number of comprehensive schools of 5 or 6 forms entry and an age range of 11 to 16 with a 6th Form College.

It was reasoned that the area could be divided into socially comprehensive units and the new organisation fitted into the existing buildings. These proposals were put to representatives of the teachers' associations and secondary school governors. As in other areas the principal professional opposition came from selective school staffs and the governors of existing grammar schools.

The principal administrative interest in this scheme, as with a similar one from another division in the county, would be in the attitude of the Secretary of State on receipt of the parent county's proposals which reject the Districts' plans as not being in accord with their practice.

Lancashire: Widnes.

Not all county authorities adopted this attitude. One large county (Lancashire) with numerous divisions each enjoying a high degree of freedom delegated to them the submission of schemes for their areas within a

general policy framework which excluded only the two tier systems with transfer at guided parental option.

The consequence was that four of the divisions and one excepted district had in July 1966 proposed schemes involving the creation of 6th form colleges. One plan was withdrawn after the cancellation of a projected overspill development. Of the remainder, one was to house 400 students, two 650 students and one 350 students.

In all cases the initial decisions locally were taken by divisional working parties consisting of elected members and representatives of all the teachers' associations. Although the Joint Four opposed the establishment of 6th form colleges as being educationally unsound public comment on the proposals had been mainly favourable.

This pattern was followed in the excepted district of Widnes. Despite the existence of boys' and girls' grammar schools between 25% and 50% of the age group remained voluntarily in the maintained secondary modern schools for 5th year courses. Any type of reorganisation which truncated these schools to fit a Leicestershire pattern was strongly resisted. Equally they were too small - and of recent construction - to enlarge into all-through comprehensive schools.

The inexorable logic of this situation led to a proposal for comprehensive schools from 11 to 16 followed by education in a purpose built 6th form college. The arguments in favour of the idea and opposing it were the customary ones. The problem of comprehensive school teachers not being able to teach "A" level work was ameliorated by a proposal

for "bridge" appointments to enable some teachers to work part of their timetables in each sector.

The 6th form college itself was intended primarily for "A" level work but it was anticipated that general courses would be provided and the extensive links existing between schools and further education in the area would be strengthened.

Essex:

If it were possible to devise the most favourable circumstances for the establishment of a 6th form college in any particular area, probably the most important single feature would be the existence of only one selective school which itself could be converted into the college. This was, in fact, one of the reasons given for the smooth progress of the proposal in a division of one of the largest counties in England, Essex.

A divisional working party had considered reorganisation for almost two years before the publication of Circular 10/65 and had consulted teaching and governors' interests at every stage.

The area was one of rapidly expanding population for which new schools were needed. It was proposed that the new secondary schools should be of 8 forms entry and that pupils should move to a central 6th form college, ultimately of 750 students, at the age of 16. The college was envisaged as providing two or three year courses to "A" and "S" levels for students proceeding to Universities and Colleges of Education. It was not intended that it should offer strictly vocational courses of the type offered in technical education.

This scheme was supported by the professional associations but a similar one for another of the county's divisions met more opposition. Here, a more stable and, in some parts declining, population and the existence of old established grammar schools which drew their pupils from wide catchment areas caused a good deal of debate and discussion.

At the time of writing the Secretary of State had yet to pronounce judgement on this scheme which proposed to establish a mixed 6th form college for 600/700 pupils in the premises of the girls' grammar school. Other schools would be of 8 form entry size with full ranges of courses to "O" level. The 6th form college would be sited close to the technical college and although each would remain a separate entity, co-operation between them would be encouraged to avoid duplication of resources.

The 6th form college would not be purely academic and it was envisaged that it would act also as - to quote the working party report - "a finishing school where students would learn to adopt more adult responsibilities".

Berkshire:

A college which would cater for a broad band of ability at 16+ was ultimately proposed by one of the divisions of Berkshire. There, the enquiries into the reorganisation had started in 1958 when the possibility of introducing a Leicestershire Plan was discussed. However, plans were delayed until the last of the division's all-age schools was eliminated in 1963. For the next two years a working party examined the problem and early in 1965 the views of the teachers' organisations were sought and it

was found that there was general agreement that the 11+ should be abolished and a majority in favour of common secondary schools with a 6th form college for older pupils. This was in a division centred on the market town of Newbury in a prosperous area.

At a special meeting of the divisional executive in September 1965 there was no dissentient voice to the motion that as from 1967 all the secondary schools in the division should accept an annual intake of pupils unselective as to ability. Further detailed consideration of the 6th form college was undertaken and additional members nominated to the working party. After five more meetings the divisional executive adopted their recommendation that a 6th form college be built for the purpose by 1972 and an interim scheme adopted until then.

The college was envisaged as 350 strong with a staff of 34, it would cater for academic and semi vocational courses and no applicant for a place would be barred from attendance on academic grounds. Its head would be designated Principal, his two deputies would be Senior Tutors and subjects would be allocated to one of four Faculties, each headed by a Director of Studies.

This progressive and somewhat transatlantic flavour was to be moderated by spiritual and moral guidance in the college being placed in the care of an Organiser of Religious Education, one of whose responsibilities would be a compulsory course in religious education for all students. Another of his responsibilities would be liaison between the college and churches of all denominations and other religious organisations such

as the Student Christian Movement. What, precisely, prompted this emphasis on religious education was not clear - particularly as the Student Christian Movement had changed its title to Christian Education Movement prior to the publication of this report and an up-to-date acquaintance with developments on the part of any member of the working party would, presumably, have rectified the error.

It would be unfair to stress this small part of a report which proceeded to delineate a series of courses in minority and cultural subjects ranging from Moral Philosophy to Technical Drawing and Environmental Studies. Indeed it stated that the success or failure of the 6th Form College would depend on the ability of the staff to provide a non-examination programme of study and to encourage the integration of students of varying intellect and aptitudes.

Finally the report envisaged the establishment of an elective Students' Council to act as intermediary between staff and students and to constitute an educational element in its own right although the Principal's power to expel, after due consultation, was reiterated. This was also one of the few reports, openly to acknowledge its debt to reports and studies compiled elsewhere.

A Summary of the Argument

From the proposals some successful and approved, some abortive and others still pending final approval - described in the preceding chapters a general pattern emerges of the arguments in favour and against 6th Form Colleges. It is salutary to consider what Circular 10/65 actually said about this form of reorganisation.

" 16) Two conceptions of the sixth form college have been put forward. One envisages the establishment of colleges catering for the educational needs of all young people staying on at school beyond the age of 16: the other would make entry to a college dependent on the satisfaction of certain conditions (e.g. five passes at Ordinary level or a declared intention of preparing for Advanced level). A variation of the sixth form college pattern is that which attaches the sixth form unit to one school: under such an arrangement pupils from schools without sixth forms can transfer to a single sixth form at another school.

17) A sixth form college may involve disadvantages for the lower schools: there are few obvious arguments in favour of comprehensive schools with an age range of 11 to 16. Children in this age group may lose from a lack of contact with senior pupils of 16 to 18. There is a danger that the concentration of scarce specialist teachers in the sixth form college will drain too much talent away from the schools. Some teachers may find unattractive the prospect of teaching the whole ability range in a school offering no opportunities for advanced work and many teachers express a preference for work in schools catering for the whole secondary age range.

18) But the possibility of loss to the lower schools has to be weighed against possible gains to pupils in the sixth form colleges. The risk of draining away teaching talent from the lower schools may be outweighed by the concentration of specialist staff in the colleges, thus ensuring their more economic use: a point of particular importance while the present teacher shortages continue. The loss of the younger pupils from lack of contact with sixth formers may be outweighed, not only by the greater opportunities for leadership which the younger pupils themselves will have in the lower school, but also by the gain to the sixth formers from their attaining something of the status and freedom from traditional school discipline enjoyed by students.

19) It is essential that no scheme involving the establishment of a sixth form college should lead to any restriction of existing educational opportunities for young people of 16 to 18. Where authorities are considering the establishment of sixth form colleges they should review all the educational needs of the 16 - 18 group in their

area and the provision they have hitherto made for them, both in sixth forms and in colleges of further education. Where in the light of this review, it is proposed to establish sixth form colleges, the relationship between these colleges and colleges of further education, and their respective functions, will require careful consideration to avoid unnecessary duplication of resources and to ensure that the best use is made of the educational potential of each.

20) In this country there is so far little experience on which to base final judgements on the merits of sixth form colleges. Nevertheless the Secretary of State believes that the issues have been sufficiently debated to justify a limited numbers of experiments. Where authorities contemplate the submission of proposals, he hopes that they will consult with his Department at an early stage."

Some of the arguments used in the above extract echoed those current in some of the plans for 6th Form Colleges already at the Department. Indeed they had been used by the Inspectorate and Department administrators when visited by delegations from Authorities anxious to secure consent for their proposals prior to 1965.

Irrespective of whether an actual proposal to create a 6th Form College had materialised from the discussions of policy, the arguments in favour of this form of reorganisation fall into a regular pattern. This pattern is common to virtually every L.E.A. where serious consideration was given. Likewise the contrary arguments follow a similar trend to balance the points advocated in favour of the colleges. Where 6th Form Colleges have emerged as concrete proposals - and, indeed, where they have been submerged in favour of an alternative scheme - they can be attributed to specific circumstances in the particular areas rather than the overwhelming force of argument in favour of, or contrary to, the educational principles involved.

One principal argument in favour of this type of reorganisation was the necessity to concentrate rather than fragment 6th form teaching.

It was argued that newly created all-through comprehensive schools of a manageable total size could not support 6th forms comparable with those in existing grammar schools. The recent growth in the size of 6th forms and the increase in "A" level entries plus the tendency for courses with a less pronounced academic content to develop all pointed to a possible existence of 6th forms as separate entities. In most, but not all cases, the argument for 11-16 comprehensive schools followed from these premises. In only three plans, The Isle of Wight, Berkshire and Preston, was the 6th form college proposed as a conclusion to an educational argument in favour of 11-16 schools.

Some protagonists argued that a break at 16 was natural and should be reflected in the schools' system. Movements from schools to Further Education rather than to 6th forms were commented upon. This was attributed either to the more mature atmosphere of Further Education, the need for a change and greater freedom, boredom with school or post "O" level neurosis. One report argued that able children lost to schools at the age of 16 would transfer to a separate 6th form college but would not contemplate staying in 6th forms attached to their own schools. Another argued that 16 year olds would be more willing than 18 year olds to take responsibility for 11 year olds.

Whilst the 11-16 school catering for the full ability range was seen as offering prestige to existing secondary schools which would remain of manageable size, it also attracted social exponents of neighbourhood schools. One report quoted Conant, "All children receive an equal start in a competitive struggle".

Whether others would accept Conant as their text is conjectural but a number envisaged the continuation of the grammar school tradition of scholarship, respect for learning and its role as catalyst for a cross section of the social groups in the 6th form colleges.

It was, however, in the actual constitution of the 6th form colleges that the argument waxed most visionary. Colleges would resemble colleges of education and technology rather than schools. Relationships would be more mature and relaxed. Freedom and responsibility would be engendered in a more liberal and permissive atmosphere than could be experienced in a school catering for 11 year olds. Self-discipline would develop amongst students rather than be imposed by authority. "Teenagers grow tired of the authoritative and restrictive world and are irritated by the presence of younger children" argued one report. A college would offer an environment more appropriate to their stage of maturity argued another.

The words "College" and "student" were interpreted as offering an appeal and status which "school" and "pupil" could not match. One Authority drew inspiration from Plato's academy and, with others, urged the significance of the college as a useful preliminary to higher education.

Economy was not overlooked. Concentration of resources and staff had obvious attractions, particularly when modern developments were demanding more expensive and elaborate equipment and highly qualified staff were difficult to recruit. A number of Authorities saw the prospect of a 6th Form College as the opportunity to introduce co-education and relieve the

the scarcity of women subject specialists, particularly in Maths. and the Sciences.

Notwithstanding the results of the Department of Education and Science Study Group's researches and similar exercises undertaken by groups of interested teachers it was widely assumed that 6th form colleges would be an economical way of reorganising secondary education. Their special facilities would attract the best qualified and experienced graduates. Teacher pupil ratios varying between 1:12 and 1:16 were envisaged and the teachers would enjoy a particular prestige in their areas.

Not only would the colleges offer a wider variety of courses and options than were generally available in average sized grammar schools but there would be opportunities for new courses and subjects to be introduced. Chinese, Russian and Computer Programming were mentioned in some reports and the appropriate modern aids in the form of language and reading laboratories and closed circuit television would be installed.

Teaching and communal facilities were planned to accommodate small groups and to give ample facilities for private study and informal relaxations. Some reports spoke of students' unions operating in the same way as those in higher education establishments. Equally some foresaw the common departmental structure of the typical grammar school being displaced by a faculty system operating through tutors rather than teachers - all of these being developments which would offer new career prospects to the highly qualified specialists, a section of the teaching profession whose prospects of advancement had been relatively circumscribed in the past.

Forceful as were the arguments in favour of 6th Form Colleges those marshalled against the idea had the power of tradition to support them. Apart from Atlantic College in South Wales and Welbeck College - a military establishment whose press advertisements during 1966 described itself as the first 6th Form College - there were no precedents for this type of school in the British Isles. Some schools had developed separate 6th form units but in 1965 opponents of the idea took strength from the example of Croydon in the mid 'fifties.

The tendency for 6th form colleges to be proposed in areas where grammar school 6th forms were already strongly developed strengthened the argument that any economy in specialist facilities would be marginal. Sixth forms of large grammar schools in most areas constituted viable units in that staff were economically used in teaching reasonably sized groups making optimum use of facilities and offering a wide range of subject options. A "Doncaster" or "Leicestershire" type of organisation would ensure continuity and provide a substantial base for these features to develop.

If, however, a 6th form college were determined upon, most argued that it should be in purpose built premises and not in a conversion of an existing school. The reservations contained in Circular 10/65 were cited in some cases as a reason for not pursuing the idea.

Arguments against innovation concentrated on the effect on pupils and staff. The break at the age of 16 was seen as unfortunate. It was argued that the success of 6th form recruitment depended on the continuity

of environment from the age of 11 to 18. Bright pupils were pin-pointed early in their school careers and nurtured by staff. Some were placed in express streams and reached the 6th form at the age of 15. The contemplated break at 16 might well discourage some pupils from continuing their education.

Schools were organic units. Traditionally the 6th form was the goal which carried duties and responsibilities and constituted a training in community consciousness which would be lost if it were cut off from the lower school. Upper school members acted as prefects and leaders to set the tone and ensure the smooth running of the whole school and to play an active part in the rich variety of extra-mural activities for which the English grammar school was widely known.

The inherent disadvantages to a student spending only two years in a college outweighed any benefits deriving from a concentration of resources. The guidance on choice of subjects and courses for "A" level commenced well before the 6th form stage and a break in the continuity of teaching and advice would be harmful to his prospects at a vital stage in his school career. Many schools were no longer insisting that "O" levels should precede "A" levels and it would be retrogressive to impose a system of transfer dependent on certain "O" level qualifications.

It was envisaged - as protagonists of the idea anticipated - that the colleges would attract the best qualified staff. This, it was argued, would have the unfortunate effect of diminishing the number available for service in the junior comprehensive schools. Equally the 6th form college

might prove less attractive than anticipated. The typical grammar school specialist valued his work in the lower school and would be reluctant to relinquish it. He was primarily a teacher who valued experience with a variety of age groups. The question of the future source of recruitment for 6th form colleges was raised. Would teachers be drawn directly from the universities after graduation or from the contributory comprehensive schools? If the former, they would be inexperienced as teachers and, if the latter, lacking recent experience of 6th form teaching.

Finally there were those who opposed a separate college for 6th formers - the institution of a 16+ qualification - as the negation of the comprehensive principle.

PART II

The Public Debate

Compared to the numerous books and articles published on the general theme of Comprehensive Education and the continuous correspondence in the educational press over the past twenty years, 6th Form Colleges have attracted little comment or study. The comprehensive schools of London, Coventry and Bristol have been subjected to analysis and reports by sociologists, educationists and journalists by virtue of the fact that they existed. Even now, however, in 1967 only one separate 6th Form College is actually in being within the maintained system of education in this country. Others will evolve but the process will be protracted and the experience of the two private colleges, Atlantic College in South Wales drawing its students from NATO countries and Welbeck College run by the Defence Department, is of little relevance in this context.

There is ample evidence elsewhere in this thesis that numerous individual administrators have advocated this system of reorganisation with a genuine concern that it will create a new and vital form of school offering more varied courses and an ethos more appropriate to the second half of the century than the grammar school ideal rooted in the past.

Administrators are seldom free of the accusation that their schemes give the greatest priority to administrative convenience. Their work has a dual nature. The academic side is contained in the argument whilst their profession entails putting into practice the very theory they have expounded. Few academic educationists in the university institutes and departments of education have commented publicly on this aspect of

reorganisation and, regrettably, public debate has been desultory and dominated to some extent by declarations of policy by interested parties.

Foreign Influences:

"Mr. Roy McGregor-Hastie, the author and educationist, described the non-segregated system of education up to the age of 15 followed by a scheme akin to the 6th form college idea in Sweden and other countries..... People who had never seen a 6th form college were criticising the idea. He had personal experience of this type of educational establishment in Scandinavia, in Germany and in Italy."

The abolition of selection in Sweden under the Education Act of 1962 and the introduction of comprehensive and compulsory education from the ages of 7 to 16 attracted some attention in this country, occurring as it did at the height of the debate on comprehensive education.

The emergence of the Gymnasium for students in grades 10 to 12 and aged 16 to 19 who were intending to enter universities and the professions was the natural outcome of a basic system of unselected and large unstreamed lower secondary schools. Intended to occupy campus sites with the Fackskola and Yrkesskola, technical schools and trade schools respectively catering for the same age group, the complete integration of post 16 education would be completed.

In Sweden, legislation was backed by research extending back to 1940, the most notable of which was the Stockholm experiment of 1955 to 1960.

1 The Guardian 3.7.64.

2 "That Revolution", The Teacher 1.5.64

"In Perspective", The Teacher 14.4.67.

"Visit to Sweden" Report by a C.E.O. 1965

Here the city was divided into two sectors each comparable in social class distribution. In the northern sector the selective system at the age of 11 was retained but in the southern sector it was replaced by comprehensive education without streaming to the age of 13. At that age choices of particular subjects were allowed but pupils remained in all-ability groups for the majority of their work.

The research findings demonstrated that the advantage shown by intelligent children in the selective schools at the age of 13 had levelled out by the age of 16 and that the less intelligent fared better in the comprehensive schools. ¹ Burgess's conclusion was that the special needs of the intelligent pupils were not so great as to demand that the whole system be organised for their supposed benefit.

Another C.E.O. visited Sweden and drew more homely conclusions from his visit, "No one in Stockholm seemed to be different because there were no grammar schools. I saw no persecuted high flyers slinking around corners to do a spot of Euclid, or bolting into lavatories to read a passage from Virgil". ² Sweden's nationwide system of comprehensive education clearly showed comprehensive education to be viable.

The C.E.O. and Chairman of Education Committee who visited the United States for six weeks in 1963 produced their report "American Journey" which had wide circulation amongst other local Education Authorities. The itinerary of the visit was formidable and great distances were covered. The variety, magnitude and experimentation in

- 1 "Pioneering the Comprehensives" - Tyrrell Burgess
The Guardian 1964.
- 2 Times Educational Supplement 7.1.66.

the American educational system makes impressive reading. Schools of 2,000 and 4,000 students occur frequently in the narrative. Schools designed on the basis of team teaching, television networks, programmed learning centres, computerised master schedules of courses and developmental reading laboratories were all described in the report.

The final outcome of the visit was a series of recommendations to the Education Committee but despite the report's wide circulation references to American conditions appeared in none of the reports prepared by other Authorities in connection with secondary reorganisation.

Current Developments

Even in established grammar schools, pressure of numbers led to a re-thinking on forms of organisation. One outstanding example of this was at Mexborough in the West Riding of Yorkshire for which was claimed the title of "First 6th Form College in England."¹

When pressure on existing accommodation necessitated the rebuilding of the 6 form entry grammar school, the Authority planned the new building, a 6th Form College, physically separated from the lower school to accommodate 480 students of which 250 would come from the selected intake to the grammar school at 11+ and the rest at 15+ or 16+ from secondary modern schools in the area. The courses would be academic and of a more general nature and the 6th Form College would cater for all students in the area aged 16 to 18 who wished to remain in full-time education.

The reasons for this were threefold, the high level of pupils (76%) who wished to enter the 6th form, the desire of parents of children in secondary modern schools to acquire opportunities for them of 6th form education and earlier maturation creating a distinct group of young adults. Of equal importance was the need to prepare large numbers of highly intelligent first generation working class pupils for the freedom of university life.

Other areas faced this problem but none tackled it in quite such a determined and radical fashion. Although some specialist facilities are shared with the lower school the College is built around a courtyard with its own teaching block. Study rooms are equipped with chairs with arm

1 "Education" 6.11.64
"Guardian" 29.3. 65
"Observer" 11.10.64

supports. There are no desks. The library has individual study carrels.

Dining takes place in the hall where meals are served on a cafeteria system. Social life revolves round the common rooms and snack bar. Students enjoy greater freedom than many of their contemporaries and are allowed considerable discretion in the conduct of their own affairs. In many ways their College Society, to which all students belong, is a counterpart of the Students' Union of the university and college world to which many of them aspire.

On the academic side,¹ "Each subject is taught at several different levels: Advanced level for which a subject is allowed eight periods per week, Cultural level which is of 'A' level standard but not tied to an 'A' level syllabus and is non examinable, for which eight periods per week are also allowed: Vocational level for which eight periods are also allowed and which leads to various professional qualifications, and Ordinary level for which four periods per week are normal. The whole timetable consists of four groups of setted alternatives, although a wide choice is made available by the inclusion of basic or popular subjects in more than one group. The regularity of the setting may be somewhat varied by the use of the remaining three periods in the thirty-five period week timetable for physical education of some sort.

In this first year it has not been possible or desirable to introduce all the courses which are planned or under consideration, but reference to the table in the following footnote will indicate the range of choices available to any one student at the present time.

1 "Mexborough Grammar School" Notes prepared by the Headmaster.

Footnote

Lower VI Timetable - 1964-65

Level	Group I 8 periods	Group II 8 periods	Group III 8 periods	Group IV 8 periods
Advanced and Scholarship Levels (A)	Mathematics Further Maths Biology Botany History (I) German English (I) R.I.	Further Maths. Chemistry Economics Latin English (II) Domestic Science Woodwork/Metalwork Art	Physics Mathematics (with Statistics) Zoology History (III) French Geography Craft and Design Further Art	General Studies Course
Cultural level (C)	Drama Housecraft Woodwork Metalwork	Art	Mathematics Music (Instrumental) (Vocal)	
Vocational level (V)	Accountancy	Shorthand	Typing	
Ordinary level	Agriculture English Physiol. Physics Hygiene Biology	Domestic Science Art	Chemistry R.I.	History Geography
	4 periods	4 periods	4 periods	4 periods
	4 periods	4 periods	4 periods	4 periods
				Latin----6 periods Spanish--6 periods French Engl.
				Comm. Maths.
				Maths

+ 3 periods P.E.

The A, O and V level work requires little comment except to observe that very great freedom of choice of levels and subject combinations

is allowed including the possibility of taking mixed Arts-Science courses. As no A level or V level subject is setted against General Studies this course if available for the great majority of students. The teaching is undertaken by a panel of tutors each of whom is responsible for lectures to the whole group during some part of the year and for short courses of half a term duration in his own discipline to selected students throughout the year.

The C (cultural) level work is perhaps the most interesting. It had become clear that many highly able students welcome the opportunity of undertaking study in depth which is not tied to an A level syllabus or examination. This is particularly true in the case of girls where career requirements may weigh less heavily and to whom the Training College, with its more reasonable demands, is often as attractive as the University with the extremely limiting rigidity of its entry requirements. Music, Housecraft (very popular) Engineering or Drama can all be undertaken for 'fun' either as a supplement to or in contrast with their other work by pupils engaged in up to two (or three if General Studies is included) A levels. It is hoped to introduce 'C' level Mathematics as soon as possible and in particular to make it attractive to Arts students who feel that they "can't do maths" yet intend to teach in junior schools. Mathematical insight rather than facility in cypher manipulation will be the aim."

At present staff share the teaching in the lower and upper schools and the Head, deputy and senior assistant are responsible for both. One member of staff is responsible for the day to day running of the College and the links between the two are still strong. When the schools in the

area become comprehensive the lower school will have an unselected intake and the College premises will provide 6th form education for the whole area. It may then be necessary and advisable to sever the links which exist at present between the two schools and for the College to be given a completely separate existence.

Even if the implementation of comprehensive education had not received the impetus from Circular 10/65 there is little doubt that the type of organisation developed at Mexborough Grammar school would have established a pattern for many other grammar schools with rapidly expanding 6th forms.

Both Atlantic College and Mexborough 6th Form College invited R. Wearing King with his "known interest in the theme", as he describes his contribution to the development of the idea, to visit them. His impressions were recorded in a short article in "Education".

"Many of the ideas which we brooded over in the education office at Croydon more than ten years ago have emerged into reality, others quite unforeseen have also appeared," he wrote. He described the courses at Atlantic College orientated towards university entrance and mentioned their wish to become co-educational and to develop more vocationally biased courses of a National Diploma type.

At Mexborough he welcomed the continuity between the two separate parts of the grammar school and described 6th formers as having acquired a new dignity "freed from the irrelevance of prefectorial responsibilities". He commended the greater freedom allowed to the students to manage their

own affairs and concluded that, "Generally the impression one cannot escape is that responsibility of this kind is a more relevant education for modern life than the public school practice of allowing prefects to administer corporal or more petty punishments to their juniors. To any sincere observant eye there is emerging a new pattern in English education which is long overdue."¹

2

This pattern was echoed elsewhere. In Cumberland, for example, a newly built comprehensive school at Egremont the 6th form was provided with a students' union with separate study rooms and refectory. Like Mexborough the 6th form was recruited from the lower school and from other secondary schools in the area. The fact that the school was comprehensive encouraged the development of general courses, and proposals for alternatives leading to OND in Sciences and Business Studies in association with technical colleges were under consideration.

Discipline was relaxed, school uniform unnecessary and an emphasis placed on the responsibility of the individual. Traditional prefectorial duties were replaced by assistance with games, drama, activities and a growing amount of community service in the area.

3

A similar development was reported from Inner London where it was planned to house 6th formers of St. Paul's Way School in the penthouse suite of a six floor teaching block. Accommodation would include common rooms, snack bar, lecture theatre and tutorial spaces. Where building

1 "Education" 25.6.65.

2 "The Sixth Form College at Egremont". Newcastle & Durham Universities Institutes of Education Journal

3 "Times Ed. Supp. 11.2.66. March 1967.

programmes could not provide, the pupils provided a centre building it themselves in 15 months at a cost of £1,200 at Walbottle campus near Newcastle-on-Tyne.

The movement towards separate accommodation received considerable impetus from the publication of Building Bulletin 25.² The rapid growth in the size of 6th forms, the variety of courses offered, the greater range of ability to accommodate, the need to give responsibility to younger pupils, an earlier age of maturity, the desire to bring university methods of study into the school and the desire of individual heads to pioneer new developments all constituted what the Bulletin described as "straws in the wind".

The consequence of these factors was a series of development projects and the Bulletin which crystallised the best current ideas and usages, most of which will be invaluable in the planning of 6th Form Colleges whether as separate units or in association with a contributory lower school.

Whilst some areas were experimenting in ways of organising the 6th form as a separate unit retaining its organic link with the school and building accommodation suited to its particular needs, at least one other L.E.A. was planning to link a grammar school 6th form to the courses and facilities of the neighbouring technical college to create a "Centre for Advanced Education". This was established at Witney in Oxfordshire and in essence, combined the resources for post 16 full-time education so that a pupils of that age could follow a normal academic course at the grammar

1 "Times Ed. Supp." 29.4.66.

2 Secondary School Design - 6th form and staff.
H.M.S.O. Aug. 1965

school, a vocationally biased course at the college or one which combined both elements and where tuition was divided between the two institutions.

The head of the grammar school and principal of the technical college were joint directors and individuals were asked to apply to either for advice and information. A basic admission qualification of at least 5 passes at "O" level or C.S.E. Grade 1 were required.

Of the ten pages of the attractively designed explanatory booklet, one is devoted to G.C.E. "A" level courses, one to "O" levels and eight to Ordinary National Diploma, technician and secretarial courses. The range of "A" level courses was detailed on a further separate sheet as are the variety of Higher Education courses entered by 50 students of the Centre over the previous two years.

The Centre seemed to be designed to stimulate education beyond the age of 16 by reducing the restrictions of the existing system to a minimum. The degree of publicity received by the scheme was a reflection of the desire in the educational field to welcome and encourage any development which overrode the normal conventions of grammar schools and further education institutions.

Crowther and Robbins.

In welcoming experiments in the provision for the full-time educational needs of 16 and 17 year olds the Crowther Report expressed some caution about what were termed Junior Colleges. "Have we", the Report asked, "all the elements that are needed to make a suitable provision for the full-time educational needs of 16 and 17 year-olds? Or is there a missing piece? Have we in particular provided sufficiently for the very numerous group (especially numerous among girls) who are so very sure that they are neither children nor schoolgirls, but who yet are at a stage (or so it seems to us) when their social life is marked by extreme gregariousness? Is there a case for a Junior College which would be essentially a full-time institution without part-time students? What we have in mind is an institution with the adult atmosphere of a technical college but with a much wider range of curriculum and with terms of reference nearer to those of a school, in that equal weight would be attached by the staff to the subjects taught and to the personal development of the students. We do not think of an institution of this kind as starting before the end of compulsory attendance or thereabouts, nor as continuing beyond, say, the age of 19. As we see it, there would be a wide range of practical courses - commerce, pre-nursing and catering, for instance, all lend themselves to full-time courses of two to three years duration - and also academic courses roughly parallel to those that are found in the Sixth Forms of schools. There would also, we hope, be room for courses that were not tied to examinations and regulations, but existed just because they provided a good education. It is courses of this

kind which bring the best out of an experimentally minded staff - and a Junior College would hardly be worth trying if it were not staffed by men and women with the spirit of pioneers. There would, we hope, be access from the Junior College to further education of all kinds as well as to employment, for it would be our hope that a very wide range of ability and interest would be found among its students. We do not then, think of a Junior College as replacing Sixth Forms, but as standing side by side with them, providing an alternative form of education for those whose schools had not Sixth Forms. There might well be scope for such a Junior College in widely contrasted circumstances. It is difficult to believe that the conurbations which house two-fifths of the country's population would not each throw up sufficient students for such a venture. It is easy also to see that a Junior College might be of value in areas where the nature of the population and the pattern of secondary school organisation make it likely that a good many secondary schools will each produce only a handful of pupils wanting to continue their full-time education after 16. We are not, of course, sure that there is room for such an institution in the English educational system - it would be impossible to be sure without a trial - but we have an impression that, various though the present available forms may be, there is a gap which ought to be filled. We would welcome experiments."

This concept of the Junior College was intended to fill the gap in

1 "15 to 18" Report of the Central Advisory Council for
Education - England. Min. of Ed.
Para. 622 H.M.S.O. 1959.

educational provision rather than to transform the existing 6th forms of grammar schools. Contrary to this viewpoint the overwhelming majority of proposals for 6th Form or Junior Colleges have, in fact, been prepared for localities with conditions opposite to those envisaged in the Report and where established grammar schools with large 6th forms have provided the basis on which to build colleges. In the years immediately following the publication of the Crowther Report the gaps in provision were filled by broadening the courses provided in the grammar schools and admitting pupils from secondary modern schools into the 6th forms or by the development of full-time post secondary courses in colleges of further education.

1

The Robbins Report was less tolerant of 6th form colleges than the Crowther Report. In Chapter 5, paragraph 108, it described the sheer weight of numbers as the reason for limiting the expansion of the State University of California and the consequent large-scale development of junior colleges there.

In Chapter 11, paragraphs 451 and 452, the Report states, "A different type of new institution was proposed by other witnesses, who advocated the creation of separate junior or preparatory colleges to undertake the later stages of sixth form work and the first year of university work. They argued that many schools were inadequately staffed to prepare young people going into the universities to study science or technology. As a result, students lacked the basic equipment for success in a university course, and this was a major cause of wastage. They also argued that the

1 "Higher Education" Report of the Committee on Higher Education
1963. H.M.S.O.

level of the work in these subjects in the first year at a university did not require a teacher who is also engaged in research, and that to remedy deficiencies of schooling was not an appropriate task for a university teacher.

These arguments may at first sight seem attractive, in so far as they claim an analogy with the junior colleges - some of which we much admired - in the United States. But the American junior college fits into a quite different pattern of secondary and higher education. In this country to exclude sixth form work from the schools would deprive them of a source of inspiration at all levels. We are concerned with the effect that such a scheme would have on higher education. We reject the assertion that first year work is inappropriate for a university teacher. It is in the first year that foundations are laid and the young are introduced to the world of mature thought. A year or two years in a junior college would be no substitute for the first university year in this country. Moreover, if this change were made, a university education would for some people last only two years, and this is not long enough for the development of a coherent course. Finally, we do not think the present problems of co-ordination between schools and higher education would in any way be eased by such a scheme."

The conclusion was stated in the following paragraph, 453. "We therefore recommend that the needs of the future should be met by developing present types of institutions..".

Although it could be argued that advocates of 6th form Colleges in England were concerned less with bringing first year university level

work into the college than with separating immediate post-primary from pre-university work within one school, the Report made it clear that they considered the integration of the 6th form as a feature of English education which could not lightly be discarded.

The Department's Studies.

Within the Department of Education and Science itself the flow of proposals for comprehensive education from the local Education Authorities during the early 1960s necessitated study and research. Following the precedent of the Crowther Report, the 15-18 Committee, a group of experienced H.M.Is, was established to examine the whole field of relationships in the education of this age group and to study particular facets of comprehensive reorganisation.

Their reports acknowledged the anomalies which had been allowed to develop within the system. Teachers in schools and lecturers in colleges of further education were teaching, in some cases, equivalent students but enjoying different conditions of service and salaries. The buildings they occupied were costed according to different formulae and the institutions governed under different grant regulations. One enterprising Authority had planned and costed its 6th form college in accordance with the Building Regulations for further education¹ but had been told firmly by the Department that this could not be permitted. Consequently a considerably reduced area and expenditure under the School Building Regulations had to be accepted by them.

These divisions and anomalies were preserved in the administrative structure of the Department of Education and Science and in that of Her Majesty's Inspectorate. It is conjectural how far this examination of fundamental principles in the provision, administration and inspection of education was prompted by the accession to the Senior Chief Inspector of Mr. C.R. English. He was the first occupant of probably the most

1

Further Education (Local Education Authorities) Regulations 1959.

influential post in education to have emerged from the further education - as opposed to the schools - sector. Equally the questions posed in the Crowther Report on technical challenge and educational response, and the issues raised by the Newsom Report, might not have been without influence in the Department's decision to institute a survey into the education of the 15 - 18 age group.

Their Report acknowledged the extent of infiltration by institutions of further education into full-time education which might normally have been considered within the secondary schools' province. It mentioned the technical pre-apprenticeship courses and the anomaly that many teachers making the valuable contribution to the work of technical colleges would not be entitled to qualified teacher status in schools. The Report did not consider the number of qualified teachers recruited or diverted from work in the schools through the operation of the quota system governing the employment of teachers in the maintained schools sector.

It considered the appropriateness or otherwise of particular types of courses for schools and colleges and reached the broad conclusion that was to be translated - albeit unofficially - into Department policy. Schools would be expected to confine their activities to generally non-vocational, and colleges to vocationally biased, courses although the growing area of overlap between the two would make it more difficult in the future to draw a clear dividing line.

6th Form Colleges - The Department's Definition:

The 15-18 Committee distinguished two types of 6th form college, the first which was basically a projection of existing sixth form provision

and being either strictly academic or more general in character. The second type was that more often designated as a 'junior college' which would make provision for conventional sixth form courses and for specialised technical and professional courses normally available in technical colleges and dealing either with full or part-time students, or both.

Although proposals for academic type 6th form colleges appeared to preponderate the H.M.Is assumed that complementary and co-operative provision between them and local colleges of further education would be the likeliest development in the future.

The Report then proceeded to consider questions which arose from the creation of 6th form colleges. Most of these questions had been considered by Authorities which had proposed such colleges. They were concerned for the bright young pupil and the age of transfer. They queried whether it was advisable for the slower pupil to transfer on age at 16 to complete an "O" level course. Flexibility in organisation was counselled, a working principle in most schools but more difficult to operate in the case of two separate institutions.

On entry qualifications the Report likewise urged the avoidance of any rigidity at a time when individual schools were imposing fewer restrictions on entrants to their 6th forms.

The need for continuity and student guidance were emphasised. This would involve vocational guidance at an early stage in the secondary school and early advice on the most appropriate educational courses in the

secondary schools. A break in the continuity of secondary education would emphasise these needs.

On the size of prospective colleges the Report propounded as a basic principle that no college should offer a more restricted list of subjects and courses than any of the sixth forms it replaced. On a generous staffing ratio of 1:12 a college of 200 students would require a staff of 16 or 17, insufficient to cover a reasonable range of academic subjects. A college of 400, the Report assumed, would be the minimum viable size and a roll of 800 to ensure that all the teaching groups would rise to double figures.

On the question of accommodation it was emphasised that in a normal school the 6th form benefitted from communal accommodation provided for the whole school. If comparable communal facilities were to be provided for a separate college within cost and area limits applied to secondary schools even a college of 600 to 750 would yield meagre practical accommodation and only very modest communal facilities.

A college of 400 would be needed to ensure the full use of two physics laboratories whilst provision for art and music would be difficult to justify in terms of usage. The answer might lie in sharing technical and art facilities or in amending the building regulations.

This Report on 6th form colleges reflected genuine doubts about this type of school. What was surprising was the readiness to accept building regulations designed to accommodate 11 to 16 year olds as a basis for housing 16 to 19 year olds. The Inspectorate were well aware

of the scope of provision in further education for predominantly the same age group. To overburden the argument with this artificial distinction seemed pedantic particularly as the Department were in process of adjusting the regulations to accommodate the new "middle schools"¹.

The 15-18 Group also completed an exhaustive survey of staffing for 6th form colleges. In the absence of an actual working model they took the 6th forms of six large grammar and comprehensive schools as a starting point to ascertain staffing loads. The 6th forms varied in size from 123 to 350 students.

The average division size, i.e. the total number of teacher-contact periods spent by individual 6th formers divided by the number of class contact periods put in by staff, was 11.5. The average effective staffing ratios, i.e. the 6th form roll divided by full-time staff assuming each taught 30 periods a week, was 12.4 and ranged from 8.5: 1 to 15 : 1. The number of "A" level subjects offered ranged from 16 to 21, the number of teachers involved from 46 to 63 and private study periods per student from 2.6 to 10.1, the mean being 6.2.

To assess subject distribution the Group constructed from a break down of the 1963 statistics of education a typical profile of subject popularity for 100 pupils ranging from Physics (37), Maths (35) and English (21) to German (5) and Economic History (3). Obviously the range of subjects attracting small numbers of students would fluctuate. but the predictable entries for the most popular subjects would be the main determinants of staffing.

1 Dept. of Ed. & Science Building Bulletin 35 Para. 10. Pub. 1966.

On this basis the Group constructed some theoretical models of 6th form colleges. One of 200 pupils would require 17 full-time members of staff i.e. 2 Physics, 2 Maths, 1 Chemistry, 1 English, 3 to cover History, Economics, Economic History and British Constitution, 2 Modern Languages, 1 Geography, 1 Latin and Religious Knowledge, 2 for Botany, Zoology and Biology, 1 Art and 1 for Technical Drawing.

Unable to call on the staffing resources of a lower school a college of this size would be forced to economise by combining 1st and 2nd year groups in minority subjects whilst joint appointments would be needed in cultural subjects. Such a college could not provide the range of educational opportunity commonly available in existing 6th forms.

In a college of 400 pupils, however, the range of subjects could be extended to 26, the divisions increased to 46 with 28 staff engaged on examination work and a further 4 on P.E. and cultural studies.

A college of 600 would be an even more attractive proposition. An average division of 12 and a staff pupil ratio of 1:15 would be attainable. The fullest flexibility would not be accomplished until a roll of 750 - 800 pupils were reached with a staffing ratio of 1:13. Even so the 6th form college would still face problems on timetabling 3rd year scholarship and "repeat" pupils, on the apportionment of majority and minority time and the absorption of general - as opposed to academic - pupils.

The problem of catering for minority subjects in 6th forms was not novel and concerned the orthodox 6th forms in existing grammar schools as much as in 6th form colleges. As in most forms of organisation the growth in the measure of efficiency was proportionate to the increase in size.

The Report did not, however, specify an optimum size beyond which some law of diminishing academic returns might apply. It did state that if a more comprehensive type of college were contemplated it would be imprudent to suppose that its minimum viable size could be less than would include 400 pupils on academic courses.

This document was an extremely valuable one but the extent to which it has been of practical value to the planners is conjectural. It was seldom mentioned in Authorities' reports and ante-dated the work of those where planning was most advanced. Indeed it confirms many of the estimates already completed by the local administrators based on actual conditions and subject preferences in their own localities. Had not a number of Authorities submitted proposals for 6th form colleges prior to 1965, the 15-18 Group's survey would not have been required. If there is any criticism of its methods it is, perhaps, in its choice of schools for its field work, none of which - excluding Mexborough Grammar School - was in a locality where a 6th form college had been proposed. Thus was impartiality preserved.

The Teachers' Associations.

The attitude of the principal teachers' associations towards any specific form of reorganisation of secondary education has been one of caution and restraint. All of them had members in most types of secondary school although the Joint Four retained the bulk of their membership in selective schools. It is from this source that the principal profession based opposition to 6th form colleges derived.

Prior to the publication of Circular 10/65 a memorandum from the Incorporated Association of Headmasters had stated that "This Association can find no real justification for changes which would entail the destruction of well-found and well-proved grammar and modern schools in order to achieve a tidy solution by regrouping all the schools of a large city or county on a comprehensive basis." The memorandum stressed the need for buildings to fit any new pattern rather than allowing the system to be dictated by the disposition of existing schools. It foresaw neighbourhood schools in large cities acting further to stratify society rather than extending educational opportunity. Whilst recognising the wisdom of providing comprehensive education in some areas the memorandum left little doubt that the Association was unconvinced of its merits.

"We counsel patience and prudence with every step consolidated before moving to the next and, because the problem is a complex one, we hope that in its solution the full responsibility will be shared by all those concerned with the wellbeing of the child."

The President of the Association had written in a similar vein in

1 "The Reorganisation of Secondary Education" 1964

1.
March 1964 . "Many who believe that grammar schools have done this country a great service both academically and in furthering the national trend towards social equality in the past 50 years have refrained from expressing their opinions in public because they dislike joining in what appears to be a party matter. In this they have leaned too far backwards in order to demonstrate a neutrality which may result in the destruction of these great institutions which they represent." He criticised lack of consultation, the serious psychological effects on staff and failure to take professional opinion into account. "Just as honours students work with honours students, and skilled research workers with their intellectual equals, so must the most able children grow up together and stimulate one another in an atmosphere which favours maximum growth," he concluded. "This country will run into most serious danger if it substitutes an unproven cure for all scholastic ills for the proven worth of well-tried and still evolving institutions"

His successor in 1966 was still critical. "Nothing is more likely to discredit the comprehensive principle than an attempt to bring comprehensive schools into existence in conditions which give them impossible handicaps." ² Of comprehensive schools of 6 form entry he stated, "In the education of the able this puts the clock back, not forward." If all forms of selection were abolished there would be only two ways of providing 6th forms of the minimum size of 180 proposed by the Schools Council: the large comprehensive school and the 6th form or junior college.

1 "The Times" Growing Threat to Grammar Schools (article)

2 "The Guardian" 29.12.66.

A report on one of a series of study meetings at Brasenose College, Oxford, by members of the Headmasters' Association spoke of their endorsement of the Minister's caution on the 6th form college expressed in Circular 10/65.¹

Though restrained in its official policy statements the Incorporated Association of Assistant Masters in Secondary Schools (A.M.A.) discussed 6th form colleges at its annual meetings in 1966 and 1967.

A resolution in 1966 calling on the Minister to exercise great caution in the establishment of schools with an age range of two years, including 6th form colleges was finally amended by a substantial majority to exclude the latter reference. One speaker stated that there was probably a future for some sort of 6th form college, another that in large areas of population there was a place for one or two 6th form colleges as a bold experiment which they hoped that the Association would consider.²

The following motion "That the Council refuses to condemn the idea of 6th Form Colleges" did not conclude in a vote on the advice of the General Secretary and was referred to the Executive Committee. The General Secretary expressed the view that not only was the motion unconstructive but, if passed, it could easily be misunderstood by those who did not read the discussion. Members from areas where 6th form colleges had been proposed were due to meet the Ad Hoc Committee on Reorganisation and the Association might then formulate a considered statement of views.

This statement was expressed in an article by Mr. E.G. Beynon, Assistant Secretary in August 1966.³ It named some Authorities where

1 "Times Ed. Supp." 22.4.66.

2 The A.M.A. Journal Feb. 1966.

3 "Times Ed. Supp." 19.8.66.

proposals were at an advanced stage and the extent of teacher participation in policy making and detailed planning. It claimed that there was firm evidence that teachers in the areas concerned were choosing to move to areas where schemes for all-through schools had been accepted. Some were being forced to think in terms of retiring at 60 when they would not otherwise have done so.

A conference of Association representatives from Authorities affected had met recently to discuss matters. The conference took no decisions and passed no resolutions but reiterated the major decisions which the Authorities would need to take at an early stage on relations with Further Education, entry qualifications, liaison with contributory schools and recruitment of staff.

The Association remained apprehensive about this form of organisation and hoped that the Secretary of State would not allow more than a limited number to be created. This apprehensiveness was understandable in that grammar school staff who formed the overwhelming majority of the membership of the A.M.A. were bound to be the ones most inconvenienced by the introduction of a 6th form college. Mr. Beynon's article reported one Authority where it had been estimated that only about one third of the specialist teachers at present employed would be required for the college. As one member had expressed it at the 1967 Conference of the Association, "Other teachers' organisations would often vote merrily with the¹ councillors because the 6th form college left them alone."

Although it was inevitable that grammar school staffs were open to

¹ "The A.M.A. Journal" Jan. 1965.

charges of self interest in opposing 6th form colleges there is little doubt from the weight of educational argument deployed that their concern for the most intelligent quartile of the child population in whose education they were acknowledged experts was the foremost factor in their resistance although perhaps only a minority would have echoed the words of a Girls' Public Day Schools' Trust headmistress, "It's a hideous idea, quite alien."¹

The Annual Council of the Association of January 1967 debated a resolution "That, while recognising that the establishment of a limited number of 6th form colleges might be desirable so that any advantages and disadvantages of this form of organisation could be demonstrated, Council would view with considerable concern any hasty or widespread adoption of schemes of reorganisation incorporating 6th form colleges."² This was more closely aligned to official Association policy than the previous year's resolution.

The mover and seconder of the motion expressed concern that the creation of junior colleges might result in 6th forms being lost from the schools to the further education branch of the service. The question was posed whether the range of subjects normally available in a 6th form could be extended by the creation of a separate college. There was a need for a great deal of research and this could apply to one or two areas where trends could be tested and evidence accumulated from 6th form colleges in operation. Eventually the motion was amended to read "wholeheartedly condemn" for "view with considerable concern" and passed in its amended form.

¹"Times Ed. Supp." 10.3.67

² A.M.A. Journal Feb. 1967.

"The National Union of Teachers takes the view that it is not part¹ of its duty to support one pattern of education rather than another." Less restricted by serving predominantly one section of the teaching profession than the Joint Four the N.U.T. had tended to welcome comprehensive reorganisation in principle whilst allowing its local associations to contribute to the debate in their L.E.A. areas.

The Union's reorganisation pamphlet cited above consisted of a factual survey of the situation prior to Circular 10/65 and contained notes on selection procedures and on the legal position relating to selection and the organisation of secondary education.

In its statement of principles it observed that, "The Union could not support schemes of reorganisation which would be put into operation in inadequate or unsuitable accommodation, which did not give able children as good an opportunity as they are at present getting or would deny less able children the opportunities of developing their capabilities to the full, which would make a final and irrevocable decision about the nature of the education a child is to receive at the age of 11 or even later: or which would deny the teachers' right to develop the curriculum of any school in a manner which, in their professional judgement, is best suited to the needs of the children in that school."

The principles were unexceptionable. In practice local associations could, within their limits, support or oppose any scheme later proposed under Circular 10/65 on educational grounds.

The official attitude to 6th form colleges was expressed in their publication "Sixth Form Colleges" of September 1966² This document

1 The reorganisation of Secondary Education. N.U.T. 1964

2 "Secondary Reorganisation. An N.U.T. discussion document."

emphasised that Union policy was to support the reorganisation of secondary education under a system of comprehensive schools. This policy favoured all-through co-educational schools and disapproved of two tier systems which involved selection at 13 or 14 years of age. It was prepared to support simple two tier systems as a second preference.

Although it acknowledged that a correct evaluation of a scheme for secondary reorganisation could be made only by the local associations the Education Committee of the Union had considered a general policy in regard to the creation of any school aimed solely or mainly at examination purposes. In this sense there existed an implicit objection to the notion of a 6th form college aimed purely at university and college entrance via "A" level examinations.

The document lists in a concise form the general argument advanced by protagonists and opponents of this type of organisation. On the one hand earlier maturation, difficulties of transition from school to university, the greater variety of courses available through concentration of resources, the quality of staff attracted to such posts, the Crowther Report comments on the desirability of some junior colleges and the appropriateness of the age of 16 as a natural break were all cited in favour of 6th form colleges.

The contrary arguments ranged from research evidence that the voluntary extension of school life is greater where there is no break in continuity, that the break at 16+ creates an educational gap which demands a positive effort from the individual to bridge, that existing

6th forms were being liberalised, the continuing need for flexibility in educational provision for the age range 15 to 17 and the dubiousness of claims that colleges would be more economical, to the "cherished tradition" of leadership by older pupils.

In the face of this - and mindful of the need to take into account issues of a purely local character and the absence of any long term experience in the operation of such colleges - the Executive felt unable to offer positive advice. Consequently, at various times and in various places local associations of the N.U.T. have emerged as advocates or opponents of this type of reorganisation.

It would not be altogether expected that the most detailed policy document on secondary reorganisation should emanate from the Association of Teachers in Technical Institutions, an associated body of the N.U.T. The Association's pamphlet, 'The Organisation of Secondary Education' which "unequivocally opposes the concept of academic 6th form colleges as a negation of the comprehensive principle"¹ commented on their view of the educational principles involved and their attitudes to the particular modes of reorganisation proposed in Circular 10/65.

The reason for the Associations' concern in this matter was summarized in the pamphlet's early pages. "An examination of the proposals (in different parts of the country) shows that decisions ultimately reached have almost always been the result of having to provide for the 16 to 18 age group". In other words, the need to provide sufficient variety of courses in sufficiently large units had dictated the form

1 "The Technical Journal" - A.T.T.I. No. 1966.

of comprehensive school proposed.

The pamphlet then expounded the case for participation by teachers in further education in discussions on reorganisation as their colleges catered for a considerable part of the 16-18 age group on a full or part-time basis. In effect colleges of further education were comprehensive and it would be retrograde for the introduction of comprehensive education in the secondary field to restrict the nature of existing colleges.

Pupils at the age of 16 should, therefore, be offered an informed choice in extended education and should be allowed to follow in schools or colleges the courses best fitted to their needs and offered in institutions best capable of providing them. It would be wrong, for example, to develop Ordinary National Diploma courses in schools and equally unwise to prevent colleges from continuing G.C.E. courses for students unwilling to continue such studies in schools, although many of these courses would ultimately be transferred to schools. The Association recommended that further study should be made of schemes which allowed release from the upper forms of secondary schools for specialised studies in local colleges.

The Association's objections to the idea of a 6th form college as outlined in Circular 10/65 were that whilst abolishing selection at 11+ it reimposed it at 16+ on a competitive basis. Their experience was that it was as difficult to assess at 16 what a pupil was capable of doing at the age of 18 as it was at 11 to know what he would be capable of achieving at the age of 16. "The 6th form college would only be satisfactory if those pupils not selected for grammar school 6th form

work were enabled to undertake similar work at the technical college if they so wished.¹

If a wider variety of full-time education over the age of 16 were to be proposed the Association would prefer the general principle of continuing full-time in technical colleges to be adhered to. If all full-time education were to be concentrated in the one school, then the Association would be opposed to the segregation of full-time and part-time students.

Finally the pamphlet proposed a solution which had not been included in Circular 10/65, a Junior College embracing all full and part-time education for the 16 to 18+ age group. It would avoid all segregation and the tendency for two cultures to develop. It would provide an interplay between full and part-time education and enable the young student to be treated as an adult.

This policy statement was in accordance with articles and expressions of opinion by various individuals intimately concerned with further education and the implications of comprehensive reorganisation. In one sense it was defensive in that the Association's membership would naturally be reluctant to relinquish the considerable stake which institutions of further education had acquired in the 16-18 age group. Equally a new concept of education was emerging.

This point was emphasised in the editorial comments of "Technical Education and Industrial Training" which enjoyed a wide circulation in technical colleges.² After commenting that the justice of comprehensive

1 "Organisation of Secondary Education" A.T.T.I.
2 "The Tottinham Frolic" - Technical Education &

education was accepted by all political parties it proceeded to question the time honoured administrative divisions between schools and further education resulting in "the collapse of the complex edifice of the comprehensive belief". Supporting the A.T.T.I. policy statement the editorial agreed with the rejection of 6th form colleges on the grounds of selectivity and supported experiments with a full and part-time comprehensive senior college on American lines. It concluded with some asperity that "such an establishment would go far to defeating the Snowist two-culture syndrome and would provide an excellent educational staging post for this group of young adults. Why the Department and the LE.As. have themselves not projected the effects of reorganising one sector of education on the policies and contingency planning of the others is a question likely to go unheeded. One trusts that the A.T.T.I. statement and other educational arguments may be allowed some space by the Mother Hubbard of Curzon St."

Comprehensive Further Education:

The policy statement of the A.T.T.I. reflected, but could not express in the same detail, the ideas of D.E. Mumford, Principal of Cambridgeshire College of Art and Technology. So persistently and effectively had Mr. Mumford advocated his own solution for secondary reorganisation that one journal was able by mid 1966 to refer to it as "the Mumford system"¹.

His paper to the Annual Meeting of the Association of Technical
2
Institutions in February 1965 was extended and published in "Forum"

1 "Technical Education & Industrial Training" July 1966.

2 "16019, School or College?" D.E. Mumford. Pub. by A.T.I.

1
in 1965 and in "Education" in the following year . He cited Ministry
2
statistics for the 16-19 age group. The numbers in that age group
were as follows,

Maintained Grammar School 6th forms	129,000
Full-time Further Education, 16-19	83,000
Part-time " " 16-19	386,000

Taking full and part-time students together four times as many individual students were following their education in F.E. institutions as in grammar schools. Of these F.E. students 16,000 were following G.C.E. "A" level courses.

If as a result of reorganisation all, or most, full-time students were transferred to the Schools sector the result would be to create part-time institutions of F.E., a retrograde and deplorable step and wasteful of resources and staff.

Inevitably the Crowther Report's comments on junior colleges were cited and the conclusion reached that "the most urgently needed reform in education is not comprehensive reorganisation but the division of the present 11-19 secondary age range into two distinct and separate stages".

The arguments for this proposition followed a similar course to those put forward by advocates of 6th form colleges: early maturation, the anomaly of 18 year olds being educated alongside 11 year olds and the growing dissatisfaction with the existing 6th form system. He criticised, however, the general courses provided in 6th forms as having no currency in the outside world and giving no recognised qualification if a student entered further or higher education.

1 "Forum" Spring issue 1965

2 "Education" 4.2.66.

He advocated, therefore, a system which combined in one institution "A" level courses and vocational courses. This would be comprehensive, relevant to contemporary society and would diminish the division between academic and vocational education which was so damaging economically and socially.

The same theme was expounded in his paper to the North of England Education Conference in January 1967 at Blackpool¹. He stressed the relevance of F.E. courses to vocational needs and the absence of disciplinary problems due to the principle of voluntary attendance. Repeating his theme of earlier papers that the most urgently needed educational reform was the implementation of a break to enable the older and younger age groups to be educated separately he stated, "In twenty years' time, those now planning schools to cover the whole age range from 11 to 19 will be regarded rather as we now regard the British Generals at the start of the Great War who pinned their faith on the Cavalry".

Statistics showed that 60% of all classes in 6th forms contained less than 10 pupils, as against 17% in Further Education. The latter had been sharply criticised in the Pilkington Report and this point was repeated by a fellow Principal in a letter to "Education" shortly afterwards.²

As entry to "A" level 6th forms in comprehensive schools was only

1 Moral Values in F.E." "Education" 13.1.67.

2 "Education" 10.2.67.

half that of grammar schools, comprehensive reorganisation would therefore ensure a far less economic use of scarce specialist staff than at present appertained in grammar schools which were themselves less viable than comparable institutions of Further Education.

The Mumford doctrine appeared to be influential in framing the official policy of the A.T.T.I. towards comprehensive education. It is evident in submissions by the local associations when asked their views on comprehensive education. It is also evident in the concern expressed in Circular 10/65 that there should be a consideration of the respective functions of 6th form colleges and colleges of further education.

Even if the historical accident of the division between Schools and Further Education is not repaired during the next decade there is little doubt that Mumford's writings will have brought into sharp focus existing anomalies and will have pioneered developments to rationalise the education of the 16 to 19 age group.

Further Education and the extent of its impingement into what had previously been considered the preserve of the schools had at last become a topic for debate where previously it had been largely ignored.

The Department View.

Public awareness of the links which had developed between Schools and Further Education was initiated by Circular 10/65 and given wider currency from the Department itself. The private studies of the "15-18 Group" of the Inspectorate were backed by public addresses to influential bodies by the Senior Chief Inspector of the Department, Mr. C.R. English. The fact that he was the first occupant of this highly influential post to have emerged from the Further Education rather than the Schools Branch was significant of lowered barriers within the hierarchy of the Department.

His address to the 1966 North of England Education Conference at Harrogate¹ dealt with relationships between Schools and Further Education. He assessed both the overlap which had developed in the two sectors and the distinctive functions of each. He described the Ordinary National Diploma as "industrial "A" levels". The principal problem during the ensuing years could be to maximise the use of all educational resources in view of the rapid expansion in industrial training.

The raising of the school leaving age to 16 would demand a rethinking of programmes and schools should be encouraged to make use of the expertise of local colleges to augment their own resources. After 16 schools and colleges would be running in parallel. In some parts of the country some very able boys and girls would be leaving school at 16 and taking employment which would offer greater facilities for day and block release to colleges. Others would wish to continue vocational full-time education.

He could not anticipate post-school technical courses being provided other than in colleges with appropriate staff and resources. While "A"

¹ "Education" 14.1.66.

level work remained basically a schools' function he would regret the removal of full-time students from colleges. He foresaw a pattern of partnership between separate institutions, each continuing to educate in its respective tradition, so strengthening the complementary relationship which had developed over the years.

This theme was repeated in a speech to the Further Education Section of the N.U.T. in 1967¹. As at Harrogate he stressed that the days of competition for a limited supply of students had ended and the problem of the future would be one of matching facilities to meet the anticipated demand. Schools should think carefully of the ultimate purpose of their courses. Likewise colleges would need to adopt their courses in co-operation with the schools. The outcome would be more qualified technicians and a greater pool of teachers.

His paper to the annual meeting of the Northern Counties Technical Examinations Council in March 1967² began by citing the increase in student numbers in colleges of further education. In 1955 there were 56,000 full-time and 2,000 sandwich course students. By 1965 these figures had increased to 170,000 and 17,000 respectively but these did not give a true indication of the increase as the ten Colleges of Advanced Technology which had been awarded university status were not included in the 1965 statistics. During the same period the number of part-time day students had increased by a quarter to reach a total of just under 680,000.

The popularity of further education pointed to the need for close co-operation between schools and further education, "I believe that both

- 1 "Education" 6.1.67. and "Technical Education & Industrial Training", Feb. 1967.
- 2 "The relationship between schools & further education"
Reprint by N.C.T.E.C. Reported Times Ed. Supp. 17.3.67.

parts of the system have their own particular virtues and that the right course is to try to develop the best qualities of each sector whilst at the same time avoiding unnecessary duplication", he stated.

He reiterated that the increasing demand for education would place a strain on all educational resources. It was important that students should be offered the courses they wanted rather than merely those the particular institution was able to supply. Some vocational motivation would affect courses in schools whilst National Diploma courses in colleges would offer "A" level type studies not less demanding than their more academic counterparts in grammar and comprehensive school 6th forms.

Of 6th form colleges, he distinguished between the academic college largely restricted to "A" level work and the junior college catering for a wider range. He claimed that the latter were, in effect, typical of many area colleges of further education. If their full-time students were "bled off" to provide comprehensive education for a smaller number in the 16 - 18 age group staying on at school the corporate life of the colleges would be destroyed.

The colleges of further education should continue to "provide a full-time education to a limited number of vocationally motivated students as well as providing part-time education to those less fortunate who leave school at 16."

Looking forward to a close and fruitful relationship between schools and further education he concluded by hoping that eventually the boundaries would become so blurred as to disappear altogether. "This will not be achieved by take-over bids which would destroy the characteristics of one

or the other. But real co-operation could help to develop the best aspects of both systems and thus lead to a major evolution in the education system".

These papers by the Senior Chief Inspector helped to create an awareness of the overlap in provision for the 15+ age group. The theme was pursued by members of the Inspectorate at courses and conferences concerned with comprehensive education. They were, in fact, exploring a rather sensitive area of administration and politics. Many Authorities had encouraged colleges to undertake these courses centrally in the absence of viable 15+ groups in secondary modern schools. Having established an interest in the full-time education of secondary school age groups the colleges were reluctant to forgo and were strongly supported by the Inspectorate who had seen and welcomed the transformation brought about by the existence of full-time students in what were essentially part-time institutions. The extent to which this transformation was based on evidence and how far it constituted an aspiration is difficult to judge. A member of a North Western education committee confessed to being unable to recognise any college of his acquaintance in Mumford's description of his own Cambridgeshire College with its annual operatic productions.

Equally strong in their claim to be consulted on the education of the school age group was the A.T.T.I., its growing membership commensurate with the increase in college staffs. Its published statements indicated its independence of the general policy of the N.U.T. to which it was affiliated, an attitude facilitated by the absence of any great diversity of interests in its ranks.

This upsurge of opinion in defence of the technical college stake in the education of the 15-18 age group ensured that the economic use of staff and resources of both schools and colleges would become a major issue in the debate on comprehensive education.

The Political Parties:

"Mr. Heath said he would like to see more experiments with 6th form colleges, especially in country districts". This statement from the leader of the Opposition in mid-1967 was part of an address on Conservative educational policy. Its implication was that the party should accept a changed role for the grammar school and not oppose reorganisation merely to preserve tradition. "I want to make it clear that we accept the trend of educational opinion against selection at 11+. If the transfer from primary to secondary education is now to be made without selection, this is bound to entail some reorganisation of the structure of secondary education.

The official attitude of the Conservative party to comprehensive education was pragmatic. Many of the major developments in comprehensive education were approved by the successive Conservative governments from 1951 to 1964 but most of the schemes for new all-through comprehensive schools related to new housing areas with no established educational traditions or to two tier systems in which grammar schools formed the base of the upper tier.

The Party's spokesman on education, Sir Edward Boyle had during his

1 "Observer" 18.6.67.

period at the Ministry and in Opposition established a reputation for integrity and a broad sympathy for educational experiment. His readiness to foster or support schemes of reorganisation had stopped short of any threat to grammar and direct grant schools. In a lecture at the University of Leeds in 1966 he had described the part that many grammar schools could play in enabling many children to overcome the handicap of a poor background. He thought it useless to pretend that an all-through comprehensive school in a poor district could offer the same opportunities.¹

In his adoption address in his Handsworth constituency in 1966 he promised "firmly and bitterly" to resist any threat to use statutory powers against the King Edward's direct grant grammar school but this probably stemmed less from adherence to a dogma than from his belief in the future of the direct grant school as a bridge between the maintained and private sector of education.² In his speech to the North of England Conference in Harrogate earlier that year he had returned to the theme of his Leeds lecture and stressed the strong sense of injustice which might arise from zoned neighbourhood schools. "He was also opposed to a wholesale change-over to comprehensive education in an area which had only just completed an existing scheme of reorganisation.....What were the different chances of the high flyers? What difference would it make for a late developer to be in the middle of a comprehensive school instead of at the top of a secondary modern school? How would Newsom children fare in very large schools?"

By January 1967 Sir Edward was enunciating a policy which Mr. Heath

¹ Reported "Times Ed. Supp." 11.2.67

² " " "Education" 14.1.66.

was to state more publicly in June of that year. At a conference in Cambridge¹ he, Sir Edward, said "he did not put all his money on 6th form colleges but the idea should have more serious consideration than it had yet received, and that, particularly in rural areas, some concentration of 6th form work had a great deal to be said for it. If the school leaving age were to be raised, and he still hoped that it would be, pupils might go on to a 6th form college at 15 for their last year so getting what he called a sniff of more academic education." He also expressed the fear which gained currency during 1967 that the growth of non-selective education might weaken 6th forms.

One small measure of Conservative support for 6th form colleges came from the "Pressure for Economic and Social Toryism" group (P.E.S.T.) in a pamphlet² "Educating the individual child" This urged the establishment of secondary schools catering for 11-16 year olds with 6th form work concentrated in junior colleges. This would achieve a high level of concentrated study and 6th form methods could be brought nearer those of the universities. It is doubtful whether this "young, leftwing group", as it was described, had any marked influence on the evolution in Conservative policy but it was symptomatic of the preparedness on part of the younger element in the party to move beyond the narrow, defensiveness of their less radical colleagues. As the radical Conservatism of the P.E.S.T. pamphleteers shaded into Liberalism their support for 6th form colleges was backed by Mr. A.D.C. Peterson, Liberal spokesman on education, who at the Liberal Education Association Conference in January 1966 had

1 Reported "Times Ed. Supplement" 6.1.67

2 Published Conservative Political Centre 1966.
Reported "Times Ed.Supp." 4.3.66.

stated that he thought schools for 11-19 year olds would be a mistake¹ and that 6th form colleges might be the answer.

The attitude of the Labour Party - from November 1964 the party in power at Westminster - was to encourage reorganisation but not to insist on any single method. Circular 10/65 itself constituted an expression of Department and Government policy and it was evident that of the six options, 6th form colleges were the least favoured. Despite this the Secretary of State, in a parliamentary answer on the 19th June 1967 was able to announce approval of 15 such projects in 11 Authorities.

In the previous year one of the Ministers of State in the Department, Mr. Goronwy Roberts, had refused to be drawn by questions on the relationships between 6th form colleges and technical colleges.² He had been asked by an interviewer whether colleges of further education might become 6th form colleges in all but name if 15 year olds continued to opt from schools to the more attractive amenities of the colleges. His reply followed the lines laid down by the Senior Chief Inspector in emphasising that vocationally motivated students would need to be catered for in colleges rather than schools.

At a local level, however, political divisions were more pronounced. Although the "Guardian"³ welcomed the emergence in mid 1967 of "Tony Heathland" as companion to "Edward Crossboyle" on the national scene, secondary reorganisation continued to divide the parties and there seemed little prospect of compatibility being achieved. The extensive swing of most Local Education Authorities to Conservative control ushered in an

1 Reported "Guardian" 14.1.66.

2 Interview reported "Technical Education & Industrial

3 "Guardian" 19.6.67.

era of speculation in May 1967. By the middle of that year reports were beginning to issue of Authorities reviewing schemes of comprehensive reorganisation which had already received the Secretary of State's assent to create an impression of rigidity at a local level whilst the national leadership was advocating flexibility.

Mr. Heath's pragmatism was supported in part by the Secretary of State in his address to the Annual Meeting of the Association of Education Committees in June 1967². Prompted by the 25 vice chancellors' letter to the Times he argued that one large or two moderate sized comprehensive schools may be able to replace the traditional pattern of one grammar and three secondary modern schools.

He added, "We must consider also the untried but promising scope for the development of 6th form colleges in some areas, to cater either particularly for the academic stream or for the whole range of ability: I have already approved 16 such colleges and have several more before me now. We must remember again the scope for transfer of 6th formers from one school to another where not every subject can be provided in every school. And we must note that reorganisation is already throwing up a number of proposals for joint courses between schools and colleges of further education. Is it not likely that we may get a better and more flexible 6th form provision under these new arrangements? And might not the universities help us to adapt to these exciting changes in school provision, instead of asking the schools always to adapt to their traditional requirements?"

1 "Guardian" 3.7.67. "The Teacher" 30.6.67.

2 Reported "Education" 30.6.67.

Special Articles and Correspondence:

After the appearance and demise of the Croydon Plan in the mid 1950s with subsequent correspondence in the educational press, discussion of the concept of a 6th form college languished. It revived at the end of 1964 in the columns of "New Education" and early in 1965 in the Times Educational Supplement. The increasing number of L.E.As. proposing this form of reorganisation prompted an article by Dr. Derek Miller of the Tavistock Clinic¹ which was published in December 1964. As a psychologist he was critical of the establishment "under the guise of educational tidiness" of separate colleges for 6th formers. He urged the necessity of continuity of education to strengthen relationships formed between staff, pupils and parents at the earlier stages of secondary education.

Dr. Miller foresaw an increase in the number of "educational drop-outs", pupils who opted out of the system through social maladjustment rather than educational inadequacy. The integral 6th form was seen as the "educational carrot". "The school without a 6th form finds it hard to demonstrate to the younger half of the school the privileges that go with educational maturity."

The process of moving from one institution to another he thought less adaptable by 15 year olds than by 17 year olds. Pupils of 15 and 16 needed to identify themselves with adults and to establish meaningful relationships. This was not possible if a break in continuity occurred. To these psycho-social criticisms he added that a precipitous falling off in educational standards might be anticipated if the best teachers were restricted to 6th form colleges.

1 "Sixth Form Colleges" - New Education. December 1964.

He concluded, "Adolescence provides a second chance in life for the correction of the emotional mishaps of childhood. There is thus a special responsibility on the educational system not to blindly experiment because an idea is fashionable In a healthy educational social system the 6th formers would carry some real responsibility for the well being of the juniors as part of the privileges of seniority in the school. It would appear likely that to truncate schools and remove their 6th forms will not assist the development of the intermediate adolescent age group and it may give older adolescents a feeling of privilege being their right because of intellectual achievement and not associated with feelings of responsibility for others."

Dr. Miller's article provoked correspondence from Professor H.A. Rée¹ of the University of York and from R. Wearing King . The former claimed that transfer - from his observations - at various stages in the educational process were generally welcomed by pupils and students. He saw the 6th form college as "a magnet" which would attract students. On pupil-teacher identification he claimed it to be often advantageous for a pupil to change heroes as he passed from one to another stage of growing up. It was arguable, he stated, that "what is needed by 16 year old potential academics is the breeze of change which may sometimes blow cold."

Mr. Wearing King's argument rested on the hard cases encountered by Dr. Miller at the Tavistock Clinic making bad law. He claimed that the normal child wanted, at 16, to put away the childish things he did at 11.

1 "New Education" - February 1965.

Dr. Miller replied in the same columns that society ought not to increase the problems of adolescence and schools should provide an element of stability. Professor Réé pursued his theme in an interview reported in Spring 1965¹. Explaining conversion from his earlier belief in selective education to advocacy of comprehensive education, Professor Réé concluded, "I want 6th formers to have more time to work by themselves. They should be taught to think for themselves. I think that the 16 year old should be encouraged to be away from his little brothers and sisters, away from a rigid and full timetable, away from compulsory P.T. As a 16 year old he should be concerned with a wide spectrum of society, with old age pensioners and his peers in other fields of life. These are the kind of things he should be concerned with rather than stopping 11 year olds playing around in the lavatories."

Dr. Miller's article may well have provoked Wearing King's contribution shortly afterwards to the Times Educational Supplement as special mention is made of it. As his concept of a 6th form college had attracted more abuse than praise - "all great truths begin in blasphemies" - he stated his purpose as being to argue the merits of this form of reorganisation and asked that its advantages be weighed against its alleged demerits.³

The tenor of his argument has been expressed by numerous protagonists both before and since 1965 but it was Wearing King's pioneering prerogative to state his case publicly. One line of argument he pursued had seldom been mentioned elsewhere. He stressed the word "state" in writing of

- 1 "Where" - Journal of the Advisory Centre for Education
- 2 The Essential Grammar School. H.A. Ree (Harrap)
- 3 "Times Ed. Supp." 19.2.65.

the reorganisation of secondary education and cited the Direct Grant and Public Schools for purposes of comparison. "Primarily the case originates from a conviction that the small 6th form is a weak link in the chain, comparing most unfavourably in the opportunity it offers with the big public schools.....the 6th form, to be viable, must be 400 or 500 strong as at Dulwich or at Manchester Grammar School". The public school analogy occurred later in discussing staffing. "My own nephew at St. Paul's has just won an open scholarship to King's, Cambridge, at 17: and the master who took him through what is usually called the 6th form stage did not teach him at all until after "O" level.....It is meaningless to say that a change of teachers at this stage will not work. It works at St. Paul's and it worked at Oundle."

In another part of the article he wrote of the "looming superiority of the independent schools" disappearing if comparisons were made in the public mind between the opportunities offered by a new institution, the 6th form college, and the independent school.

This article by a former master from Oundle and later L.E.A. administrator left no doubt that its author was opposed to the concept of a grammar school "emulating the Thomas Arnold type of public school. Admirable as it may have been, it was evolved in a different century for a different purpose". His strictures on Sir Robert Morant and the 1902 Act left the suspicion that his lack of faith in the state grammar school owed more to its failure to live up to Morant's Wykehamist ideals than to any intrinsic flaw in concept.

Of the advantages of 6th form colleges he cited size and economy. Students ought not "to be deprived of fellowship with their contemporaries and competition in learning: nor should good staff be used uneconomically." He advocated a break at 16 to give young adults an environment in keeping with their age. He decried the argument that the same staff ought to teach children from 11 to 18. This was not so in the public school and the rapid turn over of staff - particularly in girls' schools - made it unusual in the state sector.

His sternest strictures were reserved for grammar school staffs. "Over ten years I have been driven to the conclusion that the opposition from grammar school staffs to pooling 6th forms comes from a fear of challenge to their own position, the chance that their less distinguished members may lose the academic pleasure of taking their two or three sixth formers." The Joint Four had opposed him at Croydon but elsewhere were prepared "to compound for the psychologically and administratively unsound break at 13 or 14: and when the 6th form at Mexborough Grammar School was hived off as a separate entity with quite a different discipline there was no protest at all from them about this being educationally unsound."

He concluded, "I am pleading for a fair deal for the state educated child: by which I mean a first rate academic and personal opportunity, there for the taking at the age when it really matters."

Wearing King's strongly worded arguments evoked correspondence in ensuing issues of the paper. The Chairman of Stoke-on-Trent Education Committee wrote in support: the headmistress of Bolton School (Girls' Division) disputed the argument that certain teachers specialised only

1
 in 6th form work. Her evidence was confirmed by the Headmaster of
 Liverpool Institute High School whilst in the same column Sir Geoffrey
 Crowther wrote of his personal regret that the Croydon experiment was not
 allowed to proceed. "In Chapter 36 of "15 to 18" we said that experiments
 in junior colleges, (by which we meant something very close to Mr. Wearing
 King's 6th form colleges) would be welcome. May I express the hope that
 some of the more adventurous education authorities will respond to this?"²

Another grammar school head challenged the concept of a college
 which would accentuate the isolation of the teenagers, break the continuity
 of secondary education and create staffing difficulties.³ A comprehensive
 school head also stressed continuity and claimed that the most desirable
 emancipation was achieved within a framework of responsibility. The
 Head of Dover Grammar School wrote in similar vein.

4
 In a later issue other heads took up this theme, one advocated
 separate buildings for the 6th form but opinion was not exclusively
 condemnatory. Two further education lecturers took up the then emergent
 Mumford scheme and other individuals wrote in appreciation of Wearing
 King's contribution.

5
 The correspondence was concluded by two heads describing their
 6th formers pastoral duties in minute detail whilst a training college
 lecturer decried the "atmosphere of paternalism and cramming which so
 many teachers identify with the best grammar school traditions." The
 debate had reached a stage where it was editorially wise to draw it to
 an inconclusive end.

1	Times Ed. Supp.	26.2.65
2	" " "	5.3.65
3	" " "	12.3.65
4	" " "	19.3.65
5	" " "	2.4.65

In the debate on 6th form colleges it was a rare occurrence to find support for the idea in the grammar school sector. The headmaster of Burnage Grammar School, Manchester, Mr. S. Hughes, advocated 6th form colleges in his paper to the National Education Conference in January 1966¹.

The basis of his support was the changing role of the 6th form. It was no longer solely the route to university and college. "A" levels were becoming prerequisites for a growing number of professional careers. With the raising of the school leaving age to 16 and the earlier maturity of adolescents an educational break at that age was feasible and desirable. A college of 500 - 600 students would be more economic than dispersal of "A" level work over a number of 6th forms.

His concept of a 6th form college was that of a modified discipline with a strong emphasis on continued pastoral care and guidance. He emphasised the need for these colleges to be independent of further educational establishments and for them to concentrate on strengthening their academic links with the universities.

Perhaps as a consequence of the indistinct division between politics and educational policy, few university educationists have commented on the concept of 6th form colleges. Local politics seldom provide a congenial forum for academic neutrality.

Dr. Robin Pedley, one of the best known advocates of comprehensive education could claim that his first case for a 6th form college had

1

Reported "The Teacher" 7.1.66.

1
been published in 1944. During the ensuing twenty one years he had suggested variants of the comprehensive principle but had returned in 1965 to a belief in a break at the age of 16.

His article, "Five Comprehensive Plans too Many" published shortly after the appearance of Circular 10/65 was critical of the threatened proliferation of comprehensive schemes. "To have six different patterns of secondary education in a small country like ours is obviously absurd, particularly as economic changes demand that the population should become increasingly mobile."

Anticipating the Plowden recommendation of a primary school transfer age of 12 he extended the argument for a two tier ~~second~~ secondary school system. The first stage would occupy the 12 to 16 age range and provide a 4 years' course for "O" level and C.S.E. The second stage would take into account the significant changes in work and attitudes which occurred at 6th form level. This stage could be accommodated either in a separate 6th form college or in one attached to a main school.

He had foreseen this development in his book "Comprehensive Education: A New Approach" where he had written, "It is probable that a clear break at 15 or 16, with general education up to that age in common schools, would make impossible the premature specialisation now common in many grammar schools".

2
In 1962 he commended the revival of the Croydon Plan and hoped for a revival of the Stoke-on-Trent scheme for a 6th form college which, with the Leicestershire Plan offered "an early, just and efficient answer to

1 "Education" 23.7.65

2 "Times Ed. Supp. 3.8.62.

the problem of organising the framework of secondary education". During 1966 Pedley took the opportunity of pressing locally what he had long advocated nationally by suggesting a series of comprehensive schools with a 6th form college or centre in Torquay. The occasion was a conference of local teachers and education officials in the area called to discuss comprehensive education ¹. There he pressed for a separate college in the face of tentative proposals to attach a 6th form section to one of the comprehensive schools.

Whilst Dr. Pedley enjoyed an extensive influence in sustaining and strengthening the validity of the idea of comprehensive education - his books were virtually prescribed reading for Labour councillors in the 'fifties and 'sixties - other academic educationists were occasionally called in as commentators or arbitrators on L.E.A. proposals. Messrs. Jacks and Elvin on separate occasions were called in to comment on the Croydon proposals. When the Darlington proposals were published in 1964 Dr. J.J. Grant, Director of the Durham University Institute of Education was asked by the editor of the Northern Echo to give his unbiased opinions on them.

²
These were published in an article in June 1964. After describing the accumulation of evidence showing the fallibility of selection at 11+ he commended the Darlington plan as "a bold, imaginative and workable

- 1 Reported "The Teacher" 1.7.66.

2 "Northern Echo 19.6.1964.

scheme" which would give greater freedom to the primary schools and avoid the necessity of creating over-large comprehensive schools to provide viable 6th forms. He was critical of the effect on staff and pupils of separating 6th formers from the lower school but balanced this against the probable gain, "some genuine measure of freedom and responsibility."

He commended the age range 11 to 16 as more manageable than that of the all-through comprehensive school and one which would enable 15 and 16 year olds to develop and exercise powers of leadership. Dr. Grant's conclusion was that the merits of the plan outweighed its demerits but he, personally, would have preferred to start from a different basis, a transfer age of 13 rather than 11.

Dr. Grant's doubts were echoed in an article by S.A. Munro in 1966 .¹ 6th form colleges would ensure economically sized units where staff would be fully utilised and large enough to bring diversity of approach to their subjects. Existing 6th form privileges were "meaningless rights" whereas a 6th form college would allow democracy to be practised. "It is desirable that the older scholars should have a real share in the major policy decisions affecting the school through democratically elected schools' councils."

Democratic consultation, however, was not prominent in the debate on 6th form colleges.

¹

"Senior School or Junior College?"

"New Schoolmaster," Oct. 1966.

One writer did, at least, attempt to assess attitudes of 6th formers to their own education by analysing forty essays and a hundred and fifty questionnaires completed by new entrants to a college of education. The results were published in "Education" in late 1965¹. Over half the students thought there had been little opportunity to discuss social problems with their teachers, that the prefect system seemed artificial and that careers advice was inadequate. Teachers laid too much stress on passing examinations and were unprepared to treat 6th formers as adults. The author's conclusion was that "the 6th form is not the haven of content that some would have us believe".

Even after taking account of the subjectivity of this type of project the information obtained was of some value in strengthening the argument that a new type of institution would be able to explore and develop new relationships and attitudes amongst students themselves and between staff and students. Probably less reliable statistically but equally indicative of prevailing attitudes was a report based on a survey carried out in 1967² that only 7% of 6th formers seemed content with their conditions.

In August 1966, George Taylor, then recently retired as Chief Education Officer for Leeds expounded the case for Junior Colleges in the "Guardian"³. His case was based on the changing character of 6th forms. Whereas previously they had constituted an élite destined for university, they now were heterogeneous with a wide range of interests and abilities. Simultaneous with 6th form developments had been the growth in facilities for the same age group in colleges of further education. By 1980 he

- 1 The 6th Form Myth - D. Child. "Education" 3.12.65.
- 2 "Discontented 6th Formers" Times Ed. Supp. 9.6.67.
3. "The case for Junior Colleges" - G. Taylor, Guardian 17.8.66.

estimated that there would be in the country between 3,000 and 5,000 comprehensive schools each with 6th forms containing between 70 and 120 students. The shortage of Science and Mathematics teachers would make it difficult to staff all these schools.

In terms of a fairly substantial city of a quarter of a million people, instead of having 1,200 6th formers dispersed over between 10 and 17 schools it would be more realistic to accommodate them in two well equipped and staffed junior colleges.

He saw the principal opposition arising from the heads and senior staffs of existing grammar schools. For the younger teachers he envisaged career opportunities comparable to that of surgeons and consultants in the medical field remarking that it was "almost impossible for one person to combine the ability to teach effectively children of 11 and young adults of 18, the brilliant and the slow learner."

Taylor's article contained little that authors of reports in the various L.E.As. had not mentioned but it did help to illuminate one of the problems that would arise from the wholesale application of comprehensive education the difficulty of finding teachers of the right calibre to staff the 6th forms. On its publication this article provoked little correspondence. In fact, only one letter and this was from the former chairman of an Authority planning its own 6th form college who wondered whether it would not be advisable to create a "binary" system at the 16 - 18 age group level to prevent dilution of the academic ethos of the 6th form.

The Times Educational Supplement:

Taylor's theme was to be taken up in the following year by 25 university vice-chancellors but in August 1966, in its comment on E.G. Beynon's centre page article ¹ the Times Educational Supplement saw ² 6th form colleges as the possible salvation of academic standards in future years. "If we are determined, for social reasons, to blunt the edge of the academic element in the general secondary schools, it seems desirable to have places of intense study under selected teachers where students aspiring to higher education can be brought up to its standards. 6th form colleges should have 3 year courses 15-18 or 16-19 and with the formed motives of that age group a great deal could be done in that time. It is not being argued here that this solution is better than the present system. The point being made is that if comprehensivism goes ahead the 6th form college offers a means of recovery from some of its in-built weaknesses."

This statement prompted one correspondent in the following week's issue to comment that the paper's advocacy of the 6th form college as the last refuge of "separatism" and "segregation" must surely throw doubts on its logical inclusion in a comprehensive system.

Possibly encouraged by support from the Duke of Edinburgh, "I think people who have, say, done up to their "O" levels at a day school would gain a tremendous amount by going to a 6th form college for two years. Even if they don't go to a university afterwards the pressure of having only people in that age group stimulates them," ³ the Times Educational

1 Supra p 125

2 "Comment" Times Ed. Supp. 19.8.66.

3 "Sunday Times" 6.11.66.

Supplement looked favourably on 6th form colleges.

Its correspondence columns gave space to readers' letters on the subject. In delightful juxtaposition in September 1966 were two letters, one from the Public Relations Officer of The Association for the Establishment of Junior Colleges whose final sentence read, "We would merely say that the junior college will attempt to educate young adults in an environment suited to their needs, it will not try to segregate pupils at 16 into categories that it rejected as artificial at 11."

The final sentence of the next letter signed by "Critic" read, "The unholy alliance of anti-intellectual intellectuals, woolly minded sociologists and others who would give us 6th form colleges as one sample of the new educational order need not imagine that we in this country can avoid either the difficulties or the decline in standards experienced elsewhere."

Editorial concern seemed basically to rely on the argument that small 6th forms were disadvantageous to pupils and unlikely to secure adequate staffing. The publication of the plans for the Inner London Education Authority in December 1966 provoked the comment that the six form entry school was "almost the lowest form of comprehensive life"¹. Quoting the Presidential address to the Headmasters' Association the editorial asked, "If we cover the country with small 6th forms, how are we going to staff them? That is the question which Mr. Crosland ought to face. Academic standards are being lowered at a time when all the requirements of a modern scientific economy are suggesting they ought to be raised..... Maybe in time the comprehensive system will prove its ability to preserve

the present distinguished academic standards. The 6th form college, for example, might do it."

This theme was taken up by Sir William Alexander in his "Week by Week" column in "Education"¹ also commenting on the I.L.E.A. report on their existing comprehensive schools. Repeating doubts~~s~~ expressed a dozen years earlier, he wrote "...perhaps the all-through comprehensive school from 11 to 18 may not be as effective an answer as the comprehensive school from 11 to 16, combined with a 6th form college, or alternatively, that a three tier system may offer advantages by enabling a higher concentration of children of substantial academic ability so that they can be fully stretched."

The County Council elections of April 1967 which left only one English and one Welsh council under Labour control prompted an editorial in the Times Educational Supplement which returned to the theme of the dispersal of specialist subject teachers. "Universally applied, the all-through comprehensive scheme would disperse the limited stock of better qualified graduates and produce a mass of small, inefficient 6th forms. Put in simple terms it would deny the able working class boy of the future the standard² of schooling he can get today."

In May it returned to the same theme implicating a mysterious, powerful, unpolitical and anonymous figure of Alexandrine proportions. "The all-through comprehensive party have suddenly run into the question of how on their plan the nation is going to be able to staff a multitude of small 6th forms. It is being argued in private by at least one

1 "Education" 24.2.67.

2 "Times Ed. Supp." 21.4.67.

extremely powerful figure without any political commitments, that for an 11 to 18 comprehensive to produce a sound and economic 6th form it ought to be 3,000 pupils strong. If his reckoning is sound (and one cannot think of a sounder reckoner, on record, in British Education) such an institution is beyond possibility¹.....Some back a three tier system with transfer at 13. Some believe the 6th form college, for all its special difficulties would be academically better still."

After the severe Labour losses in the county borough elections the "Comment" column² said of the new Conservative administration, "...it will pay them in many places to think hard about 6th form colleges." A further opportunity to press the difficulties of 6th form staffing arose with the publication in the Times of a letter signed by 25 vice-chancellors³ . "The number of teachers capable of providing the depth and stimulus characteristic of this kind of education (i.e. pre-university studies) is limited, and hence it seems inevitable that if such students are to go on being adequately educated and properly prepared for entrance to universities as we know them, they should as far as possible, be concentrated so that they can be taught by teachers of this calibre in reasonable and economic groups. We are alarmed, in short, lest some of the plans for secondary reorganisation, in spite of their admirable social intentions, may lead to a denial of opportunity for the individual pupil of ability, particularly if he comes from a poor and uneducated background..... If the needs of the able minority are prejudiced at school stage by hasty schemes of reorganisation, by the diffusion of specialist staff, and we may add by the loss of morale in some sections

1 Times Ed. Supp. 12.5.67.

2 " " " 19.5.67

3 The Times 3.6.67

of the teaching profession, serious difficulties are bound to arise."¹

The publication of this letter provoked letters from two well-known comprehensive controversialists, R.R. Pedley of Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar School in Kent and Tyrrel Burgess but editorial comment suggested a compromise of transfer at 13 to Senior, "selective in some fashion", schools whilst acknowledging that, "If the all-through comprehensive would be a disastrous model for all the country to choose, there are places where it could work perfectly well if the communities were behind it." It was inevitable that an editorial on comprehensive reorganisation could not be complete without a reference to 6th form colleges. "Elsewhere a combination of high schools with a 6th form college might work out well."

In commenting on Mr. Edward Heath's speech of June 17th 1967 it asked "whether a 6th form college would not be less of a coaching establishment if it were grafted on to an existing grammar school as at Mexborough..... Let us hope that authorities, in revising their plans, as Mr. Heath suggested they should, will never forget the working class boy of parts. This boy, or girl, needs all the backing in school his community can give him, the trouble with many comprehensive schemes is that they promise to make the world even safer for the middle classes."²

As if to demonstrate the practical effect of this conjunction of educational caution, for which the Times Educational Supplement was noted, with official Conservative Party policy as expressed by the leader of the Opposition, Surrey County Council - whose original development plan had

1 Times Ed. Supp. 16.6.67.
2 " " " 23.6.67

been rejected by the Secretary of State - published the report of its
1
Education Sub-Committee proposing the creation of all-through
comprehensive schools combined with the setting up of 6th form colleges.

1 "Guardian" 4.7.67.

PART IVI

Secondary Reorganisation in Darlington

The Background:

Darlington is an industrial town with a population of 86,000. It covers an area of ten square miles and had during the 1960's diversified the type of industry, traditionally heavy engineering, on which it depends for its livelihood. It also retains some importance as an agricultural market town for an extensive rural area.

A strong non-conformist and evangelical tradition in the 19th century and a forward looking school board following the 1871 Education Act had ensured a sound educational basis for expansion in the inter-war years. During that time, Hadow reorganisation was completed and, in the light of then current educational philosophy, the needs of children of varying abilities were catered for in boys' and girls' grammar schools, a technical school and various senior elementary schools.

Since 1945 the borough parliamentary constituency had followed national swings in elections whilst the borough Council majority remained consistently Conservative and Independent controlled until 1956 when Labour came to power. The latter lost control in 1960 to regain it in 1964.

These changes in local political control were reflected in the composition of the Education Committee. This consisted of seventeen members drawn from the Council with one co-opted member, the chairman and vice-chairman - elective annually - reflecting the dominant political groups although at one stage both were independent and would have objected to having a party conotation applied to them. In Darlington, the word independent could often be literally interpreted and the party label be no guarantee of conformity as the Labour Chairman of the Education Committee

showed on a number of occasions.

The Development Plan:

"Today the school development plan reads like the marching orders of some remote campaign in a long forgotten war"¹. This is one conclusion drawn from a study of primary and secondary school building since 1944. It would be less appropriate for a relatively stable area such as Darlington than for the more rapidly expanding areas of the South East. However, no consideration of the reorganisation plan of 1963 can be appreciated without reference to the Authority's Development Plan drawn up almost twenty years before.

In the introduction to the section dealing with secondary education, its authors stated, "We are convinced that in a time of transition when traditional concepts are being questioned and are likely to be modified we must be circumspect and, whilst affording the widest opportunities for constructive experiment, avoid establishing a system of organisation which, by its very nature, might well frustrate the attempts of those who are compelled in future years to adopt existing means to a new end."

The authors - or author, to give due credit to the Chief Education Officer, - of the Development Plan devoted some time to an analysis of what he termed "multilateral" schools. The weaknesses of selection at 11+, the social rather than educational significance of the terms "academic" "technical" and "modern", the invidious position of the modern school alongside the grammar school in a selective system and the most effective means of giving weight to parental preferences were all cited in the argument for the multilateral school. "It may be that some such method

1. Central Government & Local Authorities, J.A.G. Griffith
p.106. Allen & Unwin.

of organisation will achieve general acceptance in the future".

However, comprehensive education was not implemented in the years immediately after the war. "We do not believe we should be justified in effecting, by a deliberate act of policy, the disappearance of the Grammar School and the High School." Admittedly both schools had been opened to admission purely on grounds of ability and without questions of social or economic privilege and it was felt that the Development Plan provided for the evolution of a comprehensive or multilateral system in the absence, in 1946, of compelling circumstances which would warrant what the Plan termed "an act of surgery".

Briefly the Plan envisaged the continuation of selection of about 25% of the age group at 11. Incidentally, the proportion of the age group in grammar schools in 1938 had been 22.5%, almost double the average for the English county boroughs. The Technical School, housed in the premises of the Technical College and admitting pupils at the age of 13 was to close and boys' and girls' secondary modern schools each of four form entry were to be provided on adjacent sites. At that time one such unit existed. Two additional ones which would involve the closure of existing secondary schools were planned. Sites were reserved on the periphery of the town partly because of the 40 acres needed for each complete unit and partly because new housing estates would be located there.

The policy outlined in the document remained the guide lines for developments during the fifties except that the plan to move the boys' grammar school from near the town centre to a site adjacent to the contemplated girls' grammar school was tacitly abandoned when new

extensions were built in the existing site in 1962.

Curriculum developments forecast in the Plan did not wholly materialise. Handicrafts for boys and domestic subjects for girls in the grammar schools were extended but the engineering and commercial courses did not start. Likewise the concentration of certain types of courses in engineering, domestic science, commerce, building and agriculture at individual secondary modern schools did not develop to any noticeable degree. However, the secondary modern schools in the late 'fifties did gain a fresh impetus in academic work from the introduction of a regional examination under the auspices of the regional technical examinations council - a development not foreseen in 1946 and one which would have been looked upon with disfavour in the climate of educational opinion of that time.

Between 1946 and 1963 the four form entry grammar school for girls was transferred to a new building on the western outskirts of the town in September 1955, the first of the new four form entry secondary modern schools - mixed in the first instance - was opened to the north-east of the town in 1959 (Haughton), new extensions to the four form entry boys' grammar school completed in 1962 and a further four form entry mixed secondary modern school opened in September 1963 to the north-west (Branksome).

Already, by 1963, the pattern envisaged in 1946 was clear. "We are confident that our objectives can be obtained more effectively by establishing conditions under which the process of educational change can be worked out without impediment but also without abrupt dislocation", the

authors of the 1946 Plan had written. Even in 1955, however, there had been moves to hasten that process of educational change.

The First Attempt 1955-1959:

The history of conflict during the four years from 1955-59 constitutes an object lesson on the frustrations of education and politics in that ill-defined area where the two merge. The times were unpropitious. There was in power at Westminster a government pledged to defend the grammar schools. The groundswell of popular disapproval of 11+ selection procedures had yet to form. Political decisions on educational matters which over-rode suggestions of the Education Committee which was constituted to advise and formulate educational policy gave a party political complexion to a debate. The exclusion of the press from meetings of the General Purposes Committee, another name for the whole Borough Council meeting in committee, made the press suspicious, a suspicion which when expressed in editorial comment bordered on hostility.

Certain individual councillors on the Labour side acquired reputations for aggressive advocacy of comprehensive schools and the production of "ex cathedra" pronouncements which probably harmed rather than fostered the spread of their gospel. Whilst their plans were educationally suspect through lack of consultation, their outspoken - though genuine - campaigning was deeply resented by many teachers. They gave the unfortunate appearance of rumbustiously politicking over matters held sacrosanct. The price was failure.

Comprehensive Education became an open political issue in 1955 when a Council resolution was passed which urged the extension of comprehensive facilities at the earliest possible date that this could be made effective.

The occasion of this resolution was the reference to the intended merger of the existing Roman Catholic boys' grammar and secondary modern schools, an event brought about by their small size and the difficulty of their continuing as separate viable units rather than adherence to the principle of comprehensive education. Accordingly the C.E.D. produced a report in May 1956.

On a number of occasions in the narrative of this first attempt to implement comprehensive education, reference is made to the General Purposes Committee, already noted as the full Council sitting in Committee and thereby entitled to exclude press and public. On a number of occasions in the late 1950's it took the initiative or over-rode the Education Committee on the topic of comprehensive education. Individual members of the Council who were not themselves members of the Education Committee were, therefore, able to take part in debates on education other than in the open Council meeting. The practice, however, led to accusations of meddling, bulldozing and political motivation which opponents of the scheme were able to exploit to considerable advantage.

Following this first Report by the C.E.O. the General Purposes Committee resolved that the Education Committee be instructed to prepare a report with a view to implementing the Council's agreed policy at the earliest possible moment. This resolution was passed and the C.E.O.'s second report was put to the Education Committee in October 1956.

This gave impartially the arguments then current in favour of and against comprehensive education and possible ways in which existing and

future schools could be fitted into a multilateral or an "all-through" pattern. The general conclusion was that the Authority should defer final consideration until more new schools were built. Only one, the Girls' Grammar School had been completed in the ten years which had elapsed since the submission of the Development Plan.

In the meantime the problem could be studied more closely by visiting existing comprehensive schools in other areas. Alternatively one of the existing secondary modern schools could be converted to an "all-through" comprehensive school but the Report gave clear warning of the objections to such a scheme which would be raised by the Ministry, parents and many teachers. These anticipated objections were more than realised in the ensuing months.

In the event, the Education Committee considered that the time was not appropriate to consider and develop comprehensive schools in Darlington.

However, in March 1957 the General Purposes Committee recommended the Education Committee to seek Ministry approval to a variation of the Development Plan of 1946 to allow the building of a comprehensive school in one particular area of the town for which a four form entry mixed secondary school had been included in the 1958-59 Building Programme.

By June 1957 a further Report from the C.E.O. dealing with the Leicestershire Plan had been circulated and discussed. Of particular interest in this report was a summary of different methods and ideas in comprehensive organisation including Dr. R. Pedley's proposal in his book "Comprehensive Education" for county colleges for all full and part-time education from 15 to 19 and reference to the Croydon Plan of 1954. It also referred to changes which had occurred in the structure of the Boys'

Grammar School in its long existence. "It may be that in order to keep abreast of modern thought and development further modifications will be called for". These were three chords which were echoed in 1963.

This report of June 1957, like every one composed by the C.E.O. emphasised the need to consult all educational interests, particularly the Governors of the secondary schools and the teaching profession. "Collectively the teachers constitute a storeroom of knowledge and experience which the Committee would be unwise not to tap in seeking a solution to this problem."

Whilst no concrete action emerged from the June Report the ubiquitous General Purposes Committee resolved in July 1957 that the Education Committee should examine a proposal to merge two existing secondary modern schools of pre-war construction (Eastbourne Boys' and Girls') and sharing the same site into a mixed comprehensive school with a consequent reduction in the intakes of the two selective schools which served the whole town.

By November 1957 the Education Committee had considered a further Report on this matter and had resolved to take no action on this proposal. They did, however, determine to arrange visits to other comprehensive schools and to seek the views of interested bodies before deciding whether to propose comprehensive status for the new school which had been included in the Building Programme.

In January 1958 the views of the various Governors and the teachers' organisations were sought. The outcome was not auspicious. The Joint Four was adamantly opposed, the N.U.T. did not approve and the N.A.S. declared itself for evolution rather than change. Of the Governors, and these comprised four separate bodies each attached to a group of two or more secondary schools, one was staunchly opposed, one sympathetic to change,

one non-committal and one suggested possible modifications to allow all existing secondary schools to take pupils from 11 to 16 whilst concentrating "A" level work for boys and girls at the Boys' Grammar School. This last point was to be one of the major issues of 1963.

The outcome of these discussions was an Education Committee resolution in September 1958 to issue a public notice for the new school not as a comprehensive school but as a secondary modern/technical school planned to allow flexibility in organisation and without prejudice to future developments.

Again the General Purposes Committee intervened and amended the Education Committee resolution so that the public notice issued in November 1959 declared the Authority's intention to create a school of 1,200 pupils aged 12 to 18 from certain named areas of the town.

This led to fierce controversy. Petitions and counter petitions were organised. Correspondence in the press and statements from the leading protagonists were given wide publicity. At one stage the Old Boys' Association of the Grammar School demonstrated their loyalty by inserting a half page advertisement in the local evening newspaper encouraging resistance to the proposal. Debates in the Council were heated and at one stage a proposed informal visit by the Prime Minister to the school became a centre of controversy. The protagonists appeared on T.V. and it was widely believed that the issue would prove a test case for the Minister.

In the event the Minister asked a series of pertinent questions to which the Authority replied in February and March 1959. In April the Minister gave his decision. He refused to agree to the restriction on the

parents' freedom of choice implicit in the L.E.A. statement that, ultimately, children in the catchment area of the new school would not be considered for the 11+ selection procedure. If qualified pupils were excluded from the grammar schools on grounds of residence he would consider it unreasonable.

A deputation to the Minister later in the year clarified some of the points raised in the letter but on the issue of parental choice for children of grammar school ability there could be no compromise.

Some progress did, however, emerge from this episode. Horizons had been widened. Seven members of Committee had spent three days in the Midlands looking closely at five comprehensive schools in June 1958. Tactical - and, indeed, strategic - errors made between 1955 and 1959 would not be repeated when a more favourable opportunity arose.

The immediate benefit was in the Committee's adoption of certain recommendations for extending the scope of secondary modern schools. Some even claimed that this implemented comprehensive education without the need for actual comprehensive schools.

In November 1959, significantly after consultation with the teachers and interested bodies, the Committee agreed on the closure of the technical school, the introduction of G.C.E. "O" level in all secondary modern schools, the retention of selection at its existing percentage with allowance for periodic review and the transfer of successful "O" level candidates to "A" level courses in the grammar schools. The final irony was contained in the statement that pupils selected for grammar schools should, if their parents

wished, be allowed to opt for an academic course in a secondary modern school. The principle of freedom of transfer - albeit one way only - was at last enshrined in the Minutes of the Education Committee.

The 1963 Plan

After the Labour victory in the local government elections of May 1963 it was inevitable that the issue of comprehensive education would be raised at an early opportunity. The Education Committee reflected the political majority on the Council and the chairman and vice-chairman, both of whom had served on the committee as ordinary members were Labour councillors. In accordance with custom, however, the Committee retained its character as representative of the whole political spectrum.

At its meeting of July 1963 the Committee resolved "that the Chief Education Officer be asked to prepare a report for consideration by this Committee at a subsequent meeting, on the selection for and the organisation of secondary education". This minute was duly ratified by the Borough Council and the long process of secondary reorganisation commenced. Like the previous abortive attempt to introduce comprehensive education in 1956, the minute was prompted by the inclusion by the Ministry of a substantial secondary school project in the Major Building Programme for 1964/1965. The Committee were asked to approve the preparation of plans for the second school on the site of its first post-war secondary modern school (Haughton).

There had been a third minute in July 1963 in which it was decided to consider the feasibility of introducing the teaching of modern languages into the curriculum of secondary modern schools. This had the effect of focussing attention on one of the major discrepancies between the different types of secondary schools.

The 1st Report:

The Report was written by the C.E.O., and circulated with the agenda papers a few days prior to the September meeting of the Education Committee. Its final paragraph emphasised that it should be regarded as a preliminary report which merely explained the problems and made tentative suggestions for dealing with them.

It dealt concisely and methodically with 11+ selection and described the way in which various refinements had created an efficient instrument for its purpose and gave due weight to head teachers' assessments alongside the results of standardised tests.

On the possibility of introducing modern languages into the secondary modern schools it underlined the two principal difficulties, the shortage of specialist teachers and the doubt that with a 22 $\frac{1}{2}$ % selection process at 11+ there were sufficient pupils of the necessary calibre to undertake such studies in the modern schools. Concentration in a strictly limited number of schools seemed to offer the best solution to this problem.

On the school building programme, the report summarised the position in respect of each individual secondary school and the Development Plan proposals of 1946.

The section devoted to the organisation of secondary education began with the unequivocal statement that "The only effective way in which the 11+ could be abolished would be not to have any selection for secondary education at that stage". Some Authorities which had claimed to have abolished the 11+ and in whose areas comprehensive schools had been

established had not achieved comprehensive education in its fullest form. There still existed in many areas independent and direct grant schools outside Local Authority control which continued to attract the abler pupils. This situation, except for a limited degree in the case of girls, did not exist in Darlington.

After reference to the controversies of 1958-1959 as an illustration of the attitude of the Ministry of Education and their insistence that any new system should be allowed to develop alongside the existing one and parental rights not circumscribed in any way the Report proceeded to look afresh at the grammar schools.

This part of the Report concentrated on the boys' grammar school which had been the focal point of resistance in 1958-1959. Its changing role since its foundation in the 16th century was traced. It had occupied various sites, catered for several age groups and at one time had been co-educational. This picture of the schools as an institution adapting itself to changing demands in the past led to the conclusion that "any proposal to effect changes in its organisation should be regarded as one more step in the continuous process of development designed to meeting the needs of the town and of the times."

There followed an assessment of the special merit of 6th form work in the school, a feature which drew particular mention from the Inspectorate at a recent full inspection of the school. In numerical terms the 6th form of the boys' school had increased between 1958-59 and 1962-63 from 152 to 222 and pupils aged 16+ from 153 to 245. During the same period comparative figures for the girls' grammar school were from 85 to 153 and from 124 to 182.

These numbers meant that 6th formers had a wide choice of groups of subjects and of subject options within those groups. In the case of the boys' school further expansion on the existing site was practically impossible and if the rate of growth continued the Authority would be faced with the possible transfer of the whole school to another site.

Two other issues were included in the Report at this stage. As the Authority had built two mixed secondary schools and had reorganised another boys' school to co-education the advisability of the 1946 policy of single sex schools sharing the same site might be worthy of examination.

If as a result of this consideration it was decided to build mixed schools there might be merit in having six sites each with 600 boys and girls instead of three with 1,200. Recent land acquisitions would make this project more feasible than could have been foreseen in 1946. A well developed grass and cinder athletics track and adjoining land had been purchased from an industrial firm for general use by youth and sports organisations. The construction of a school on the site would enhance the amenities, reduce travelling for pupils and make supervision of the stadium easier.

The following section of the Report gave an outline of a scheme of secondary reorganisation headed "Suggestions for Consideration". It emphasised that the proposals were not necessarily the best way of achieving the various objectives and that it was hoped that they would form a basis for discussion from which may emerge a scheme incorporating the best of all points of view. Accordingly it recommended that "the Report be circulated to all interested organisations and to the schools affected,

and in particular to the various groups of Governors, the Teachers' Advisory Committee and the several Teachers' Organisations and that their view and comments be sought before the Education Committee finally decides on the recommendations it wishes to make to the Borough Council and to the Ministry of Education."

This suggested method of approach was in sharp contrast not to the C.E.O.'s previously suggested methods but to those adopted in 1958-59. At that stage, comprehensive education had been an overt political issue. Decisions had been made in meetings of the General Purposes Committee to which the press and public were not admitted. Certain councillors had been attributed with prominent roles whilst some of their party colleagues on the Education Committee itself had opposed their views.

Following the method of approach the kernel of the Report consisted of nine brief proposals, viz -

- " 1) That selection at 11+ be abolished.
- 2) That, instead, all pupils on leaving primary schools go to the appropriate secondary schools for their district.
- 3) That they continue there until the school leaving age is reached (at present 15; at some future date it is expected this will be 16). This is the "break" which can have the least possible objections.
- 4) That each of these schools takes courses leading to G.C. of E. at "O" level, together, in due course with the proposed new Certificate of Secondary Education.
- 5) That each of these schools has approximately a five or six form entry and thus will be approximately the same size.
- 6) That they be built on separate sites.

- 7) That they be organised as mixed schools.
- 8) That the High School (i.e. girls' grammar school) be adapted so as to form one such school.
- 9) That the Boys' Grammar School continue on its present site - organised as a mixed school and taking pupils from all secondary schools in the town for "A" and "S" work, i.e. from 15 to 19."

There followed a statistical summary of the accommodation needed for the estimated numbers on roll for 1967 when the new school already in the Major Building Programme had been completed. In all a total form entry of 38 was anticipated and during the first stages of reorganisation they would be fitted into existing schools, some of which would have a higher intake than that for which they would ultimately have provision. In the second stage these intakes would be equalised after the completion of a new 5 form entry school with the exception of one old secondary school (Central).

As this particular school attracted considerable comment at a later stage in the debate its position is worthy of note at this juncture. Although old and near the town centre it had a high repute in the Authority and attracted pupils from a wide area. Its premises were substandard according to current Building Regulations but the actual fabric was sound and the school, on the whole, was far from being unprepossessing. In the first stage it was anticipated that it could take a 5 form entry reducing to a 3 form entry in the second stage. However, the Report noted that the school could be replaced at the second stage by increasing slightly the

size of the other seven secondary schools or by building another new school to replace it.

The Report then asked the question, "What will be achieved by such a scheme?" The answer is here quoted in full.

- "1. 11+ Selection as we know it will be dispensed with.
2. Opportunity will be given for all secondary schools to develop full courses up to the G.C.E. "O" level standard.
3. All secondary schools will have a full cross section of the ability range and will have opportunity to organise particular courses suited to their special interests.
4. Pupils attending all secondary schools will have the opportunity of taking a broader curriculum, including the study of foreign languages.
5. Each secondary school will serve its own particular area and thus travelling costs and time will be kept to a minimum.
6. A pattern of 'Mixed' schools will be established throughout the town.
7. The changes proposed will continue to use all the facilities at the existing schools. The new schools planned will fit into the overall pattern of development. All this means that a minimum of additional expense will be involved.
8. The best of the traditions of the Boys' Grammar School and of the Girls' High School will be preserved in the 'new look' Grammar School which can contemplate a new era of activity in the latter part of the 20th Century and beyond. It will no doubt be argued that this scheme will destroy the Boys' Grammar School and the Girls' High School. This would be true in the form in which these two schools exist at the present time and in the sense in which their purpose is understood today. But it is suggested that a more correct assessment of the whole position would be to regard all the secondary schools as being revitalised and being given a new sense of purpose by the proposals, and with the Grammar and High Schools adapted and equipped to meet in full measure the needs of the more able pupils (as they have done in the past) and thus to continue to play a vital role in the educational system of the town.
9. The highly qualified members of the staff at the Grammar School and the High School capable of taking Advanced level work will be retained and concentrated. This should greatly increase their effectiveness as compared with any system which scattered these resources thinly throughout a number of schools.

10. The Boys' Grammar School in its new form will complete a Higher Education 'Campus' on a site near to the centre of the town, closely adjoining both the Teacher Training College and the new College of Further Education. It is difficult to attempt to anticipate possible future developments of advanced secondary education in the town, but the close proximity of these three establishments should at least provide the nucleus for a flexible scheme, permitting experiment and continuous development, and by allowing the sharing of facilities avoid any unnecessary waste of staff, premises or equipment. By way of illustrating this particular point the following provision, existing and proposed, for physical activity might be shared:-

- Sports Hall - (proposed for Phase IV of the development of the College of Further Education)
- Playing Fields - adequate at the Grammar School, but very limited at the College
- Swimming Pool - (proposed for the Grammar School).

Joint use of laboratories and practical rooms, with their expensive equipment, would also be practicable."

First Reactions

By 1963, tempers had cooled after the controversies of 1958-59. It was becoming more difficult to defend 11+ selection on educational or social grounds. There was a growing wave of parental distrust at selection. Professional objections had grown amongst teachers too. The backwash effect on primary schools was emphasised whilst secondary modern schools in the country generally were showing that children with academic ability could enter G.C.E. "O" level examinations on equal terms with some of their grammar school contemporaries.

More important, however, in this one Authority was the fact that the Report was the work of an experienced and respected professional administrator. Teachers were offered the opportunity to comment and submit counter-proposals if they wished. There was no pressure to achieve a political victory - the "bulldozing" impression which certain members had created - or whose actions had been so interpreted by others - in 1958/1959. So closely linked was the Plan to the C.E.O. personally that it became popularly prefixed by his surname.

Secondary School Governors:

The secondary schools of Darlington were allocated into four groups for administrative purposes. Each group had a governing body comprised of representatives of the Education Authority, i.e. the Borough Council, and co-opted members. The latter were nominees of the Education Committee but vacancies were advertised in the press and any individual resident could be nominated by any other person, or indeed could nominate himself.

Governors met once every term in schools belonging to their particular group. The C.E.O. acted as Clerk and the Head Teachers were present at the meetings and encouraged to participate. The responsibilities of each governing body were defined in Articles of Government but broadly speaking their discussion normally covered a wide range of topics relevant to the welfare of the schools.

Each group of governors was asked at its Autumn meeting to consider the plan of reorganisation remitted to them. This they did conscientiously. The result was to a large extent predictable. The secondary modern schools which stood to gain unselective intakes were in favour. The grammar schools threatened with the loss of selective status were opposed.

One group recommended the Plan as "a worthwhile goal to be achieved" and suggested that secondary schools should no longer be described by type, modern, mixed etc., but merely by the name of the district in which they were located. One group was concerned about noxious smells from nearby industry if a new school were to be built on the stadium site.

Only the group concerned with the two grammar schools held a special meeting on the subject. It was a lengthy meeting and the membership was fairly evenly divided in favour of and against the proposal. In view of these differences they decided to submit a summary of their discussion and the particular reservations felt by some members. The C.E.O. prepared this summary and submitted it to a later meeting for verification.

Most of the points were put in the form of questions: Was the Education Committee satisfied that a break at 16 was educationally sound?

Could an adequate supply of teachers be assured particularly for the sciences and modern languages? Would secondary schools of the size suggested in the Report be able to offer as wide a range of "O" level subjects as the existing grammar schools? Had the Committee considered a break at 13+ instead of 11 or 16?

In a sense these were rhetorical questions. To reply in the negative to any but the last of these questions would have been self condemnatory as protagonists of the Plan were claiming that it would extend, not limit, opportunities for pupils of all ability.

The two final points posed by the governors, however, received wide currency amongst critics of the Plan. The first pointed to the social implications of the system of area schools admitting children from only the locality. At present the grammar schools contained cross sections of the town's population. Equally, they asked the Committee to consider whether such zoned schools might not limit the numbers proceeding to higher education in the 6th form and that pupils of high academic ability might find their chances prejudiced by not being concentrated in the grammar schools.

Like many small industrial towns Darlington had certain favoured residential areas containing privately owned houses and where rateable values were high. Equally post-war housing developments by the Council had created extensive estates of rented property. Most areas contained both types in varying proportions and only one could be said to be exclusively privately owned. The girls' selective grammar school would attract its unselective intake as a comprehensive school from this estate.

The N.U.T.

The local association of the National Union of Teachers contained members teaching in schools in Darlington and in the surrounding district. They duly considered the Plan and submitted their observations.

A small majority of the members were in favour of retaining selection at 11+ but as opinion was almost equally divided they submitted two alternative schemes.

The first of these schemes which had the support of a small majority of members entailed a 10% to 12% selection at 11 for a 4 form entry mixed grammar school whose 6th form would cater for pupils from its own school augmented by transfers after five years from four 8 to 10 form entry secondary schools. The mixed grammar school would be located at the existing girls' grammar school. The boys' grammar school premises might be disposed of to either the College of Further Education or the adjacent training college. Two way transfers of pupils between the different types of secondary schools would continue on the recommendations of the head teachers.

The second scheme - favoured by a large minority - was similar to the Plan except that it envisaged six secondary schools each of 1,000 pupils.

The Association's comments concluded with some general observations which stressed that pupils of all ranges of ability should receive equal attention, that full time secondary education up to the age of 16 should take place in schools - an oblique reference to 15+ courses in the College of Further Education - and that these schools should provide courses

with a technical and commercial content in addition to G.C.E. and Certificate of Secondary Education.

Finally the Association emphasised the importance of an adequate supply of suitably trained teachers, sufficient funds for equipment and buildings of the highest standard.

The reaction to reorganisation of many teachers as reflected in these comments was cautious. How far this could be attributed to a desire to preserve the system which they knew operated with rough justice at 11+, how far it stemmed from an unwillingness to tamper with a system in which they had been educated and how far genuine educational and sociological ideas were implicated is conjectural. It could hardly be expected, indeed, that teachers corporately would enthusiastically endorse a major scheme of reorganisation which would involve innumerable difficulties over salary safeguards and security of tenure.

The Head Teachers:

The local branch of the Head Teachers' Association were no more enthusiastic than the N.U.T. in their reception of the scheme. They expressed concern at safeguarding the interests of the abler children and ensuring the best opportunities and resources of education for all children, primary and secondary, as they developed.

They were agreed that the 11+ procedure, accurate for its purpose, had a restricting and inhibiting effect on primary schools. They had considered alternative schemes of selection but found none so accurate and fair as the present one.

On the proposed comprehensive system they specified certain prerequisites for its success, namely buildings planned for the job, teachers in

quantity and quality, adequate finance and catchment areas ensuring good ability and social cross sections of the community and "an annual intake of 'high flyers' who can set the academic standard in the school and show an example of hard work and application".

Their comments then considered these criteria in greater detail. Building requirements would need to be examined carefully, particularly in relation to the older schools. It was estimated that staffing ratios in the secondary schools would need to be 18.5 to 1 and, consequently, seventy five extra teachers would be required. When the school population increased, even greater numbers of teachers would be needed and the Association doubted whether they would be forthcoming.

In their absence, however, the comprehensive schools could not hope to offer educational opportunities equal to those offered in the existing grammar and secondary modern schools. Shortage of specialist teachers ought not to be alleviated by compulsory travel or transfer of pupils to schools for particular subjects.

Comprehensive education, they stated, would be expensive and they asked whether, in fact, the public appreciated this. In addition they stressed that the proposed schools should contain a cross section of the ability range. Even so, some schools might receive a disproportionate number of 'high flyers' and others conversely, This might lead to an accentuation of social distinctions between equal schools in different parts of the town. Mixed schools were supported by a small majority of members.

Reservations were expressed about the 6th Form College. Close liaison would be necessary between the College and the comprehensive schools and a free interchange of teachers should be encouraged. The loss of continuity implied in the break at the age of 16+ was criticised whilst the comments included one view of 6th formers in a separate college, "They will think themselves grown up and independent and will ape university life before they are ready for it". Finally they questioned minor details of the Plan, assumed the termination of periodic tests held for record card purposes in primary schools and drew attention to the work of the Flowden Committee.

This Head Teachers' document was neither enthusiastically in favour nor strongly opposed to the reorganisation Plan. They agreed that the introduction of comprehensive education was the only alternative to selection at 11+ but were concerned in their conclusions that whatever was decided should be a practical proposition for those who would have to make it work - a fair basis to ask of any plan for reorganisation.

The Joint Four:

The Joint Four in their evidence defined the problems as they saw them. They appreciated the widespread demand for the abolition of selection at 11+. Many parents wanted their children to go to a grammar school therefore the basic flaw in the Plan was that by destroying the grammar schools the route to G.C.E. would be harder for all, easier for none and would cut away the roots of successful 6th Form work. "Where

children who are not admitted to the grammar schools immediately at 11+ are deprived of opportunities, a solution should be sought which will help them without being harmful to others. The ideal of comprehensive education is to allow all children to develop their talents to the full."

Their greatest misgivings arose from the repercussions they claimed the Plan would have on children they were most anxious to help, those from less favoured homes. They cited the statistics from the Robbins Report illustrating the close correlation between parental occupation and educational achievement, impressions confirmed by contacts with their colleagues in less favoured areas.

The relevance of these factors to the situation in Darlington was drawn. A break in the continuity of education at 16+ would constitute a major deterrent to candidates from less favoured homes. Schools in the industrial areas of the town would be at a disadvantage compared with those in residential areas.

This argument was tempered by a sympathetic awareness of family difficulties and the way in which some pupils felt that they should start work as early as possible to ease the financial burden. However, in the grammar schools, the environment could counteract home pressures. Continuity of education from 11 to 18 was vital. A break at 16 would call for a positive decision to continue a pupil's education. He would have to contract in whereas the existing system entailed contracting out. The former course would be more likely to jeopardise the chances of a pupil from a poor home than the latter.

The Joint Four report then cited examples in support of their argument drawn from the percentages of pupils from various types of secondary schools opting to continue their education in the high schools under the Leicestershire Plan.

The report continued with comments on various problems of organisation and staffing if the Plan were implemented. If there were to be selection for the 6th Form College, this might produce tensions and anxieties at 16 similar to those then experienced at 11+. They questioned whether each unselective secondary school could produce 20 pupils annually for an "express" stream which would transfer at 15+ to the 6th Form College.

They doubted the wisdom of attempting to cater in each school for different sets of pupils all taking different examinations or no examination at all.

On staffing they stated their belief that for successful "O" level teaching, specialist graduate teachers, or their equivalent, were required. Specialist teachers would not be attracted by work which reached no higher than "O" level and if the Plan assumed that surplus specialists from the two grammar schools would be available for redistribution, the Authority would be unwise. They would depart!

On the relation of "O" level to "A" level work the Joint Four stressed the need for continuity and a long association of teachers and pupils. The potential scholars were identified in the middle school and nurtured long before commencing on an "A" level course. "Unless the secondary schools can offer the same opportunities at "O" level and produce

results equal to those now achieved at the grammar schools, the scheme cannot achieve its purpose." Eight separate secondary schools would not each be able to offer the fourteen or sixteen "O" level subjects then available in the two grammar schools.

They inevitably raised the most telling point by selective school teachers against comprehensive education. How could comprehensive schools equal the facilities of a grammar school when each would have approximately only 30 pupils from the top 25% of the ability range? What would happen to subjects which attracted small numbers in the existing grammar schools, Latin, Economics, Geology and German? If they were made available in certain schools, problems of transfer would arise. Part-time and peripatetic teachers would make an educationally unsound arrangement. To start minority subjects in the 6th form would, in the majority of cases be far too late.

On the 6th Form College itself they decried the concept of an educational campus consisting of the College, the College of Further Education and the Training College - their aims being far too different. Students entering a 6th Form College would need teachers directly responsible for all aspects of their development. Contact with adults and others following day release courses might confuse them and divert them from their ways. These arguments which in 1963 were concerned with a very minor issue were to be repeated with much greater force in 1966 and 1967 when, after the acceptance of the notion of a 6th Form College - indeed an eagerness to participate in an educational experiment - the

issue of a unified institution for all the 16+ age groups was debated.

Finally they stated, "We view with grave misgivings the prospect of up to 700 boys and girls of 15 to 18 (if so many went on) in the so-called College. They would be rootless, aping the freedom of university students and ill-fitted to accept that freedom: and carrying no responsibility towards their juniors as 6th form prefects and leaders." The Robbins Report was also quoted "In this country to exclude 6th form work from the schools would deprive them of a source of inspiration at all levels".

However the Joint Four accepted the difficulties arising from the demand to end selection at 11+. Their solution was either to improve the process of transfer at a later stage or consider selection at a later age. They insisted that the age of 15 or 16 was too late to ensure success at "A" level.

The arguments used by the Joint Four were similar to those used in other parts of the country. They felt a special concern for the gifted child from every type of background. The schools in which they taught had achieved high standards. University entrants from their 6th forms were well above the national average for maintained grammar schools. They were firmly convinced of the social training received in their schools and feared that a break at 16 might endanger the educational prospects of pupils about whom the reformers professed greatest concern, those from poorer homes.

The N.A.S.

The evidence of the local branch of the National Association of

Schoolmasters with members in every type of secondary school welcomed the Report as a constructive attempt to deal with the immediate problems of secondary education in the town - followed shortly by the suggestion that the staffs of the mixed secondary schools should be so balanced to ensure that boys would come predominantly under the influence of men teachers.

In their evidence, however, they favoured the retention of selection at 11+ on the grounds of its general accuracy and the fact that to delay it would deprive grammar school pupils of the opportunity to form the loyalties and absorb the traditions of that type of school. Pupils from less advantageous home backgrounds would miss the compensatory factor provided by the grammar school.

They anticipated that comprehensive schools as envisaged would have difficulty in offering a full range of subjects due to a shortage of specialist teachers. They foresaw the likelihood of a wider range of ability in a school leading to a concentration on academic work to the detriment of the less able pupils.

The logic of their reasoning led them to the conclusion that selection at 11+ should be retained, modified by later transfers. They proposed that the six mixed secondary schools should be of a Technical type with an extension of the Handicraft bias - Rural Science, Building and Plumbing for boys and Nursing, Physiotherapy and Typing for girls - with a Modern Language in each school. Otherwise the schools could be upgraded by increasing the number of posts of responsibility and implementing a scheme of long-service increments.

Numerically, the local branch of the N.A.S. was relatively small but their service covered every type of secondary and junior school. Like all the teachers' associations consulted their approach was cautious and unenthusiastic. For a Committee determined to reorganise education on comprehensive lines, however, their advice was hardly constructive. The same could not be said of the submission which is given below:-

A Member's Comments

The Education Committee in 1963 contained one co-opted member, a lady who had fairly recently retired from the principalship of the local Training College. She had, in fact, served on the Committee since the early 1940's and was as conversant as any not only with the educational structure of the town but with the individual schools also. She took advantage of the request by the Committee for interested associations and individuals to submit comments and offered her own scheme of secondary reorganisation.

She began by citing the historical accident of 11 as the age of transfer dating as it did from the need to provide a post primary stage of three years' duration when the general school leaving age was 14. As it was now 15 and quite shortly expected to become 16 it was possible to look for an alternative age of transfer which was educationally best for the children.

Within the secondary schools' system, transfers between schools was not to be commended. The establishment of G.C.E. courses in the secondary modern schools was a brave attempt to remove the sense of frustration of the more ambitious children but she saw it vitiated by the inequalities

which existed between the schools.

Comprehensive schools of the range of 1,500 to 2,000 were suspect. They would need an administrative genius at their head, they would engulf some types of child and teacher, they would deprive a parent of the right to choose the type of school he required and might even be capable of manipulating minds in the hands of unscrupulous leaders.

The original Plan could be criticised on a number of points. The break at 16 disturbed continuity, teachers might be difficult to find for schools offering no "A" level work and the dissociation of the teaching of foundations of a subject up to G.C.E. "O" level from 6th form teaching was unsound.

She, therefore, outlined an alternative scheme. Basically this consisted of raising the transfer age from primary to secondary education from 11 to 12 or 13. Similarly the transfer age from infant to junior school could be raised to 8. It was appreciated that an additional junior age group would entail extensions to some primary schools. Transfers from primary schools would be made after consultation with parents and based on diagnosis and "Profiles".

The secondary schools, 6 in number as opposed to the 9 proposed in the C.E.O.'s plan would each offer the normal range of secondary school subjects but beyond the statutory school leaving age the individual schools would concentrate on limited ranges of subjects. When this range of subjects was examined there appeared to be a fair distribution of subject bias between existing schools, although it was questionable what expansion to make a 6th form of 100 students could take place at the two secondary

modern schools scheduled for English, Religious Knowledge, Art and Craft, Pre-Nursing, Engineering and Domestic Science compared to the Boys' Grammar School's Sciences, Geography, Economics etc.

On coeducation it was proposed that two of the schools, the boys' and girls' grammar schools should remain single sex to give an element of parental choice. It was envisaged that the secondary school course should be diagnostic in its first year, that transfers would be inevitable from one secondary school to another and that a long period of adjustment would be necessary for the scheme to stabilise itself.

This scheme attracted attention but little support. There was little support for a dispersal of 6th form teaching over so many schools. Indeed, specialisation of the kind envisaged would have entailed the imposition of restrictions on individual schools which at some future juncture would have provoked a reaction from teachers. Eventually it was rejected on a technicality, the fact that the law stated that transfer from primary to secondary education must take place at 11. Ironically, three years later the Secretary of State was to give in to pressure from the L.E.A.'s in the aftermath of Circular 10/65 and generally permit transfer at ages other than 11.

The Boys' Grammar School Association:

The memorandum submitted by the Association with a membership of 250 which consisted largely of parents was basically a plea for a maintenance of the status quo. Continuity of education for the age range 11 to 18 needed to be preserved. Quantitative considerations appeared

to have coloured the C.E.O.'s Report whilst they were concerned with the qualitative aspects of the scheme which would sacrifice those children who could benefit from an academic education.

The grammar schools provided an opportunity for a 25% cross section of the whole town to live and work together in one community. There, opportunities for higher education were twice the national average. If the girls' grammar school became a neighbourhood school it would draw from a highly rated residential area exclusively.

Their memorandum went on to specify features in the existing system which contributed to the educative value of the school, the societies, the orchestra, the character training and the prefect system. As with the Joint Four memorandum an oblique shaft was aimed at the campus concept in which one group pursuing technical advancement would be incompatible with the other following a wider general education with university careers in view.

Their own suggestion regarding reorganisation was to improve facilities in the whole range of secondary schools and to facilitate transfers within the system. They concluded by reasoning that hasty decisions might well produce disastrous results with the heaviest burden falling on the children of those parents least able to overcome or compensate for them. "Let us not, by seeking to do better than good, end by doing worse than bad".

It was natural that the parents of pupils in a selective school should object to plans to change its status and possibly deprive them of a vicarious educational cachet. Yet there was some force in the argument that comprehensive schools would be unequal if the existing girls' grammar

school drew only from its own residential neighbourhood. Other schools would draw from mixed social areas and provide a reasonable cross section. These arguments became contradictory at a later stage when an effort was made to prove that a large proportion of grammar school pupils in fact came from this residential area. How could they, therefore, claim to represent a cross section of the community?

The Second Report

All the evidence and comment submitted by the associations and other interested parties were attached as a series of appendices to the second report by the C.E.O., circulated in January 1964.

This Report was an extension of that of September 1963 and took into account the views of the other bodies. It acknowledged that it would be difficult, if not impossible to attempt a compromise of the various viewpoints expressed. However, as it seemed that the principal doubts had centred on the size of the proposed secondary schools, this aspect could probably be revised. In fact, the C.E.O. claimed that apart from the grammar schools' governing body and the Joint Four - the grammar school association evidence was not included in the Report - opinion had been favourable, at least towards certain aspects of the Plan.

His Report then dealt with alternatives suggested by the associations. Apart from the lady member's scheme, none of the others had been worked out in any great detail in the context of conditions existing in the town. For example the narrow majority N.U.T. scheme which would have halved the 11+ intake into grammar schools ~~but~~ would not have fulfilled the object of the exercise, the abolition of selection. Transfer at 13+ as at Doncaster or Leicestershire could be criticised on the grounds of selection based not on ability but on the willingness of parents to undertake to keep their children at school beyond statutory leaving age. "Middle" schools as in the West Riding were permissible only in limited areas and the Minister was unlikely to sanction the experiment more generally.

The lady member's scheme had, he suggested, an inherent weakness in that it distributed 6th formers too widely. "700 to 800 6th formers

dispersed over half a dozen schools would tend to produce a number of weak 6th forms and the staffing resources and specialist facilities, very important considerations at that stage, would be diluted".

On the alternative proposals generally the Report stressed that no two Authorities shared exactly comparable conditions. Variations in size, character and the existence of independent schools all affected the attitudes of Authorities to secondary reorganisation. The town needed a scheme evolved to suit conditions in Darlington rather than the adaptation of one prepared elsewhere for completely different circumstances.

Although some criticism had been expressed that Darlington should not be the "guinea pig" for a 6th form college it was pointed out that certain other Authorities were considering this type of reorganisation. Moreover the scheme had aroused a great deal of interest from other L.E.As. and from private individuals who had written asking for copies of the proposals. Various letters and comment from the national press were cited to illustrate the interest in preserving sixth form education intact.

Most reorganisation schemes, the C.E.O. argued, which moved the selection age from 11 to 13 or 14 were in the nature of palliatives. The 1958 scheme which introduced G.C.E. "O" level courses into secondary modern schools in Darlington had been an expedient which had soon shown its shortcomings. "The scheme which has been proposed for Darlington attempts to look forward 10, 20 or even more years and tries to visualise what the ultimate pattern of secondary education in the town will be. If it can reasonably be established that the plan which has been suggested provides the answer to this question then why not cut corners and achieve now at one

step, the ultimate organisation? This in a nutshell is the educational philosophy behind the proposals. To some people this is too bold a step to take and even though they may be reasonably certain in their own minds that the final pattern may well be very similar to the one proposed in the Darlington Plan nevertheless they prefer this goal to be achieved by stages rather than at one operation".

Before summarising the detailed considerations contained in the rest of the Report it is of interest to note the implicit change of tone in the second Report. This first Report of September 1963 had been tentative and exploratory. The resulting comment and criticism had provided no viable alternative in the four months which had elapsed since the Report's first circulation. The January Report was, as a consequence, more definitive. The idea had passed the first hurdle of public and professional criticism and could, therefore, be proposed, not as a possible solution, but as the only scheme which could satisfy the criteria originally stipulated. Administratively, the period after January 1963 was one of planning rather than proposing, of implementing rather than determining the solution.

Detailed Consideration January 1964

There had been considerable criticism that the five form entry schools originally envisaged would not be large enough to provide the range of courses then covered in the existing grammar and modern schools. The intention in placing the maximum entry at five forms to produce schools of about 730 pupils had been to avoid the large impersonal units and to

step, the ultimate organisation? This in a nutshell is the educational philosophy behind the proposals. To some people this is too bold a step to take and even though they may be reasonably certain in their own minds that the final pattern may well be very similar to the one proposed in the Darlington Plan nevertheless they prefer this goal to be achieved by stages rather than at one operation".

Before summarising the detailed considerations contained in the rest of the Report it is of interest to note the implicit change of tone in the second Report. This first Report of September 1963 had been tentative and exploratory. The resulting comment and criticism had provided no viable alternative in the four months which had elapsed since the Report's first circulation. The January Report was, as a consequence, more definitive. The idea had passed the first hurdle of public and professional criticism and could, therefore, be proposed, not as a possible solution, but as the only scheme which could satisfy the criteria originally stipulated. Administratively, the period after January 1963 was one of planning rather than proposing, of implementing rather than determining the solution.

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retain schools where head teachers and staff would know pupils more intimately. The six proposed schools had fitted into the pattern of existing sites and would have served to minimise travelling distances.

However, since the publication of the first Report the "Hailsham Report" on the region had been issued. This envisaged Darlington as a principal growth point and anticipated an increase of a third in its population by 1981. Obviously this would affect development plans for education. Instead of the 38 secondary forms entry a year, the figure would be increased to 50, or approximately an 8 form entry for each of the six secondary schools. Existing sites, with one exception where extra land could be acquired, were adequate for the purpose.

The increased size would ensure that each school contained at least two forms of pupils of equivalent academic calibre to those admitted to grammar schools on a 25% selection procedure. The range of "O" level subjects would be as extensive as those offered at the existing grammar schools, namely English Language and Literature, French, German, Latin, Maths, Chemistry, Physics, Biology, History, Geography, Art, Divinity, Technical Drawing, Woodwork, Metalwork, Domestic Science and Needlework. The only subjects occasionally offered in the grammar schools not included in the list were Russian, Spanish, Greek and Music with one, one, four and seven candidates respectively in 1963 and Economics with 30 candidates from the boys' school. The more esoteric subjects could be concentrated in particular schools or included in the curriculum according to demand. "In this way, it is suggested, there would be no restriction of opportunity

under the proposed new arrangements as compared with the existing provision".

Doubts had been expressed whether the staff to run the courses would be available. Here the C.E.O. could argue with ample evidence regarding quantity of teachers. Each year the Authority achieved its quota permitted by the Ministry. This had been done without lowering standards and almost without exception the teachers had been employed full-time and had been fully qualified. This was due in part to the presence of a training college, the fact that the grammar schools produced training college entrants in large numbers who returned to the town to teach and the fact that it was a pleasant area in which to settle.

More important, perhaps, the Authority's generous interpretation of the discretionary clauses of the Burnham Report with regard to posts of special responsibility helped to attract and retain well qualified staff. The future would see an extension of additional allowances in the secondary schools and would ensure that adequate replacements would be found to fill any vacancies which might arise.

The Report argued that doubts about the ability of college-trained teachers to undertake work up to "O" level were unfounded. The 3 years' course of training ensured that qualified non-graduate teachers had pursued their specialist academic subjects at least five years beyond G.C.E. "O" level themselves whilst there was the prospect that, for some students at least, the end of the college course would be marked by the award of a degree.

It was anticipated that the increase in the number of training college places announced recently by the Minister and the flow of "married women returners" stimulated by a national press campaign would ease the overall teacher supply situation. In addition, many areas were experimenting with closed circuit television and other audio-visual aids which might offer one solution to the problem of minority subjects.

Very little concern had been expressed by the associations on co-education. One proposal had suggested the retention of two single sex schools to ensure maximum parental choice. Two had criticised the "throwing together of several hundred boys and girls at the age of 16". There was little to add in this second Report to that already stated in the first. An individual supported or opposed co-education largely through inclination rather than logic. In a co-educational society segregation in secondary schools was hard to justify. The Report cited the evidence of the most recently integrated secondary school in the town. The Head had written of his co-educational school, "In short I will say this splendid experiment is enriching and extending the scope and quality of the whole of our life and work here."

Three of the associations had asked that the social implications of the scheme should be examined. It had been suggested that the grammar schools represented a cross section of the population and that this was a valuable social feature. The secondary modern schools, however, tended to cater for their particular districts, less the 20% - 25% attending the grammar schools.

It was envisaged that each of the six secondary comprehensive schools would draw its pupils from particular sectors of the town. This was expressed diagrammatically by a circle divided into six segments so that each school zone would contain a cross-section of the population. The Report acknowledged that it was debatable whether such an arrangement would produce social distinctions. Excellent buildings did not necessarily produce good schools. What was important was the need to ensure comparability of standards in buildings, equipment and staffing.

Finally, on the subject of 16 being the most appropriate age for a "break" in the continuity of secondary education the Report argued that it was a more natural stage than any other age between 11 and 16. It was at that age that most pupils left schools and for those who remained it introduced concentrated study of three or four subjects in an "A" level course as opposed to the larger number studied in less depth for "O" level.

Various "sundry queries" were dealt with after the principal educational arguments. The reasons were given why it would be necessary ultimately to close a secondary school near the town centre. It was agreed that the term "modern" should be dropped from secondary school titles. It was assumed that some association with the historic name of the boys' grammar school would be retained. Existing primary school record cards might be dispensed with. Playing field facilities for secondary schools on built up sites would be rearranged. Even the "noxious fumes" which had caused so much concern to one governing body were not, the Report averred, beyond the wit of man to remedy.

Timing the Implementation:

The last section of the Report of January 1964 gave a summary of a possible programme for introducing the Plan. The existing total of 35 secondary forms entry a year in county secondary schools - a deduction of 15% having already been allowed for Roman Catholics, private school entries and handicapped pupils - would be allocated on an average of 5 forms entry to each of the 7 schools existing or envisaged. The raising of the school leaving age to 16 would, however, reduce the entry capacity of each school by virtue of the pupils staying on a year longer - therefore school A which could accommodate a 5 form entry each of 30 pupils for four years ($5 \times 30 \times 4 = 600$) would be able to take only a 4 form entry when each pupil stayed for five years, ($4 \times 30 \times 5 = 600$). Schools which could absorb a 38 form entry in 1966 would be able to take only 28 forms when the school leaving age was raised. In addition, if the increase in population to 115,000 materialised, there would be 20 extra forms entry to create an annual total of 48. Six 8 form entry schools could accommodate these.

A graph accompanied the text to indicate the anticipated growth in population, the effect of the raising of the school leaving age and the stages by which various building projects would need to be programmed to absorb the increase.

The Report concluded that "Whatever recommendations for the future of secondary organisation in Darlington the Education Committee decide finally to make to the Borough Council it is suggested -

(a) that the Minister of Education be invited to express his views on

proposals and

- (b) that in the complicated process of working out the complete details of the scheme and the time-table for its implementation, the help and advice of the various teachers' organisations in the town continue to be enlisted (as for example through the Teachers' Advisory Committee appropriately strengthened for this purpose if considered necessary or through a special sub-committee)."

Between September 1963 and January 1964 the implications of the Plan had been clarified and by the latter date a stage had been reached where it could either be accepted outright or rejected. None of the modifications or alternatives had suggested viable schemes.

In a sense, this was inevitable. Democratic processes within the professional associations militated against sharp and positive policies except in the case of the Joint Four where opposition was inevitable. Either through lack of agreement, lack of administrative expertise or a determination not to be too closely involved in politics no Association offered a more feasible solution to the problem of reorganising secondary education in Darlington.

The Committee and the Council

The Revised Report was presented to the Education Committee at their meeting on January 27th, 1964. The Chairman proposed a draft resolution of seven points recommending, amongst other matters, approval in principle and consultation with the teachers' organisations. The preparation of draft resolutions was a custom of many years' standing. It originated in the short time which elapsed between certain meetings of the Education Committee and the deadline for proof reading and circulation of the printed minutes of the Council. It had the advantage of allowing forethought in the preparation of minutes and enabling the Chairman to give to the Committee a precise draft decision which they had every power to accept or reject. It was, however, a procedure considered suspect by some individuals of all parties in that it appeared to encourage automatic assent to resolutions from the chair. It also prevented actual minutes from being challenged for their veracity when they were put to the Committee for confirmation at a later meeting.

Notwithstanding the draft resolution the debate ranged over a wide field though very few new arguments were presented. One councillor claimed that young grammar school teachers would leave the town and would be difficult to replace. Another argued that too many reservations had been recorded by practising teachers for any hasty decision to be taken. One wanted to reduce the percentage intake into grammar schools at 11 to produce a better "top" to the secondary modern schools. Another wanted a third grammar school and a higher percentage selection at 11. It was argued that

the existing girls' grammar school serving as a neighbourhood secondary school in the most prosperous part of the town would be socially wrong. There were some reservations on the large size of the envisaged schools and the possibility of recruiting enough teachers to staff them. Some questioned the advisability of disturbing a selective system which provided university entrants well above the national average and destroying the character of schools whose excellence had been proved by their past record.

Inevitably, most of the arguments in support of the Plan were drawn from its actual contents. The public had lost confidence in the 11+, the Plan would secure equality in secondary education and ensure a firm basis for the future. Finally the Chairman reminded the Committee that decisions of policy were their prerogative. The professionals could advise but, ultimately, only the Committee could decide. This they did by a small majority.

Their decision came up for ratification at the Council meeting of February 7th. Public interest in the question swelled the normal handful of spectators to almost a hundred. As in the Education Committee debate the arguments were largely conventional. Some professed concern at the apparent haste in approving the Plan and wanted the matter referred back for consultation with the teachers on the principles of reorganisation. Some thought reorganisation itself wrong in principle. One of the protagonists of six years previously saw it as a vindication of his earlier struggles. Various political accusations about group decisions were made and one Labour member quoted extensively from a pamphlet (which

had been produced by the Bow Group) in support of comprehensive education.

Finally a named vote was taken. In favour were all the Labour councillors and alderman - with one abstention but joined by one Conservative. Opposed to the Plan were all the remaining Conservatives and Independents.

The minute eventually agreed by the Education Committee in January and confirmed by the Borough Council at the beginning of February resolved:

- 1) that the Further Report be received,
- 2) that subject to consultations with the Teachers' Organisations on the further report, the revised proposals for the re-organisation of the secondary schools in Darlington be approved in principle, involving the establishment ultimately when the school leaving age is raised to 16 and the proposed increase in the population of the County Borough to 115,000 is achieved, of six mixed secondary schools each with an 8 Form Entry taking all pupils from the ages of 11 to 15 or 16, and thereafter their transfer for Vith Form work to one school, and that the present Queen Elizabeth Grammar School be adapted for this purpose.
- 3) that as the scheme represents a variation of the approved Development Plan the views of the Minister of Education on the proposal be sought.
- 4) that copies of this further report etc. be forwarded for information to all the organisations which had been consulted or which had submitted views and to those members of the Council who are not on the Education Committee.
- 5) that the Teachers' Organisations be consulted with a view to the establishment of a Joint Committee for the purpose of considering the

scheme in detail and submitting proposals for its implementation, and that this Joint Committee be requested to give consideration

- (a) to the possible development in each school of a bias or specialism to enable parents to have a choice of school or course likely to develop to the full their children's potentialities
 - (b) to the age of transfer from Primary to Secondary Schools.
- 6) that the 4 Form Entry Secondary School approved by the Ministry of Education for the 1964-65 building programme and referred to previously as "Haughton No. 2 School" be sited at Longfield Road.
- 7) that the Ministry of Education be now asked to include in the 1965-66 building programme the complete re-modelling of the two Eastbourne Schools, so as to provide the first of the 8 Form Entry Mixed Secondary Schools visualised in the "Plan".

On the following day a copy of the Minute and three copies of the Further Report were despatched to the Ministry. Likewise copies were sent to the four principal teachers' organisations. The Ministry replied a month later saying that a discussion between representatives of the Authority and Officers of the Ministry would be welcomed and asked the Authority to offer a few dates when it would be convenient for them to visit London. This reaction was duly considered by the Education Committee who nominated the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, one pro-reorganisation Conservative Councillor, another who had been a leading critic of the scheme and the sole co-opted lady member, the author of one of the alternative schemes. This was a genuine attempt to provide a delegation representative of the whole political spectrum. Two dates in mid April

were suggested but the posting to another branch of the Ministry of the Under-Secretary concerned delayed the eventual meeting until mid June.

The Delegation:

Whatever the composition of the delegation it was incumbent on the C.E.O. to brief them to present an informed - if not united - front. The lines of approach to be used by the Ministry were anticipated by asking Authorities with similar proposals how they had fared. It was obvious from the replies that the officials at Curzon Street would be concerned, not with principle but with organisation, curriculum, courses, entry conditions and staffing. The Ministry could offer criticism but little help and generally seemed unenthusiastic, partly because of lack of experience with this type of organisation. The 6th Form College was, as yet, untried. One official suggestion to one delegation had, indeed, been that a 6th Form College could be formed and grammar schools allowed to retain their 6th forms, the two developing on parallel lines.

Accordingly the C.E.O. provided a 20 page document of notes for members of the delegation. These covered virtually every point that could be raised at the Ministry. They ranged from an allegation made at the February Council meeting that the original report had never been requested and that the original minute was deceptive, to extracts of relevant sections of the Education Act of 1944.

The Report anticipated the questions and criticisms that might be made at the Ministry. Any allegation of haste in the preparation of the scheme of reorganisation could be countered by a history of the

problem dating back to 1956. Four months had been allowed for comments on the original Plan of September 1963 to be made. Even after they had been received the Plan was approved only in principle and subject to further discussions so that almost 12 months after the question had first been raised it was still under active consideration. Moreover, it was likely to be even a longer time before the scheme could be finalised and implemented.

Every step had been made publicly and the matter debated at Education Committee meetings which were open to the general public. As a provincial press centre, two daily and one weekly newspapers were published in the town the Plan had received more than its fair share of publicity. One newspaper had even offered prizes for letters on the subject. Admittedly, products of the selective system had demonstrated a commendable loyalty and literacy in defence of their particular interest and the C.E.O. likened this to the support for famous regiments threatened with amalgamation. Both the editor of one newspaper and the local secretary of the Assistant Masters' Association were quoted in commendation of the open manner in which the Plan was presented and debated. This desire to ensure all shades of opinion were represented was further demonstrated in the composition of the delegation for which the brief was prepared.

One criticism which other Authorities had encountered at the Ministry concerned staffing - and this was emphasised 18 months later when final approval was given. Figures, from 1959 showed that for five years the Authority had employed precisely its quota of teachers permitted by the Ministry and had used only full-time and qualified teachers. More married

women returners might be recruited, some interchange of staff between the 6th Form and the neighbouring College of Further Education might be effected, peripatetic teachers might be employed as might also unqualified teachers as a last resort. It was not envisaged that these steps would be necessary. Obviously the quota would have to be increased to cope with an increasing school population but "if one had to wait for ideal conditions before carrying out improvements few reforms would ever be introduced." Certainly the school leaving age would never have been raised to 15 nor would its further extension be contemplated if teacher supply were the only consideration.

In fact, the concentration of 6th form work could be more economical than dispersing it over half a dozen different schools. An estimated staff of 60 would be required for a College of 800 students, a smaller total proportionately than for the existing 6th forms of the two grammar schools.

It had been argued in the press and elsewhere that pupils needed a continuity of teaching between "O" and "A" level work. However, a study of the girls' grammar school showed that just over half the staff had been appointed in the previous four years and only a quarter had served in the school for ten or more years. Over ten years there had been an annual average of 8 new appointments. Even in the boys' grammar school, half the staff had been appointed in the previous five years and the annual staff turnover was in the region of 10%.

On the necessity of a 6th form for the proper function of a school

the Ministry might well be embarrassed by the comments of H.M. Inspectorate following a full inspection of the boys' grammar school. The tenor of their remarks was that some fifth formers were expressing a sense of frustration at being classed with younger boys for purposes of school discipline whilst some of their contemporaries were in the 6th form and enjoying privileges. Moreover a 6th form of more than 200 members meant either that all deserving cases could not be given prefectships or that the currency of this particular responsibility was devalued by the spread of its distribution.

Sir William Alexander was cited as an advocate of comprehensive education to the age of 16 followed by a 6th Form College to give the necessary responsibility of personal study to the 6th formers to equip them for a university. Finally the President of the Association of Chief Education Officers was quoted in criticism of the sheltered life of the 6th form and its association with a community of young children.

Whilst some critics had argued that suitable staff would not be recruited others had argued that those already employed would leave the Authority's service. The brief contained an analysis of all the Head of Department and Graded posts at the two grammar schools accompanied by the ages of the holders. These allowances were generous by current standards and were increased shortly afterwards. However, the most significant point was that assuming 1972 as the date for full implementation of the Plan thirteen of the thirty-six involved would have either retired or reached the age of 60 and have become eligible to do so.

From that it would be inferred that most would continue during the transition stage and that others would have opportunity ultimately from promotion to the vacancies. In addition provisional estimates of size indicated that most, if not all, senior staff would be absorbed in the 6th Form College.

For the existing secondary modern schools which were to become comprehensive, the scheme of allowances would be extended commensurate with the enhanced responsibilities of 8 form entry schools covering the full range of ability. There seemed no reason to suppose that the schools and the College would not be able to attract and retain staff fully qualified for the grade of work they would be called upon to undertake.

Except for extracts of the appropriate sections - 11,12, and 13 - of the 1944 Act, the brief concluded with a note on the anticipated size of the College. The existing 450 6th formers plus a $\frac{1}{3}$ increase by 1981 under the Hailsham Report - whose unfulfilled predictions were possibly as embarrassing to the Ministry as its H.M.I's report mentioned above - plus 50 fifth formers with an allowance for the upward trends evident from 1958 onwards and increasing numbers of post C.S.E. entrants indicated a figure of 700 to 900 students. This was the most optimistic figure which could be produced in 1964 as an indication of requirements for 1972. Detailed planning at a later stage was forced to take cognisance of the possibility of a lesser figure at the date of implementation.

Thus briefed, what might be described as a delegation of all the talents journeyed to Curzon Street accompanied by the two district H.M.Is. whose responsibilities covered the Authority's schools. There they conferred with the Under Secretary, Assistant Secretary and territorial Principal of Schools Branch and the Chief Inspector for Secondary Education.

The Department's officers questioned the delegation on various points of detail. They enquired what opportunity there would be for late developers to take G.C.E. "O" levels in the comprehensive schools, what the standards of admission would be to the 6th Form College, how the proposed schools would be staffed, how comparable standards would be maintained, what assessment of losses and gains to the existing grammar schools could be made and what the timing would be for the implementation of the scheme.

The officials of the Department refused to be drawn on their opinion of the merits of the scheme. They preferred to await the outcome of the discussions due to start in the "Ad hoc" committee which had been established in the Authority. They did, however, promise a reply in the near future to the request for the remodelling of two separate schools to create the first 8 form entry comprehensive school to be included in the Major Building Programme. As one officer said at the end of the meeting, "I was merely bowling to see how you batted".

Whilst not overtly hostile, there was no evidence of enthusiasm for the 6th Form College at Curzon Street. The same scepticism which other delegations had encountered was detected by the Darlington members but at

least, they could not be accused, as one Authority had been, of haste or, as another, of americanisation. It seemed obvious that political uncertainty was a not inconsiderable factor in the situation.

The "Ad Hoc" Committee

On the day following the Council's ratification of the Plan the C.E.O. wrote to the local secretaries of the four principal teachers' organisations the N.U.T., N.A.S., Joint Four and Head Teachers. He sent additional copies of the Report, a copy of the Minute and asked for their suggestions concerning the constitution of the proposed committee to discuss the Plan in detail.

The replies demonstrated a wide divergence of views. The N.U.T. asked for representation from teachers' organisations to be proportional to their strength - a not unnatural reaction from an association to which the large majority of teachers belonged. The Head Teachers, however, considered quality more important than quantity and recommended 12 Heads, 6 assistants and the secretaries of the four associations. The Joint Four asked "adequate" representation whilst the N.A.S. asked for the respective strengths of the associations in the secondary schools to be taken into account.

The resultant negotiations were protracted and delicate, reflecting as they did, local rivalries of long standing. Eventually a compromise solution was proposed to the Education Committee with the somewhat grudging assent of two of the organisations concerned. By this honours would be shared and it was hoped that all the secondary school heads affected would be included. Three months after his first letter, the C.E.O. was able to ask the associations for their nominees. In any future reckoning the associations could hardly be accused of inordinate

haste in approaching the conference table.

Even as the nominations were forwarded some concern was expressed that there was no specific representation from assistant staff in primary schools but the first meeting was arranged, nevertheless, for early July. In the meantime the Education Committee had restricted their own direct representation to five members.

Prior to their first meeting all members of the Committee were circulated with a summary of membership and the Report produced by the C.E.O. as a brief for the delegation which had visited the Ministry in June with the result of that visit as notified to the Education Committee. In addition the agenda included an item from the N.U.T. requesting protection of salary and status for teachers involved in reorganisation.

This first meeting was bound to be mainly of an exploratory nature. In fact arguments reminiscent of Burke's distinction two centuries earlier between representatives and delegates almost submerged the main business in procedural wrangles. Tactful steering by the Chairman of the Education Committee who had been elected chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee turned the discussion into more constructive channels. The principal decision of the meeting was that future sessions should be devoted to examining the particular points of the Plan which the Ministry had queried, namely:-

- a) An assessment of the losses and gains to the present secondary schools likely to result from the proposed changes.
- b) The maintenance of comparable standards, including staffing in the proposed schools.

- c) The opportunities there would be in the proposed secondary schools for late developers to take the G.C.E. at "O" level and for pupils who wanted to stay at school beyond the age of 16 but who did not want necessarily to study for "A" level.
- d) The standard that would be required for admission to the 6th Form College.
- e) The zoning of the proposed schools and the possibility of social segregation.
- f) The question as to whether all schools should be mixed.
- g) The timing of the implementation of the scheme.

In addition nominations for representatives of assistant staff in primary schools were agreed to be submitted at the next meeting to be held in September. The N.U.T. secretary asked that his request for safeguarding salaries and status should go direct to the Education Committee and the C.E.O. undertook to arrange visits to comprehensive schools in other Authorities in the region. Finally, in arranging to discuss the first of the seven topics, all members were asked to submit comments in advance to assist the preparation of a preliminary survey which could form a basis for discussion.

Of the 26 members of the Committee, 7 responded to this invitation and these were summarised on three pages of double foolscap, advantages and disadvantages alongside each other and categorised into pupils, teachers and teaching, examinations, premises and equipment, staff and general remarks.

At their September meeting the Committee tackled the Document with vigour though the very range of opinion expressed in it tended for a time

to diffuse the discussion. As at the first meeting uncertainty was expressed about the extent to which the Committee's deliberations could amend the Plan and arguments of principle were interspersed with points about particular existing and proposed schools. Whilst one member wondered whether the Flowden Report would recommend a later date of transfer another quoted Quintin Hogg on the responsibilities of brains and excellence and called for the retention of a modified 11+.

Generally, however, the meeting confined itself to the alleged disadvantages and advantages of the Plan to pupils in the proposed comprehensive secondary schools. The disadvantages alleged included a fear that work would be geared to the able child to the neglect of the less able. Members agreed that this ought not to happen and would be foremost in staffing considerations. Likewise the danger of leadership in the school being monopolised by the top of the ability range could be guarded against. The extent to which selection and streaming within a secondary school would create a tripartite system in miniature was discussed and it was anticipated that the visits to comprehensive schools would help resolve some of these issues.

Amongst the advantages which, it was argued, would be incurred were the stimulus the less academic pupils would gain from learning and living alongside the more gifted, a wider acquaintance with more members of staff, better opportunities for late developers, wider courses and options and the eradication of a sense of failure. One member emphasised that excellence in others could discourage as easily as encourage a fellow

pupil. Equally size and complexity of organisation could lead to a sense of insecurity on the part of the individual child. The Committee could hardly be expected to vote on each point and finally they decided, subject to a few minor amendments, that the part of the document dealing with losses and gains to pupils was a fair statement of fact and opinion. Their next meeting was arranged for October.

Before that meeting, however, they divided into groups to visit comprehensive schools in three other Authorities and, inevitably, a High School and a Grammar School in Leicestershire. At these schools, all purpose-built or extensively adapted, they were able to see the range of facilities provided and the types of courses devised. Except for the Leicestershire schools, all were operating within a selective system and were not strictly comparable with the proposed Darlington schools as their intake did not reflect the full range of ability. The ways in which the Heads and staff planned for large numbers and varied courses were relevant, however, and the House systems and upper and lower school organisation attracted considerable attention and comment. They resolved some of the misgivings of members who had not previously visited a comprehensive school.

Teachers and Teachings

By the time the Ad Hoc Committee next met the General Election had returned, with a small majority, a Labour government pledged to implement comprehensive education. No matter how much the Committee were concerned with purely educational questions it was inevitable that a change in

political direction at Curzon Street would make it incumbent on every Authority to reorganise its system of secondary education. The status quo in education could not be maintained in the foreseeable future.

Their next meeting was concerned with Teachers and Teaching in the comprehensive schools. It was claimed by advocates of change that larger schools with more specialist staff would improve standards. Teachers would have better promotion prospects through increased Head of Department and Graded posts. Extra-mural activities would be extended and ranges of courses and options would be increased. Teachers in the larger schools would gain from association in dealing with common problems.

Conversely the question was asked whether a comprehensive school could cater adequately for a small group of brilliant pupils. Would not, also, the difficulty of teacher recruitment tend to restrict subject choices? Would not existing staffing inadequacies in secondary modern schools be perpetuated in the comprehensive schools?

The discussion extended over two meetings of the Committee. All members were concerned over the quality of recruitment and anxious to press for as generous an interpretation as possible of the permissive clauses of the Burnham Report. There was some argument whether teaching to "O" level was the proper province of the graduate or three year trained teacher and the promotion opportunities which would be open for each in the comprehensive schools. The question of concentrating staff by allowing each school to specialise in certain subjects was discussed but the proposal rejected. A considerable time was spent on discussing the

teaching of the most able children. Although transfer at 15 to the 6th Form College might compensate for lack of intensive teaching with large groups of similar children in the lower school there remained the argument that dispersing children meant dissipating teaching resources when the latter were in short supply.

The quota system by which L.E.As. were obliged to limit the total number of teachers in their employment in primary and secondary schools was explained to the members. Some individual members had calculated the requirements of the new system in terms of qualified teachers and had reached conclusions which exceeded by far the current Ministry quota. One estimated that 75 extra teachers would be required in the secondary schools if transfer of staff from the primary schools was to be avoided. It was explained that no immediate increase in the quota would result from reorganisation. This was later confirmed in Circular 10/65 itself.

By the middle of their fifth meeting at the beginning of December 1964 the Ad Hoc Committee agreed their statement of advantages and disadvantages to Teachers and Teaching. It was not greatly different in substance from that prepared originally by the C.E.O. from suggestions proposed by members - with appropriate interpolations.

The remaining sub-headings were agreed with commendable alacrity. They agreed unanimously that examination groups could be more easily formed in large schools and that teachers and pupils in secondary modern schools would be relieved of some of the present strain of accommodating small groups. A draft remark about C.S.E. possibly displacing G.C.E. in

the future was deleted but another stressing the complexity of organising for both types of examination retained.

It was decided to refer to a sub-committee a point about ensuring parity of conditions and equipment in the secondary schools. The question of whether it would be advisable to retain some single sex schools was also referred to a sub-committee for more detailed consideration and the Committee then passed to an examination of the advantages and disadvantages claimed for a 6th Form College.

One advantage stated was that the age of 16 constituted a natural break in secondary education. Members claimed various other ages as more natural and eventually it was agreed to alter "natural" to "statutory" and include 15 as well as 16 as ages when this break occurred. They agreed that 6th form work was becoming more akin to that of the universities but deleted references to the 6th Form College providing new opportunities for group activities. A statement that the size of 6th forms denied opportunities for students to exercise leadership and responsibility was amended to give emphasis to the emergence of adolescents as a distinct social group whose separation from a school would provide opportunities for responsibility by the 15 and 16 year olds.

To offset this rather thin list of advantages was arranged a series a disadvantages. School loyalties and tradition would be lost, the expertise of grammar schools would be dissipated, university and college entries would decline, standards would be lowered and the very bright pupils would be retarded. These statements were modified but their substance remained.

The remainder of the discussion concerned the staffing advantages, concentration and new career prospects, the difficulty of ensuring adequate information about pupils transferred from schools to College and the question of whether the boys' grammar school would gain or lose prestige in its proposed translation in status. Both statements, mutually contradictory were allowed to remain on the record.

The Sub-Committees:

At an early stage in the deliberations of the Ad Hoc Committee it became clear that consideration of all the issues by the full committee would be a protracted assignment. At one point the C.E.O. felt it necessary to issue a note explaining the function of the Committee. Briefly, the Plan had been approved in principle. If the Committee wished to advise the Education Committee that the policy of comprehensive education was unsound they could do so. Equally, if they agreed that new evidence not previously available was such as to cast doubts on the Plan, it was their prerogative to report this. Otherwise their task was to foresee possible difficulties and make suggestions in detail for its implementation.

Accordingly the Committee agreed to divide its membership into equal thirds, each of which would consider two linked aspects of the six remaining points posed by the Ministry officials. Members were allocated to the sub-committees after nomination by their Associations. Each member was allowed to belong to one committee only. All members were asked to send their comments on the subjects referred to the sub-committees and these were incorporated in a draft statement for each by the C.E.O.

Sub-Committee "A" met in December 1964, the C.E.O. having circulated his draft statement in advance of the meeting. Their topics were, "The maintenance of comparable standards, including staffing, in the proposed schools" and "The zoning of the proposed schools and the possibility of social segregation".

Apart from a few minor amendments the draft of the first topic was accepted by the sub-committee. This was largely factual in that it cited Building regulation requirements for school sites and accommodation, Authority policy on capitation allowances, anticipated pupil/teacher ratios and policy regarding ancillary staff.

The second topic, however, led to wider discussion. The Economics master at the boys' grammar school had undertaken "A study of the relationship between the social background of pupils and their academic achievement at the grammar school". The study appeared to underline the assumption already widely circulated that one area of the town would preponderate in academic success. As a piece of scholarship the survey with its accompanying tables and graphs was commendable but its very complexity and the tentativeness of its conclusions weakened its use as a means of condemning area schools.

The draft report emphasised that schools were intended to draw from segments of the town, that intakes would be large and, of necessity, socially mixed. If it became necessary to contrive a balanced social mixture some system could be devised although it was hoped that zones would not be necessary and that parents would wish their children to go to the most accessible secondary school.

The draft report mentioned another piece of research conducted in the Education Office which proved that university and other higher education awards were distributed fairly evenly over the town as a whole with only a slight concentration in the alleged superior residential area. The current years 11+ entrants to grammar schools when plotted on a map of the town showed an even distribution which would have ensured a fair share for each comprehensive school.

To some members of the sub-committee the argument was not about whether a pupil went to one particular comprehensive school or another at the age of 11 but whether the break at 16 would encourage a tendency to contract out of further education - a course which continuous provision from 11 to 18 would normally dissuade him from taking. The problem was thoroughly discussed and, in the end, the C.E.O's draft was accepted as a fair and accurate statement.

Sub-Committee "B" met to discuss "The opportunities there would be in the proposed secondary schools for late developers to take G.C.E. at "O" level and for pupils who wanted to stay on at school beyond the age of 16 but not necessarily to study for "A" level". Their meeting was held in mid-December 1964.

The C.E.O's draft was examined in detail and some amendments made. It was agreed that pupils who wished to spend 6 years instead of 5 in the secondary schools should be allowed to do so particularly for C.S.E. The feeling was expressed that it would probably be advisable for G.C.E. resits to be taken at the 6th Form College. The reasoning behind this

was that status at the top of the secondary school should be the preserve of the 15 to 16 years age group and that, in some cases it might be a disservice to pupils to encourage them to resit the examination when experience proved that few pupils who did so managed to improve their results.

The second topic the sub-committee considered was "The standards that would be required for admission to the 6th Form College". The C.E.O's draft and, indeed, the final report was ambiguous. On the one hand it stated that the 6th Form College would be concerned mainly with pupils who in due course would be proceeding to university, training college or seeking to obtain some professional qualification. The basic educational requirement in most, if not all, of these cases would be a minimum of 4 or 5 "O" levels. Pupils would be admitted who had been successful at 2 or 3 "O" level subjects and who showed potential to pass in 2 or 3 other subjects at "O" or "A" level. So far the emphasis was on academic potential.

On the other hand, however, the Committee agreed that the 6th Form College should provide courses for all pupils aged 15 - 16 to 18 - 19 who wished to continue general education and were likely to profit by attendance there. The courses envisaged ranged from "A" levels to "O" level resits, minority and cultural courses. Admission would be on the recommendation of the Principal of the 6th Form College.

The report also mentioned the proximity of the College of Further Education and it had been agreed in the discussion that the 6th Form

College would not undertake vocational courses. The C.E.O's draft had mentioned transfer for students and staff between the two Colleges for particular subjects and courses but this was amended in the final paper to read "transfer of students to utilise particular facilities". This argument was to be revived in 1966 and 1967 when relationships between the two Colleges were discussed.

Sub-Committee "C" considered "The question as to whether all schools should be mixed" and "The timing of the implementation of the scheme". At this meeting most of the arguments for and against co-education were mentioned and finally it was decided to recommend, by six votes to two, that all the schools should be mixed.

With regard to timing the implementation of the Plan the C.E.O's draft was agreed with some reservations. This allowed for the first unselective intake to the secondary schools in September 1968 with no admission to the boys' grammar school that year. By 1971 the numbers at the latter would have fallen to about 500 and the 6th form from the girls' grammar school could be transferred leaving one entry of girls selected at 11+ in 1967 to finish their G.C.E. "O" levels at the girls' grammar school.

The stumbling block proved to be the centrally situated old mixed secondary school without prospect of expansion on its own site and which could not attain more than a four form entry as a comprehensive school. Some members wanted the whole scheme to be delayed until this school could be replaced and it was finally agreed that a note should be included in the final report emphasising the concern felt that pupils at this school should not be at a disadvantage compared to their contemporaries in newer buildings.

. The "Ad Hoc" Committee Stage 2.

The meetings of the Sub-Committees had taken place during December 1964. By mid-January 1965 the final draft reports had been submitted to members for comment and their replies had entailed minor amendments on points of detail and emphasis. The final reports were circulated to all members of the Ad Hoc Committee for their resumed deliberations at the beginning of February 1965 along with the draft report of its discussions on the losses and gains likely to result from the proposed system of reorganisation.

There were two principal additions to the documents discussed in the sub-committees. One was comparative schedules of accommodation for a comprehensive school, the girls' grammar school and the two adjacent schools which it was planned to remodel into one unit. The other was an analysis of the staffing requirements for an 8 form entry comprehensive school. The 59 assistant staff required were classified according to subject and the basis of the calculations, a complete timetable prepared by the Schools' Organiser was available for scrutiny at the meeting.

At their meeting the C.E.O's summary of the earlier discussions of the full Ad Hoc Committee was accepted with very slight amendments. The reports of the three sub-committees, however, attracted considerable discussion. The N.U.T. representatives pressed for large schools initially, criticised the decision to build a separate 4 form entry instalment of the new comprehensive school on the stadium site and suggested that the 6th Form College should be located at the existing

girls', rather than boys' grammar school. These proposals were not accepted.

The question of zoning attracted debate also. One member suggested that parents were removing from what he considered would be less favoured educational areas to those within range of the existing girls' grammar school. This was an extreme view but others expressed concern and hoped that an even distribution of ability between schools could be achieved.

This topic was resumed at a later meeting of the Committee. There was strong pressure from some members to locate the 6th Form College on the site of the girls' grammar school to avoid the possibility of that school attracting pupils solely from the well-to-do catchment area. Opposed to this was the view that the more central position of the boys' grammar school made it more accessible from every part of the town whilst its proximity to the College of Further Education and the Training College provided an educational "campus". In the end this latter view prevailed.

Various members also expressed the opinion that some system of selection might ensure a spread of ability between the various schools but the general aspiration was that freedom of parental choice should be tried in the first instance.

The Committee also considered the C.E.O's summary of their discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of the 6th Form College. After slight amendment and the deletion of a reference to a national sixth forms association the document was accepted. This constituted the strongest case yet made within the Authority for a 6th Form College.

Although it repeated previous arguments it amplified them to present a coherent theme.

Basically the case for the 6th Form College derived from the figures of 6th form expansion, the emergence of adolescents as a distinct social group, the disparity between the 17 yrs old and the 11 yrs old, the way in which 6th formers could assume new concepts of responsibility and service within the College and in the wider framework of society and the capacity of adolescents to develop new loyalties and their increasing identification with undergraduates and college students. It questioned whether continuity and the implied reassurance with staff and surroundings were necessarily what the adolescent required. It was arguable that a breeze of change which might sometimes blow cold was not without value to the 16 year old potential academic. A successful transition to a new environment could be a stimulating experience for a growing personality.

For the staff, a 6th Form College would be a new and stimulating experience. They - and their students - might value commencing their teaching at 15 or 16. The College would open new career prospects where, at present, advancement could only be to institutions of higher education. The College might serve as a base for research in practical teaching.

Furthermore, concentration of resources rather than dispersal would ensure that the lead established by the town in the region for a high level of university entrants would not be jeopardised. The actual fashion in which this concentration of resources could be translated into

buildings was outlined in a specimen schedule of teaching and ancillary accommodation for the College which was included in the report.

The remaining summaries of the sub-committee meetings were approved largely as they were presented, notwithstanding the issue to all members of the Committee of the private report on social background and academic achievement and the display of charts on behalf of the grammar schools, plotting the frequency of higher education awards in the town.

At their eighth meeting on April 12th 1965 the Committee concluded their deliberations and the full report was circulated to the Education Committee for their meeting later in the month.

The Final Stage.

The Report of the Ad Hoc Committee was included in the agenda of the normal scheduled meeting of the Education Committee but it was agreed to hold a special meeting to consider it. This was duly held and only one outspoken critic of the Scheme voted against receiving the Report and sending it to the Department of Education and Science. Arguments which had been stated so often as to become almost conventional were put for and against the Scheme in principle and in application. Reservations were expressed about zoning, the centrally sited old secondary school and the absence of single sex schools.

Eventually it was resolved that the Report should be sent to the Department of Education and Science, to other members of the Council and that the Secretary of State should be asked whether he was in a position yet to express his views on the original request made in February 1964. This last point was an oblique rejoinder to the letter received from the Department at the end of March asking whether the Authority was yet in a position to supply further information about the proposal. Finally the members of the Ad Hoc Committee were thanked for their services.

These resolutions were confirmed by the Borough Council on June 3rd 1965. On July 6th the Old Boys and Girls' Associations of the two schools and the boys school's Parents and Friends Association published their alternative plan but it was too late to inject further vigour into the controversy and the final seal was given in mid August when the Secretary of State wrote giving his approval.

Two reservations were included in the letter of approval. One drew attention to paragraphs 17 and 28 in Circular 10/65 which had been published in the meantime and which drew attention to possible staffing difficulties which might develop in that particular type of reorganisation. The other reservation was to the effect that the approval was without prejudice to decisions the Secretary of State might have to make on individual proposals concerning particular schools.

Detailed Planning:

a) The Building Programme.

The Secretary of State's approval of the Plan marked the end virtually of public controversy. The issue was revived by candidates at each local government election, Conservative candidates promising to alter it and Labour candidates hoping to expedite it. Press comment and correspondence flagged and the issue was mentioned in the Education Committee and Council only when new building developments were reported. The public notices for combining a girls' secondary modern school with the adjacent boys' school into one comprehensive unit attracted little attention and no objectors.

In the administrative sphere, however, considerable work remained to be done. Some of it had overlapped the meetings of the Ad Hoc Committee but additional reports had to be produced to fulfil the requirements of Circular 10/65.

One of these, the preparation of a long term plan, had been

completed but the Department required also detailed proposals of what was proposed to be done in the three years from September 1st 1967.

Accordingly the C.E.O. prepared an extensive report showing details of fluctuations in the birth rate, the effect of the raising of the school leaving age and the effects of the planned growth of the town to increase its population by approximately one third by 1981.

Fluctuations in the birth rate followed roughly the national pattern between 1945 and 1965 and averaged 17 per thousand in the first half of the 1960's. Excluding pupils attending Roman Catholic schools, about 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ % of the population, the annual average secondary school age group totalled 1,000. Even without taking into account the planned growth of the town 5,400 to 5,600 secondary school places would be required by the late 1970's. With the gradual effect of the planned growth this figure would be 7,200 by 1981. Therefore, four form entry instalments of the eight form entry schools would need to be built at five or six year intervals. A complex chart was produced to indicate how this could be achieved.

Two projects, the remodelling referred to in the first paragraph, and the four form entry instalment of the school on the stadium site had been approved by the Department for 1967 - 68. In successive years up to 1971 this and the two other post-war secondary modern schools would be doubled in size. In addition the girls' grammar school of post-war construction would be adapted to accommodate boys and the boys' grammar school altered to provide 6th Form College facilities.

Circular 10/65 also required L.E.As. to negotiate with voluntary bodies so that aided and direct grant schools could be associated with their schemes. Only the former existed in Darlington and relations between the Authority and the diocesan and local church authorities were cordial. The R.C. boys' secondary school was already multilateral and the R.C. authorities decided to transfer to its site the independent girls' grammar school for which Aided status was sought, and the Aided girls' secondary modern school. These three schools, combined into one mixed comprehensive school would produce a roll of between 1,100 and 1,300 pupils including a sizeable 6th form.

All these proposals were presented to the Education Committee and approved. Successive annual building programmes were submitted to the Department of Education and Science but apart from a generous allotment to provide facilities for the raising of the school leaving age no major secondary school building projects were sanctioned by May 1967. To offset disappointment in this respect a number of major projects were approved in the field of primary education.

b) The 6th Form College.

Critics of the scheme of reorganisation involving the creation of 6th Form Colleges in Darlington and of similar schemes elsewhere had emphasised the novelty and untried nature of the concept. Some Authorities had developed separate 6th form accommodation associated with normal grammar school provision but no 6th form college of the type planned in Darlington existed elsewhere except at Welbeck Military College

and Atlantic College, neither of which was strictly comparable.

The concept had to be translated into terms of areas, rooms, laboratories and costs. Although the College would cater for the older range it needed to be scheduled and costed in accordance with the Building Regulations governing secondary schools. Another Authority had costed one using the Further Education Building Regulations which would have allowed considerably more expenditure on the project but this had been disallowed by the Department. Not for the first time this illustrated the anomaly that if a technical college was planned to cater for full-time students aged predominantly from 15 to 18 the resulting standard of accommodation would be higher than that for their contemporaries in a 6th Form College.

The obvious starting point was the existing 6th form accommodation in the two schools. The Heads of the schools assisted in an analysis of subject and year groups and room usage. Existing numbers and course options were projected to the assumed minimum roll of 650 students in 1972. Existing accommodation was compared with that envisaged and a schedule produced.

The existing accommodation consisted of 33,473 square feet of teaching area, i.e. classrooms, hall, laboratories, libraries etc. Taking an average of 50 square feet of area for each student this would accommodate the 650 students expected when the College opened. However, few of the existing rooms would be appropriate for the type of institution envisaged and major remodelling would be necessary to provide

a building in keeping with the aims of the College. For contingencies such as this the Department had a "Remodelling Formula" and previous experience of its application in regard to secondary schools encouraged confidence in its generosity.

Allowing for certain assumptions about subject choices and the size of teaching groups, e.g. average teaching groups of 15 students, a total weekly laboratory load of 315 periods, library accommodation for 50 students and at least 27 classrooms in occupation at any given time the following schedule emerged:-

Assembly Hall	2525	Square Feet
Dining "	2100	
Libraries	2500	"
Gymnasium	2800	"
9 Laboratories	7970	"
6 Practical Rooms	5272	"
27 Classrooms	10290	"
Student Common Rooms	2000	"
	<hr/>	
	35457	"
	<hr/>	

In terms of overall area it was assumed that the total was close enough to Department calculations to be approved for costing purposes. At that stage a formal brief to the architect was not prepared but informal soundings of specialist staff were made. It was clear that the resemblance between a normal secondary school and the envisaged College would exist only in the terminology used in the schedule. In practice the specialist areas and rooms would resemble those of the Higher Education field. Audio-visual aids would be developed and

private study and communal activities encouraged by the layout of the building. Certain internal partitions would be flexible to allow for teaching groups or audiences of all sizes. The design would reflect the educational and social needs of the age group for which it was planned.

The Staff:

It was accepted that the building work envisaged in the previous section could not be undertaken until possibly 1971 but there were more immediate and pressing issues at hand. It was acknowledged that not all existing teachers of the 6th forms at the two existing schools could be absorbed into the 6th Form College structure.

As with accommodation various calculations about staffing had to be made to ascertain what future needs would be. Following that, it would be necessary to consider how those needs could best be met from existing staff and from later appointments.

Again, certain basic assumptions had to be made about students, subjects and staff. These were -

- a) That the majority student would study 3 "A" level subjects.
- b) " " " " "A" level subject would be allocated 7 periods a week.
- c) " each student should have at least 4 private study periods.
- d) " " teacher at "A" level should have a 25 period per week teaching load and each "O" level teacher 30.
- e) " "A" level sets should average 14 students.
- f) " non "A" level sets should average 20 students.

On these assumptions the College of 650 students would absorb 13,650 "A" level student periods ($650 \times 7 \times 3$) each week, 6,500 non "A" level student periods (650×10) each week and 2,600 private study periods (650×4) each week. From these figures it was calculated that the College

would require a teaching staff of 50. These figures were estimated without knowledge of similar studies being undertaken by a group of Her Majesty's Inspectorate and referred to in more detail below but were broadly comparable in conclusion. The effective pupil-teacher ratio would be 13:1.

Allocated by subjects and in proportion to the existing balance in the 6th forms at the two schools the following dispositions were indicated.

	<u>Nos. of Staff</u>	<u>Head of Dept. Posts</u>
Pure and Applied Maths	8	E & D
Chemistry, Physics & Biology	11	E D & D
English & Library	5	E C & C
Modern Languages & Classics	6	E C & C
History & Economics	4	C & B
Geography & Geology	5	C
Art & Music	2	B & B
Scripture & P.E.	3	B & B
Boys and Girls' Crafts	2	A & A
General Subjects	2	
Deputy Head	1	
Senior Assistant	1	
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	50	20

In 1966 the combined staffs of the two grammar schools totalled 90 men and women teachers. It was clear that not all would be offered posts in the 6th Form College even if they wished to teach there. Consequently the local association of the Joint Four requested a meeting with the C.E.O. to discuss some of the issues on an informal basis. This was held at the end of the Summer term 1966 and the C.E.O. promised to submit a draft paper to them on all the questions raised at the meeting.

This was duly produced and circulated in October 1966 with the proviso that it represented the C.E.O's personal views and that it was intended as a basis for discussion with the ultimate intention of providing an agreed report on staffing for submission to the Education Committee.

This report gave the staffing requirements noted above. Departmental headships were based on single or grouped subjects but the possibility of creating departments related to faculties of study, e.g. Science, Arts, Technology and Social Studies, was not ruled out.

Certain staff had enquired whether teachers based on the 6th Form College would be used in the comprehensive schools. The answer to this was that the schools would constitute independent units and although co-operation would be welcomed and encouraged they would value their traditional freedom to plan curricula and syllabuses to suit their requirements. In essence, therefore, teachers whose services were utilised in both sectors would need to adapt to the particular needs of each.

Another point raised was the precise date of reorganisation, the abolition of the selection procedure in 1968 or the conjunction of the two sixth forms in 1972. This four years' transitional phase would necessitate careful planning to avoid personal difficulties for individual teachers and to ensure continuity of the 6th form teaching in both schools. In the event of the resignation or retirement of senior staff from either of the grammar schools their replacements would need to be appointed with a view to ultimate disposition and, if necessary, the "A" level teaching

of certain subjects in both schools could be combined to anticipate the future.

On the question of filling future posts it was suggested that vacancies and newly created posts should be advertised in order to be fair to all the individuals involved. The 6th Form College, it was anticipated, would be staffed by senior staff of the two grammar schools. In the case of staff holding equivalent posts in the two schools and who both wished to transfer, it would be the task of the Governors to select after due notification in the regular Schools' Circular.

Posts below Head of Department might prove less amenable to a clear cut decision. Various factors needed to be taken into account such as the planned reduction in the staff of the boys' school where normal wastage was unlikely to match precisely the areas of contraction and the possibility that specialist staff there might be attracted to senior posts in the developing comprehensive schools. Any newly created or upgraded Headships of Department in the comprehensive schools would be open to competition.

Calculations of unit totals in accordance with the Burnham Report indicated that the 6th Form College would probably fall into Group 11 or 12 initially qualifying for between £8,000 and £9,500 in annual expenditure on Head of Department allowances. The earlier part of the report had suggested a total of £8,680. This was not an ungenerous scale and coupled with the protection of existing posts agreed by the Authority at an early stage of discussions on reorganisation offered continuity and

enhancement of career prospects for existing specialist staff.

The circulation of this report, initially to the two Heads and the Joint 4 Secretary and later on a more liberal basis to the staffs of the two schools was followed by an open meeting attended by the C.E.O, the Chairman of the Education Committee and combined staffs. The C.E.O. used the occasion to amplify some of the remarks in the report and he and the Chairman dealt with questions. The meeting was cordial and concluded with an invitation for any member of staff to call at the Education Office to discuss any personal difficulty arising out of reorganisation.

The response to the invitation was that during the ensuing weeks 46 teachers from both schools called on the C.E.O. to discuss their futures. Inevitably a considerable amount of preparatory work had been undertaken and its principal feature was a chart giving the age, seniority and grade of each member of staff. Whilst not being in a position to allocate definite posts the C.E.O. was able to indicate to each individual or group alternative options for the future. There appeared to be a growing enthusiasm for the concept of a 6th Form College and the scope it would offer. It was debatable how far this was an acceptance of what had appeared to be inevitable or how far it was simulated for the occasion. Certain younger teachers acknowledged that they would move on for promotion. Others expressed interest in the comprehensive schools but most declared for a 6th Form College post as first choice. In terms of precise answers to definite questions these interviews, of necessity, could have only a limited value. In terms of

public relations and maintaining confidence they seemed to meet general approval. Indeed the readiness to consult and to give wide circulation to documents which elsewhere would have had a "Confidential" imprimatur and restricted circulation did much to maintain confidence at every stage of reorganisation.

By mid 1967 every serving teacher in the two grammar schools had had the opportunity to discuss his or her future with the C.E.O. and had been able to speak openly to the Chairman of the Education Committee at the open meeting. Predictions that reorganisation would precipitate the flight of staff from the grammar schools proved to be unfounded, the actual figures for each academic year from 1960 being -

<u>School Years (Sept-Aug.)</u>	<u>60-61</u>	<u>61-62</u>	<u>62-63</u>	<u>63-64</u>	<u>64-65</u>	<u>65-66</u>	<u>66-67</u>
Boys' Grammar School	4	5	1	2	9	3	2
Girls' Grammar School	$\frac{6}{10}$	$\frac{8}{13}$	$\frac{8}{9}$	$\frac{12}{14}$	$\frac{11}{20}$	$\frac{2}{5}$	$\frac{2}{4}$
<u>Total Resignations:</u>							

Many of the women teachers had resigned on marriage or for personal reasons. Other teachers had moved elsewhere making considerable financial gain and enhancing their career prospects. Neither school found difficulty in recruiting staff of the required calibre and all applicants were informed of the Authority's plans.

The Comprehensive Schools:

In 1963, experience of comprehensive schools in Darlington was slight. A number of councillors remained from the Midlands visitation of five years previously. Certain teachers and administrative staff

had visited comprehensive schools but no-one in the Authority's staff of 500 teachers had actually taught in one. The deficiency was remedied to some extent by the visits arranged in 1964 for members of the Ad Hoc Committee but it was appreciated that none of the schools visited was of the type envisaged for Darlington. Indeed, a number of them were basically secondary modern schools of great organisational complexity but very little spread of ability.

Gradually, however, a prototype comprehensive school emerged from the debate and was given a structural expression in the stadium site school. The schedule of accommodation given below was treated imaginatively by the architect to produce a school which lent itself to a type of organisation on a "house" system which the teachers favoured.

1 Hall	3,000 sq. ft.
2 small halls	2,800
1 gymnasium	2,800
1 swimming bath	2,800
1 library & adjoining classrooms	2,000
5 science laboratories	4,800
32 classrooms varying in size from 300 to 960 sq. ft.	20,400
2 art & craft rooms	1,920
8 handicraft rooms	7,400
4 general practical rooms	3,840
	<hr/>
total	51,760 Square feet.
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The architect's design provided for blocks of accommodation. Administration was centred near the main hall with its two smaller halls integrated but capable of operating separately with folding screens. Classrooms would occupy two four storey blocks linked by corridors to

the library suite. Classrooms leading from the corridors could be opened by folding screens to create assembly and activity areas. Laboratories and practical rooms were located in a separate block whilst the music suite and practice rooms were situated near to the Physical Education area.

Embodiment of the concept of comprehensive education into a new building encountered, inevitably, limitations of cost. In the project to combine two existing secondary schools into one comprehensive unit limitations of existing layouts proved equally restricting. Here the solution was drastically to remodel parts of the existing interior and to provide new specialist laboratories in a separate block. The schedule was almost identical with that for the new school but existing areas and teaching spaces allowed the architect to create facilities for drama and music which would have been prohibitive under cost limitations for new building.

When plans for extending the girls' grammar school to take an 8 form comprehensive and mixed intake were drawn up advantage was taken of recently developed ideas on informal teaching and communal areas for older pupils. In all the schools, new and remodelled, the Authority was committed to providing facilities comparable with the best then existing in its area.

Staffing:

Understandably, it had been the staffs of the two grammar schools who had shown most concern with their future status. It was accepted that teachers in the comprehensive schools formed from existing modern schools

would have greater opportunities for head of department and graded posts which would result from increases in the size of the schools and their Burnham groupings.

The C.E.O. dealt with these matters in the report on staffing mentioned above. The original report of the Ad Hoc Committee had contained a summary of staffing required for a typical 8 form entry comprehensive school and members had been given the opportunity of studying a specimen timetable drawn up by the Schools Organiser. In terms of particular subjects the following needs were estimated -

<u>Staff</u>	<u>Subject</u>
7	Mathematics
7	English
6	Science
5	Modern Languages
3	History
3	Geography
4	Art & Crafts
6	Girls' Crafts
6	Boys' "
2	Music plus instrumental teachers
2	Scripture
5	Physical Education
1	Remedial
1	Careers
1	Commerce

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It was appreciated that this pattern would vary from school to school but, as with the schedules of accommodation, it provided a basis for planning. It was assumed that each school would offer a range of subjects equal to those currently provided in the grammar and secondary modern schools bearing in mind that they had in the past developed individual

specialisms. Economics, for example, could be studied at the boys' grammar school but not at the girls!

In the event of a shortage of certain specialist teachers the idea was mooted of teams of teachers working in groups of schools or the subjects being concentrated in certain schools. It was, however, emphasised that any concentration of minority subjects should be planned in such a way as to avoid any impression of creating grammar biased schools within the comprehensive system.

On the question of the amount of money which would be available for head of department allowances a graph was used to illustrate the way in which current commitments could be projected into future requirements. Assuming an 8 form entry school to be assessed as Burnham Group 9 or 10 the amount available in discretionary allowances would be between £4,540 and £6,000 in addition to the mandatory graded posts. Depending on the wishes of the Head of the school and the approval of the Governors a sum of £6,000 would cover 18 posts, 3 at grade D, 4 at grade C, 5 at grade B and 6 at grade A.

The exercise had illustrated that for both the staffs of the grammar and of the modern schools reorganisation would offer financial advantages and career prospects which the existing system could not match. It was difficult to gauge whether these apparent benefits would be sufficient to overcome the innate and understandable reluctance felt by most teachers to the concomitant change and, in some cases, upheaval, in their professional lives.

The Teachers' Consultative Committee:

The period following the Compilation of the Ad Hoc Committee's Report had been one of administrative activity to prepare for the implementation of reorganisation in terms of building and staffing. In mid 1966, however, representatives of the teaching profession were again involved in preparations through the formation of a teachers' Consultative Committee.

There had existed in the Authority for many years a Teachers' Advisory Committee which had met to consider mainly selection procedures, secondary school transfers and record cards. Originally its membership had been nominated by the local N.U.T. branch but over the years some disquiet had been expressed by other organisations whose membership had increased without a commensurate voice on the Teachers' Advisory Committee.

Therefore, the Education Committee had agreed to a reconstitution of the Advisory Committee and after lengthy negotiations with the various representatives bodies the new Teachers' Consultative Committee, 14 strong, met for the first time in November 1966. It was chaired by the C.E.O. and the circulation of a report on a course on Comprehensive Education attended by the Schools Organiser provided an introduction to the Committee's enlarged rôle of advising on the implementation of comprehensive education in Darlington. A small sub-committee was formed to draw up a list of suitable items on this topic for discussion at later meetings.

This sub-committee duly met and suggested the following four headings-

- 1) The staffing of schools during and after the reorganisation of secondary education including the secondment and interchange of teachers and the employment of school counsellors.

- 2) The provision of courses for teachers dealing with methods of organising comprehensive schools and with problems resulting from the raising of the school leaving age.
- 3) The study of the possibility of liaison between schools (including the subject departments of separate schools) and between the schools, the 6th Form College and the College of Technology.
- and 4) A consideration of the standards to be achieved in the schools and measures to ensure that they are comparable.

The main Committee divided into two panels under the chairmanship of the Deputy C.E.O. and the Schools Organiser respectively, each to consider two of the topics. As with the Ad Hoc Committee in 1964 - 65, a paper on some aspects of the topics to be discussed was circulated prior to each meetings to form a basis for discussion, each chairman compiling his own summary for verification at the ensuing meeting, the eventual findings being presented as a joint report.

The contents of this Report were an indication of the measure of concern felt by the teachers themselves that reorganisation should open new vistas in secondary education. The section which dealt with staffing advised exploring the possibility of day release from schools to specialised courses at the College of Technology. It stressed the need to give due prominence to the needs of all ability groups and to provide opportunities for teachers other than subject specialists.

It recommended interchanges of staff to commence in September 1967 for periods lasting from a few weeks to a whole term to enable teachers to gain experience of teaching children of wider ability ranges than those to which they were accustomed. Inter-authority teacher exchanges were proposed with an extension of the numbers of secondments to

Institutes of Education for specialised courses.

The new concept of Counselling - which was defined as the process of consultation, advice and guidance to ensure the personal well-being and progress of individual pupils and of the school and community to which they belonged - was examined. It was decided to recommend the appointment of a counsellor to each of the new secondary schools and to encourage them to become qualified for the work by attendance at one of the recognised courses of training.

On the question of teachers' courses the Report outlined proposals far more ambitious than previous ones. Traditionally the Authority had invited lecturers each year for a series of conferences and courses on a variety of subjects. However, the suggested outline for the future contained study groups and subject syndicate groups in addition to at least one two-day conference for all secondary school staffs. It was intended that the syndicates would cover every aspect of organisation and teaching. The Report identified the principal non-teaching problems of large comprehensive schools as delegation of authority, relationships and responsibilities, organisation and communication. It was not intended that the subject groups should produce schemes of work but rather that they should concern themselves with general principles, approaches to subjects throughout the ability ranges and correlation between the subjects.

The two-day conference would include lectures by outside experts, discussions and an open forum. Teachers attending would receive prior to the conference, reports produced by the syndicate groups.

These proposals marked a considerable departure from customary practice. It was in accordance with the spirit of the times. Two years earlier the Authority had established a teachers' centre to form a base for meetings and courses in connection with Schools Council/Nuffield projects in primary Mathematics and Science. Primary teachers had become accustomed to acting in groups led by other teachers and Heads who had attended more advanced courses. In 1967 this teacher-centred research and development permeated into the secondary schools to inaugurate a period of co-operation and co-ordination which would give a new purpose to secondary education.

The section dealing with liaison between schools emphasised the links which already existed as a result of curriculum development being carried out under the auspices of the Schools Council. It went on to advocate close links and adequate documentation on transfer from primary to secondary schools. Although each secondary school would develop its own distinctive character it was expected some broad measure of agreement between schools would develop.

The need for continuity between the secondary schools and the 6th Form College would demand regular consultation and exchanges in information, possibly a formal system of "profiles" to be compiled for each individual pupil and to be used for diagnostic and prognostic purposes. Joint appointments to one or more secondary schools and the 6th Form College were envisaged to encourage recruitment of staff who wished to teach every age range.

The Relationship between the Sixth Form College and the College of Technology

Of all the methods of reorganising secondary education which the Secretary of State would be prepared to countenance under the terms of Circular 10/65 that concerning the establishment of 6th Form Colleges was the one most circumscribed by conditions. Paragraph 19 of the Circular stated "Where... it is proposed to establish 6th Form Colleges, the relationship between these Colleges and Colleges of Further Education and their respective functions, will require careful consideration to ensure that the best use is made of the educational potential of each."

This concern for the economic use of resources could apply equally to any other type of comprehensive school but was not mentioned in that context. It is uncertain why 6th form colleges should have been singled out for reference. A partial explanation may lie in the hostility shown against the idea of an academic institution for 16 to 18 year olds by prominent figures in the field of technical education and the Department of Education and Science. Equally, an overlap of specialised provision might be more obvious when concentrated in two institutions catering for the 16 to 18 age range than where dispersed in 6th form units of comprehensive schools.

The particular arguments are considered elsewhere and had little relevance within the narrow terms of reference of the Circular. In Darlington, however, the discussion was initiated by a further report drafted by the C.E.O., circulated in draft form to the Principal of the College of Technology and the Heads of the two grammar schools for comment,

then submitted formally to the Education Committee. The latter remitted it to the respective governing bodies for consideration and postponed any further discussion until their recommendations were received.

In typical fashion, the Report contained considerable statistical detail. It began by describing the role originally envisaged for the 6th Form College and the type of courses which were envisaged there. It gave an analysis of the existing grammar school 6th form timetables showing the numbers of periods devoted weekly to the 23 various subjects, mostly academic and university orientated.

The scope of the work of the College of Technology was far more complex. The work of the College, which had in September 1966 over 6,000 student enrolments, was divided into three main elements. It provided vocational education for workers released from industry and for young people intending to enter industry. Much, but not all, of this work was done on a day release and evening study basis. It also provided educational courses leading to "O" and "A" level of G.C.E. for students who, for various reasons, could not or would not remain at school. Finally, it provided non-vocational and recreational courses of every description for all age groups. The levels of the courses were as extensive as their variety. The academic apex comprised a full time "sandwich" course leading to the degree equivalent Higher National Diploma in Engineering whilst day release courses in fundamental craft and operative skills constituted the base. Between these two were courses leading to certificates of a comprehensive range of examining bodies in Further Education.

The Report summarised the enrolments in terms of courses, the ages of students and whether they attended full-time or part-time. There were, for example, 326 full-time students aged 15 and 16 and a further 167 aged 17, 18 and 19, a total greater than the combined grammar school 6th forms and including 96 full-time students taking G.C.E. "O" level subjects. The small number of full-time students over the age of 20 were mainly "sandwich" course students preparing for the Higher National Diploma in Engineering. The large number of part-time students included numerous non-vocational and recreational classes provided by the departments of the College as the Authority's main source of adult education in the absence of separately organised evening institutes.

The C.E.O's report proceeded on the basis of the established figures to consider the inter-relationship of the 6th Form College and the College of Technology. It suggested that if the problem were to be tackled 'ab initio' there might be merit in considering complete integration on one site of all the work represented by the existing courses at the College and the grammar school 6th forms. This would, in addition, extend the comprehensive principle up to the age of 18 or 19.

However, existing facilities and premises would have an important bearing on the pattern of organisation finally to be adopted. The proximity of the two Colleges would encourage a measure of co-operation between them but the Report emphasised that it would be difficult to indicate other than guide lines of general principle. Co-operation would be a process of evolution and the character of the relationship might change considerably in the course of time.

Where overlapping in "O" and "A" level work occurred it would seem natural to concentrate such work at the 6th form college. Equally, post "O" level courses with a vocational content requiring staff experienced in industry or commerce would obviously be more suitably based at the College of Technology with part-time students released by industry on a day or "block" release basis.

The Report urged the value of both Colleges offering "service" courses or facilities in subjects or activities with which they were most familiar, technically biased courses at the College of Technology and cultural activities, particularly music and drama, at the 6th form college.

The proposed withdrawal of a proportion of full-time students from the College of Technology would have serious implications in view of restriction on the extension of Advanced Courses in Technology. The Pilkington Report,¹ Circular 11/66² and the White Paper on Polytechnics³ indicated Government policy to rationalise Further Education. With a limited catchment area and a large conurbation within relatively easy travelling distance there would obviously be a limit to expansion of higher level courses in view of Government policy to concentrate them in major centres.

Out of 6,100 students at the College it was estimated that 130 would be accommodated in the 6th Form College whilst the expansion of neighbouring colleges might also act as a limiting factor. To counteract these losses various possibilities were suggested. It was anticipated that

- 1 "Committee on Technical College Resources", The Size of Classes and Approval of Further Education Courses.
- 2 Circular 11/66 12th April, 1966, title ditto 1.
- 3 Cmnd. 3006 "A plan for Polytechnics and other Colleges May, '66.

the implementation of the Henniker Heaton Report would increase enrolments by 600 students - the target set by the Northern Advisory Council for Further Education.

In addition the Industrial Training Act of 1964 was expected to increase demand for places whilst the recent appointment of an Industrial Liaison Officer based on the College and covering an extensive area would be an additional source of recruitment. Finally the 5% rate of expansion in enrolments over previous years, the establishment of new industries in the area and the demand for associated courses and the increase in the birth rate would all ensure that any immediate reduction in courses would be compensated within a reasonable period.

The Report next outlined the additional accommodation which would be required for the 6th Form College. It left open the question whether certain of the communal and recreational facilities might be sited for joint use by the two Colleges.

What was to prove the most controversial part of the Report was the final section dealing with the administration of the 6th Form College and of other courses for the 16 to 19 age groups. It differentiated between three types of students, a) those at the 6th Form College aged 15 or 16 to 18 or 19, b) those of a similar age range, both full and part-time at the College of Technology and c) those aged over 20.

It then outlined possible ways of administering the three groups. If one principal were appointed over all three with deputies responsible for each section the whole would constitute a polytechnic with the obvious

merit of ensuring a fair and even development of all courses. Alternatively a principal with two deputies, one responsible for two of the sections and the other responsible for one, seemed a feasible arrangement. The question remained whether a single man would possess the expertise and qualities required for such a post.

Alternatively two separate principals would continue the existing arrangement whilst three principals, one for each section, would be an unwieldy arrangement with the existing overlap of provision for full and part-time students in one building.

Out of this complexity the C.E.O. recommended that, at least initially it might be best to continue the existing pattern and keep an open mind on the ultimate organisation reviewing it from time to time as opportunity arose. The very fact of outlining possible alternatives had, however, provided protagonists of integration with the pretext for pressing their case.

The final section of the Report dealt with the alternative ways of amalgamating or associating the governing bodies of the two institutions. The College of Technology governing body contained representatives of industry and commerce and was twice the size of that for the two grammar schools. In view of the closer relations which would obtain between the two institutions they could continue separately with direct representation from one to the other, they could be combined into one unit or the 6th Form College governors could act as a sub-committee of the other and report through it to the Education Committee.

Reactions:

When this Report was distributed to the two governing bodies as part of the normal agenda, both decided to hold special meetings to discuss the topic. In all, seven special meetings were held, three for each governing body and one joint session to agree policy.

At the first of the meetings of the grammar school governors held to discuss the Report everyone paid lip service to the flexibility existing already in the separate 6th forms. More students were benefitting from courses with a less stringent academic content. New subjects were being introduced and demarcation was less rigid than hitherto. With larger numbers further developments on these lines could be anticipated.

However, any College catering mainly for the academic élite would find little community of interest with groups of part-time vocational and students who were already wage earners. It was argued that the introduction of comprehensive education would affect these students most radically. If their dispersal in comprehensive schools to the age of 16 were to be followed by integration in an amorphous institution after that age their prospects might well be damaged.

In a sense this was an argument against comprehensive education but it echoed the original plan for reorganisation which had stressed the need to build the future from the strongest point in the present - 6th forms and admissions to higher education twice the national average.

On the question of administration the governors agreed that any complex superstructure would defeat its own ends and they concluded by agreeing on separation for the present time and co-operation where

mutual benefit would result. They also agreed to pass the Report to the staffs of the two schools, in effect the Joint Four, for their scrutiny and observations.

Whilst the grammar school governors had taken a defensive stand those of the College of Technology came to opposite conclusions. Their College was housed largely in new buildings, expensively equipped with workshops, classrooms, library, laboratories and communal facilities and situated within short walking distance of the proposed 6th Form College. Expansion had been rapid during the previous 8 years, the full-time teaching staff numbered over 100 and the phased building programme would cost between £ $\frac{3}{4}$ and £1 million by completion.

Everyone associated with the College and the community generally took pride in its expansion and the range of facilities offered. Technical Education in 1966 would have been unrecognisable to the initiators of the Technical Instruction Act of 1889.

Most of the College governors had little knowledge of school matters. It was not unexpected that the historic dichotomy of school from college, each bound by separate grant regulations yet overlapping to a degree that divisions were blurred, should invite criticism. To men accustomed to making maximum use of resources and modern management techniques, the continuance of separate institutions and duplication of plant and equipment appeared illogical.

The idea of ultimate integration appealed instinctively as a businesslike proposition but concern was expressed over a number of educational problems. Did not preparation for university and the

professions require a different approach and environment from day release courses for apprentices? The answer might lie in a separate academic department which remained integral to the general college structure. Would not transfer to an 18+ college disrupt the work of part-time students? It was acknowledged that transfer at any stage would create difficulties. How could potential university students be taught specific subjects alongside day release students? Obviously courses would be differentiated according to ability to profit from them.

From this discussion, however, certain points emerged to introduce locally certain arguments about secondary reorganisation which had already been ventilated nationally. It appeared illogical to abolish segregation at 11+ yet retain it at 16+. If comprehensive education as a principle was valid up to the age of 16, what were the grounds for separatism after that age?

Finally the meeting agreed to recommend initially a policy of close co-operation between the two institutions. The final objective should be integration under one principal, as soon as circumstances permitted. They decided to ask for the views of the staff to be expressed through an open meeting called by the A.T.T.I. to which copies of the C.E.O's document - but not the Governors' resolution - would be sent.

When these views had been received it was agreed that a joint meeting should be held with the grammar school Governors.

The Joint Four were the first association to reply to the Report. They were disturbed to find themselves having to discuss links with the College of Technology which might prejudice the chances of success for

the 6th Form College. The latter, they argued should be autonomous and self-supporting in its curricula. One argument for creating a 6th Form College was that young people in their later teens constituted a distinct social group. It was questionable whether any benefit would arise from associating them with wage earning contemporaries and people in much older age ranges. Discipline and the traditional pastoral care would be far more difficult to maintain.

Although social links might be forged between the two institutions they should enjoy separate facilities. Likewise the staffs - already separated by the Schools and Further Education Grant Regulations - should remain separate. They could not envisage one principal of sufficient calibre to run an integrated college and they recommended that events should be allowed to develop rather than the pace forced at that crucial stage.

This document was brief and emphatic. That produced by the A.T.T.I. was equally the latter but far more lengthy and detailed. The Association favoured one integrated college administered by a principal and two deputies and based on the departmental structure already in existence at the College of Technology. They saw the existence of a 6th Form College as perpetuating the very separatism at 16+ which protagonists of comprehensive education were so anxious to eliminate at 11+.

Social life would be more vigorous, specialist facilities could be rationalised, course provision be made more flexible and the services of staff used to best advantage. They anticipated some difficulties of size and administration and arising from the different regulations governing

the employment of teachers in schools and institutions of further education. However, they considered that the balance of advantages over disadvantages favoured one integrated college.

The two separate governing bodies held special meetings to consider the reports submitted by their staffs. Both re-affirmed their original decisions and agreed to meet jointly but to have a further separate session prior to the joint meeting to consider the recommendations of the two staffs and governing bodies concerned.

Each met again separately and, not unnaturally in the circumstances, could find little of merit in the other's arguments. In addition to a 30 page paper consisting of seven documents recording evidence and committee decisions the governors were issued with details of the West Oxfordshire Centre of Advanced Education which combined 6th Form with Further Education facilities and an off-print of a speech by Her Majesty's Senior Chief Inspector of Schools on the Relationship between Schools and Further Education made at a recent meeting of the annual meeting of the Northern Counties Technical Examinations Council. It was clear that an impasse had been reached and any joint recommendation to the Education Committee would need to be phrased with the greatest subtlety if disharmony were to be avoided.

Accordingly the C.E.O. circulated a brief summary of the current situation. He pointed out the areas of agreement resulting from the discussions. Each governing body agreed that there should be close liaison between the two colleges and that initially the 6th Form College

should exist as a separate entity. On future development, however, the views diverged. Whereas the grammar school governors saw the possibility of closer links evolving in time, the College governors declared the ultimate amalgamation and full integration of the two as their objective.

The question the C.E.O. then posed was whether it could be said at that point in time that complete integration was the best solution or whether it would be better to proceed more slowly making appropriate adjustments as circumstances permitted. An open mind could be kept on the final form of organisation, without ruling out the possibility of a merger of the two in due course.

The joint meeting of governors eventually agreed on this compromise course which was submitted to the Education Committee in June 1967, twelve months, seven meetings and four reports after its introduction. One seemingly innocuous sentence in Circular 10/65 had drawn an excessive tribute in time and thought from lay members, teachers and administrators.

Conclusion

In the four successive council elections following the publication of the plan for the reorganisation of secondary education in Darlington, official candidates of the Labour party had promised support for its implementation whilst their Conservative counterparts had promised a review which would preserve the status of the two grammar schools and extend the opportunities for pupils in other secondary schools.

In the three elections from 1964 to 1966 Labour retained control but in the election of 1967 this control was lost to a coalition of Conservatives and Independents and membership of the Education Committee reflected this bias.

Administratively, secondary reorganisation had acquired a steady momentum but the six months' period following the change of political control was one of indecision from the point of view of policy. Arrangements to embark on alterations to the Girls' Grammar School to allow a mixed unselective intake in September 1968 were cancelled. The alternative policy for secondary reorganisation prepared by a group of Conservatives was distributed early in September 1967 but found little favour with the teachers representing, as it did, a selective tripartite system based on parental choice.

However, by early October 1967, after heated debate the Conservative and Independent majority decided to withdraw their "amendments" and to proceed with the original plan approved by the Department. In the four years which had elapsed since its publication the scheme had acquired

the respectability of an entrenched interest, so much so that those who sought to defend the status quo in 1967 were open to the accusation of depriving children of educational opportunities. Staff had been appointed with a view to the comprehensive pattern, others had determined their future role in the schools and in the 6th Form College. Teachers in all types of schools had participated in planning for the change and the quasi-selective proposals of the Conservatives sought to perpetuate a system which no longer had the will to defend itself.

If the history of reorganisation in one Authority has any lessons to offer, they must surely be these. Educational plans need time to mature, the goodwill of the teachers and their voluntary co-operation in planning must be ensured. A bond of respect and confidence should exist between teachers, administrators and elected representatives. They should share a readiness to explore issues openly and should manifest the highest measure of professional competence in their work.

Whilst a conjunction of these elements is no automatic guarantee of success, any imbalance is virtually certain to provoke damaging controversy in a delicate field of human relations where, ultimately, the child is the victim.

APPENDIX A

Reorganisation in Darlington 1963-67. Main Events

- Sept. 1963: C.E.O's report submitted to Education Committee and forwarded to professional organisations, governors and interested bodies.
- October to December 1963: Submission of views from interested parties.
- Jan. 1964: C.E.O's second report. Proposals approved in principle and submitted to the Department of Education & Science.
- June 1964: L.E.A. representatives visited the Department.
- July 1964: The Ad Hoc Committee composed of teacher representatives and a minority of Education Committee members convened.
- July 1964 to April 1965: Meetings of the Ad Hoc Committee held to discuss seven major topics.
- May 1965: Education Committee accepted the report of the Ad Hoc Committee and forwarded copies to the Department of Education & Science.
- Aug. 1965: Secretary of State approved the scheme.
- July 1966: Discussions on staffing commenced with Joint 4.
- Nov. 1966: Report on Relationship between 6th Form College and College of Technology circulated.
- Newly constituted Teachers' Consultative Committee established, one of its functions being to advise on the implementation of comprehensive education.
- May 1967: Change of political control after municipal elections.
- Sept. 1967: New Conservative "amendments" circulated.
- Oct. 1967: Education Committee agreed to continue with original 1963/64 plan.

APPENDIX BMaintained Secondary Schools in Darlington
1946Development Plan Proposals

<u>School</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Proposal</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Queen Elizabeth (Boys)	Grammar/ Technical	650 pupils	Transfer to new site	Extended on exist- ing site 1959.
High School (Girls)	Grammar/ Technical	650 "	Transfer to new site	Transferred 1955.
Albert Rd. (Boys)	Technical/ Modern	600 "	Transfer to new site	Closure from 31.7.68.
Eastbourne (Boys)	Technical/ Modern	600 "	Retain on extended site	Remodelled 1967.
Eastbourne (Girls)	Technical/ Modern	600 "	Retain on extended site	Remodelled 1967.
Gladstone St. (Boys)	Technical/ Modern	600 "	Transfer to new site	Renamed "Central"
North Rd. (Girls)	Technical/ Modern	600 "	Transfer to new site	Closure from 31.7.68.
Reid St. (Girls)	Technical/ Modern	600 "	Transfer to new site	Closed 31.7.63.
Technical School (Mixed)	Technical	150 "	Discontinue	Closed 31.7.63.

APPENDIX C

Maintained Secondary Schools in Darlington
1.1.1964.

Revised Development Plan Proposals

<u>School</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Proposal</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Central (Mixed)	Modern	450 places	Retain initially	Discontinue by 1972.
Branksome (Mixed)	"	600 "	Add 570 places	
Eastbourne (Boys)	"	600 "	Combine to 1,170 places	Remodelling commenced 1966/67.
Eastbourne (Girls)	"	600 "		"
Haughton (Mixed)	"	600 "	Add 570 places	
North Rd. (Girls)	"	250 "	Discontinue	Replace by 600 places instalment of an 1,170 mixed school (Longfield) due for completion 1968.
Albert Rd. (Boys)	"	250 "	Discontinue	
Queen Elizabeth (Boys)	Grammar	850 "	Become 6th Form College	650 places rising to 800.
High School (Girls)	"	750 "	Extend to 1,170 (mixed)	First phase to commence 1968.

The major works required between 1964 and 1972 would be met from major capital projects sanctioned by the Department of Education and Science and from sums allocated for the raising of the school leaving age.

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