‘Scottishness’, ‘Partnership’ and ‘Efficiency’: Exploring Devolved School Management and Local Government Reorganisation within the Local Education System.

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my Parents, Duncan and Wilma Campbell, for all their support.

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the reorganisation of schools and education authorities in Scotland. National implementation of Devolved School Management (DSM) began in 1994. Two years later, Local Government Reorganisation (Reorganisation) occurred. Each policy signified a reorganisation of the education system. The thesis argues the need to consider the combination of DSM and Reorganisation in policy and practice, particularly for the roles and relationships of schools and education authorities. Therefore, the initiation, interpretation and implementation of DSM and Reorganisation over time and across 25 schools and 11 education authorities are researched. There is no previous research on this specific area of inquiry. Hence, the thesis is exploratory.

The thesis develops debate about research and analyses of education policy. Influenced by and seeking to develop policy sociology, the method is qualitative. DSM and Reorganisation are interpreted within their historical, political, cultural, social, economic and institutional contexts. The need to explore issues of and linkages between structure and agency is debated. Consideration of discourse is developed to explore the nature of policies, perceptions of persons involved, the linkages to previous developments and the discursively articulated influence of structure and agency. It is suggested three central discourses characterise Scottish education policy. 'Scottishness' posits the distinctive, collective and egalitarian nature of Scottish education. The post-war 'Partnership' advocates a 'national system, locally administered' promoting 'equality of opportunity'. Both discourses have been challenged since the 1970s by an economic discourse of 'Efficiency' valuing market forces and managerialism. The thesis explores the developing and dynamic discourses and the perceptions and practices of policies at school and education authority levels.

The perception and promotion of a 'Scottish dimension' within a British state and arguably global reorganisation of education indicates the complex inter-relationships between structure and agency, as articulated in discourses and affecting developing policies such as DSM and Reorganisation.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an introduction to the nature and rationale of my research. The development of my research focus and approach is outlined. A fundamental issue is the nature of studying education policy; hence this will be explored. Attempts to address issues of structure and agency and to 'bridge' the micro/ macro gap are discussed. A method, which seeks to address such issues and has relevance to my research approach is 'policy sociology'. In developing these issues and approaches, consideration will be given to analysis of 'discourse'. The implications for my research purpose will be considered. Finally, an overview of the contents and purpose of the thesis is provided.

The Nature and Rationale of My Research Focus

My research focuses on the policies of Devolved School Management (DSM) and Local Government Reorganisation (Reorganisation). It seeks to explore the process, policy, perceptions and practices associated with these reforms. As both policies affect the management and organisation of the education and local government systems, the research considers the implications for the roles of schools and education authorities (EAs), plus the relationships between these bodies. Consequently, the fieldwork research focuses on the perceptions and associated practices of head teachers and education officers towards these policies. However, this information is 'contextualised' and juxtaposed with analyses of the historical process of reforming the education system, plus the associated discourse, perceptions, policies and practices. Detailed consideration of the process to and nature of policy of DSM and Reorganisation is provided, before further consideration of the policy as perceived and 'enacted' in the implementation stages.

DSM offers a potentially radical reform of the management and culture of the education system. By devolving at least 80% of school- based budget to school- level, it indicates that the roles of school and EA, plus their relationships will change. However, there is a lack of empirical study of the policy and implications of DSM. Only two studies have been published (Adler *et al* 1996, 1997, Wilson *et al* 1995),

which focus on the impact of DSM at school- level. A similar approach is adopted by a study comparing devolving school management in Scotland and England (Raab *et al* 1997). Therefore, there is a lack of consideration of the implications and perception of DSM at EA- level and for the relationship between EA and school. Furthermore, while devolving school management is becoming an international 'mega - trend' (Caldwell & Spinks 1992), there is a relative lack of material considering its specific form, process, perception and practice in Scotland. By contrast, there is a burgeoning literature concerning devolving school management in England, which suggests that this policy can have profound consequences for the organisation and management of the education system, especially affecting schools and EAs. It has been suggested that the operation and perception of devolving school management may be distinctive in Scotland (Alder *et al* 1994, 1996, 1997, Arnott 1993, Arnott & Bailey 1995, Arnott & Munn 1994, Arnott *et al* 1993a, 1996, Clark & Munn 1997, Raab *et al* 1997). There is a need for research focussing on the policy, perception and practice of DSM, especially as affecting schools and importantly EAs.

Research concerning the roles and relationships of school and EA must take account also of Reorganisation which signified a thorough reform of the local government system with implications for its education function. As with DSM, shifts in the role of EA and/ or school may have implications for their relationships also. There is no published research concerning these issues. The existing publications concerning Reorganisation, especially as affecting the education function, rely on propositions about and reactions to the policy (Corsar 1994, Hart 1994, Kirk 1995, Maginnis 1994, McDowall 1994, Midwinter & McGarvey 1994, Scottish School Boards Association *et al* 1994). There is no empirical study of the perceptions of those actually involved and affected towards neither the policy nor the emerging practices. If the process, policy, perception and practice of Reorganisation is to be understood such research as carried out in my study is vital. Furthermore, it is necessary to explore the implications for the education system, especially the schools and EAs, through detailed empirical study at those levels.

Some commentaries suggested that the combination of DSM and Reorganisation would affect the implementation of each policy and subsequently the nature of the education system (Arnott *et al* 1993, Kirk 1995, Maginnis 1994, McDowall 1994). However, these comments have been an aside to considerations, which focus specifically on DSM or Reorganisation. Separately DSM and Reorganisation offer potentially radical reform of the education and local government systems. In their combined practices, the implications may be even more profound. Therefore, my research seeks to explore the implications of the combination of DSM and Reorganisation for the roles and relationships of schools and EAs. As both policies were occurring simultaneously, analysis, which does not take account of their combined impact, is narrow in focus and limited. Consultation on the proposals of DSM and Reorganisation began during 1991, with initial implementation of DSM in 1994 and Reorganisation fully occurring in 1996. Therefore, my research had the perhaps unique opportunity to explore the process, policy formation, policy 'text', developing perceptions and emerging practices concerning DSM and Reorganisation, across schools and EAs, and over time.

For all of the above reasons, my research is a timely and unique exploration of the policies of DSM and Reorganisation. It offers a contribution to a wider debate about the roles of schools and EAs, plus their relationships, which is an under- developed area of study in Scottish education. It provides a focussed consideration of the historical and contemporary nature of the Scottish education system. Furthermore, it raises theoretical, conceptual and methodological issues, which have wider relevance than the Scottish education system specifically.

Developing My Research Focus and Approach

Research on DSM and Reorganisation could have been informed by a variety of different research 'theories', e.g. 'economics of education' (Kraft & Nakib 1991), 'education politics' (Layton 1982, Murray Thomas 1983), 'organisation theory and education' (Ribbins 1985, Westoby 1988), 'the state and education' (Dale 1989,1992) and 'educational management' (Bush 1988, Bush & West- Burnham 1994, Gray 1982, Hughes *et al* 1985), to name but a few, employing a range of different research

methods, both qualitative and quantitative (Keeves 1988). Including the study of local government with that of the education system offers also the potential to move beyond the 'parochialism' of much 'education research' and include broader issues from political and social sciences (Dale 1994, Raab 1994b).

When I first began to outline, conceptualise and frame my research project in 1993, DSM and Reorganisation were both at 'consultation' stages. There was no published empirical research concerning these reforms which could inform my research approach. Indeed, there was a lack of research concerning issues of the management of schools, role of local government in education, and relationships between schools and EAs in Scotland. Therefore, my research is intended as a necessary exploration of DSM and Reorganisation and as contributing to the development of a wider literature concerning issues of policy, process, perception and practice at the 'local level' of school and local government in Scotland.

From a review of the primary documentation concerning DSM and Reorganisation, it is apparent that these policies were intended to reform the roles of schools and EAs and consequently the relationships between these bodies. Hence, the focus of my study became the nature of these policies and the implications for 'roles and relationships'. Furthermore, given the timing of my research, I had the opportunity to trace the development of these policies. This was an opportunity to be seized. I viewed policy as a process and change as not simply 'structural' but as affecting and being affected by 'agency'. The perception that policy is not simply made by government and then discretely implemented but rather is a continuous process has been indicated in education and local government research (Ball 1994, Bowe & Ball 1992, Cochrane 1993, Ranson & Tomlinson 1994). Literature concerning the 'management of change' indicates that structural and organisational change requires the involvement of the people affected, change is a process with both structural and agency level implications. Fullan (1982:54) proposed that: "Educational change is technically simple and socially complex". Hence, I decided to focus my study on the nature of policy, the perception of that policy and the practical issues arising consequently.

In developing my line of enquiry, I consulted existing research and writings, which I believed, might have relevance to my work. Concerning the study of Scottish education and policy, McPherson & Raab's (1988) work was particularly useful and the issues raised by their theoretical stance, methodological approach and empirical findings have influenced my own study. However, their research was conducted during the 1970s and focussed on the 'policy community' composed of an elite of senior educationalists. They do not research changes in the 1980s, which are acknowledged to be extremely different from the 1970s, nor do they consider the 'local' level of school and EA policy-making, perception and practice. As concerns devolving school management, at the early stages of my research I had to rely upon international literatures, predominantly English studies. These were informative but I was aware of the possibility of a 'Scottish dimension' as suggested by McPherson & Raab's (1988) study and later research (Adler *et al* 1994, 1996, 1997, Arnott 1993, Arnott & Bailey 1995, Arnott & Munn 1994, Arnott *et al* 1993a, 1996, Clark & Munn 1997, Raab *et al* 1997). Many early writings concerning LMS fall into the category of 'educational management' and share its weaknesses of being a-theoretical and overly pragmatic (Dale 1994, Ozga 1987,1992, Raab 1994a). These studies were generally prescriptive and where empirically- based tended to rely on descriptive single case studies, frequently where the author was involved as a practitioner (Blanchard *et al* 1989, Caldwell & Spinks 1988, Downes 1988, Fidler & Bowles 1989). The reliance upon description and pragmatic prescription, 'how to do LMS', is unsatisfactory providing little exploration of the nature of the policy, the values implicit and explicit, the perception of those involved, issues such as power and politics and fundamentally to develop any understanding and critique of the policy and practice. A notable exception is the work of Bowe & Ball (1992) who sought to deconstruct the policy of LMS and explore its implications for the 'micro' level of actors in schools concerning issues such as management and markets. The strength of Bowe & Ball's (1992) work, as McPherson & Raab's (1988), is its in- depth nature. However, Bowe & Ball's (1992) work relies upon study of four schools for the entire project and only one for LMS. These findings are not intended to be generalisable; they rely on very particular evidence, which may be only illustrative and partial. From reviewing the literature, I was aware that I did not wish to offer pragmatic prescription nor abstract models

rather I sought to develop understanding of the experience of policy as perceived by those involved. In short, I was interested in the study of education policy, but not in a narrow and technical vision of 'policy analysis' (Hogwood & Gunn 1984).

The Study and Research of 'Education Policy'

'Educational policy studies' is a relatively new phenomena and is at a "cross- roads" (Ball & Shilling 1994:1) due both to the need to develop the nature of the research approach itself and in response to the dramatic changes in education policy especially post- 1988 *Education Reform Act* (Ball & Shilling 1994, Raab 1994b). Since the 1970s, the education system has undergone profound changes and consequently changes in the study of this system have emerged and require development. The study of 'educational administration' emerged during the post- war period, however the approach was positivist and assumed the reification of organisations, therefore essentially concerned with 'structures' (Griffiths 1959). In 1974, Greenfield began his infamous counter- attack arguing the need for a qualitative methodology and focus on agency, as schools were socially constructed organisations (Greenfield & Ribbins 1993). By the late 1980s, emphasis began to shift from a broader concept of 'educational administration' to a narrow and technical study of 'educational management' in 'theory' and practice (Bush 1988, Bush & West- Burnham 1994). These approaches were concerned primarily with the functioning of schools and pragmatic prescriptions. By contrast, the other dominant research 'paradigm' derived from 'educational sociology' that contained two distinct approaches related essentially to the study of 'agency' or 'structure' (Hammersley 1984). 'Educational management' tends to focus on institutions (meso- level) and individuals, whereas 'educational sociology' focuses on 'macro' structures and collective experience at the 'micro' level. Each approach has something to offer but is locked into a particular and 'parochial' approach based on specific values, approaches and research methods. Many of the issues pertinent and necessity for development have linkages to wider issues in the political and social sciences (Raab 1994a, b), such as the tensions between 'structure and agency' and 'micro and macro' levels of analyses and differences between 'natural sciences' and 'social sciences' (Hammersley 1984). There is a need to develop the study of 'education policy' in both methodological

approach and theoretical scope (Dale 1994, Hammersley 1984, Ozga 1987, 1994, Raab 1944a, b).

Ozga (1987:141) argues for the need to improve the study of education policy via an attempt to develop "'middle level' analyses" which overcomes the disjunction and lack of coherence apparent in the split in 'micro' and 'macro' level studies, although bridging such a gap is problematic (Hammersley 1984, Hargreaves 1983, Ozga 1987). Raab (1994a, b) argues not only for the development of 'education policy studies' but also for its linkage and development to wider issues in the field of 'policy studies' in particular and 'political science' in general. For too long, the study of education has been treated as separate from the latter broader fields, but this neglects the importance of education:

> In the light of education's centrality to states, societies and individuals as a principal site of cultural production, transmission and reproduction, such neglect is both unfortunate and highly ironic. For Scotland, one should add to this centrality education's institutional prominence as a distinguishing feature of civil society and culture. (Raab 1994b: 20).

Raab (*ibid*: 27) argues the need to transcend "academic orthodoxy" and the previous exclusionist approaches to analyses.

The Dualism of Structure and Agency

An inherent theme in writings advocating the development of study of 'educational policy' is the need to overcome an abstract 'dualism' between micro and macro and to address issues of 'structure' and 'agency' (Hammersley 1984, Hargreaves, 1985; Knorr- Cetina & Cicourel 1981, Ozga 1987, Raab 1994b). Consideration of structure and agency can be conceived as a methodological approach (Hay 1995), but it contains also theoretical (Giddens 1979,1984), and philosophical issues (Sayer 1992). There are four broad approaches towards structure and agency: Structuralism; Intentionalism; Structuration theory; and Critical Realism. Although the former two have received increasing criticism, all four have been influential.

i) Structuralism and Intentionalism

Traditionally, consideration of 'structure' and 'agency' was distinct with the former emphasised in 'Structuralism' and the latter in 'Intentionalism' (Hay 1995). Both are 'simple' or monocausal' views of the structure and agency relationship (*ibid*), however, the former is an 'outsider ' account (Wendt 1987) emphasising 'structure', associated particularly with Marxist writings. By contrast, Intentionalism is an 'insider' perspective focussing on individual action, interaction and micro- practices, and can be discerned in rational choice, public choice and pluralism (Hay 1995). Both approaches have been 'severely criticised' for their narrowness of perception, failure to adequately account for and understand society and need for considerable development. However, both have been influential in the study of education and are closely associated with the 'conflict' in traditional 'sociology of education' (Hammersley 1984, Ozga 1987, Raab 1994b).

Attempts to develop a more coherent understanding and analyses have been made through combining consideration of structure and agency, most notably in the work of 'Structuration' (Giddens 1979,1981, 1984,1989) and Critical Realism (Bhasker 1975, 1979, 1986,1989, Sayer 1992). There is an extensive body of literature associated with each approach, developing diversities within the approaches and substantial differences between the approaches, which cannot be fully explored within the present thesis.

ii) Structuration Theory

'Structuration' is associated with Anthony Giddens (1979,1981, 1984,1989), who is critical of the 'dualism' between 'structure' and 'agency' and associated 'dualism' between a foci on the 'macro' or 'micro' which pervaded the development of sociology. He argues that in order to develop analyses, one cannot simply incorporate ideas from both approaches, but must re- consider and define the concepts involved (Giddens 1981).

Giddens seeks to define the concepts of 'structure' and 'agency' and develop the concepts of 'system' and 'structuration'. Giddens (1981:163) argues that when

studying 'agency', i.e. human action, one must be aware of two "crucial components". Firstly, 'capability': "the possibility that the agent 'could have acted otherwise" (*ibid*). Secondly, 'knowledge- ability' of society. Both refer to observable factors and unconscious, 'every- day' routine actions. For Giddens, institutions remain structural factors, but must be considered also in terms of action within and across time and space. Giddens' redefinition of 'structure' is both the most fundamental and controversial. He is critical of existing conceptions that suggest structure refers to pattern and constraint. While not rejecting that structure constitutes a pattern and *may* exert a constraint, Giddens believes this is only a partial understanding. He proposes that the connection of structure purely with constraint and external to action is at the root of the dualism between structure and agency. Giddens is critical of the definition of structure becoming entangled with a definition of 'system', positing a distinct definition of 'system':

> social systems have *structural properties*, but are not as such structures... what most sociologists have thought of as 'structure', the 'patterning' of relationships between individuals or collectives, can be best dealt with by the notion of system. Social systems (and overall societies, as encompassing types of social system) consist of reproduced relationships between individuals and (or) collectivities. As such, social systems have always to be treated as situated in time- space. If we understand 'system' in this way, we can free the concept of structure to perform other conceptual tasks. (Giddens 1981:169).

Hence, the development of the definition of 'structure' is to follow from a critique and redefinition of existing conceptions.

Giddens develops his definition of 'structure' by developing notions from the French tradition of 'structuralism'[1]. Consequently:

> 'Structure' then refers to rules and resources instantiated in social systems, but having only a 'virtual existence'. The 'rules' involved here are social conventions, and knowledge of them includes knowledge of the contexts of their application. By resources I mean 'capabilities of making things happen', of bringing about particular states of affairs... To conceptualize structures as

> rules and resources (or structures as rule/ resource sets) is to acknowledge that structure is both enabling and constraining. (Giddens 1981:170- 171).

Structure is separate from, but interwoven with systems, institutions and actions, linked also to considerations of time and space. Giddens rejects the previous dualism of structure and agency:

> The structured properties of society, the study of which is basic to explaining the long- term development of institutions only exist (a) in their instantiation in social systems, made possible (b) by the memory- traces (reinforced or altered continuity of social life) that constitute the knowledgeability of social actors... action and structure stand in a relation of logical entailment: the concept of action presumes that of structure and vice versa. I use the phrase 'duality of structure' to mean that structure is both the medium and outcome of social practices it recursively organizes. (*Ibid*: 171).

'Structuration' is the overall: "Conditions governing system reproduction" (*ibid*: 172).

Giddens' 'Structuration theory' is a substantial development (Hay 1995). Nevertheless, fundamental criticisms and controversies about its' adequacy and utility exist. In particular, whether 'structuration' constitutes an adequate 'theory' and whether it has any empirical utility (Gregson 1989, Hay 1995, Thompson 1989, Thrift 1985). Gregson (1989:295) argues that 'structuration' is "a second- order theory". Thrift (1985) perceives 'structuration' as concerned with 'concepts' rather than theorisation. Yet the 'concepts' adopted and explored are controversial. Critics posit that Giddens' re- definitions of 'structure' and 'agency' are inadequate (Thompson 1989). Giddens' use of the concepts 'system' and 'institution' are fundamentally under- developed (Hay 1995, Thrift 1985). His re- definition of structure and agency are extremely selective in order to support his proposition of overcoming the 'dualism' between structure and agency. However, if one believes that the concepts are contestable, the inherent foundations of 'structuration theory' become precarious (Hay 1995, Thompson 1989). Hay (1995) proposes that Giddens' re- definition of structure and agency ultimately fails to overcome the dualism of these foci. Consequently, the charges are that Giddens has failed to provide a 'middle- ground' between structure and agency, to create the necessary dialectic to posit a duality. This

lack of a 'middle- ground' fundamentally undermines the conceptual soundness and methodological applicability of structuration theory (Hay 1995, Thrift 1985). Thrift (1985) argues the need for mid- range focuses, positing the need for a more detailed, explicate focus on institutions. Also criticising Giddens' emphasis on:

> the small scale and the large scale to the detriment of the scale at which most institutions operate, the historical medium term and the medium (for want of a better word) extension in space. (*ibid*: 619).

Furthermore, as the notions of duality of structure and agency stand, it is inherently difficult to operationalise these terms (Gregson 1989, Thrift 1985).

This leads to the empirical applicability of structuration theory for informing and framing research. This is not a straightforward issue and is not helped by Giddens' ambivalent comments, ranging from the importance of structuration theory for informing research (Giddens 1984) to the "*relative autonomy* of theory and research" (Giddens 1989:294). Critics have centred upon the difficulty of applying structuration theory to empirical research programmes. Structuration theory is deemed either inadequate in its present form (Stones 1991), or wholly inappropriate (Gregson 1989). The proposed solutions to this problem are varied: Structuration theory should be recognised as insufficiently critical and empirical to be applied (*ibid*); Structuration theory should be recognised as 'sensitising' the researcher to potential research issues but not itself a programme of research (Giddens 1989); Giddens must develop his theory of structuration in order to make it more methodologically applicable (Thrift 1985); or other critics must develop appendages to structuration theory in order to generate its research applicability (Cohen 1989, Stones 1991). The overwhelming image is that structuration theory cannot be readily adopted for empirical research. Whether it could or should do so is controversial (Cohen 1989, Giddens 1989, Gregson 1989, Stones 1991, Thrift 1985)[2].

Giddens maintains that structuration does not constitute a research programme or "method of research" (Giddens 1991:296). However, he rejects Gregson's (1989) argument that structuration theory is irrelevant to empirical work. Giddens posits that structuration provides a range of concepts which can be informative in research,

'sensitizing devices', drawing upon mixed methods. Nevertheless, Giddens' ambivalence to the linking of structuration theory and empirical research remains. On the one hand, structuration should be considered part of the interaction of social science and object of study; but on the other, it should not be adopted wholesale as a research approach. The argument appears to be that structuration theory has a general relevance in selected settings and a selective relevance in some general settings, but that in each case it is a partial approach and not fundamentally an empirical design (Giddens 1991).

To date structuration theory has had limited applications in the 'sociology of education' but not 'education management'. Shilling (1992: 79-80) enthuses:

> In terms of education policy, the implications of this view mean that it is not feasible to conceptualise policy as constructed by the logic of capital or any other force which operates entirely above and out of reach of individuals. Neither is it possible to construct a feasible, 'policy sociology' simply by adding on a concern with "individual's perceptions and experiences" to a state- centred analysis (Ozga, 1987, 1990). Instead a major concern of education policy should be how people formulate, implement, mediate and oppose policies, which seek to bind together social systems in time and space, by drawing on rules and resources.

In this interactionist view of the duality, change is possible and therefore it avoids the "deterministic views of the history of education and the education- society relationship. Teachers and students can and do make a difference" (*ibid*). Shilling (1992) argues for the adoption of structuration theory wholesale into the sociology of education, perceiving this as the key means to overcome the dualism and determinism of many existing accounts. However, he fails to provide a fundamental critique of structuration, in terms of its conceptual, theoretical and empirical adequacy. Shilling (1992) proposes the implications of structuration for research without actually conducting the research himself. One must question whether Shilling's (1992) propositions based on Gidden's re- conceptualisations are adequate. In re-conceptualising structure, Shilling (1992) ignores the fact that 'intangible' capitalist structures may still have a bearing on the education system. In re- conceptualising

agency, he suggests variations on a basic proposition of socialisation. There remains the need for a much more critical consideration of the applicability of structuration to educational research.

McFadden (1995) posits benefits from a structuration approach for the sociology of education but notes weaknesses. McFadden (1995) is driven to considering issues relating to structure and agency as developed by Bhasker, a critical philosopher, and for application to education and pedagogy by Bernstein. Hodgkinson (1994) combines structuration theory with a critical realist conception of empowerment for his study of education. However, in Hodgkinson's (1994) conclusions and model it is difficult to discern why or indeed how structuration was intrinsic to its development. Educational researchers are increasingly aware of a need to overcome the dualism between structure and agency and the gap between 'micro' and 'macro'. To this end, structuration appears seductive and has been adopted, in many cases, without thorough consideration. However, a more appropriate approach is for a critical engagement with structuration theory discerning its empirical and practical utility for informing the research process. As Gregson (1989) suggested, there is the need for a more critical empirical and theoretical development of the structure and agency debate.

iii) Critical Realism

Critical realism combines a focus on structure and agency but in significantly different ways from structuration theory. Critical realism is derived from philosophical origins, especially Bhasker (1975,1979,1986,1989), but is concerned with practical research and methodological approaches also. Critical realism contains many approaches combined by a strong value and philosophical basis, which is predominantly Marxist, promoting structural transformation and human freedom, and advocating the difference in research method between the natural and social sciences. Many of the criticisms levelled against structuration have no relevance to critical realism. This is a 'critical' approach, which has:

> retained the orthodox usage of the terms 'structure' and 'agency'... Hence, structure and agency, though *theoretically* separable are in practice completely interwoven. (Hay 1995:200).

In critical realism the fusion of structure and agency, plus fact and value, theory and practice is fundamental (Bhasker 1989).

Fundamental to the development of critical realism is the philosophical inquiry into the nature of social science, in particular compared to natural science and scientific inquiry (Sayer 1992)[3]. In linking these philosophical ideas to structure and agency, and in juxtaposing critical realism with the previous approaches, Bhasker's (1989:74-77) Transformational Model of Social Activity is helpful. Bhasker develops his model in light of criticism of the three preceding models (see Appendix A) . Firstly, an agency- centred approach, akin to Intentionalism, whereby agency determines structural factors. Bhasker relates this 'Model 1' to the Weberain stereotype 'Voluntarism'. 'Model 2' is the converse argument of structural determinism, related to Structuralism. Bhasker associates this with the Durkheim stereotype 'Reification'. These models are severely limited. Hence, Model III, which Bhasker deems the 'Dialectical Conception- Illicit Identification'. This model aims to overcome the previous dualism by "synthesizing these conflicting perspectives on the assumption of a dialectical inter- relationship between society and individuals" (*ibid*:75). This approach has connections to structuration theory, although Bhasker derives this model from Berger. In particular, Berger's premise that "society forms the individuals who create society; society, that is , produces people, who produce society, in a continuous dialectic" (*ibid*:75). The crucial point of Model III is:

> society is an objectivization or externalization of people. And people, for their part, are the internalization or re- appropriation in consciousness of society. (*ibid*:76).

However, Bhasker (*ibid*) believes that this approach is fundamentally flawed:

> For it encourages, on the one hand, a voluntaristic idealism with respect to our understanding of social structure and, on the other, a mechanistic determinism with respect to our understanding of people.

According to Bhasker, an adequate understanding of structure and agency requires the development of Model IV, the Transformational Model. The crucial difference is that society pre- exists agency, therefore voluntarism is inaccurate, but that society can only be reproduced or transformed through the actions of agency, therefore reification is inaccurate. Bhasker posits that this model is an advance because it provides a more realistic conception of the relationship between structure and agency, in which issues such as socialisation, affecting actions and conditions, and the importance of change and history, are often linked and important.

Hay (1995:200- 201) provides guidelines as to the "premises of a critical realist or strategic- relational ontology" which will affect research design and methodology:

1. All human agency occurs and acquires meaning only in relation to already preconstituted, and deeply structured, settings.

2. Such settings simultaneously constrain and enable the actors (whether individual or collective) that inhabit them by determining the *range* of potential appropriations and the direct consequences of such actions.

3. What constitutes a structure is entirely dependent upon our vantage point. For instance, the action of others (a crowd for example) represents from the perspective (vantage point) of an individual who is not part of that collectivity. This is an inherently *relational* conception of structure.

4. Structures, do not determine outcomes *directly*, but merely define the potential range of options and strategies. Since actors only have partial knowledge of such structures they have only partial access to this hypothetical range of strategies.

5. Action settings can be conceived of in terms of a nested hierarchy of levels of structure that interact in complex ways to condition and set the context within which agency is displayed.

6. The nature of the constraints (and range of opportunities) imposed on action by structured settings are twofold: (i) *Physical*: referring to the spatial and temporal properties of the (potential) action setting; and (ii) *Social*: (here the notion 'social' is employed in its widest possible sense)- referring to the

products of the intended and unintended consequences of previous human action or inaction on a structured context.

7. These constraints may also be seen as *resources*. Constraint also implies opportunity.

8. Strategic action is the dialectical interplay of intentional and knowledgeable, yet structurally- embedded actors and the preconstituted (structured) contexts they inhabit. Actions occur within structured settings, yet actors have the potential (at least partially) to transform those structures through their actions.

This impact of agents upon structures may be either deliberate or unintended. Hay (*ibid*: 201) explains: "Actors appropriate a structured context which is *strategically selective* (favouring certain strategies over others) by way of strategy". Furthermore, action has both "*direct effects*" on structures and generates "*strategic learning*" at agency level (*ibid*). The linkages between Hay's (1995) outline and Bhasker's (1989) model are evident. Although these are extensive propositions, they have implications for theoretical, methodological and empirical issues.

Although philosophical, critical realism recognises the need to address theoretical and methodological issues, often viewing these as inter- twined (Sayer 1992). Critical realism rejects the use of "orthodox" scientific approaches derived from natural sciences preferring qualitative methods (Bhasker 1989:83). Explanatory theories and related methodologies are promoted. In framing and executing research, one must be aware of "the *concept- dependent* nature of social activities" (*ibid*: 85). However, there may be a disjunction between the concepts employed and the phenomena to which they relate. Hence, researchers must move beyond straightforward explanation of face value concepts and seek to explore, account for and criticise the concepts and their prevalence. Bhasker (*ibid*: 186) argues "that the criteria for theory- choice and theory- development must be exclusively explanatory and non- predictive". Consequently, there are implications for the type of research finding and purpose advocated by critical realists. Social science is perceived as different from natural science and therefore objective and absolute knowledge cannot be created. However, such knowledge can be subjected to empirical 'testing'. As the social structure is continuously reproduced and transformed, one cannot posit an accurate static theory.

Furthermore, research and theorisation should generate social change. In doing so Bhasker (1989:87- 88) posits that one must move from philosophical issues and abstract theorisation to directly practical issues and outcomes:

> Once this step is taken then conceptual criticism and change passes over into social criticism and change... In the full development of the concept of ideology, theory fuses into practice, as facts about values, mediated by theories about facts, are transformed into values about facts.

Critical realism is a value- driven approach seeking to promote social change around notions of human ontology, freedom and emancipation. Rather than a premise of theoretical absolutism and deductive methodology, critical realism is acutely aware of the interactions between the various 'levels' of analysis and the objects of study.

However, this 'holistic' approach of critical realism has received criticism (Magill 1994). Critical realism proposes an overarching and specific ontology as a means to guide both theory construction and empirical inquiry. Magill (1994) argues that there is no universal ontology, but rather there are various ontologies reflecting the diversity of theoretical and empirical areas to which they specifically relate. The relationship between theory and ontology are far more complex than the critical realists acknowledge. Furthermore, the universal ontology proposed by critical realism is very specific in its internal nature, inhibiting its applicability (*ibid*). Critical realism may have some appeal, but it must be recognised as a specific and value- driven approach that is inherently not neutral therefore undermining its universal applicability.

Magill (1994) takes issue with many of the intrinsic features of critical realism. He argues that their propositions about the difference between natural and social science are simplifications. Magill (1994) suggests that critical realism is a judgmental rather than an explanatory approach. He believes that critical realism's search for the 'philosophical mid- way' offers (but does not provide) universality and compromise, but denies the creativity and intellectual stimulation in debate and opposition. Ultimately, Magill (1994) proposes that critical realism per se is wholly unnecessary. Its internal nature is problematic, the concepts adopted, such as ideology and illusoriness exist out-with critical realism, and the proposition of universal ontology

does not have practical application. However, even Macgill (1994) is unable to reject realism completely, it is rather the particular nature of critical realism that he finds insidious. Hence, Macgill (1994) argues for a minimal realism, which offers guidance but does not make aggrandised propositions about universal ontologies and 'truth', this is akin to using 'structuration' as a 'sensitising device'.

As with structuration theory, there are limited examples of critical realism being advocated for education research, especially within the broad field of sociology of education. There are three key issues in the literature: firstly, the need for critical realism per se; secondly, its need in contemporary educational research; and thirdly, its application. The first point arises out of a perceived failure of positivist science, especially in the social sciences. While the movement to qualitative approaches has benefits, there are problems also:

> a nagging paradox persists. If interpretative research argues that it gives richer, thicker, more meaningful descriptions of the world than positivism, but cannot evaluate these descriptions, then it collides with the positivist separation of knowledge and value. (McLaren & Giarelli 1995:2).

Social structures are not neutral; they exhibit differences that are systematically linked to the different interests of particular social groupings who hold power differentially. McLaren & Giarelli (*ibid*: 3) argue that the adoption of critical theory to educational research is " a particularly pressing agenda". Critical theory is concerned with power and politics and therefore provides a basis to reject and refuse the dominant arguments of neo-conservative politicians. Critical theory provides a force for the quest for emancipation emphasising the 'politics of difference', e.g. cultural diversity and 'otherness', plus the promotion of the 'politics of solidarity' in order to create liberation. In McLaren & Giarelli's expression, to use the 'arch of social dreaming' to direct research and practical aims. This radical and critical agenda owes more to vision than practicality.

Nevertheless, in applying critical theory, two methods merit most attention. Firstly, in its broadest sense, discourse analysis. McLaren & Giarelli's (1995) focus on 'difference' emphasises the marginalized and those who 'disidentify' with the existing

discourse. Giroux (1995) notes the importance of 'discourse, discursive practices and power', while Weis (1995) is concerned with the issues of 'voice, silencing and listening in discourse'. The deconstruction of the dominant discourse, the search for silences, the exercise of power and the search for alternatives are pervasive. The second methodological issue relates to the interplay of researcher and the researched. There is a "concern for a kind of research that occurs *with*, rather than *on*, others and is thus informed by a dialogue aimed at mutual understanding" (McLaren & Giarelli 1995:18). LeCompte (1995) argues for '*critical, collaborative* research', while McLaren (1995) posits the need for a '*critical* ethnomethodology'. The purpose of research is to generate change and understanding therefore in all methods dialogue is important.

However, one must question the extent to which critical realism can be applied in educational research. If we accept the pre- eminence of structural constraints, how do researchers, educators and others reach the state of relative autonomy necessary to be truly critical and achieve aims such as the 'arch of social dreaming'. The promotion of 'mutual understanding' and 'social change' is in reality complex. Furthermore, critical realism emphasises the constraining nature of structure, therefore contrary to Giddens, critical realism may under- estimate the enabling nature of structure and agency. Where Giddens displayed an ambivalence about the capacity to apply structuration directly, critical realism advocates its utility to guide research. However, it does so on the basis of an universal and value- drive approach that undermines the difficulties inherent in combining various levels of analyses which is fundamental to the issue of structure and agency. Critical realism raises interesting issues, but as Magill (1994) suggested, it is perhaps best applied as an illuminating approach rather than universally applicable.

<u>iv) Issues for my Research Purpose</u>

The purpose of my research is not to resolve nor directly 'test' the various approaches to structure and agency. However, issues of structure and agency have relevance to an adequate exploration of education policy and the changing education system. As Raab (1994b:26) noted the issue of structure and agency has "long been on the agenda in

the sociology of education", yet it can be neither "easily skirted" nor "permanently resolved". The previous discussion sought to outline the essential characteristics of the 'structure and agency' debate, the problems and possibilities involved and the existing applications to the study of education.

Although influential, Structuralism and Intentionalism are limited and partial accounts. The development of Structuration and Critical Realism seeks to provide a more holistic explanation. Unfortunately, these literatures are internally problematic and often difficult to translate into empirical research. Of course, the boundaries between theory and empiricism exist and one would not expect complete unity. Nevertheless, in choosing to adopt Structuration, one is adopting a substantially re-defined notion of structure and agency, which although significant is problematic to operationalise. By contrast, in adopting Critical Realism one is subscribing to a specific and value- driven ontology of society aimed at universalism and radical change. Both approaches are consequently partial. Arguably, the most appropriate use of structuration and critical realism to date in education research has been as 'sensitising devices'. McFadden (1995) and Hodgkinson (1994) combined ideas from structuration and critical realism in order to apply structure and agency to education research. This is a more 'pragmatic' approach but offers scope for the development of practical research informed by the issues inherent to the structure and agency debate without adopting an over- arching and all- embracing philosophical value position or abstract theorisation.

Consideration of 'structure and agency' for my research purpose indicates the potential benefits of a qualitative research methodology. There is scope for research focussing on individuals as agents, who are related to each other in interactions, institutions and located in wider social, political and economic structures. It is necessary to 'engage' with the actors involved and to 'contextualise' their actions and perceptions with the wider interactions, institutions, historical, social and structural settings within which they belong. Issues arising from structure and agency may inform and 'sensitise' analyses of research concerning education policy. There is a need to consider the perceptions and language employed by those involved, to

consider the silences and contextualisations in these accounts. It is not sufficient to approach the subject purely in terms of the dominant conceptualisations of the 'empowered establishment' and the 'enabling authority'. One must scrutinise the existence of these and the counter- factual, e.g. the dis- empowering effect of change and the constraining nature of reform. In the concept- dependent nature of education policy, a disjunction may exist between the conception of a phenomenon, some people's perception of that phenomenon and the phenomenon itself. There is a need for a consideration of the issues of power, constraint and ennoblement. Teachers or education officers cannot be treated in isolation but must be considered within their wider structural setting. In developing the linkage between structure and agency, Bhasker's (1989) Transformational Model suggesting that structure pre- exists agency, but that agency then influences structure through the necessity of action to reproduce or transform structure may have relevance to the education and local government system. Furthermore, it is vital to consider the issue of discourse and discursive practices. Fundamentally, a means to understand the nature of structure and agency, plus their facilitating and constraining tendencies, is to consider how structure and agency are perceived and discursively articulated by those involved at the 'ground-level', e.g. teachers and education officers. Such an approach perceiving issues of structure and agency as integral to discourse and research method is not developed by structuration and under- developed by critical realism thus far. This appears fruitful to developing research and understanding of how structure and agency affect perceptions and practices.

Therefore, I believe that some of the issues raised by consideration of 'structure and agency' have relevance to the informing and analysing of my research. However, I do not propose to adopt totally any of the approaches previously outlined. My research is exploratory and to this end some of the issues raised have relevance. Issues of discourse, process, structure and agency are integral. However, my research does not constitute the resolution of the dualism between structure and agency within a research strategy nor does it constitute a complete bridging of the micro- macro gap in the social sciences.

The Micro- Macro Gap and the Study of Education

Specifically concerning the 'micro- macro gap', there is need for development at both theoretical and empirical levels. Hammersley (1984) links the difficulty of overcoming the dualism between micro and macro practices in education to the nature and inadequacies of present theories and approaches, especially in the sociology of education which is "organized competing research perspectives" which maintain the micro- macro divide (*ibid*: 321)[4]. Given the "paucity of theory" (*ibid* :321) capable of resolving this issue, Hammersley (*ibid*:321- 322) proposes that:

> attempts at 'synthesis' (Hargreaves, 1978, Pollard, 1982) are premature. What the search for synthesis leads to are futile efforts to 'map' the whole range of casual chains thought to be relative to the explanation of a particular phenomenon. But even the *description* of these lines of influence, without any attempt to check their reality, is an exhaustible task... the validity of any theory or explanation synthesizing macro and micro levels is dependent on the validity of the theories at each level. The problem in the sociology of education... is that well- established theories of any kind are few and far between.

Hammersley's (1984), perhaps interim, advice is that the issues involved should be explored through research programmes rather than abstract and competing theorisation. Both DSM and Reorganisation are linked to consideration of institutions and processes that Hammersley (1984) proposes as a central but neglected element in resolving the micro- macro issue. Therefore, my research is aware of these issues and seeks to provide an exploration through a specific research project. The research is exploratory and empirical with theorisation proposed to be 'emergent' rather than imposed. These approaches demonstrate similarity to 'policy sociology'.

Policy Sociology

When discussing the potential and problems in necessary development of the study of education policy, Raab (1994b:23) heralds: "Enter 'Policy Sociology'". While Ozga (1987) recognises that the capacity to "close the macro - micro gap" (*ibid*:138) is problematic and indeed pessimistic, she believes that there is potential also:

> For this reason the time is ripe for the development of policy sociology, rooted in the social science tradition, historically informed and drawing on qualitative and illuminative techniques. (*Ibid*: 144).

In this approach issues of micro and macro, structure and agency are inherent, though not fully resolved (Raab 1994b):

> relationships between policy process and outcome and between motive and action are at the heart of many investigations, and signal a research method that relies heavily upon getting in on the inside of the policy process through participants' accounts. Policy sociology may try to hold both policy and practice (or implementation) within the same frame, and in some sense map them onto 'macro' and 'micro' dimensions, whilst attempting to work out the rules or methods for framing and for mapping. It may also try to explain historical and cultural continuities or changes, and to address the relationship between structure and agency. These crucial tasks are daunting... (Raab 1994a:7).

While 'daunting', this approach is potentially fruitful as demonstrated in research applying 'policy sociology' to policy- making (Ozga 1987), Scottish education policy (McPherson & Raab 1988) and devolving school management (Bowe & Ball 1992). 'Policy sociology' is an exploratory and critical approach, in either a Marxist (e.g. in some of the orientation of Bowe & Ball's (1992) work) or non- Marxist connotation (e.g. McPherson & Raab's (1988) approach). Part of the strength of 'policy sociology' is its capacity to address issues raised by broader debates without adhering to the promotion of particular political values, as Raab (1994b:21) explains:

> Troyna (1994) seems to suggest that, in the issues it tackles and in its analysis, education policy sociology is very like social research *sans* political commitment.

This approach is more akin to my research purpose which , like McPherson & Raab's (1988), seeks to explore education policy in a politically informed and aware manner, but not to be politically promotional.

The "catholicity and experimentalism" of policy sociology is both its strength and potential weakness (Raab 1994b:23). If policy sociology becomes such a broad label that it lacks delimitation and definition, it may be problematic to maintain this as an

appropriate field of inquiry. Raab (*ibid*) comments: "Ozga's formulation implies that there is nothing exclusively 'sociological' about education policy sociology". Hence: "Policy sociology rests on a somewhat insecure theoretical foundation" (Raab 1994a:6). Differing definitions of 'policy sociology' exist (Halpin 1994, Ozga 1987, Raab 1994b). The concepts and issues at the heart of policy sociology are complex and controversial: "conceptualizing the relationship between the 'formulation' and the 'implementation' of education policy is also beset with problems"; "ambiguity in that literature's use of 'macro', 'micro' and 'meso'"; and "these problems of levels and structure and agency" (Raab 1994b:25- 26). Scope remains for developing the theoretical and conceptual nature of 'policy sociology'.

Nevertheless, that the above concepts are considered within 'policy sociology' is a considerable advance. Given the problems with existing theorisation, the use of empirical exploration and evaluation as a means of 'emergent' theorisation may be a worthwhile exercise. Raab (1994b:23- 24) explains that although differences in the detail of interpretation exist, an overall commonality of approach is evident:

> policy sociologists examine the relationship between process and product, and between motive and action. In each case, however, knowledge of the former is to be gained empirically and not on the basis of inference from the latter or by deduction from grand theory. Hence the importance of going beyond the public pronouncements of 'policy makers' and actually talking to them, for meanings and 'assumptive worlds' are essential parts of the policy process and require to be understood if action itself is to be understood.

Despite criticisms of 'policy sociology', it is perceived as a significant and beneficial approach to the study of education policy (Ozga 1987, Raab 1994a, b).

The issues, approaches and methods advocated by 'policy sociology' have relevance to my research project. 'Policy sociology' emphasises the importance of studying education policy through a qualitative methodology focussing on 'policy- makers' and actors involved (Ozga 1987, Raab 1994b). Ozga (1987:141) proposes that such an approach will help to 'close' the micro- macro 'gap', as will a focus on :

> Development of 'middle level' analyses, especially in LEA structures... and study of historical and public documents, plus interactionist studies of LEA administrators, heads and school staff outside the classroom all look like promising ways of bridging the micro- macro gap.

Such an approach is important to, influential in and developed by my study of DSM and Reorganisation. In terms of method, Ozga (1987:146) advocates:

> The use of in- depth, unstructured or semi- structured interviews... careful historical work and the development of an education policy archive would do much towards bridging the micro- macro gap.

In executing and analysing such a method, Raab (1994b:18) explains the need:

> to look at the 'impact', effects or consequences of policy, to get inside its language or 'discourse', or to explain its provenances and processes.

Although the 'bridging of micro and macro', structure and agency remain more complex than perhaps indicated by Ozga (1987), the methods and approaches of 'policy sociology' are relevant to the development of my exploratory research concerning DSM and Reorganisation, consequently I have adopted the methods outlined above.

The Exploration and Analysis of 'Discourse'

Exploration and analyses of discourse have become increasingly utilised in social science research (Hastings 1998). Analyses of discourse are perceived as a means of exploring and improving issues of structure and agency (Ball 1994, Fox & Miller 1995, Giroux 1995, Hajer 1989, Howarth 1995, McLaren & Giarelli, 1995, Palmer 1990 , Weis 1995), closing the micro - macro gap (Fairclough 1992, Hastings 1998, Poulson 1996) and developing the application and scope of policy sociology (Ball 1990, 1994, Raab 1994b). Therefore analyses of 'discourse' offer potential to further research of education policy.

However, the theory and analysis of discourse is not unproblematic (Hastings 1998, Howarth 1995, Palmer 1990, Poulson 1996). 'Discourse' is a frequently ill - defined and controversial concept (Mills 1997, Nunan 1993). Although the study of discourse is relatively recent in the social sciences (Hastings 1998), it originates from a longer

tradition of studying linguistics (Poulson 1996) in which de Suassure's work is especially influential (Gunnarsson *et al* 1997). In developing a critical widespread application of discourse analysis, Foucault's work is important (Hastings 1998, McNay 1994, Mills 1997, Poulson 1996). Yet, Foucault approaches discourse as an area of inquiry rather than a coherent theory (Mills 1997). Hence, he posits a variety of definitions of discourse:

> Instead of gradually reducing the rather fluctuating meaning of the word 'discourse', I believe I have in fact added to its meanings: treating it sometimes as the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualizable group of statements, and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a number of statements. (Foucault 1972: 80).

Mills (1997) argues that this theoretical 'looseness' enables the flexibility for differing definitions and modifications of the meaning of discourse to emerge and develop.

Nevertheless, with the prominence of Foucault's work, critical theory, cultural theory and social constructionist approaches, common criteria have emerged (MacDonnell 1986, Mills 1997). Most importantly, discourses are perceived to relate to and interact with their social and structural context:

> a discourse is not a disembodied collection of statements, but grouping of utterances or sentences, statements which are enacted within a social context and which contribute to the way that social context continues its existence. Institutions and social context therefore play an important determining role in the development, maintenance and circulation of discourses. (Mill 1997:11).

Discourses do not operate in isolation but are dialogues which exclude and define certain 'others' and meanings. This capacity to exclude and signify meanings and concepts gives discourses their power. There is not one discourse but potentially several conflicting discourses. However, in the process of becoming a dominant discourse, a 'naturalisation' occurs, whereby the elements contained and excluded by the discourse are considered to be widely appropriate. To an extent, these discourses become sub - conscious, taken - for- granted, only being challenged in times of crisis and disillusionment. Discourses are important because they affect "both our sense of reality and our notion of our own identity" (*ibid*: 15). They contain and convey

"meaning, force and effect within a social context" (*ibid*: 13). For Foucault, it is the "configuration" of power, knowledge and truth" which "essentially... constitutes discourse" (*ibid:* 17). Each of these elements is considered to be an interactive and potentially productive force which emerges through social experience, learning and discursive structures. Therefore, the study of discourse is perceived as a means to understand the nature of society, power and language.

The types of discourse analysis outlined above are most frequently applied to the study of linguistics and literature (Mills 1997, Nunan 1993). However, the approach has been developed for social science research. A reasonably straight - forward adoption is through textual analysis of policy documents (Hastings 1998). Yet as Ball's (1990, 1993, Bowe & Ball 1992) work on discourse in education has demonstrated, policy is not simply text, but also a process, the "enactment of texts" (Ball 1994: 19), with outcomes, "effects" (*ibid*: 24). Most fundamentally, drawing on Foucault, policy is considered as 'discourse', as it is related to power, truth and knowledge. According to Ball (*ibid*: 23):

> there are real struggles over the interpretation and enactment of policies. But these are set within a moving discursive frame that articulates and constrains the possibilities and probabilities of interpretation and enactment. We read and respond to policies in discursive circumstances that we cannot, or perhaps do not, think about.

This notion of dominant discourse is prominent in the development of discourse analysis in political science research, especially linked to notions of hegemony and ideology (Hajer 1989, Hefferman 1997, Howarth 1995, Reeves 1983). In principle, discourses are never closed (Howarth 1995, Laclua & Moffe 1985). They rely on the creation of 'antagonisms' by which the 'other' is defined and distanced (Howarth 1995). Through the construction and conflict of discourses, a dynamic quality is inherent. However, through processes of hegemony, ideology, naturalisation and legitimisation certain dominant discourses prevail (Burton & Carlen 1977, Hajer 1989, Howarth 1995). Therefore, although a myriad of discourses are potential, it is those discourses which are "historically contingent and are constructed politically" which have greatest force (Howarth 1995: 121) and can often be discerned through the

promotions of 'policy networks' (Fox & Miller 1995). Furthermore certain 'meta - discourses', for example capitalism, are perceived which policy discourses must function within (Mair 1998). There are certain common discourses, shared assumptions and socialisation which make the world intelligible (Howarth 1995). The emergence, dominance and shifts in discourse have become focal points in seeking to understand the contradictions, fragmentation and nature of post - modern society (Fox & Miller 1995, Howarth 1995, Mair 1998). The study of discourse becomes important also with the realisation that it connects the past, present and future experiences and expectations of individuals and collectives (Hajer 1989)[5].

The linkage between consideration of discourse and the study of education and local government systems is a potentially fruitful but generally under - developed area of inquiry. There is no Scottish material in this respect, although Raab (1994b) has advocated its development. Political science research on discourse and government tends to focus at the central level and/ or wider economic and social structures, not on the management, organisation and policy of local government. In the broad field of education traditionally, attention has been given to the importance of 'discourse', but in terms of the nature of language, learning of language, children's use of language, classroom experiences and pedagogic practices. Bernstein (1971, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1990) sought to develop these analyses into consideration of language, pedagogy and class. While important, this work did not consider the 'discourse' of education policy (Poulson 1996). Poulson (1996) outlines the development of discourse in education policy analysis focussing on the promotion of 'key- words' (Williams 1976, 1980), the use of symbolism and 'nominalisation' (Troyna 1994), "whereby a process or action, formerly occupying a verb slot within a sentence is transformed into a noun form; thus a process becomes a static entity or abstraction" (Poulson 1996: 581), examples include management and efficiency. Ball (1994: 24) argues that contemporary "'dominant' discourses, regimes of truth, erudite knowledge" in education policy are "neo - liberalism and management theory". These 'discourses' are crucial to understanding contemporary education policy (Ball 1990, 1993, 1994, Bowe & Ball 1992, Menter *et al* 1995), such as DSM, but they do not explore the existence of previous discourses. McPherson & Raab's (1988) exploration of the

historical governance of Scottish education does not mention discourse, but in their conceptualisations of 'Scottish myth', 'Partnership myth' and 'post - war consensus', they explore what are arguably 'discourses', i.e. dominant discursive strategies, associated statements, ideals about society, political and historical constructs, exercises in domination and legitimisation, plus a 'policy network' of support and influence. Therefore, there is need to develop consideration of discourse for research of contemporary and historical education processes, policies, perceptions and practices.

The application of discourse analysis to studying policy is developing and requires development (Hastings 1998, Poulson 1996). While Foucault has been influential, his ideas are abstract, therefore they lack empirical 'testing' and development which is necessary for a better understanding of the interaction of discourse and policy, language and society, and power (*ibid*). Palmer (1990) is critical of the 'descent into discourse' which seeks to reify language. However, on both counts discourse analysis can be developed through theoretically - informed empirical work, which links discourse with historical, social and political processes. Howarth (1995) argues that discourse theory does not reify language, as it has a 'realist' orientation that recognises a reality exists out - with our conceptualisation, although we use concepts to give that reality meaning. Similarly, social constructionist approaches have influenced the development and application of discourse analysis, suggesting the inter - relationship between language and society. These approaches are useful in developing education policy analyses.

Moving towards a more practical and appropriate consideration of discourse in education and local government policy analyses, writers influenced by social constructionist ideas are helpful (Gunnarsson *et al* 1997, Mair 1998). Berger & Luckmann (1967) argued that 'reality' was socially constructed. Gunnarsson *et al* (1997: 2) develop this point:

> cultural knowledge and representations of reality are interactionally constructed, socially transmitted, historically sedimented and often institutionally congealed, and finally communicatively reproduced in situation.

This avoids the a - historical approaches to discourse which threaten to reify language (Palmer 1990). Discourse has a recursive quality whereby:

> knowledge systems and interactional routines ... have been socially (communicatively) constructed through cultural history rather than on the spot, and yet such structures and routines are at the same time actively and productively re - created in situated practices. (Gunnarsson *et al* 1997:2-3).

Gunnarsson *et al*' s analysis of professional discourse indicates that discourse is both individualised and socialised, it occurs within socio-cultural, situational and historical contexts, and can be institutionalised:

> professional language and discourse have been developed historically as part of social activities, how the use of language and discourse in the professions shapes social reality, and reproduces and maintains social activities and relations, how its genres and patterns are sustained by social institutions, and how discourse enters into the continuing process of negotiations that produces novel arrangements for our social future. (*Ibid*: 3).

This moves away from a straight- forward linguistic and textual denotation of discourse analyses, towards a process that has historical, social and institutional dimensions:

> To understand professional discourse as it is, we must view it in its historical framework. We must then ask ourselves how not only professional genres have been constructed but also for whom, for what needs and why they have been formed the way they are. We must also analyse the continuous construction and reconstruction processes taking place in the various social practices *in situ*. The historical and situated contemporary construction processes are mutually constitutive. It is the repeated social practices that form the genre, and it is within the historically created genre - and due to the demands of this - that the everyday professional discourse takes place. (*Ibid*: 3-4).

This notion and analyses of 'professional discourse' may be useful for understanding the process and perception of policy amongst head teachers and education officers.

Empirical work is crucial to developing consideration of discourse. The methods advocated accord with policy sociology, namely analysis of spoken and written texts, conversations, interviews, observations and ethnomethodology (Gunnarsson *et al* 1997, Howarth 1995, Lentz & Pander Maat 1997). Mair (1998) argues that in combining philosophical inquiry with practical research there is a need to explore the construction, negotiation and 'accomplishment' of discourses. Discourses should be analysed in terms of the language, rhetoric and concepts promoted, what is present and absent, what is explicit and implicit, what coherence exists and where contradictions arise. It is not simply the 'content' of the language but also the nature of the speaker, their 'assumptive world' (McPherson & Raab 1988, Raab 1994b), and the 'spoken to', the 'assumed audience'. Mair (1998) advocates the need to be aware of 'inter- textuality' also and importantly the relationship between differing discourses, for example the potential that there is a shifting hierarchy of mutually supporting discourses plus the existence of conflicting discourses. This plurality of potential discourses is especially significant given the alleged 'fragmentation' of political structures (Alexander 1990, 1991, & Orr 1994b) and post - modern society (Fox & Miller 1995, Howarth 1995). Therefore the content, purpose and shifts in discourses are important areas for investigation.

All of the above suggests that consideration of 'discourse' is an important element in developing the study and understanding of education and local government policy. It provides a means to explore issues of structure and agency, micro and macro, policy sociology and develop understanding of political, professional and managerial drives which are affecting education policy and practice. Importantly:

> The ways in which policy in education is formed and enacted discursively are, potentially, important areas of development in relating empirical studies to wider theoretical work in social science... (Poulson 1996: 591).

However, the study of discourse cannot be abstracted from consideration of its historical, social, cultural, political and institutional context (Fox & Miller 1995, Gunnarsson *et al* 1997, Hajer 1989, Palmer 1990, Poulson 1996). Therefore it is necessary to explore the existing literature concerning the historical and political development of Scottish education policy, the understandings promoted and the

concepts developed, in order to place DSM and Reorganisation within their 'context' and before considering their specific discourse(s). Furthermore, Hastings (1998: 196) argues that discourse analysts wish to argue the 'language' and social meanings are open to varying and competing definitions, thus in presenting their own data they should:

> signal awareness of the issue... present the data, analysis and conclusions in such a way that the reader is able to assess the researcher's interpretations and claims.

This necessity to contextualise 'discourse', supplement it with historical and theoretical material and clarify the approach to the data has informed the structure of my thesis. Throughout issues of discourse are drawn upon, but these are not fully developed and explored in my findings until the conclusions which 'pull together' the historical, theoretical, conceptual and empirical issues and findings.

Overview of the Purpose and Content of the Thesis

Policy sociology suggests the need to trace the process of education policy historically as well as through detailed contemporary analysis of the policy, perception and practice. Throughout issues of discourse are important. It is this rationale and order that has influenced the purpose, content and ordering of my thesis. As Taylor *et al* (1997) suggested, there is a need to look at 'contexts, texts and consequences' in order to understand education policy. Similarly, my thesis is divided into three parts, which contain distinctive elements but are not mutually exclusive as they combine to explore the process, policy, perception and practices of DSM and Reorganisation. Firstly, *Part 1: Placing Devolved School Management and Local Government Reorganisation into Their Historical 'Contexts': Issues of Discourse, Process, Practice and Policy 'Text'*, explores the 'context' of the historical development, practice and conceptualisation of the education system and associated policies. This may influence the perception and practice of DSM and Reorganisation, the policy 'texts' and initial perceptions of which are discussed. *Part 2: Empirical, Conceptual, Theoretical and Methodological Issues in the Study of Devolved School Management and Local Government Reorganisation*, considers the 'texts' of existing research which may be relevant to my study, plus related conceptual, theoretical and methodological issues. Therefore, Part

2 explores established 'texts' plus developing their 'consequences' for my research project, approach and understanding. *Part 3: Exploring the Emerging Policies, Processes, Perceptions and Practices of Devolved School Management and Local Government Reorganisation*, considers the 'consequences' in terms of my research findings, seeking to explore their nature and to develop understanding building upon the previous analysis of 'contexts' and 'texts'. The thesis is divided into ten chapters that are outlined below.

This chapter, **chapter 1**, outlines the nature and rationale of my research. It explains the development of my research focus and approach. A fundamental issue is the approach to the study of 'education policy', its linkage to issues of structure and agency, plus the ongoing attempt to reconcile a micro/ macro 'gap'. It is suggested that 'policy sociology' offers development and potential application. In seeking to develop these approaches, analysis of discourse is considered. These issues have influenced the foci, approach and method adopted and developed throughout my research project.

Chapter 2 traces the historical developments of the Scottish education system from its origins to the 1970s. It is not simply the structures and practices of the education system that are important, but also how these have been conceptualised and associated discourses. From its origins to the present day, there is a strong assumption that Scottish education is distinctive, especially compared to England. Distinctiveness relates to structural, institutional, historical and policy factors, but also fundamentally cultural assumptions and traditions. The discourse of the 'Scottish myth' proposes Scottish culture as being democratic, egalitarian, collectivist and valuing education, this is reflected in the distinctive nature of the education system which re- enforces and reproduces the distinctive culture. The pervasive appeal of the 'Scottish myth' but its practical limitations are explored. In the post- war period, a new British discourse of 'Partnership' emerged which valued the involvement of central and local government in the provision of a collective, public education system. Although differing practices emerged from previously, the underlying values of 'equality of opportunity' had some accordance with that of the 'Scottish myth'. Both of these

discourses and associated practices received challenges during the 1970s. The 'breakdown of consensus' related to the increasing politicisation of education and the attempt to link it more closely to issues of economic efficiency. By the late 1970s, there was the need to build a new 'consensus' and the start of attempts to construct a new discourse.

Chapter 3 traces developments in policy and discourse from 1979 onwards. It explains that 'Thatcherism' is a contentious and multi- dimensional term, but that there was an over- arching concern with issues of economy and efficiency. The values inherent to the 'Scottish myth' and 'Partnership' such as Scottish distinctiveness and collectivism were rejected. The development in education and local government policy during Thatcher's first two Administrations are critiqued. Thatcher's Third Administration was more radical, focussing on reforming areas of social policy, including education. With the resignation of Thatcher as Leader, the potential for a different policy style, ideology and agenda under Major is discussed. However, a 'shift in emphasis' rather than rejection of 'Thatcherism' occurred. Indeed in education and local government policy, the 'Major years' were even more radical, arguing that the ideal of 'economic efficiency' was not simply political, but fundamentally pragmatic and moral.

Chapters 4 & 5 analyse the process, policy and initial perception of DSM and Reorganisation respectively. It is suggested that the 'traditional' discourses of 'Scottish myth' and 'Partnership' and their conflict with the discourse of 'Efficiency', within which DSM and Reorganisation were being promoted by Central Government, affected the process, nature and perception of these policies. Fundamentally, there is an inherent argument as to whether local government and its education function should be economically and managerially efficient, affecting services, or concerned with enabling and enhancing local democracy. These tensions are inherent in the early development and debate concerning reform of the education system and the promotion of devolving school management in Strathclyde Regional Council. The developments from Regional experimentation to National policy are traced. Similarly for Reorganisation the competing conceptions affect the proposed purpose, nature and

scale of reform. The consultation documents, policy 'texts' and initial perceptions are critiqued.

Chapter 6 seeks to further understand the potential issues, perceptions and practices of DSM and Reorganisation by exploring existing published research concerning devolving school management and reforming the local government role in education. The two studies of DSM are outlined, issues arising discussed and limitations highlighted. To develop understanding and raise a range of issues from a variety of studies, the English research concerning Local Management of Schools (LMS) and the reform of Local Education Authorities (LEAs) is considered. This material is extensive and diverse, however two over- arching themes emerge suggesting reform is concerned with the promotion of markets and/or management. The findings and analyses offered plus issues raised are discussed. Notions of markets and management may related to DSM and Reorganisation also. However, research which compares Scotland and England suggests that these 'forces' are being mediated and operationalised differently in the different countries, referring back to the ongoing importance of Scottish distinctiveness.

Chapter 7 explores and unpacks the conceptual and theoretical nature of the promotion of 'markets', linked to the New Right, and 'management', linked to New Public Management (NPM). The nature of these bodies of thought, their assumptions, propositions and prescriptions are outlined and critiqued. Both approaches are inherent to the discourse of 'economy, efficiency and effectiveness' which has influenced policy reform since the 1980s. An economic definition of the efficiency criterion, related also to managerialism, is utmost, undermining the 'effectiveness' of reform in terms of the arguably distinctive values of the Scottish education system. Criticisms of the nature of this discourse are explored. Alternative conceptualisations of reform that emphasise collective and democratic approaches are outlined. In practice, the shift to 'markets' may not be complete, thus issues of hierarchy and network require consideration also.

Chapter 8 considers the methodological implications for my exploratory research. The nature of the research and influence of 'policy sociology' suggest the need for a qualitative method. The strengths and weaknesses of qualitative research and in comparison to quantitative are discussed. The research method adopted, involving secondary and primary material, in- depth interviews and a multi- site case study approach is explained and justified. The nature, selection and rationale of the research sample is discussed. Issues of gaining access and the conducting of interviews are explored. The approach to analysing the research material is made explicit. Finally, a critique of the research process is offered.

Chapter 9 provides details of the research findings gathered from the fieldwork. The findings are presented to explore the issues raised in terms of the policies, perceptions and practices of DSM and Reorganisation, plus their implications for the roles of schools and EAs, and the relationships between these bodies. The findings are presented to indicate the 'content' of what was said and by whom. The findings are developed in terms of how perceptions and practices evolved during my fieldwork, comparing findings between interviewees and across time.

Chapter 10 develops analysis of the research findings by attempting to explore 'what is going on here?'. The findings are critiqued, compared to and developed with reference to issues that have been raised throughout the thesis, e.g. from the historical material, the 'policy texts', the previous research, theoretical and conceptual literatures, plus assumptions about the study of education policy. The benefits of considering discourse are discussed. It is suggested that the three discourses of 'Scottishness', 'Partnership' and 'Efficiency' are important to understanding DSM and Reorganisation and were frequently drawn upon by my interviewees. The first two discourses are more popular and can be adopted to reject or modify the promotion of an abstract or generic 'efficiency' discourse. Within the 'efficiency' discourse, the promotion of 'management' is more acceptable than 'markets', although both are controversial. In practice, a pure 'education market' does not exist and is being resisted. Hierarchy remains and requires consideration also, although the traditional assumptions of a static and authoritarian hierarchy may be diminishing. Hence, the

need to consider the potential of networks also. In practice, for differing functions, between different 'agents' and institutions, and over time, a combination of markets, hierarchies and networks may be emerging. The implications of issues of structure and agency and their discursive articulation in my findings are explored. It is suggested that discourse affects the policy, perception and practice of the education system, but that various discourses may co- exist, conflict and have a dynamic capacity. The implications for the approach to studying education policy and suggestions for future research agendas are discussed.

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[1]In 'structuralist linguistics', language consists of the 'presences' of spoken words, utterances occurring at certain times, and the 'absences' of the unspoken and taken for granted knowledge of the language and its conventions (Giddens 1981:170).

[2]Giddens proposes two forms of methodological bracketing. Firstly, institutional analysis defined as:

> Social analysis which places in suspension the skills and awareness of actors, treating institutions as chronically reproduced rules and resources. (Giddens 1984:375).

Secondly, strategic conduct analysis defined as:

> Social analysis which places in suspension institutions as socially reproduced, concentrating upon how actors reflexively monitor what they do; how they draw upon the rules and resources in the constitution of interaction. (*Ibid*:378).

Cohen (1989) and Stones (1991) argue the above approaches are not fully adequate. Cohen (1989:89) advocates a further methodological bracket of:

> In what I call *systems analysis*, temporary brackets screen off both the structural properties of social systems and the contingencies of interactions that depart from institutionalised routines. What remains in view is the ordering and the articulations between interactions in time and space.

Stones (1991:676) proposes "the notion of *strategic context analysis* as sister to strategic conduct analysis":

> it is possible to distinguish the analysis of the strategic context from the analysis of strategic conduct as a whole. The category of knowledgeability is, of course, implicated in both strategic conduct analysis and strategic context analysis. *The difference is that in the first case it tends to lead us back to the agent herself, her reflexive monitoring, her motives and her desires, while in the second case we are led more clearly outwards into the social nexus of interdependencies, rights and obligations, and asymetrics of power.* Strategic conduct analysis would be used if the *explanandum* called for a knowledge of the motives, knowledgeability, skills (beliefs, purposes, intentions, etc) of given actors, whereas strategic context analysis would be used where the problem being addressed called for a knowledge of the strategic terrain which faces or faced an agent which constituted the range of possibilities and limits to the possible.

Although Stones (1991) work offers development as he notes himself further work is required. The fundamental problem remains in moving from the abstract and complexity of structuration theory to a specific and applied research project.

[3] Sayer (1992:5-6) provides a competent and concise outline of the key dimensions of realism in philosophical thought:

> 1 The world exists independently of our knowledge of it.
> 2 Our knowledge of that world is fallible and theory- laden. Concepts of truth and falsity fail to provide a coherent view of the relationships between knowledge and its object. Nevertheless knowledge is not immune to empirical check, and its effectiveness in informing and explaining successful material practice is not mere accident.
> 3 Knowledge develops neither wholly continuously, as the steady accumulation of facts within a stable conceptual framework, nor wholly discontinuously, through simultaneous and universal changes in concepts.
> 4 There is necessity in the world: objects- whether natural or social- necessarily have particular causal powers or ways of acting and particular susceptibilities.
> 5 The world is differentiated and stratified, consisting not only of events, but objects, including structures, which have powers and liabilities capable of generating events. These structures may be present even where, as in the social world and much of the natural world, they do not generate regular patterns of events.
> 6 Social phenomena such as actions, texts and institutions are concept- dependent. We therefore have not only to explain their production and material effects but to understand, read or interpret what they mean. Although they have to be interpreted by starting from the researchers' interpretations of them. A qualified version of 1 therefore still applies to the social world. In view of 4- 6, the methods of social science and natural science have both differences and similarities.
> 7 Science or the production of any other kind of knowledge is a social practice. For better or worse (not just worse) the conditions and social relations of the production of knowledge influence its content. Knowledge is also largely- though not exclusively- linguistic, and the nature of language and the way we communicate are not incidental to what is known and communicated. Awareness of these relationships is vital in evaluating knowledge.
> 8 Social science must be critical of its object. In order to be able to explain and understand phenomena we have to evaluate them critically.

[4] "Neither the macro nor the micro tradition within the sociology of education has been very successful in developing and testing theories about educational institutions and processes. Indeed this enterprise itself has often been dismissed as positivist. Many sociologists of education have concerned themselves with developing general macro theories, but few have subjected these to serious test. Indeed, such theories have rarely been developed to the point where the claims they make are clear enough to be tested (Hargreaves, 1981). Interactionists, phenomenologists and ethnomethodologists, on the other hand, have been primarily concerned with *describing*, albeit in a theoretically informed manner, the perspectives of teachers and pupils and the process of classroom interaction. While they have produced some interesting ideas, once again these have not been systematically developed or tested". (Hammersley 1984:318- 319).

[5] "People's experiences in the past give them a certain perception of the world which helps them to come to an understanding of the present. You feel attracted to a specific discourse because you recognise some vague notion of how you saw the world in the past. However, there is an element of anticipation as well. The discursive interpretation of the present which appeals to you, always relates to some element of strategic thinking and anticipation of the subject. People do not usually feel attracted to a discourse which excludes them. They 'join' the discourse because they can see their future role in that context. This is where the circle closes. The discursive 'choice' is a reciprocal matter: a discourse is composed to attract certain actors, and actors are attracted because they have to anticipate how to get on in life. Discourse gives them this sense of direction. As such, discourse relates the psychology of the individual actor to the structuring capacity of the hegemonic project." (Hajer 1989: 40).

PART 1:

PLACING DEVOLVED SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION INTO THEIR HISTORICAL 'CONTEXTS':

ISSUES OF DISCOURSE, PROCESS, PRACTICE AND POLICY 'TEXT'

CHAPTER 2

THE SCOTTISH EDUCATION SYSTEM FROM ITS ORIGINS TO THE 1970s: THE DISCOURSES OF 'SCOTTISH MYTH' AND 'PARTNERSHIP'

This chapter places the development of the Scottish education system, in particular the roles of schools and local government, within its historical context, from origins to the 1970s. This requires consideration of the practical developments linked to statutory and policy developments. However, it is not merely a question of physical changes, but also the perceptions, discourse, values and ideology associated with the nature of the education system. Although these elements can be treated separately, they have implications for each other and for a fuller understanding of the education system.

Existing analyses considering the historical development of the local government and education systems tend to treat them separately. In order to understand the combined impact of DSM and Reorganisation, it is necessary to combine consideration of education and local government as far as possible. This is a complex task, made more difficult by the magnitude of developments and policies inherent in their historical developments. Therefore, this chapter does not offer a fully comprehensive review of all the practical developments of both systems and associated analyses and discourses. Rather the material selected focuses on the pertinent issues of the roles of schools and EAs, plus the relationships between them.

The 'distinctiveness' of the Scottish education system is considered. The purpose is to explain why the Scottish education system can be treated as separate from the English & Welsh systems. The chapter then outlines and analyses the practical developments in the education and local government systems, plus the associated discourse and ideology. It is posited that there have been three essential discourses adopted that can be linked with certain periods of practical development. Two of these discourses form the bulk of the present chapter: firstly, the origins of the Scottish education system and the 'Scottish myth'; secondly, the post- war system and the ideal of 'partnership'. However, changes and challenges to these perspectives and practices emerged since the 1960s. The 'break down of consensus' and attempted reforms during the 1970s are considered. It is posited that the beginnings of a discourse of 'efficiency' emerged

during this period. In practice, a clear demarcation between the three discourses is not accurate. Nevertheless, for the historical periods outlined, the associated discourses had greatest prominence at these particular times. These discourses served to not only explain the system, but also represented an ideology of what the system was and should become.

The Distinctiveness of Scottish Education

There is a long- standing assumption that Scottish education can be treated as distinct from the rest of Great Britain. In its historical origins, legal status and administrative arrangements Scottish education is distinct A further element is the education system's location in a peculiar Scottish political, civil and educational culture. These beliefs in the 'distinctiveness' of Scottish education are pervasive influencing both the accepted practice and conceptualisation of the Scottish education system.

Scotland was an independent country until 1603, when the crowns of Scotland and England united. In 1560, John Knox's *First Book of Discipline* advocated universal elementary schooling. Hence, the rise and spread of parish schooling throughout Scotland in the 16th and 17th centuries. This separate system of Scottish schooling was retained after the 1707 Act of Union, whereby the Scottish and English parliaments were united and located in London. The Act of Union maintained 'local autonomy' for Scotland in education, church and law (Parry 1987). This signifies the importance of the Scottish education system to the Scottish people. The links between the legal, religious and educational systems were pervasive and established. From its origins, the Church played a vital role in the provision and development of Scottish education (McPherson & Raab 1988). Whereas, in England, the state assumed the essential role in education system's origins (Chitty 1992).

The precise nature of 'local autonomy' was unclear. As the system evolved, Scottish demands for recognition of their needs and the administrative requirement for a more coherent and efficient approach brought this issue to the forefront, resulting in the creation of the Scottish Office in 1885, located in London until 1939, when it moved to Edinburgh. The extent to which the Scottish Office was intended to appease and

institutionalise Scottish complaints, rather than as a source of empowerment remains controversial. Fundamentally, "The Scottish Office is ultimately a Whitehall department" (Parry 1987:129). Hence: "the ultimate decision- making powers over everything, including the functions devolved to the Scottish... Office... (remains) at the U.K. level." (Keating 1976:133). The Scottish Office is a creature of the U.K. Parliament, headed by a member of the British Cabinet and subject to the scrutiny and norms of the British civil service. In its manner of operation and priorities: "The Scottish Office derives functional policies from the United Kingdom context" (Parry 1987:133).[1]

The administrative distinctiveness of the Scottish education system was generated by the creation of the Scotch Education Department[2] (SED) in 1872. The SED became part of the Scottish Office, but preserved some functional autonomy. The extent of the SED's autonomy was eroded by greater organisational, financial and personnel integration since 1970 (Parry 1987). Hanham (1965: 206) argues that historically the location of the SED in England and its relationship with the English Education Department was such that the latter "steadily worked for the assimilation of Scottish and English education", thereby eroding autonomy. Despite the relocation of the SED to Edinburgh, some contemporary analysis indicates a substantial inter- relationship exists (Macbeth 1984, McPherson & Raab 1988). There is popular belief that a distinctive approach to Scottish education remains. However, one must be aware of the location of the SED within the wider British administrative and governmental machinery, which constrains the scope for autonomy.

A separate administrative and institutional apparatus for Scottish education exists. This has a historical basis, e.g. the creation of Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) located in Scotland from 1840. There are more recent examples, with developments in the 1960s being cited as the continuing distinctiveness of Scottish education: e.g. the Scottish Examination Board (SEB); the Scottish Consultative Committee on the Curriculum (SCCC), and the General Teaching Council (1965)[3]. However, recent changes to all these bodies have reformed their nature and purpose, increased central control and promoted accountability.

Most legislation affecting the Scottish education system is embodied in separate legislation from that affecting England & Wales. However, the general similarity of policy and timing is striking (McPherson & Raab 1988). There is a trend of proximity of policy between these nations, with England generally pre- empting Scotland. There are two qualifications necessary. Firstly, in recent years, there has been evidence of English legislation containing a section affecting Scotland, e.g. the 1988 *Education Reform Act*. Secondly, when one looks at the legislation affecting local government, this is often introduced in Scotland before England, e.g. the Council Tax and Reorganisation - both are noteworthy for their controversial nature and the perception that their introduction was an experiment prior to consideration of implementation in England and Wales. In the main separate legislation does exist. However, this obscures the similarity of policy pursued throughout Britain. Nevertheless, as with DSM, subtle but often significant differences within the overall thrust of policy between England and Scotland can be discerned (Arnott *et al* 1993a, Arnott & Munn 1994, Clark & Munn 1997, Raab *et al* 1997). There is the possibility also that in the processing of policy through perception and into practice, variations may emerge. The scope for separate legislation, like the administrative arrangements, enables distinctiveness but does not guarantee it.

The distinctiveness is not merely structural and institutional factors. There are differences that can be accorded to agency- level, especially the 'policy community':

> many aspects of continuity and change after 1945 have been common to both countries (Scotland and England), arising either directly from the commerce of people and ideas. At the same time, however, Scottish educational policy has been made by its own cast of characters, in its own setting and, for the most part, with its own script as well. We find in it, therefore, both the particulars of Scottish experience, and also the themes of British experience realised in particular Scottish form. (McPherson & Raab 1988: x).

Policy does not have to be exclusively Scottish or British but may contain elements of both. It alerts us also to the importance of human agency. This agency level is not only individualised, there is collective action and consciousness. There is a belief that

Scotland has a distinctive political and civil culture that manifests itself in a peculiar Scottish educational culture, which in turn re- enforces the original underlying Scottish culture. McPherson & Raab (1988: 36- 37) explain the practical outcome of this approach:

> A further distinguishing feature of Scottish education has been its emphasis on a national, public, system (Saunders 1950)...Scottish liberalism had little patience with the English view that the involvement of the state in educational provision at levels above the elementary should be minimal, and that provision of secondary education in particular should be left to market forces.

A distinctive Scottish culture has manifested a distinctive purpose and practical approach for Scottish education, which in turn has generated a distinctive manner of perceiving and conceptualising the system.

The Origins of the Education System and the 'Scottish myth'

Based upon the moral principles and practical advocacy of John Knox's 1560 *First Book of Discipline* universal elementary schooling was to be based on parish provision and to enable movement through secondary schooling and university where a student was able. The system of parish schooling emerged and developed throughout the 16th to 19th centuries receiving international acclaim. The purpose was the moral, spiritual and academic development of the individual and, cumulatively, the creation of a better society. At this time "there was virtually no recognisable system of organised local government" (SLGIU 1995:12). Burghs existed from the 12th Century, but these had limited powers and no intervention in the education system, which was decentralised.

It is to this period that the traditional conception of Scottish education based upon the discourse of the 'Scottish myth' has greatest relevance. The term 'myth' does not denote falseness, but rather as McPherson (1983:218) explains:

> Since Durkheim sociologists have often wanted to reserve the term 'myth' not for beliefs that could simply be dismissed as false but for folk stories that had two simultaneous functions: to celebrate identity and values and to describe and explain the world in which these are experienced or sought. Public

> statements about Scottish education often have the logically dual character of myth.

The Scottish myth is a description, explanation and celebration:

> myth is simultaneously expressive and explanatory. It is about hearts and minds. It asserts identity, celebrates values, and explains the world through them. (McPherson & Raab 1988: 407).

The Scottish myth is not simply an analysis of the education system, it is an emotive appeal to the practice and perception of this system.

According to the myth, Scottish education is intrinsically different because it emanates from, and is located within, a distinctive Scottish culture:

> ... some are inclined to mythologise the past and even the present of Scottish education, claiming that it has always been a democratic and egalitarian system, with a broad humane general education for all and prospects for advancement for the 'lad o'pairts' to climb the ladder of achievement, through sheer ability and determination, regardless of social class or background. (Scottish Centre for Economic and Social Research 1989: 1)

The key points are the democratic, egalitarian and broad approach of Scottish education (Gethins *et al* 1979). Historically, Scottish education strived to provide free and open public education. Unlike England, class was not a deciding factor (Robertson 1984). This democratic and egalitarian nature is popularised by the image of the 'lad o'pairts'. He was an intelligent boy to whom the Scottish system offered the opportunity for education and advancement, ideally to university and on to a professional career. While based on 'equity', this is linked to ability as Scottish education is essentially meritocratic.

The Scottish myth combines a focus on collectivism and individualism. The example of the lad o'pairts "illustrates two separate strands of Scottish egalitarianism: a solidarity, collectivist strand, and an individualist one" (McPherson & Raab: 407). While opportunity was open to all, advancement was based on ability. Class may not have been the deciding factor, but intellectual aptitude was. Yet, this was viewed as a fair system:

> Thus the myth offered a reconciliation of two potentially conflicting ideals of society. One stressed individual advance upwards through society's ranks to positions of leadership. The other stressed harmony across its ranks. (*Ibid*).

Individual aspirations were accommodated within a collectivist system through the emphasis on assumed objective merit.

The breadth of Scottish education relates to its content and provision. The 'democratic intellectualism' relates to the strong generalist tradition in Scottish universities (McPherson & Raab 1988)[4]. This preference for broad- based education influenced the traditional curricula adopted in schooling. McPherson (1983: 219) claims this manifested a perception of a 'liberal' pedagogy as integral to general education. A belief in "looking at the whole before the parts" was intrinsic to the Scots psyche (Robertson 1984: 239). As was a belief in the value of education (McPherson 1983). Scotland's history of poverty and struggle instigated a common desire for education to improve people and their life chances (Scotland 1977, Paterson 1983). Hence, belief in education to improve individuals' abilities and opportunities through collective and equitable provision:

> ... the most prominent characteristic of Scottish education, in its origins and in its sustaining philosophy, has been the assumption that it exists to serve the whole community... a social rather than a consumerist approach to education policy. (Scottish Centre for Economic and Social Research 1989: 14- 15).

This collectivist approach has been pervasive due to both Scotland's culture and its physical smallness enabling a national consciousness to be fostered and flourish, plus facilitating ease of centralised provision and control (Boyd 1997, Scotland 1977).

The myth provides a view of the practical workings of education, plus propositions about its implications for the inter- relationship with the social order:

> The myth is an interconnected system of values and beliefs that both celebrates national identity and explains how that identity is realised in, and reproduced through, the national system of public education. The myth thereby invests with meaning the peculiar features of that system... These institutions are interpreted as the product of a historical endeavour to construct a society in

which differences of rank, such as they are, derive solely from differences in merit, determined by education. The various parts of the system of values and beliefs are held to be logically related in some sense: 'We have an interest in the common man, therefore we have an interest in a broad education'. The myth, in other words, has a dual status as a statement of values and as a set of proto- scientific statements about the social world. It shapes the consciousness of the actors in the separate parts of the system, makes the world intelligible to them, and makes their actions intelligible to others. It thereby facilitates collective action, but only within certain limits.(Gray *et al* 1983: 309).

The myth has a pervasive character. It is not simply the description of factual practices, but the construction of a specific discourse.

The power of the myth as collective belief and perception is demonstrated in McPherson and Raab's (1988) 'Kirremuir Career' thesis. Their analysis of the relatively closed and coherent Scottish policy community in the post- war period demonstrates that prominent head teachers, HMIs and SED Officials believed in and promoted the Scottish myth. Their career paths and experience bred a personal experience of and belief in the Scottish myth. Teacher training colleges were filled with working- class people who had gained advancement through the university system, hence re- enforcing the belief in a democratic, meritocratic and egalitarian system. Having qualified, these 'Kirremuir career' educationalists embarked upon a career progressing through the rural areas of Scotland before , for many, a final post in the SED. These areas were less class- based and conformed more to the idyllic image of the rural, parish schools pervasive in the Scottish myth. This gained a symbolic dimension:

> a symbolic axis that parallels the axis of careers that were traced through the historical heartland of the pre- industrial educational system. One might say that this symbolic world is bounded by Angus, standing for the East and North, and with Kirremuir at its heart; by Dumfries in the South; and, in the West, by a Glasgow academy, perhaps the Academy. We may call it the 'Kirremuir career', after the popular Kailyard author J.M. Barrie. (McPherson & Raab 1988: 417).

Of the 13 attributable interviews conducted, 10 subscribed to and espoused the Scottish myth as pervasive and evident. Many viewed themselves as akin to the lad o'pairts. These individuals held great influence over the practice and policy of Scottish education in the post- war period. Hence, the Scottish myth was further embodied and pervasive. Nevertheless, the Kirremuir Career individuals are essentially a- typical. They were educated in 'first- generation' schools, i.e. ones dating to the pre- war period. The EA schools had no place in their experience. Similarly, the West of Scotland was not a feature. In particular, it was proposed you should 'get out of Glasgow'. It is the power that these individuals had over the nature of Scottish education that makes them important, and ensures the promotion of the myth and its discourse, not their representativeness of the wider Scottish experience.

This calls into question the accuracy of the Scottish myth. There is evidence that many of the basic principles of the myth do have some accuracy, especially in comparison with the English education system. Gray *et al* (1983: 311) explain:

> Much of the Scottish myth, after all, has turned out to be 'true' in the sense that it has corresponded, often in unexpected ways, to the world that our data had represented. The omnibus- school culture *was* more 'democratic'... there was relatively little class inequality in levels of achievement among the elite minority who achieved some certification. The certified curriculum itself *was* more accessible (than in England) and the formal opportunity to take courses leading to university *was* more generously provided.

This evidence has been substantiated elsewhere also (McPherson 1983, McPherson & Raab 1988, Scottish Centre for Economic and Social Research 1989). Nevertheless, the myth is not universally true. The lad o'pairts was a unique creature. A gender bias resulted in very few 'lass o'pairts' (Scottish Centre for Economic and Social Research 1989). Paterson (1983: 198- 200) argues: "The system (of schooling) ... is best described as competitive- elitist rather than egalitarian or democratic", citing that schooling was "not free (usually a small fee was charged); attendance was not universal; the curriculum was for most of the children, restricted". McPherson (1983) argues the 'democratic' nature of Scottish education emphasised individualism and had a class- orientation. Scottish education could be more democratic and egalitarian

than selected international examples, but this did not make the Scottish system inherently democratic per se. While the myth has some accuracy with selected examples, its promotion as universal and exaggerated claims renders it inaccurate as an explanation of the entire Scottish system.

Furthermore, the accuracy of the myth may have a historical dimension. Gray *et al* (1983: 312) argue that following recent reforms such as comprehensive reorganisation, "the myth's descriptions and explanations of the world have become less adequate". They comment that "Until the mid- 1960s, Scottish educational policy, for example, worked mainly through the myth" (*ibid*: 309- 310). This is substantiated by McPherson & Raab's Kirremuir thesis. Nevertheless, these individuals have been replaced by non- first generation school educated individuals. The integration reforms in the Scottish Office may have undermined the closed recruitment and moral code of the SED. There is some evidence to indicate that since the 1960s Scottish education became less egalitarian (McPherson 1983, Humes 1983), was more class- based (McPherson & Raab 1988) and the curriculum was not as broad (Gray *et al* 1983). The practical existence of the Scottish myth in terms of the operation of the present day education system has been questioned (Gray *et al* 1983, McPherson & Raab 1988). Other analysis has indicated the inappropriateness of the Scottish myth has a longer history, believing it refers to a pre- capitalist, pre- industrial , rural society where the parish was the locus of community life (McPherson 1983). While there is support for the myth as having some relevance to the origins of the Scottish education system, its relevance to the contemporary system is controversial: "myth is rooted in history, and its correspondence to a present reality is problematic" (McPherson & Raab 1988: 407).

A key problem with the myth is its promotion as universal plus use of general concepts without qualification or , often, verification. There is " a denial of history. Instead, myth is mapped on to the past so as to make of it a continuous present" (Gray *et al* 1983: 313). The above discussion exposes the inadequacy of this approach. Furthermore, there are problems with the internal nature of the myth. Humes (1983) argues that it is difficult to evaluate the 'democratic' nature of Scottish education

when the concept itself is ill- defined and vague. He argues also the difficulty of positing one universal Scottish culture when there have been conflicts and three native languages. Humes suggests however that it is possible to talk of the Scottish culture in its "resistance to English cultural imperialism" (1983:151). Humes (1983) and Paterson (1983) explain that the myth has a dynamic quality, altering to accommodate changing practices, and interpretations, and sometimes appearing contradictory. Nevertheless, it does not seek to qualify its internal terminology, nor its universal appropriateness.

Despite these limitations, the Scottish myth remains a pervasive aspect in debates about the education system. The myth serves not only to determine a specific conceptualisation of the system, and to influence the practice, therefore re- enforcing that conceptualisation. The myth has self- fulfilling properties as it pervades the educational rhetoric, influencing policy and perception. The myth may not fully reflect the reality but it undoubtedly has influenced the perception of that reality and the received wisdom of generations of educationalists (McPherson & Raab 1988, Paterson 1997). Therefore, when one considers the practical development of the Scottish education system one can discern both linkages and divergences from the system espoused by the Scottish myth. In particular, the myth's reliance upon emotive language and universal principles does not offer practical guidance on issues of management or administration. It is proposed that the education system should be collectively provided, but within this system no detail on practice is provided. In addressing these issues, while the Scottish myth remained pervasive, pragmatic and principled appeals to notions of efficiency can be discerned. These were evident in the field of curriculum and schooling also, but the meritocratic principles of the Scottish myth offered more guidance here. Arguably, the Scottish myth derived from the ideals of the pre- industrial era (McPherson 1983). The applicability and appropriateness of these ideals in practice and discourse from the 19th Century onwards requires consideration.

Changes occurred due to industrialisation and urbanisation in the 19th Century. There was growing awareness of the need to protect the population's social welfare, hence

the development of education, housing and health provision. There was concern that the working classes needed to be controlled by law and order also. The increasing scope and complexity of many public services plus the need for a more coherent and effective approach resulted in the development of local government (Gethins *et al* 1979). The 1890s witnessed legislation to compound and expand the previously ad hoc system of local government (SLGIU 1995). Education was undergoing expansion, cohesion and reform at this time. The *Education (Scotland) Act* 1872 established "over 900 popularly elected School Boards, with between five and fifteen members, with powers over finance, staff appointments and buildings, and the ability to take a wide range of initiatives" (Macbeth *et al* 1980:10). There was still a decentralised approach. However, there was the development of a centralising force with the creation of the SED by the same statute. The creation of a potentially powerful body within the physical smallness and arguably cohesive culture of Scotland have led many commentators to argue the Scottish education system is characterised as being centralised (Gray *et al* 1983, McPherson & Raab 1988, Scotland 1977). Nevertheless, the 1872 Act did not specify curriculum, nor advocate a particular structure. A resolution to these issues was problematic due to the various values espoused linking to educational, governmental and religious arguments.

There were essentially two views of the nature and purpose of the education system, plus its linkage to the social system at this time:

> one stressing open access, community and local control, the other stressing restricted access, individualism and central control. The former position emphasised the virtues of a traditional view of Scottish democracy: the good society was one in which educational provision at all stages was generous and open, and one in which each community had a school of equivalent status. The latter position held that democracy was more efficiently served by making separate provision for different types of education and different levels of community, and by sponsoring only some individuals to the highest levels. (McPherson & Raab 1988: 33).

Both had resonance with different elements of the Scottish myth. The former implied a continuation of the parish school ideal and collectivism. The latter relied upon the

importance of individual achievement and meritocracy. It was the latter model that received wider support. Hence , the development of a bipartite view whereby selection and accordingly different educational experience were deemed the most appropriate:

> In it were many elements of a 'social efficiency' platform (Finn 1983). Specialist secondary schools would concentrate resources, and give economies of scale. With economy, new subjects such as sciences and languages could be developed in the secondary curriculum, thereby preparing pupils better for university. Secondary- school teaching would be restricted to such pupils. Pupils not bound for university would be offered a non- secondary, post-elementary curriculum of vocationally relevant courses. The selection of pupils to different types of course would enhance social efficiency, not merely by ensuring economies of expenditure, but also by promoting individual talent to its appropriate level, and by preparing it accordingly for its next step. (McPherson & Raab 1988: 42).

Efficiency was to be achieved through the targeting of economic and physical resources to the most efficient development of human resources[5].

Concerns with efficiency were prevalent from the 19th Century. There were moral arguments concerned with the 'social efficiency' and development of human resources. Provision was generally at elementary levels (Clark 1997a). There were pragmatic arguments for economic and physical efficiency also. McPherson & Raab (1988: 43) claim the SED "disliked small schools, and wanted to locate secondary provision in centres of population". A concern was to target the location and nature of schools, through the linking with selection. However, Scotland did not fully implement a bipartite system. In several areas omnibus schools[6] existed, where general access was provided. However, the SED argued that within these schools selection and accordingly the targeting of resources should occur. Complete 'efficiency' could not be assured due to the existence of omnibus schools and the geographical nature of Scotland. The economic efficiency arguments that existed centred on the need to limit and target school provision, this was counter to the social and educational demands for expansion. From the 19th Century until pre- World War II, the SED attempted to "suppress expansion" as it necessitated increased expenditure

and threatened the SED's ability to be sole controller of the education system (McPherson & Raab 1988: 45). These are rational bureaucrats, but not the expansionary activities of Public Choice theory. Nevertheless, expansion was almost inevitable due to growing practical, educational, social and political demands.

The concern for a more coherent and efficient approach to fulfil the demands of this expanding system necessitated developments in education and local government systems during the early 20th Century. With the increasing concern for public health and welfare, there was a recognition that these factors could affect the capacity of children to receive education. Hence, for the first time in Scotland, local government gained a direct role in the education system, through permissive powers to grant free food and clothing under the 1908 *Education (Scotland) Act*. To devise a more cohesive and rational approach, school boards were abolished and replaced by 38 education authorities, under the 1918 *Education (Scotland) Act*. These education authorities, like the school boards, were popularly elected. In addition, there was the introduction of "School Management Committees at a more local level for groups of schools, each to have representatives of the Authority, parents and teachers, all appointed by the Authority" (Macbeth *et al* 1980: 10). Unlike England, where Local Education Authorities under the control of local government existed since 1902, it was not until the inter- war years that the provision and administration of Scottish schooling became the responsibility of local government. The *Local Government (Scotland) Act* 1929 reformed the local government structure, including the transfer of powers from the previous education authorities to the new City and County Councils[7]. With the inclusion of education as a local government function, the potential for challenges to the SED was evident from the 1920s (McPherson & Raab 1988). Furthermore, in terms of the nature of the education system, by becoming a local government function, education and local government values and principles may influence the conception of both sectors. From a contemporary standpoint what is remarkable is that the education system functioned independently of local government for over 350 years, but has operated within this system for less than 70 years.

The discourse of the Scottish myth did have some pervasiveness and application to the system of education. McPherson & Raab (1988) argue there was an over-arching Scottish liberal concern for a collective , public education system whereas in England there were arguments for an non- collectivist approach (Chitty 1992). The debate about the structure of schooling demonstrates the ability to adopt different aspects of the Scottish myth for differing arguments. Nevertheless, the Scottish myth did not provide the universal guidance that it often assumed that it could. It did not give sufficient attention to the practical management and administration of the education system. When analysing this, the limitations of the Scottish myth as an explanatory tool are evident. Rather one must draw upon alternative discourses, often related to notions of efficiency. However, these early notions of 'efficiency' were not as pervasive nor as central to discourse as the contemporary political, ideological and economic concern with 'efficiency'. The Scottish myth is a partial explanation bound by selective evidence and particular values. In their evaluation of the Kirremuir career and its embodiment of the Scottish myth, McPherson & Raab (1988) are careful to explain that while it is a powerful force it is an imperfect one. The Scottish myth is a "normative articulation" which omitted detailed consideration of "lower- status education", i.e. West of Scotland schools and those established by 'new' EAs (*ibid*: 489). It is a value- laden, practically limited and therefore partial explanation.

Why then has the Scottish myth been so pervasive?. It is important as an "expressive and explanatory" mechanism (McPherson & Raab 1988). The myth is a celebration of Scottish culture and education. The myth has served this purpose well, forging not only a collective sense of identity but also individual pride. However, the myth can be adopted for judgmental purposes also. McPherson & Raab (1988) explore the moral dimension of the myth. If one subscribes to the universal and democratic nature of the myth, its evident inapplicability to the experience of some Glasgow schools, or the non- promotion of some individuals, can be attributed to their moral failings, not the education system's nature. It was assumed the educational structure was facilitating, therefore agents not achieving all that was potential were blamed for their own actions. The combination of both collective interest and individual ability within the Scottish myth can be manipulated in various ways. The experience of the elite

promoters of the myth may be quite distinct from the reality of the majority. There are issues of whose beliefs are embodied in the myth and whose power is being furthered:

> a fuller discussion is also, no doubt, required of the extent to which the myth , whether in its fully elaborated form or in its more symbolic, fragmentary and implicit aspects, has 'merely' been invoked as a mystifying justification of actions undertaken in the light of other sectional interests (say of class or power); or of whether it has functioned as the unifying belief and value system of the entire 'clan', to use Durkheim's phrase. (Gray *et al* 1983: 310).

McPherson & Raab's (1988) work highlighted the use of the myth by an a-typical elite to further their values and ideals as a means of ensuring and enforcing a particular governance of the education system. However, there remains popular appeal and support for the Scottish myth as a celebration of Scottishness. The issue of whether the Scottish myth represents the collective expression of common interests, or the successful manipulation and defining of a particular reality in the creation of a particular discourse benefiting particular sectional interests has not been adequately resolved.

The strength of the myth lies not in its detailed accuracy, but in its pervasiveness. It may well be serving particular interests, but it has captured a general consciousness. Consequently, I propose that the primary purpose of the myth is its ability to frame the discourse and conceptualisation of the Scottish education system. It can be utilised as an explanatory mechanism, albeit an imperfect one. It is a facilitator to an understanding of the Scottish education system. Nevertheless, it constrains that understanding with the promotion of specific assumptions and concepts. The terminology may require clarification, the descriptions may be partial, but the vigour of their promotion and apparent logic have received widespread dissemination, this "furnished teachers with a ready explanation for their pupils' failure" (Gray *et al* 1983: 312). Gray *et al* (1983) suggest that the myth found voice due to the lack of alternative evidence and understandings, and that due to changes and challenges its applicability should be questioned. I agree with these statements. However, I wish to develop the point that the myth does not rely purely on factual evidence. Rather it is a system of belief and a discourse that has been both powerful and pervasive. It may not

provide an objective and proven image of the Scottish system, rather it seeks to determine the conceptualisation of this system. Through its pervasiveness as a discourse and a system of belief, the Scottish myth serves to constrain and facilitate our conceptualisation of the Scottish education system and the acceptable practice within.

Changes in practice and discourse following World War II served to undermine the prominence of the Scottish myth in analysis of the education system. For consideration of administration of the education system, other discourses drawing upon both pragmatic and principled arguments from the *British* context are important. The discourse and ideal of 'Partnership' was pervasive in the espoused nature of educational administration.

The Post- War System and the Discourse of 'Partnership'

Developments in the immediate post- war period were not a complete demarcation from previous practice, assumptions and arguments. McPherson & Raab (1988) trace the continuing debate concerning the appropriate nature of the education system, related to whether it should be available to all throughout schooling or whether it should adopt a selective approach related to meritocratic notions and the linking of schooling to access to university. The resultant experience of selective schooling linked to notions of 'equality of opportunity' were not novel to Scotland. What was remarkable was the pervasive will throughout Britain for a collective education system.

In the post- war reconstruction, education was a vital component, related to individual and collective rights. Finch (1984: 11) explains that all services in the welfare state were to be provided based on "collective responsibility, free and universal services, benefits provided as a right". As concerns education, Gray *et al* (1983: 5-6) explain:

> universal compulsory secondary education was widely supported both as an expression of the purpose of a nation united by war and also as a means of reproducing that social solidarity in times of peace, of preserving the moral principle of the nation. To increase participation in education was to recognise

an individual right that young citizens were believed to enjoy simply by virtue of their citizenship; it was to make a statement that, in certain new respects, all citizens were universally valued and that neither individual nor society could be regarded as morally complete until these new conditions of citizenship were met. The policy for universal compulsory schooling was, in this sense, an expression of shared identity. Nevertheless, the policy also rested on an explanation of how the world of education worked and of how education could be made to work in the world. At a collective level, increased participation

> would promote economic growth and social and cultural progress. At an individual level, a lengthened education would help school- leavers to better themselves materially and in other ways. Public and private purposes thus sustain each other... A wide spectrum of opinion subscribed, albeit with differences of emphasis, to this happy conjecture of purpose and explanation.

While some of these arguments can be related to aspects of the Scottish myth, what is different is the emphasis on collective education provided over a longer period of time for a larger proportion of the population, fulfilling both individual citizenship rights, won during the war, and enabling a better collective order. It is an attempt to promote education as inclusive, open, participatory and British.

The arguments for the education system are perceived as according with a post- war consensus. Although the nature and longevity of consensus are controversial, many writers claim that it existed concerning the bulk of social and economic policies:

> For at least 30 years after the end of the Second World War, both major parties... shared a basic commitment to the underlying principles of the Welfare State: a set of tacit assumptions that former cabinet minister Tony Benn has described as 'the welfare capitalist consensus'. This involved a three- fold commitment to full employment, to the Welfare State itself, and to the co- existence of large public and private sectors in the economy. The Conservative and Labour parties often differed fiercely about specific details of policy; on a deeper level, their conceptions of political authority and social justice differed even more. They differed, however, within a structure of

> generally accepted values and assumptions. Above all, they believed in the concept of public provision. (Chitty 1992:8-9).

Based on Keynesian economics and a Beveridge- inspired welfare state, the consensus did not in practice implement these ideals in full nor without contention. Rather it was a broad framework of ideals and prescriptions that were generally endorsed.

Many writers claim that a particular consensus concerning education policy existed (Regan 1977, Gray *et al* 1983, Kogan 1985 , McPherson & Raab 1988, Chitty 1989,1992, Coulby 1989a, Woolridge 1990). McPherson & Raab (1988) argue that the specific values associated with the education system were not adequately explored nor were they linked to detailed practical considerations during the mid- 1940s. This has enabled varying interpretations of the implications of the post- war consensus for education policy. Kogan defines the consensus as being 'social democratic'[8]:

> This view assumes that the underlying motives were not general amelioration, but that education policies were used to maintain the existing social structure and the needs of 'capital'. (Kogan 1985:16).

Such a view can be linked to the consensus over the use of selection, hence a qualified notion of 'equality of opportunity' linked to a narrow definition of 'ability'[9]. There is evidence that through the persistence of selection and the linking of schooling to university entrance an elitist strand remained in tact. This is contrary to Woolridge's (1990) criticism of the 'progressive consensus' which served to erode an elitist system. The dominance of the 'expansionist consensus' (Gray *et al* 1983) gives credence to the extension of educational provision, therefore potentially eroding elitist tendencies. Nevertheless, the expansion of the physical provision of education does not necessitate that in the structure and content of schooling differentiation will not occur. The benefits of educational expansion were deemed to be both individual and collective, primarily through economic gains (Kogan 1985, Woolridge 1990). Unlike the origins of the education system, the post- war system was perceived as being intrinsically linked to the economic order. Nevertheless, in many respects this focus was under- developed. There was not the focus on economic efficiency that is prevalent today. Rather, as in the Victorian era, Scottish concerns centred on 'social efficiency' (McPherson & Raab 1988) and the concern to prevent the "'wastage' of

able pupils" (Gray *et al* 1983:46). Hence, like the Scottish myth, the 'expansionist consensus' combined a moral and evaluative strand with an explanatory one (Gray *et al* 1983).

Within the general consensus over British education, "conflicts of purpose remained latent" (Gray *et al* 1983: 300), but there was widespread agreement about the nature of its administration. This could be deemed the 'Partnership consensus' as it advocated the partnership between central and local governments in the administration and management of education. This Partnership was evident and embodied within the legislation of 'a local system nationally administered' created by the 1945 and 1946 *Education (Scotland) Acts,* equivalent to the 1944 Butler Act for England & Wales. There are great similarities between these Acts, especially in their quest for a balanced partnership of duties and responsibilities between central government (SED and Secretary of State for Scotland) and local government (Scottish education authorities). Local government education authorities are to have the key responsibilities in the day-to- day administration and provisions of education within their locality. This is an extensive task as the 'expansion' in education was not merely in the length of access, but also in ensuring a wider scope of education both in terms of access, e.g. provision for special education needs, and in terms of scope, e.g. linked to a health and welfare function. The Secretary of State's primary duties are ones of regulation and oversight only directly intervening in exceptional cases. This balance of power is intrinsic to the notion of partnership and was maintained and enhanced by the consolidating 1962 Education Act.

Under these Acts, local governments are to appoint an education committee therefore creating an education authority (EA). The education committees are to include Members of the Council, plus Church representatives and teachers. A Director of Education is to be appointed whose specific remit is to serve the EA. Within each local government "all the functions of the council relating to education" are to be delegated to the education committee, with certain financial exceptions[10] as appropriate for a Council Department. Nevertheless, the EA's responsibility for all the other functions relating to education were to give them considerable powers and

duties. Each EA is to prepare a scheme for the constitution of the education committee, the administration of the functions of the council relating to education, and the powers and duties to be performed by the Director of Education. These schemes are subject to the approval of the Secretary of State. Therefore, central government is retaining powers of oversight, but there is some local discretion over the precise nature of each EA's scheme[11].

The fundamental provision and servicing of the education system within each locality is the responsibility of the EA:

> It shall be the duty of every education authority to secure that adequate and efficient provision is made throughout their area of all forms of primary, secondary and further education. (Education (Scotland) Act 1945: I:1).

This includes the provision of "special educational treatment" (*ibid*)[12] and "child guidance service" (*ibid*: I:7). The EA is responsible for adequate educational provision for all pupils within their area. This is to be secured primarily through their responsibility to provide and maintain educational facilities. All compulsory stages of education are to be provided free of charge (with limited exceptions) (*ibid*: I:11), this extends to EAs providing "books, writing material, stationery, mathematical instruments, practice material and other articles which are necessary to enable the pupils to take full advantage of the education provided" within their schools (*ibid*). There is to be free provision of milk and meals. In cases of financial hardship, the EA may provide scholarships, bursaries or financial assistance to pupils. Hostels, board and lodgings, plus travelling expenses or transportation were to be directly provided by the EA. Physical and financial barriers were to be ameliorated creating the principle of free universal education. Education is to be provided in accordance with the parents' wishes and it is the parents' responsibility to ensure that their child receives an education. This is generally achieved through the EA system. For these children, if a child is not attending, the EA has the duty to investigate, to impose an attendance order, and if not satisfied to prosecute the parents. The EA is responsible for extensive educational provision and administration. Provision is to be assured "for the age, ability and aptitude of the pupils concerned" (*ibid*: 1:1). Hence, the provision of primary, secondary, further and special education. Barriers to education - such as

physical location, financial, or parental unco-operation are to be overcome. A collectivist and universal education service, providing not only the three 'Rs', but social and health functions is to be provided essentially by EAs.

Throughout the above system, the Secretary of State has powers of oversight, regulation and inspection. The Secretary of State prescribes standards of educational premises, approves EA schemes plus decisions regarding alternative arrangements for pupils' education, and regulates the provision of scholarships, bursaries and financial assistance. There is the capacity for the Secretary of State to direct the provision of transport. However, the duties are primarily oversight to ensure checks and balances. The Secretary of State has direct interventionist powers in the nature and provision of teacher training and certification. The appointment, employment and dismissal of teachers is the responsibility of the EA. The Secretary of State has direct and important powers over inspection. Firstly, relating to pupils, the Secretary of State ensures medical and dental inspection. Secondly, relating to schools, inspection is ensured through HMI under the duty and patronage of the Secretary of State. If necessary the Secretary of State has the duty to require specific local inspections. Finally and importantly the Secretary of State has the power "to enforce duty of authorities and other persons" (*ibid*: III:60). Therefore, there is the potential for the Secretary of State to assume greater interventionist powers if it is deemed necessary, but generally responsibility for the provision and administration of education within localities rests with the EAs.

Under the 1962 Act, the EA remained responsible for an expanded education function. Potentially more schools and pupils could come under each EA's control with the ability for endowed and denominational schools to be transferred to EA control. In order to manage the expanded system, EAs have the power to discontinue or move educational establishments[13]. EAs have the power also to acquire land and execute works. In the provision of educational facilities, EAs have power to make improvements in order to ensure the safety of pupils. EAs can provide special clothing for pupils. Pupils are to be protected by the EA's power to prohibit or restrict the employment of children. Finally, EAs are to provide a county library service. The

Secretary of State's powers remain essentially similar also. There are two notable changes. Firstly, the Secretary of State "may from time to time require" reports and returns from EAs. The wording implies that this will not be a constant interventionist power but there is scope for increasing central intervention and local accountability. Secondly, Advisory Councils are to be appointed. This signifies the central determination of educational bodies out-with the scope of EAs who may have some powers within the education system. Both changes offer the potential for increased central intervention and reduced autonomy for EAs. Nevertheless, the EA remained a vital component in the statutory education system.

It is this balance of power and responsibilities between central and local government that gave credence and promotion to the discourse of 'partnership'. At a basic level:

> Partnership refers... to the division of formal responsibility for education... between central and local government. First, statute vests some powers in the central authority, and others in the local authority... Second, many of the powers that statute vests centrally are in practice exercised by the local authority acting as the agent of central government. (McPherson & Raab 1988:3).

Partnership denotes a common purpose and goals between the two bodies, in which both have been active in their determination. This is essential if partnership is to refer to policy- making and power, not simply the implementation of a formal division of duties:

> The division of authority indicates some division of power and influence as well, as does the interdependence of central authority and local agent. Partnership therefore implies a system in which authority, power and influence are, to some extent, distributed or decentralised (*ibid*: 4).

This is a pervasive definition of partnership. It is an extensive and inclusive connotation that has received widespread appeal but criticism of its practical accuracy. Nevertheless, the pervasiveness of the discourse of partnership and evidence of its existence must be noted. McPherson & Raab (1988: 3) concede that:

> In practice, no doubt, any discretion that the local authority enjoys as the agent of central government in some matters is reinforced by the local authority's

> statutory powers in other matters. The local authority's right to act independently of central government in certain instances makes it more important for central government to win the consent of the local authority in other instances where the local authority is formally no more than an agent of the central authority.

In the system created in the 1945 Act, the interdependencies of local and central government require a partnership, which has been strongly endorsed (Regan 1977).

However, in moving to practice, a simple two- way partnership may be a misrepresentation. Regan (1977) concedes that other bodies may be gaining increasing powers. Most commonly schools, or teachers, are deemed a third partner. McPherson & Raab (1988: 4) argue this "adds further dimensions to partnership's reference" raising "questions of power and influence, and questions of professional knowledge". However, in the 1945 Act and subsequent legislation, teachers have little statutory authority. The extent to which a third partner will create a more efficient education system or a more conflict- ridden one is contentious. In the administration of education, schools, local government and central government all have a role to play. The 1945 Act may not have outlined statutory powers for teachers, but also it did not define the structure or content of schooling. There is no mention of curriculum. This vagueness gave scope to teachers. In practice the local partners of EA and school may have the greatest role in the daily running of schools[14]. The assumption of a 'locally administered system' is pervasive.

This distribution of powers and responsibilities has been represented in the conceptualisation of the system of educational administration in the post- war period:

> It is customary in the United Kingdom to refer to the Education Service as being a national system locally administered. This phraseology summarises a system in which power and responsibilities are shared among central government, local government and the teachers themselves and it is hard to identify in many instances single points of decision. Indeed, one might describe the system of educational administration as reflecting a triangle of tension of which the three points are *central government* with, on the whole,

> powers of saying 'no', *local government* with, on the whole, powers of distributing resources, and the teachers in the *individual institutions* with, on the whole, power over the curriculum and teaching methods and to a varying degree over the use of the resources made available to the institution. (Briault 1976: 431).

Briault[15] (1976: 429) refers to the "patterns of curriculum, examinations, supervision and finance" as the key issues in determining the locus of decision- making, power and responsibility. Briault (1976) construes the 'triangle of tension' as being constructive as it ensures an adequate system of checks and balances preventing the abuse of power and receiving popular confidence. This is echoed in Coulby's (1989: 3) denotation of a "balance of control". Bogdanor explores the reasons for 'Partnerships' appeal:

> Such a structure ... offered clear and obvious advantages, not only for the administrator concerned with the efficient working of the system, but also for the liberal, anxious to avoid the concentration of power, and the pluralist, insistent that different interests should be properly represented... The diffused structure of decision- making led, it could be argued to better decisions, because it ensured a wide basis of agreement before changes were made. (Quoted in Chitty 1992: 9).

Constructive conflict would create a more efficient and improved education system. However, such a view of 'partnership' could only operate when a broad consensus, as is posited in the post- war period, existed to enable the common ground that McPherson & Raab (1988) argued was integral.

The notion of 'partnership' , whether conceived as bipartite, tripartite, or more pluralistic, relies on a belief in the diffusion of power which ran counter to arguments of Centralisation. Kogan rejects the term 'partnership' as there was not a parity of power, rather in England the DES wielded the greatest influence (McPherson & Raab 1988:11). Regan (1977) agrees that the DES in statute and potential could wield the greatest power, but in the practice of LEA influence and independence, a partnership remains. The situation in Scotland is perhaps more complex. Developments in the 19th Century espoused the benefits of a uniform and coherent education service. The

creation of central institutions such as the Scottish Office and SED with control over examinations and inspection, through HMI, gave the potential for a highly centralised system. By contrast, the 'local' partners at this time were weak- small ad hoc school boards, replaced by more cohesive but often small education authorities (McPherson & Raab 1988). The later development of local government in Scotland and the institutional legacy of a centralised structure manifested a belief in centralisation, made possible by the physical smallness and alleged cultural cohesiveness (Boyd 1997, Scotland 1977). McPherson & Raab (1988: 30) argue there is an 'anthropological' dimension :

> Scotland is a small country in which everybody values education, knows everybody else, and can easily be got together to thrash things out... the education system is one in which people naturally 'look to the centre' for a lead.

The SED appear to take this lead, e.g. their early rejection of a historical preference for localism (*ibid*: 47). The Scottish populace accept and even encourage Central direction ensuring cohesion and uniformity of provision:

> The crucial point, however, is the assertion that central initiative commands consent, and is therefore expected, natural, legitimate. It is one of the most cherished of official arguments, and one that permeates both the discourse of policy and various histories and textbooks. (*ibid*: 30).

It is assumed that there is a Scottish belief in and practice of centralisation. When discussing the development of secondary schooling in the 1940s to 1950s, Northcroft (1992: 80) refers to "the intimately centralised Scottish system of the time". Yet McPherson & Raab (1988) question and critique the 'centralisation' thesis due to examples of pluralism in policy- making and process. In practice, while the Centre is not without power and influence, it is not omnipotent, other bodies can and did have influence in the early post- war period.

The apparently contradictory notions of centralisation and partnership have been pervasive in interpretations of the education system. Yet, both are partial explanations:

> Part of the explanation for this apparent contradiction is that such descriptions have a rhetorical function in the politics of the systems themselves, asserting the claims and counter- claims of conflicting groups. Also, the terms themselves are imprecise. (McPherson & Raab 1988: 29).

This enables a selective interpretation and application of these terms. As a discourse they can be adopted as both explanatory and expressive mechanisms:

> In both the centralisation and the partnership models, we find a symbiosis of fact and value, a theory supported by data it has helped to create, and a tradition constructed through the selective reinterpretation of the past. (*ibid*: 499).

The similarities to the Scottish myth are striking. McPherson & Raab (*ibid*: 429) suggest:

> What has become increasingly apparent in the last twenty years is that there is also a British tradition, or myth... In this case, as Fenwick (1985, p.137) has suggested, 'the language of the myth is the language of "partnership"'.

The 'myth' of partnership is pervasive and popular, but its applicability is partial and value- based, although there is evidence that both local and central government were integral to the post- war education system.

Criticisms of 'Partnership' should not undermine the striking fact that education was not a local government function in Scotland until 1929, yet within 16 years local government was to receive extensive statutory powers and functions within this system. Many of the justifications or explanations for this development have been pragmatic. There was a need for a more co- ordinated approach. In the period of post-war educational expansion, the SED could not manage this process on its own, therefore the need to include local government in the provision and governance of education. This was not the devolution of autonomous power but rather "decongestion" at the Centre (Stewart 1986: 180). Pragmatic necessity and the ideal of Partnership served as the guiding explanations. However, this does not explore the configuration of practice and values which actually led to the expansion and inclusion of EA powers, plus the aspirations and reactions of those actors affected. There is little exploration of the impact that the incorporation of education as a local

government function will have on the values and practices of the administering of that system. There are various values and purposes identified with of local government. In Britain the 'Liberal Model' is most pervasive:

> The liberal ideology of local government endows it with two major functions in society: To serve the democratic objectives of participation, education, discussion and consent; and to provide services under such political direction in an efficient manner (Wilson 1948: 12). (Quoted in Smith 1985:133).

These are important functions that have been adopted as a basis for the creation, development and continued existence of local government.

The 'democratic' argument for local government incorporates appeal to benefits for civil society at two levels of application:

> There are those that claim local government is good for <u>national</u> democracy; and there are those where the major concern is with the benefits to the <u>locality</u> of local democracy. Each can be further subdivided into three sets of interrelated values. At the national level these values relate to political education, training in leadership and political stability. At the local level the relevant values are equality, liberty and responsiveness. (Smith 1985:19- 20).

While these values are primarily related to local government, they have implications for the education system also. The linkages between education, local government and democracy may be profound (Adams & Hunter 1994, Benn & Benn 1993, Ferguson 1994, Hill 1974, Ranson 1992, Ranson & Tomlinson 1994, Tomlinson 1994). However, this linkage was not adequately explored when it was decided to incorporate education as a local government function.

Similarly, the relationship between the educational function and the service principle of local government was not adequately articulated and explored, although this value had ramifications for the decision to make education a local government service. John Stuart Mill argued that local government "was the most efficient agent for providing those services that are essentially local in character." (Sharpe 1970:166). Local government has local knowledge and could accommodate local opinion to provide appropriate and efficient service delivery (*ibid*: 166- 169), being sensitive to

variations in local need (Smith 1985), therefore providing a more efficient and accessible service for local citizens than the remote bureaucracy of central government is capable of (Hill 1974). Local government is necessary , rather than fragmented field services, to co- ordinate service provision, function as a market substitute and act as a powerful consumer pressure group (Sharpe 1970:166- 172). There is an over- arching argument concerning local government generating more efficient service provision. Such arguments can be applied to education but require development in terms of applicability and accuracy.

The discourse of Partnership promotes the idea that local government is an integral feature of the education system. The values and functions of local government suggest that such an involvement is beneficial. This is the argument adopted by Regan (1977), who notes the international uniqueness of the British arrangement. He finds this a cause for celebration and re- iterates the benefits of Partnership (*ibid*: 35):

> Partnership is a hackneyed term and does not fully convey the flavour of central -local relationships in education. Nevertheless no other term would do so well.

The problem is that the term remains vague and partial. It does not define precisely why local government should be responsible for education , nor does it explore the linkage between local government values and those of the education system. The values of local government are impressive and logically could be applied to its education function. Nevertheless, the service function rests on an assumed nature of *local* services. The Partnership discourse does not offer any explanation as to why education is specifically a local service. Regan (1977:234) criticises contention whether education should be labelled "'a national service locally administered'... Rather than as ... a 'local service nationally supervised'.". Yet it is a crucial issue in the competing discourse of 'centralisation' and 'partnership', and one which neither addresses adequately. The perceived and practical outcome will result in different prescriptions for the assumed appropriate and efficient administration of the education system. Similarly, if one accepts that education is necessarily a local government service, the dual functions of local government, democratic and service provision, have differing implications for the efficient operation of that system and its education

function. On all of these issues, the partnership thesis is silent. Rather the distribution of powers and responsibilities, checks and balances is promoted as the defining factor. This is a valued characteristic of the Scottish education system. Nevertheless, many issues remained unresolved and were to impinge upon future perception and operation of the education system.

Changes & Challenges Since the 1960s- The Breakdown of Consensus?

The practice, politics and perception of the education system have changed markedly since the early post- war years. Many writers talk of a 'breakdown in consensus', although debate ranges as to when this was initiated and when the rupture finally occurred - some trace the origins of dissent to the late 1950s (Gray *et al* 1983, McPherson & Raab 1988), others argue the breakdown occurred in the mid- 1960s especially due to comprehensivisation (Kavanagh & Morris 1989), while others place the breakdown with Thatcher's Third Administration in the late 1980s (Cordingly & Wilby 1987, Coulby 1989b, Flude & Hammer 1990, Paterson 1997, Simon 1988). In the light of empirical evidence and developments, the nature of the education system was questioned from the 1950s onwards, with growing prominence in the 1970s, and added impetus in the 1980s and 1990s. I wish to argue that in the perception and discourse affecting the practice of the education system the quest for efficiency became prominent.

There were changes in the 1960s. Those which received greatest attention relate to the structure of schooling, comprehensivisation, and the content, examinations. The Labour Government initiated a comprehensivisation policy in 1965[16]. The key purposes were:

> two main trends: equalisation and improvement. By 'equalisation' we mean, not that equality of attainment between the social classes was achieved, but that inequality was reduced. By 'improvement' we mean a rise in average levels of certified school attainment. (Gray *et al* 1983: 529).

Even greater 'equality of opportunity' was to be achieved by the ending of selection, the raising of the school leaving age and developments in certification. Comprehensive reorganisation is distinct from the Scottish myth:

> comprehensive reorganisation... was a British policy applied to Scotland, with little Scottish impetus before the early 1960s. (McPherson & Raab 1988: 394)

This could signal a change in the consensus over Scottish education. However, there was a 'Britishness' about the post- war reconstruction. Despite its denotation as a 'non- Scottish policy', comprehensivisation was quickly and widely adopted in Scotland:

> In 1965 56 per cent of Scottish schools were still selective, and a further 24 per cent might be described as 'mixed': nine years later only 2 per cent of pupils in state schools were not in comprehensive courses. (Scotland 1982:131).

This figure is far higher than in comparison to England (Clarke 1997a). Scotland (1982) explains that while there may have been dissent over comprehensivisation, there was no great reaction. Prior to comprehensivisation in Scotland, a relatively large proportion of non- selective schools already existed, as inferred above, especially due to the tradition of omnibus schools. These schools operated general entry, i.e. non- selective. However, within the school, selection and setting occurred. This was a different from the comprehensive schools endorsed in the 1960s.

Changing practice within schooling were important. The *Education (Scotland) Act* 1962 reformed Scottish examinations. The Scottish Leaving Certificate was abandoned, in its place a dual approach was created through the maintenance of the Highers, plus the introduction of Ordinary Grade. This breached assumptions and practices relating to the Higher: "The O-grade was intended both as an intermediate incentive and also as a legitimate outcome in its own right" (Gray *et al* 1983: 302). The attainment of certification was to be extended, plus its assumed purpose broadened - e.g. it served as an end in its own right, plus employers should pay attention in the award of youth labour. Fundamentally, the linking of schooling and certification purely with access to university was broken. This struck to the core of the Scottish myth eroding the notion of the 'lad o'pairts'. Subsequent developments in certification and curriculum served further to alter the education system and to move away from the Scottish myth, e.g. the ending of the pass/ fail distinction in the 1970s and reactions to the Munn & Dunning Reports[17].

Gray *et al* (1983) characterise the changes in certification as a means to 'manage expansion', comprehensivisation could be posited in a similar light. With the drive to an universal and collective education system and the expansion characteristic of the 1950s and 1960s, changes were necessary to accommodate and educate the pupils affected. However, despite debates about the impact of comprehensivisation and certification, there was no questioning of the administration of the education system. The 'partnership' of central government and local government was almost taken for granted. Changes in school structure and content were to occur within the EA system.

There were a couple of factors which may have signified potential changes. Firstly, during the mid- 1960s internal management structures within schools were created (McPherson & Raab 1988). Thus, signifying interest in improved managerial efficiency and the extension of concerns about management and administration into schools. Secondly, a perceived politicisation of education policy. Some writers associate this with Labour's promotion of comprehensive reform (Kavanagh & Morris 1989). The situation is not clear cut. British evidence suggests there were both divisions and support within the political parties at national and local level (Chitty 1989, Lawton 1992, McPherson & Raab 1988, Simon 1992). What was unique was that comprehensivisation from 1964 onwards was presented and popularly perceived as a partisan issue. Lawton (1992) and Simon (1992) outline the relatively weak stances taken by both Labour and Conservatives in the immediate post- war period concerning education policy[18]. This changed in the 1960s when Labour believed middle- class concerns about education were a vote- winner and hence the adoption of comprehensivisation as an election pledge. In response, the central Conservative Party began to oppose the movement. On gaining power in 1970, the Conservatives cancelled comprehensivisation, yet during 1970- 74 more comprehensive school plans were approved than previously. Hence, the issue of comprehensivisation was not the fierce battle that it is sometimes assumed to have been. However, it did signify the beginnings of partisan dissent and a popular appeal of such. In Scotland, teachers' strikes occurred for the first time in 1961 and again in 1974. Scotland (1982) argues this undermined the traditional, professional status of teaching. Challenges to

professionalism and politicisation could impact upon both schools and EAs, however at that time, the EA was not challenged on such grounds.

Indeed, two documents in 1969 indicated the continuing and expanded role for local government. The *Education (Scotland) Act* maintained an integral role for EAs and expanded their statutory roles, e.g. for special educational needs (Chakrobarti 1988). The Wheatley Report (1969) concluded a comprehensive review of the functions and structures of local government. Wheatley viewed education as an integral local government function allied closely to the service provision value. Therefore despite education reforms, the role of local government in that system was not eroded.

However, the nature of local government itself had come under review[19]. The Wheatley Report (1969)[20] was the result of a fundamental review during 1966 to 1969, its overarching theme is a concern for "efficient administration" (Scotland 1982:128). The Report and recommendations are founded in a view of encouraging efficiency primarily along liberal values of local government. Mitchell (1988: 11) explained:

> Wheatley stated that the reform should have four basic objectives: local government should be enabled to play a more important, responsible and positive part in the running of the country; it should be equipped to provide services in the most satisfactory manner; it should constitute a system in which power is exercised through the elected representatives of the people; and it should bring the people into the process of reaching decisions as much as is possible.

Focussing on issues of Power, Effectiveness, Local Democracy and Local Involvement (Paterson Report 1973:5), the existing system was perceived as inefficient.

Wheatley's starting premise was that the small scale local government system of the counties was no longer appropriate:

> The report opened with the dramatic observation that "*something is seriously wrong with local government in Scotland*". It outlined numerous weaknesses including:

there were far too many local authorities (over 400) leading to conflict and confusion in powers and inefficiency:

some councils were too small for the efficient delivery of some services:

the fragmented character of local government led to an unequal spread of rateable resources:

local government had too low a standing in the community and there was a shortage of good people to stand for election: and

> central government tended to interfere too much in the affairs of local authorities. (SLGIU 1995:17).

The creation of two- tier local government to ensure efficient service delivery was advocated. Regions with a population over 200,000 should be responsible for the Education function, plus that of social work, protective services and health related services. The creation of seven Regional Councils was advocated. Within these structures, smaller tiers of 37 district councils were to be established also. These Districts would be responsible for services which were perceived as 'local', e.g. 'Environmental services'. The exceptions were the three all- purpose island councils which were deemed most appropriate for their location. To ensure increased democracy and participation a system of very small community councils were created:

> These are not a third tier of local government: they have no statutory powers and are set up by the district and island councils... Their principle function is to speak and act, representatively , for the local community. (Mitchell 1988:11-14).

There was an assumption that different scales and structures may be more appropriate for different functions. Wheatley attempted to posit the optimum size for an EA, but this was not perceived as universally optimum across local government structures and functions.

In the case of education , an additional reform, was the 'local' tier of Schools Councils, with a broad membership[21]. The functions of the Schools Council were to be determined by the EA but based upon 'such functions of management and supervision' relating to the schools served as deemed appropriate, giving scope for

variations in interpretation and practice. By 1977 "there were 302 school councils established and actively serving all 3,669 schools throughout Scotland" (Macbeth *et al* 1980: 9). In terms of their functions, Mac Beth *et al* (1980) question whether the schools councils were characterised by 'policy- making, participation or irrelevance'. There is no evidence of the former, some evidence of the middle and huge potential for the latter. Analyses suggest schools councils were at best 'talking- shops' requiring reform and development (*ibid*). The creation of schools councils suggests that to achieve the principle of 'participation', it may be necessary to decentralise some powers within local government. There is tension between increased participatory efficiency, linked to smaller units involving the public, and service efficiency associated with large functional units and professional expertise.

Based on the Wheatley report, but subject to minor amendments, the *Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973* was implemented on 1 May 1975. The key amendments were an increase in the number of councils- to nine Regions and 53 Districts, plus making Housing entirely a District council function. Hence, an even more differentiated scale of local government was created. In terms of Wheatley's proposal for EAs of over 200,000 population, two of the mainland authorities were smaller than this scale. In contrast some of the new authorities were very large, most notably Strathclyde with a population of 2579,000 in 1971 (Paterson Report 1973:114). Wheatley's determination of 200,000 has never been clarified as adequate or appropriate (Midwinter & McGarvey 1994)[22].

The proposals for the reformed structure of local government were augmented by the Paterson Report (1973)[23]. This builds upon the premise that "good management was vital to the effective operation of local authorities" (*ibid*: xiii). It was assumed that each of the new authorities would exercise some discretion of their internal management structures and organisation, but could benefit from a review and guidance. The Paterson Report notes there are some problems with the previous structure. There was a tendency for new committees to be established in an ad hoc manner to accommodate new functions. Departments tended to act independently of

each other, manifesting a professionalism which has benefits of expertise, but prohibits a co- ordinated approach to decision- making and service provision:

> this very professionalism has helped to foster the excessive departmentalism which is perhaps the main weakness in the existing management of local government in Scotland. (Paterson Report 1973:15).

It failed to enable "comprehensive policies and cohesive programmes" (*ibid*: 14). And while Paterson comments that there are some existing strengths in the system, these need to be developed and alternative strategies encouraged where appropriate. The Paterson Report is concerned with increasing the managerial efficiency of local government. However, this is not to become an end in itself, but rather a means to achieve the purpose of local government[24]. Managerial efficiency is to improve the overall efficiency of local government through improved decision- making and creating more appropriate policies and enhanced service provision. The key is overcoming the tendency to Departmentalism. Instead a corporate management and organisation approach is advocated. A Policy and Resources committee is to receive an enhanced role. While a Chief Executive and management team is to be established. The aim being to co- ordinate developments, create comprehensive policies, coherent programmes and corporate management.

The implications for Education are considered alongside the other "personal services" of social work and housing. The Paterson Report (1973: 36-7) comments:

> A major factor in the effectiveness of these services is the local organisation whose basic components are the operational units such as schools... These operational units need support... sub- regional management units would also be required. In Strathclyde the size of the task may be such that a further level of control between the sub- regions and headquarters would be needed. Broadly we see the headquarters units being concerned with assessment of need and formulation of policy, planning of provision and monitoring of implementation. Headquarters would lay down professional and administrative guide- lines and provide specialist or advisory services... In some cases the headquarters unit would also undertake the management of certain facilities and establishments with a wide catchment area, for instance... a special

education unit... The sub-regional units would undertake the detailed administration of services, decisions being taken within the framework of the policy laid down centrally.

There is to be an inter- relationship of different levels, extended to include "local contact with individuals and families and with professional, governmental and voluntary bodies in the community" (*ibid*: 38) . This plurality of approaches facilitates two crucial "links": "those existing between services and those relating to contact with the public." (*ibid*). The need for efficient services and participation achieved through efficient management and organisation of the education function is to be pursued.

The Paterson Report stimulated interest in corporate management. There was consideration of the implications for education in research and analyses from the 1970s (Davies 1972,1977, Jennings 1977,1984). However, corporate management approaches were never fully implemented. Policy and Resources Committees and Chief Executives Departments became common- place, but the fully co- ordinated and cohesive system espoused by Paterson was not fulfilled as Departmentalism lived on. Education is a particularly strong example of a Department which tends to act in an independent and exclusive manner. Similarly, the notion of sub-regional units were adopted in the form of Divisional Education Offices. However, there remained tensions between the distribution of responsibilities between head quarters, Divisions and schools. These tensions are manifest in the promotion of Reorganisation and DSM.

What is significant is the desire to improve the managerial efficiency of the local government and education systems. The development of thought concerning 'educational administration and management' can be traced from the 1950s. However, it was in the 1970s that this movement gained greatest prominence, especially in light of the Greenfield- Griffiths debate; the key terms of which were the nature and researching of educational management and administration[25]. What is pertinent is an increasing focus on the ability to make the education system more efficient through the use of universal managerial and organisational principles, although in the

'educational management and administration' literature these principles are bound to their applicability to education.

Wheatley assumed that a more efficient local government system would serve to empower that system. McPherson & Raab (1988) argue that if 'partnership' was to have meaning it would be more realisable for the Regions. These larger EAs would be a more equal partner than the previous multiplicity of small authorities. However, Macbeth (1984) argues that the large Regions could not be considered 'partners' in the previous denotation as local. In either case, it is dubious whether the re- structured system was intended to be an equal partner or empowered unit by central government. There is evidence that a centralisation of power occurred since the 1970s and increasing central government intervention has become characteristic. McPherson & Raab (1988) argue that with the period of expansion and the demise of Kirremuir career officials, the SED had to move into an era of 'promotionalism' in order to secure its aims and objectives. SLGIU (1995:19) chart this increasing central intervention in local government:

> Historically local authorities have been granted significant discretion in the exercise of their functions, within centrally imposed limits. Central governments had been happy to concentrate on the 'high politics' of Westminster leaving the 'low politics' of local government to take care of itself. However, from about 1975 onwards central government gained ever increasing powers over local government.

Despite belief in the need for local government to fulfil democratic and service functions, this was combined with an increasing belief in a role for central intervention also.

This centralisation can be linked to an increasing concern for 'economic efficiency'. The economic crisis of the early 1970s demanded a fundamental change in public finance. Review of local government finance had been out-with the scope of Wheatley. However, subject to other reviews such as the Layfield Report (1976) and increasing fiscal pressures, local government expenditure was to be reformed and constrained. The *Local Government (Scotland)* Act 1975 legislated for financing

through rates and grants. Fiscal pressures required curbing public expenditure. Mitchell (1988:16) explains:

> The turning point came when Anthony Crosland, Labour's Environment Secretary, told local authorities that the 'party's over'. This heralded a new era: Expenditure constraints were introduced.

As a public and local government service, Education was affected. Education is the largest spending local government department, therefore as Macbeth (1984) noted it is an obvious target for spending reductions. However, cuts are not achieved easily.

The quest for economic efficiency did not result in simply the cutting of education expenditure, it brought into question the overall efficiency and nature of the education system. There was a belief that the education system had failed to generate a suitable labour force. This development was particularly pronounced in England & Wales where schools and LEAs were blamed for the perceived failure of the education system to gain economic advantage. The Department of Education and Science (DES) compiled 'The Yellow Book' outlining areas of concern: firstly, the lack of classroom control; secondly, some schools did not prepare pupils for work; thirdly, the varieties of curricula that pupils followed (Chitty 1989). The perceived solution was increased central control, especially by the DES, the creation of a core curriculum and introduction of vocational education. These ideas were incorporated into Prime Minister Callaghan's 1976 Ruskin speech, the 'Great Debate', at which time he coined the term the 'educational establishment' to indicate self- interested teachers and LEAs who were acting contrary to the interests of the wider society. Simon (1992:123) comments that this indicated "an aspect of the marginalisation of local education authorities and teachers and their organisations, marking the end of the triangular 'partnership'". Cases such as the William Tyndale 'affair' in 1975 illustrated a situation in which a school could be 'subverted' by radical teachers and LEA officers undermining central government directions. The term the 'loony Left' was born in media reporting of this event. At the same time, 1975- 76, Tameside LEA won legal action against the DES attempt to enforce comprehensivisation. This latter point indicated to Coulby (1989a) the illusory nature of the consensual partnership. When Central Government had a definite education policy, it could not rely on

universal implementation in a diffuse system. With the increasing politicisation of education came the need for Central Government to be able to exert its will over the education system. Hence, the 1970s witnessed increased political and central control (Kogan 1985). The autonomy of teachers, the power of LEAs and the influence of trade unions were to be curbed. The practicability of a balanced partnership in a period of politicisation was seriously questioned. Instead of an inclusive discourse of consensus and support for EAs and schools, a discourse of derision and 'crisis' was mounted interpreting and selecting evidence accordingly.

These changes were not without influence in Scotland, although there was no equivalent 'Great Debate' (McPherson & Raab 1988). Gray *et al* (1983) explain that the period of educational expansion came to an end when it was perceived that this had failed to achieve its anticipated outcomes of improved social and economic efficiency. Chitty (1992) argues the perception of 'failure' was almost inevitable as the British public had been promised the 'New Jerusalem' via the education system. There were problems also in a simplistic linking of educational provision to employment opportunities and economic efficiency, especially in a period of global economic change (Coulby 1989, Simon 1992). Nevertheless, within Scotland, in light of economic necessity and perceived problems, spending constraints and reform of the education system were posited. There was increasing interest in the promotion of vocational education. Grant (1982) argued there was a "crisis of resources", that was compounded by a "crisis of direction" and "crisis of identity" in Scottish education (Robertson 1984:226).

Grant's (1982) concern is the demise of a particularly Scottish approach, akin to the premises of the Scottish myth, due to an Anglicisation of education. However, there remains a distinctiveness. In the 1970s, there was less conflict between the central and local governments in Scotland. There were no 'Tamesides' in Scotland (Gray *et al* 1983). The reasons for this have not been adequately explored in the existing literature. Various possibilities could be posited. The lack of serious conflict could be evidence of a Scottish consensus and preparedness to take Central direction. There is a belief that in the small scale and more culturally cohesive Scottish educational

community there is less likelihood of serious conflict. In a newly reorganised local government system, it is possible the new EAs were not sufficiently mobilised or willing to challenge central government at this time. This is not to say that increasing central intervention and demise of professionalism were non existent, but they were not as pronounced in Scotland.

Thus far the efficiency arguments of the 1970s highlighted the structure and internal management of local government, overall issues of economic efficiency of the public sector, and specifically the linking of education to the wider economy. A further dimension was the advocacy of greater parental participation and involvement in school management. This debate was primarily English, but held implications for Scotland. In 1975, Labour commissioned the Taylor Committee to consider ways of reforming school management to improve its effectiveness and efficiency through increased participation at the local level. Reporting in 1977, the Taylor Committee advocated "greater power for governing bodies and to distribute it more evenly between the local authority, teachers, parents and community." (Kogan 1985:17). Immersed in the rhetoric of participation the Taylor Report could be viewed as an empowering measure (Sallis 1977). However, it was not implemented in its original form: DES modifications called for parents as the majority voice on governing bodies (Whitehead & Aggleton 1988). Subsequent analysis highlighted the reformed 'Taylor Report' principles as a measure to curtail teacher autonomy and curb LEA power. These arguments have resonance with concerns about parental choice and school boards in Scotland.

By the end of the 1970s, significant changes or their beginnings emerged affecting the education system. It was not a complete truncation of all previous practice. Significantly EAs were still integral to an education system which was premised on public provision and collectivism in Scotland. Nevertheless, changes in the institutions, economy and politics of the system had occurred. Reforms to local government, through reorganisation, and Scottish Office, through personnel integration, occurred. Scotland (1982:127) notes:

> When the new authorities were established in 1975 the most notable phenomenon was the take- over by the younger men in the directorate: the Commemorative Dinner of the Association of Directors at that time was to mark the end of an era.

McPherson & Raab's (1988) analysis of the 'Kirremuir Career' individuals demonstrates their demise by the 1970s and suggests this would end the over- arching reliance upon the Scottish myth. They posit the need to construct a new discourse in order to secure the consensus of the Scottish educational community. McPherson & Raab (1988) suggest that consensus could be based upon two discourses, one related to curriculum ,the other to managerial and economic efficiency. They believe that it is the former that holds the greatest potential. However, I believe the latter has become pervasive in contemporary discourse, with the notion of efficiency being applied to curriculum also.

If a new consensus or discourse was to emerge from the 1970s, there were two overarching concerns. Firstly, the need for efficiency, especially economic but also managerial. This process began with the Labour Government of 1974, especially in reaction to the demands of the economic crisis. Labour politicians were prepared to move away from the rhetoric of Keynsianism. Analyses of the economic reforms and public policy changes of this Labour Government tend to stress that it was a necessary and pragmatic development (Mitchell 1988). Nevertheless, the extent to which political decisions can ever be entirely pragmatic and value- free is dubious. Rather there is evidence of a second key factor, namely a perceived shift to the Right in political discourse (Chitty 1989, Dale 1989, Lawton 1992). In many cases this shift was catalysed by pragmatic factors, although for many Conservatives there was increasing ideological importance being attached to educational reform. Especially after Thatcher's election as Leader in 1975, the Conservatives perceived a need to adopt a more radical economic policy and electoral strategy. The thinking and prescriptions of 'New Right' think tanks began to be considered. Sir Keith Joseph received prominence espousing vouchers in education, market principles and privatisation where possible. The discourse of efficiency was pervasive with politicians recognising the need for educational and economic reform.

Conclusions

This chapter has explored and deconstructed the perception, practices and policies affecting the Scottish education and local government systems from their origins to the late 1970s. The 'Scottish myth' assumes Scottish cultural and educational distinctiveness, and importantly its superiority to England. The 'Scottish myth' espouses the broad, democratic, egalitarian and collectivist nature of Scottish education which replicates and reproduces a wider civil and political culture. In practice, there are examples of the collective and egalitarian orientation of Scottish education, however its combination with an individualistic and meritocratic strand enabled provision to be 'targeted'. Linked to 'social efficiency' (Finn 1983), fullest provision was at elementary levels and wider provision was based on merit. Nevertheless, this was perceived as 'fair' (McPherson & Raab 1988) and did not diminish the perception that education benefited the 'whole community' (Scottish Centre for Economic Research 1989).

The practice of expanded and 'open' education did not fully emerge until the post-war period. Due to a sense of citizenship rights and collective responsibility forged during the War, increased educational provision, in terms of physical resources, access and purpose was promoted. Many of the principles such as 'equality of opportunity' accorded with the ethos of the 'Scottish myth'. However, this was to be a British approach and was embodied in the discourse of 'Partnership'. Central and local governments were to share a division of functions, authority, power and influence to ensure an appropriate education service. Teachers became involved in this 'Partnership' over time, however rather than being constrained by a lack of statutory duties, they enjoyed a 'relative autonomy' to control classroom practices and procedures. The daily running of schools and education was in the hands of the 'local partners' of school and EA.

However, by the 1960s, political, practical and economic challenges to the system emerged. Both the 'Scottish myth' and 'Partnership' relied on an assumption of general consensus and 'mutual interest' (Paterson 1997). With a politicisation of education policy and increasing economic imperatives, central government sought to

exert its will and therefore undermined the proposed 'equality' and 'relative autonomy' of the other partners. Callaghan's Great Debate demonstrated the way in which education was being re- constructed in pragmatic, political and discursive terms. The potential for the local partners of school and EA to be undermined and attributed with 'blame' was suggested. Nevertheless, Wheatley re- asserted the centrality of local government's education function. The reform sought to improve and empower local government, including the EAs. In Scotland, a collective education system remained intact and developed through the involvement and importance of schools and EAs.

However, the discourses of 'Scottishness' and 'Partnership' were being challenged. A new language of economic and managerial efficiency was becoming dominant, e.g. in the Wheatley and Paterson Reports for local government and the attack on education's failure to support economic growth. A shift to the Right and politicisation of education policy emerged. Previous assumptions and practices of professional power in education were being eroded, e.g. by reactions to strike activity and the rise of parental rights. In some respects, the 'crisis' in Scotland was not as pervasive as in England, there was no 'Great Debate' (McPherson & Raab 1988). However, arguably there was a more profound 'crisis of identity' (Grant 1982) manifest in the apparent Anglicisation of Scottish education compounded by the failure of the devolution bill in 1979.

By the late 1970s, there was the need to 'construct' a new 'consensus' for education policy (McPherson & Raab 1988). Changes in local government and SED were perceived as the "end of an era" (Scotland 1982: 127). In opposition, the Conservatives had been developing a new electoral strategy influenced by the New Right. The themes began in the 1970s of economic efficiency, managerialism, the erosion of professionalism and a British project were integral and suggested a new discourse and politics would emerge post- 1979. In understanding contemporary developments, it is necessary to be aware of these shifts in practice, perception and discourse, especially relating to 'Scottish myth' and 'Partnership', plus the de-construction of these ideals and consensus and the attempt to construct a new

discourse from the 1970s onwards. These historical practices and discourses influenced the policy, perception and practice of DSM and Reorganisation.

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[1] For discussion of the Scottish Office see Hanham (1965), Keating (1976) and Parry (1987,1992).

[2] The Scotch Education Department (SED) was renamed as the Scottish Education Department (SED) in 1918, becoming the Scottish Office Education Department (SOED) in 1991 and later the present title of Scottish Office Education and Industry Department (SOEID).

[3] For an outline and discussion of these bodies see Gethins et al (1979) and McPherson & Raab (1988). Humes (1983) provides consideration of HMI, Gatherer (1989) discusses of the SCCC.

[4]During the 1930s, Walter Elliot posited Scottish 'democratic intellectualism', which was adopted by George Davie's depiction of the generalist tradition in Scottish universities (McPherson & Raab 1988:409).

[5] McPherson & Raab (1988) link this approach to the notion of 'sponsored mobility', where only the selected minority are given the opportunity to progress through education. This contrast with 'contest-mobility' where the majority of pupils are prepared for exams. The former approach is selective, based on moral and pragmatic argument about individuals according to a putative notion of objective ability.

[6] The tradition of omnibus schools are outlined in Gray *et al* (1983) and in McPherson & Raab (1988).

[7]This created a slight reduction in the number of education authorities to 35.

[8] A denotation shared by McPherson & Raab (1988).

[9] Gray *et al* (1983) provide a critique and exposition of the linking of 'ability' to the Scottish education system. A critique of 'equality of opportunity' in the Scottish education system is provided by Chakrobarti (1988), Gray *et al* (1983), McPherson & Raab (1988) and Scotland (1977).

[10] "(i) the raising of money by rate or loan;
(ii) The approval; with or without adjustment of the estimates (including supplementary estimates) of capital and revenue expenditure and the authorisation of the expenditure included therein;
(iii) the power to incur expenditure on behalf of the council other than expenditure previously authorised in accordance with the estimates approved by the council or otherwise or expenditure necessarily incurred in circumstances of urgency." (Education (Scotland) Act 1945: Part III Section 44).

[11] The precise constitution and functions of the EA have not been imposed by Ministerial fiat. Only if the EA fails to provide a revised scheme within 2 months of being requested to do so will the Secretary of State determine an appropriate scheme for them.

[12] It is the duty of the Secretary of State to provide regulations defining the categories of pupils requiring special educational treatment and related provision. However, it is the duty of the EA to identify which pupils require special educational treatment and to provide them with appropriate educational facilities.

[13]Subject to the approval of the Secretary of State.

[14]During the introduction of the 1944 Act in England, R.A. Butler made it explicit that the bulk of educational decision- making rested with these partners:

> I will begin by saying that the local education authority, as I see it, will have no responsibility for the broad type of education given in the secondary schools... The governing body would , in our view, have the general direction of the curriculum as actually given from day to day, within the school. The head teacher would have, again in our view, responsibility for the internal organization of the school.

(Hansard, H. of C., Vol. 397, Cols. 2363-4, 10 March 1944) (Quoted in Chitty 1989:23). Although there were no governing bodies in Scotland, similar assumptions about the powers and roles of schools and EAs could be made.

[15]His model is a simplification of the actual system and subsequent models have reformed this (Chitty 1989). Nevertheless, Briault's (1976) model does expand upon and outline the basic partnership perceived.

[16]The Government's policy of comprehensive reorganisation began with the issuing of Circular 600 in Scotland and Circular 10/65 in England.

[17] The Munn Report (SED (1977) *The Structure of the 3rd and 4th years of the Scottish Secondary School,* Edinburgh, HMSO) concerned reforms to the curriculum. While the Dunning Report (SED (1977) *Assessment for All*, Edinburgh , HMSO) concerned assessment and examination. Consultations on the combined implications of the Reports were initiated by SED (1982) *The Munn and Dunning Reports- Framework for Decision (A Consultative Paper on the Government' s Proposals for Implementation)*, Edinburgh, HMSO. Analyses of these Reports and their implications can be found in Boyd (1997), Clark (1997a), Kirk (1982), Williams (1982), and Drever *et al* (1983).

[18]There was lack of coherence and clarity in Conservative policy with more extreme measures being prohibited. In Labour there was lack of alternative policy, with a piecemeal and pragmatic approach.

[19] "The increasing role of local government, the changing needs of services and the requirement to develop infrastructure meant that the need for further reform of local government structures had become widely recognised in the early 1960s". (SLGIU 1995:17).

[20] Titled: *Royal Commission on Local Government in Scotland.*

[21] Including teachers, parents, and representatives of religion, further education and the community.

[22]The structural and functional division of the new authorities was considered and clarified by the Stodart Committee reporting in 1981 (Scottish Office 1991a:7). Very few amendments were made.

[23]Titled: *The New Scottish Local Authorities: Organisation and Management Structures.*

[24] "Of these, the most important is that local government exists to serve people. Although it is right that local authorities should actively pursue measures to increase their efficiency and to enhance the value obtained for ratepayers' money, such measures must not result in impairment of service to the public and lack of concern for the individual". (Paterson Report: 1).

[25]Griffiths advocated a positivist approach relying heavily on systems theory. While Greenfield challenged this in 1974 and onwards with his arguments for a more qualitative approach which relied upon an inductive action focus. The basis of Griffiths' arguments are contained in *Administrative Theory* (1959). Greenfield's critique and ensuing debates can be traced in Greenfield and Ribbins (1993). MacKenzie (1994) provides a Scottish comment on these developments.

CHAPTER 3

FROM 1979 ONWARDS:

CHANCING POLICIES, PERCEPTIONS AND PRACTICES

The combination of perceived need for reform and shifting discourse gained impetus following election of the Thatcher Conservative Government in 1979. Many of the proposals to reform the education and local government system pre- dated 1979. Nevertheless, there is a perception that the 'Thatcher years' were distinctive. As Prime Minister (1979 -1990), Mrs Thatcher was portrayed as an authoritarian leader who dominated the Conservative's political style and policy substance. However, this impetus was perceived as embodying more than Thatcher personally, the term 'Thatcherism' was applied to describe the ethos of most Conservative activities and policies during this time. In particular, there was the political and ideological promotion of economic values as embodied in a discourse of 'efficiency'. Following from a consideration of 'Thatcherism', this Chapter explores the policy developments under Thatcher's premiership. Her first two administrations (1979- 1987) were less radical than the third (1987-1990), as they contained policies initiated in the 1970s but indicated also the beginnings of shifts. Notions of 'Scottishness' and 'Partnership' were being undermined. This process accelerated during Thatcher's Third Administration which sought to apply economic principles and values to social policy and rejected notions of Scottishness and Partnership, alongside the post- war consensus and collective welfare state. A British project of markets and managerialism was espoused. Following Thatcher's resignation as Leader, it was possible that Conservative politics and policies may change. This Chapter traces the policies, discourse and practices espoused during the 'Major years' (1990- 1997). Rather than a dilution of the discourse of 'efficiency', it was to become pervasive and fundamental. According to Major, the pursuit of efficiency was not abstractly political or ideological; it was pragmatic, vital and morally desirable. Hence, substantial and significant reform of the education and local government systems continued affecting policies, perceptions, discourse and practices. These approaches are counter not only to the 'historical' discourses of 'Scottishness' and 'Partnership' but also to the ongoing expectations and ethos of Scotland's educational and civil communities espousing distinctive, collectivist and public provision. Although attempting to

replace traditional ideals with a new popular discourse, Scots increasingly rejected Conservative rule, evident in declining electoral support (Kendrick & McCrone 1989, Paterson 1997).

'Thatcherism' and the Ideology of Economic Efficiency

Thatcherism is a contentious and multi- dimensional term, it "is a *diffuse* concept" (Rhodes & Marsh 1992:72)[1]. Furthermore as Jessop *et al* (1988:18- 19) claim Thatcherism may have a temporal dimension. Therefore, one cannot make generalised statements about Thatcherism without some explanation of the nature of Thatcherism to which one is referring. A simplified manner of outlining Thatcherism is provided by Rhodes and Marsh (1992), who propose five key dimensions of Thatcherism (*ibid*: 73- 82) (see Figure 3.1). While there is dispute over the relative importance of each dimension, most analyses focus on at least one. While these dimensions can be isolated for analysis, in practice they are not mutually exclusive. The five dimensions of Thatcherism combine to form a cumulative outcome. Therefore, 'Thatcherism' is not simply about 'economic efficiency', although this was a pervasive and driving force for reform. All five dimensions have been influential in education and local government policy. However, the five dimensions were not unproblematic and often were not fully realised, or only realised within Thatcher's Third administration. The five dimensions must be treated with caution and subject to criticism[2]. It is not the intention of this thesis to give a detailed exploration of 'Thatcherism' and local government and/ or education policy[3], although these literatures will be drawn upon where relevant.

The fundamental point is that Thatcherism was perceived as rejecting the post- war consensus and attempting to replace this with a new consensus. Challenges to the post- war consensus pre- date Thatcher's Premiership. Nevertheless, what Mrs Thatcher personally and the Conservatives driven by Thatcherism attempted to do was to construct a new consensus which was to have ideological, practical and political significance. The over- arching theme was the promotion of free market values. These were not merely economic policy, but were to stretch into all spheres of political activity and popular appeal. Hence, there was the need to construct an electoral and

hegemonic project intent on 'burying Socialism' and promoting 'popular Capitalism'. Through economic efficiency, allied to changes in managerial, political and social efficiency, a better Britain was to be created. This efficiency was to be achieved through the promotion of individualism, development of the free market and consumer choice. The notion of a collective, universal, publicly- provided welfare state administered and provided through collective welfare institutions was rejected. The fundamental values of 'Partnership' and 'Scottish myth' were rejected. These ideals owed much to the promotion and perception of New Right values, which were mediated by Conservative politicians to create a discourse promoting reform, although a disjunction between rhetoric and practice continued to exist.

Figure 3.1: The Dimensions of Thatcherism

1. ECONOMIC
Rejection of government intervention
Monetarism
Markets- competition
Abandoning full employment
Tax reduction

2. ELECTORAL
Changing Electoral base/ party balance: "burying Socialism"
Constructing and electoral project

3. IDEOLOGICAL
Rejection of post- war consensus
Changing social and political values
Attack on collectivism
Nationalism

4. POLICY STYLE
Style of leadership
Strong government- strong state "statecraft"
Politicising intermediary groups
Rediscovering "governability"

5. POLICY AGENDA.
(Source: Rhodes & Marsh 1992:73).

The Conservative Party did not whole-heartedly adopt all aspects and logical conclusions of these arguments. As Hall (1983:29) explains, Thatcherism combined:

> the resonant themes of organic Toryism- nation, family duty, authority, standards, traditionalism- with the aggressive themes of a revived neoliberalism- self- interest, competitive individualism, anti - statism.

These tendencies have contradictory implications with the requirement for both a decentralisation and centralisation of power. Although Thatcher wished to 'roll back the state', this was not intended to undermine the power of central government. Rather state bureaucracies and collective provision was to be eroded, due to ideological and pragmatic belief in the free market. Mrs Thatcher stated that "Economics are the method; the object is to change the heart and soul" (cited in Rhodes & Marsh 1992:77). The discourse of efficiency was promoted in order to pervade political and popular perception, encompassing a new ideology and guiding practice.

Thatcherite Education and Local Government Policy 1979- 87

This section explores policy developments during Thatcher's First and Second Administrations. Not all of the dimensions of Thatcherism were fully realised during this time. Many of policy directions developed from concerns emergent in the 1970s. However, there were the beginnings of shifts and some policies created controversy, especially in undermining the 'Scottish' and 'Partnership' discourses and promoting a particular concern with economic ideals and 'efficiency'.

The *Education (Scotland) Act 1980* consolidated and replaced much of the previous legislation. If one adopts the language of 'partnership', this balance of power was retained by the 1980 Act. The centrality of local government in providing and maintaining the education system is without question. In specific areas, one can discern a slight increase in EA responsibilities, e.g. in ensuring the wider scope of education, EAs can provide and maintain leisure facilities, museums, outdoor and community centres.

The bulk of changes during this period related to reforms of the curriculum and certification. However, as in the 1960s, these changes occurred within the established system of educational administration. Many of these curriculum and certification changes can be traced in origin to pre- 1979 also. The introduction of the Standard

Grade in 1984 was the result of the Munn and Dunning Reports, replacing the O-Grade with first exams occurring in 1986[4]. Other reforms can be traced to the interest in increasing and reforming vocational education initiated in the 1970s. The National Certificate was proposed in 1983 to provide a more coherent and simplified structure of vocational courses and certification (SED 1983,1984). It was based upon a modular approach, with a single accreditation system overseen by the Scottish Vocational Education council (SCOTVEC), altering the curriculum and certification of 16 to 18 year olds. Arnott (1993:133) comments: " The implementation of the National Certificate proceeded in a remarkably consensual manner". Fairley & Paterson (1991) argue the involvement of the Scottish policy community bred acceptance and a belief that the National Certificate accorded with Scottish principles, such as breadth of curriculum. These policies were not a radical demarcation from previous practices.

The consensual and Scottish perception of reform can be contrasted with the reaction to the introduction of the Technical and Vocational Education Initiative (TVEI) announced in 1982. There has been widespread criticism of the manner in which TVEI was formulated and initiated. The education policy community were effectively by- passed. Instead the initiation, conception and formation of TVEI was essentially Ministerial (Chitty 1989, Dale 1985). TVEI was to be implemented through the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) not EAs, creating conflict and resentment (Chitty 1989). This conflict was pronounced in Scotland, where not only had the education policy community been by- passed but the Scottish dimension had been ignored also. TVEI was to be a British policy. There were criticism specifically about TVEI in a Scottish context: a feeling that the MSC was too centralised and too linked to England; threats to comprehensivisation; and that TVEI ignored the previous curriculum reforms which made TVEI unnecessary (Arnott 1993, Bell *et al* 1989, Boyd 1997, Paterson 1997, Pirie 1989, Weir 1988). These concerns were voiced during extensive consultations with the Convention of Scottish Local Education Authorities (COSLA), and it was only after their resolution that TVEI was implemented in Scotland. Hence, Arnott (1993) argued TVEI gained and generated a Scottish dimension. Nevertheless, it signified an attempt by the Thatcher Government

to implement a British curriculum policy and by- pass the education policy community, 'partnership' and 'Scottish dimension'.

There was similarly controversy over the nature and implications, especially for EAs, of parental choice. This policy was included in the 1979 Conservative Manifesto as it linked with individual choice and market mechanisms. The *Education (Scotland) Act 1981* made it a statutory requirement that EAs should comply with parents' placing requests as to which school their child attended[5]. To facilitate parental choice, the EA is to publish certain information, especially concerning the EA's policy on placing requests and the nature of schools within their control. The Secretary of State has powers in the case of parents whose placing request is denied. The EA is to provide a suitable reason as to why this has occurred. If a parent is dissatisfied, they may take their case to an appeal committee established by each EA. If a satisfactory solution is not reached, the parent can take their appeal to a sheriff. The Secretary of State has power to intervene and direct action also. EA control over the placing of children is eroded, alongside increased accountability within the system of placing requests[6].

The exercise and nature of 'choice' within the education system are controversial (Lawton 1992). Adler *et al* (1987) note that the Act is distinctive from previous educational legislation because it is explicitly concerned with the rights of the individual, yet it pays little heed to the issue of collective rights. The particular nature of choice emphasising parental rights, undermines the EA's abilities to determine a strategic, collective right and ensure the accountability of parental choice. Rights are not linked to responsibilities. The focus on individual choice rather than collective good can be linked to the belief in the primacy of efficiency achieved through market mechanisms and erosion of producer domination, associated with Thatcherism. Nevertheless, interest in parental choice began with the Labour governments pre-1979. However, in opposition and power after 1979, the Conservatives adopted parental choice and imbued it with a particular significance:

> Whereas the rationale for parental choice had initially emphasised freedom from state control and the assumption of parental responsibilities for their children, it was now presented as a means of improving educational standards-

> the introduction of market forces would force unpopular (poor) schools to close and enable popular (good) schools to expand. It was also seen to appeal to those parents whose children would previously have gone to grammar schools and who were disenchanted with comprehensive schooling, and to those who were alarmed at the growth of radical educational ideas and would welcome an attempt to cut the teaching profession down to size. (Adler *et al* 1987:296).

Parental choice was extended in scope and implication, primarily through the promotion of neo- liberal values by the Conservatives. Parental choice would not only benefit the individual but would serve to rationalise and therefore improve the schooling system, through the existence of both 'exit' and 'voice' (Hirschman 1970) in this newly construed 'education market'.

While there is evidence of interest in creating parental choice in England and Wales, the same was not true of Scotland. Adler *et al* (1987,1989) document the relative satisfaction of parents in Scotland, the lack of demand for change, suggesting an "indifference to parental choice in Scotland" (1989:39), and perceiving it as "an English policy" (1987:296). However, post-1979, the Conservative Government was determined to introduce their 'parents charter'. Yet, the development of parental choice North and South of the border differed. Following the commitments and policies already created for England & Wales, it was simply a matter of the DES and Government ratifying and legislating these policies. In Scotland, there were no prior policies, hence "the Scottish Education Minister could start the legislative process from scratch" (Adler *et al* 1989:52). This particular Minister, Alex Fletcher, was an ardent supporter of parental choice and through experience "it is clear that he did not trust the education authorities" (*ibid*)[7]. There were other differences also, notably the extent to which COSLA got their concerns and amendments included in the legislation. Consequently, parental choice legislation enacted in Scotland was more detailed, extensive and radical than for England and Wales.

The fact that parental choice was legislated in Scotland indicates the vigour with which the Government pursued this policy. It is normal in Scottish education for

policy changes to remain at the level of guideline or circular[8]. Parental choice legislation challenged EAs and contributed to the erosion of 'partnership' between SED, EAs and teachers:

> Thus, the issue is no longer whether 'pluralism' or 'corporatism' best describes the process of decision making within the policy community... It is rather whether, at least in relation to policy making, the traditional educational policy community is being by- passed altogether. Although one of the aims of the parental choice legislation may have been to reduce the influence of education authorities and teachers by increasing the local influence of parents, the demise of the educational policy community could have far reaching implications for Scottish education. (Adler *et al* 1989:52).

Although there was a 'Scottish dimension' to the parental choice legislation, it was not constructed by the established policy community and undermined 'partnership'.

Parental choice has implications for the EA's role. Adler *et al* (1987) chart the changing relationship between EA and central government (see appendix B). The 1945 Act established a partnership and was based on consensus. The first challenge was comprehensivisation. However, through consultation and concessions, "the government worked hard to obtain and finally achieve an impressive consensus on the issue" (*ibid*: 305). In the case of parental choice, there was no thorough attempt to generate consensus and some Government activities aggravated the situation. A distinguishing feature of parental choice is the extent to which the EAs were treated with mistrust. There was a new assumption that the interests of the EA diverged from parents. Until the parental choice legislation, the EA, with regard to parental wishes where necessary, was effectively the representative and guardian of its pupils and parents' rights. In the discourse of market efficiency achieved through parental choice, the EA's influence is undermined. Nevertheless, the EA's existence per se was not challenged. 'Catchment areas' were retained and EAs have a role in placing children. Recent evidence suggests EAs have been able to refuse placing requests (TES (Scotland) May 23 1996:3). However, with expectations of parental choice, such "frustration" creates "resentment towards the authority" (*ibid*). Hence, the EA is in an uneasy situation of double accountability to parents and central government. What is

novel also was the extent to which the Conservative Government was prepared to redefine the nature of the Scottish education system and to impose this vision without seeking to create consensus and by rejecting the established notions of a Scottish policy community and partnership. Nevertheless, in the ongoing role and intervention of the EA and central government, true market efficiency has not been created.

Parental choice was extended and EA influence undermined through the creation of the Assisted Places Scheme. The core of this policy is set out in the 1981 Act:

> For the purpose of enabling pupils who might otherwise not be able to do so attend and receive education at grant- aided and independent schools, the Secretary of State shall establish and operate a scheme whereby-
>
> (a) participating schools remit fees that would otherwise be chargeable in respect of pupils admitted to assisted places under the scheme; and
>
> (b) the Secretary of State reimburses the schools for the fees that are remitted. (Education (Scotland) Act 1981: 5: 75A).

The extension of parental choice and resultant competition between schools is not to be limited to the public sector, but also be between public and private sectors. In the newly created 'education market', the EA monopoly over the bulk of educational provision is to be broken. McPherson & Raab (1988:485) view this policy alongside parental choice as a challenge to 'partnership' and the comprehensive principle. These are fundamentally challenges to the EA system. Although the private education sector has always existed, it is not pervasive in Scotland[9]. The extension of the Assisted Places Scheme intended to remove the income barrier and therefore increase the use of private education. Walford (1990:72) argues this indicated the Conservatives intended "privatising" education. He argues the promotion of Assisted Places Scheme as parental choice rather than selection was to enable its easier acceptance within Scotland. In both practice and principle, the Assisted Places Scheme in particular and parental choice in general represented a potential loss to the scope of EA provision and its perceived role.

Alongside these challenges to the service function of EAs, there was the pervasive influence of constraints on local government finance. Constraint can be traced from

1975, however, as SLGIU (1995:20) explain: "From 1979, the curtailment of public expenditure became a policy objective in its own right"[10]. 'Thatcherism' involved a sustained attempt to reduce local government spending. In Scotland, almost all of the local government Acts of the period 1979- 87 affected local government expenditure. Mitchell (1988:17) provides an outline of the main changes:

> the amount local authorities can raise through rates has been severely limited by central government. Since 1981- 82 the Secretary of State has been empowered to take selective action against individual authorities planning 'excessive and unreasonable' expenditure by reducing their RSG... The Rating and Valuation (Amendment) (Scotland) Act 1984 increased the Secretary of State's power and influence over the local authority revenue spending in a number of ways. First, he was empowered to relate RSG penalties to the degree of spending over Scottish Office guidelines by individual local authorities. Thus the amount which has to be raised from rates where there is 'excessive' expenditure is further increased through loss of exchequer grant, with the intention of making the consequent rate burden politically unacceptable. Second, the Secretary of State was empowered to 'rate- cap' all local authorities by placing a general limit on the level of rates... Third, the act streamlined the existing power to limit the rates levied by specific local authorities... Fourth, the Secretary of State was empowered to limit the amount a local authority can contribute from its rate fund to the housing revenue account to subsidise council house rents.

Local government expenditure was to be constrained and made accountable. In achieving these aims, central government was assuming greater intervention and powers.

There is a common perception that Thatcherism involved an 'attack' on local government. Young (1989: 124) comments:

> Of all Mrs Thatcher's confrontations with the institutions, that which she has fought with local government has been the most prolonged and most significant.

A reason for this perceived 'attack' is outlined by Mather (1989: 213):

> Thatcher government perceived local government as financially reckless, managerially inefficient and politically unsupportive.

In all the dimensions of Thatcherism outlined by Rhodes & Marsh (1992), reform of local government would be necessary and therefore logically also the education function. In both policy areas, the Governments since 1987 were to extend their scope of reform. Many of the policy directions for Thatcher's Third Administration had been initiated by 1987. The 'attack' on local government, in terms of service function and economically were to be continuing and heightened themes. Nevertheless, for education policy, with hindsight, Thatcher's early years were not as radical as might have been anticipated.

The abandonment of Keynsianism and shift to monetarism started in the 1970s. The Thatcher government post- 1979 maintained this shift to a "monetarist consensus" (Chitty 1989:191). Similarly in education policy, much of the general debate and direction had been set in the 1970s. Accountability, economy, vocationalism and parental choice were espoused to varying degrees during the previous Labour Administration. While it could be argued the Conservatives pursued these strategies with more vigour, they did not innovate many of these policies. As Chitty (1989:194) argued: "The new Conservative government was prepared to operate largely within the terms of the educational consensus structured by the Labour leadership of 1976".

Thatcher's Third Administration: A Radical Agenda?

This new 'consensus' was to be abandoned in the run up to the 1987 general election. Chitty (1989:198- 199) argues that by 1986 there was a perception that education was in "crisis" due primarily to the Conservatives actions of the previous seven years. Education became an electoral issue and the Conservatives were keen to adopt a new stance. Kenneth Baker was appointed Education Secretary, in England & Wales, and quickly announced plans to reform the education system. He commented:

> Central government, at the hub, had to take greater control of the curriculum. At the same time, at the rim of the wheel, the schools and the parents had to have a greater say in administration. (Cited in Chitty 1989:203)[11].

The change in discourse and metaphor is remarkable. All notions of 'partnership' are omitted as is any mention or inclusion of the EA. Thatcher personally advocated radical change: "There is going to be revolution in the running of schools"[12] (Quoted in Chitty 1989: 196- 197). A new policy based upon 'Thatcherism' was espoused.

This policy was most pronounced in England, but had ramifications for Scotland. A new 'radical Thatcherism' would influence all spheres of policy. Previously, Thatcher had focussed on economic issues, but post- 1987 areas of social policy would come under increasing scrutiny (Arnott 1993, Paterson 1997). In Scotland, there was an added dimension, by the 1987 election there was huge Scottish dissatisfaction with Conservative rule (Kendrick & McCrone 1989). Only 10 Scottish Conservative MPs were elected. Kendrick & McCrone's (1989:602) analysis reveals the extent to which "The populist/ nationalist/ anti- state appeal which sustains Thatcher in England has negative resonances in Scotland". Akin to the Scottish myth, there remains stronger support for state intervention and collective provision in Scotland. Although 'popular capitalism' was not without influence, it did not command widespread support, e.g. in the lower exercising of right to buy in Scotland. Kendrick & McCrone (1989) suggest that in order to gain electoral support in Scotland, the Conservatives will need to alter their stance. Alternatively in practice, Thatcher could maintain her stance in the belief that Scots would finally see the light and if not would become victims of their circumstances. It appeared that Conservatives had little to lose in Scotland and therefore could 'attack' the existing local government and educational systems.

A belief that Conservatives were determined to pursue ideological policies at any price in Scotland is most applicable to changes in local government finance. The *Abolition of Domestic Rates Etc (Scotland) Act 1987* did as the title suggests. This policy can be traced to the pre- Thatcher era[13], but did not have high salience until "the explosion of anger that accompanied the revaluation of property in 1985 brought the issue to the top of the political agenda" (*The Scotsman* 23/11/90:4). The policy was controversial, especially as implementation was to occur in Scotland one year before England. Many Scots felt that they were being treated inequitably. The new system contained three essential elements. Firstly, a Community Charge, popularly

deemed the poll tax, which would be set and administered by local government but could be subject to intervention and capping by the Secretary of State. Secondly, a National Non- Domestic Rate Charge, which would be pooled by central government and then redistributed to local governments. Thirdly, a Revenue Support Grant, based on a standard grant and an element of needs grant; this was a fixed sum distributed by central government to local government (Midwinter & Monaghan 1990). Hence: "Under a fifth of their total income (that from the community charge) will therefore be under the control of local authorities" (Mitchell 1988:17). The Community Charge was premised upon a model of economic efficiency and accountability linked to Public Choice assumptions about rational man (Bramley 1990). Unlike the old rates, which were paid by a minority of the electorate, the community charge was to include almost all voters and with a maximum rebate of 80%, everyone would contribute something. Local authority responsibilities were to be made evident to the voters, who would judge the prevailing situation, and either demand change or vote for an alternative candidate at the next election. The assumption was that high spending Labour authorities would be worst affected. Local authorities would be accountable to central government for marginal expenditure in excess of centrally assessed standard spending levels. The reform was inherently political and ideological.

In practice, the introduction of the Community Charge was beset with difficulties and did not achieve the assumed outcomes. Low voter turnout at elections, the lack of consideration for the linkage between local government tax and service levels, and the tendency to vote at local elections on national issues, all undermined the notion of rational voters (Gibson & Stewart 1991, Midwinter & Monaghan 1990). Practical difficulties linked to administering the Community Charge further undermined its ability to generate efficiency. Finally, the high incidence of non- payment prevented sufficient local government funds from being gathered and broke the ability for true accountability and efficiency[14]. The community charge was hugely unpopular generating riots and political rejection of the Conservatives. It was acknowledged that the community charge would have to be abolished. The result was an increase in Value Added Tax to 17.5% and under the Major Government the introduction of the Council Tax. Nevertheless, the experience of the Community Charge aggravated

central - local relations and generated Scottish hostility for Conservative government. It indicates the extent to which legislation with a strong ideological basis could be applied to local government, based on assumptions of economic efficiency, accountability and rational behaviour, but in practice these are problematic.

Notions of economic efficiency linked to a model of market behaviour were applied to aspects of service provision in local government through Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT). The *Local Government, Planning and Land Act 1980* reformed the structure and functioning of many local government 'ancillary' services through the creation of Direct Labour Organisations (DLOs). Although essentially still parts of the local government system, they were to operate on a contractual basis, intended to stimulate an internal market and private sector management techniques. These principles were taken further by the *Local Government Act 1988* and the requirement of CCT. There is a linkage with Public Choice and New Right assumptions that public bureaucracy will be expansionary and inefficient, tend to over- supply and push up wage demands. Through competition both within the public sector and with the private sector, economic efficiency will be pursued. Competition for a contract is assumed to ensure a more cost-effective use of resources, disciplined financial management and responsiveness to customers. Against these arguments of efficiency are concerns about failures to meet contractual obligations, shifts in the nature of the labour force, i.e. increasing shift work and part- time employment, and the potential loss of confidentiality and a 'public service' ethic. CCT encouraged a new culture within the provision of 'ancillary' services in local government (Ascher 1987), affecting school cleaning and catering.

In education specifically, changes altered the established public and professional nature of the system. The *School Boards (Scotland) Act 1988* aimed to create boards for each school, which would contain a majority of parent members. This could be seen as the logical extension of parental choice and empowerment. Furthermore, the Taylor Report of 1977 had advocated greater parental involvement, while MacBeth *et al*'s (1980) study of Scottish School Councils had advocated their reform into a more powerful body related essentially to a single school. However, the recommendations

contained in *School Management and the Role of Parents* (SED 1987) were not what either Report had envisaged. The proposals indicated the Conservative's political ideology and reaction to prevailing political circumstances. There was an assumption that after hostility to Conservative rule and lack of Scottish support a slowing down or reversal of Thatcherite education policy would occur. However:

> It was soon to be demonstrated, and not only in education, that the Government considered that what Scotland needed was not less, but an even bigger dose of Thatcherism. (Fisher 1988:77).

This was to be facilitated by the appointment of 'Thatcherite' Michael Forsyth as Scottish Minister for Education (Humes 1995, Paterson 1997). In addition, "the end of the school session 1986/86 saw a Scottish teacher population battle- weary after three years of industrial action" (Fisher 1988:77). Fisher argues that despite the resolution of this action, there remained a "general sense of injustice" and "that breathing space was surely necessary" (*ibid*). In contrast, the Conservative desire to abolish trade union power and reform the public sector continued with greater momentum. Hence, in this context, the introduction of increased 'parent power' and a perceived marginalisation of teachers was considered an 'attack' on the educational professionals. Fisher (1988) argues 'the *actual* reasons' for school boards were political. Firstly, Forsyth was attempting to assimilate Scottish education with the radical reforms occurring in England, generating claims that school boards are the first step to opting out. Secondly, through a redefinition of 'partnership', Forsyth was attempting to get parents to ally with his reforms and promote parental disapproval of EAs and teachers. Munn (1991:187) argues the combination of 1981 and 1988 Acts promoting parental 'rights' is "essentially concerned with accountability and control". It is a market place conception of holding EAs and teachers to account and eroding 'producer domination', rather than genuinely creating partnership or parental choice. The majority of Scotland's population did not want this type of policy, preferring notions of collective education provision, professional power and partnership (Fisher 1988, SLGIU 1988).

The contents of *School Management and the Role of Parents* "took virtually everyone by surprise" (SLGIU 1989:1). The controversy surrounded the creation of 'floor' and

'ceiling' powers for school boards. 'Floor powers' were limited ones which school boards would initially acquire, however over time the school board would progress ultimately having 'ceiling' powers which entailed the virtual management of their schools (Fisher 1988)[15]. These were extensive powers that would be held by a parental majority board, which incurred no personal liability. This posed a significant threat to the role of schools and EAs, as school boards became potentially the most powerful actor at the local- level.

The consultation paper met with widespread condemnation (Fisher 1988, SLGIU 1989)[16]. Parents were essentially happy to leave educational issues to the 'professionals' of teachers and EAs. Consequently, many of the extreme measures, particularly 'floor' and 'ceiling' powers, did not appear in the *School Boards Act 1988*. Fisher (1988:79) argues there was a "considerable Government climb down". The Act establishes the creation of school boards by EAs, replacing school councils. The membership of school boards shall contain a majority parent members, staff members and co-opted members, which may include pupils. Members are elected and generally hold office for 4 years. Advice to the school boards can be provided by the Director of Education, Education Officers, Councillors and the head teacher; although none of these are to be members of the Board. The school board is to be provided with a budget paid by the EA.

The list of functions ascribed to school boards is not as extensive as in the consultation document. The school board is to approve the head teacher's decisions to spend funds "for the purchase of books and other teaching materials for the school, and for such other purposes as they think fit" (*School Boards Act* 1988: Section 9). In doing so, the school board is to have regard to any guidance from the EA. The school board has power to request information relating to the school and educational provision from the EA and head teacher. However, the school board has to make available to the EA information about their activities and functions. School boards are to have a say in the appointment of head teachers, plus deputies and assistants. School boards have duties, in consultation with the EA, to determine the use of school premises out with school hours and to decide upon the dates of occasional holidays.

Finally, school boards are to encourage links between school, parents and community. Rather than school boards automatically receiving additional 'ceiling' powers, school boards have to ballot parents and members about proposals to extend powers. Furthermore, there are certain functions that cannot be delegated to school boards, relating especially to 'educational' functions[17]. Fundamentally, if an EA believes that a school board is not fulfilling its functions it can remove these from the board. If a school board is not appointed for various reasons then the school and EA function as previously. Hence, the creation of school boards does not eradicate the influence of head teachers and EAs.

The Government perceived school boards as a means to ensure greater economic and managerial efficiency, linked to accountability and the rational actions of 'consumers' challenging professionals. However, the 'rational actor' thesis has not been realised. School boards have not become as significant a threat to 'professional power' as was initially feared[18] Although this masks the fact that their existence is much higher in the secondary than the primary sector (SLGIU 1995:2).[19]. As Munn (1993:5) comments: "school boards have developed in unexpected ways, ways which suggest that schooling as a collective welfare for society as a whole is highly valued", suggesting a 'Scottish dimension'. School boards were the first equivalent to the more powerful governing bodies in England. However, school boards have tended to ally with the 'educational professionals' of school and EA. They have acted as a pressure group against central government. The Government promoted a discourse of efficiency and accountability, not recognising the perceptions of parents and the support for collective, public and professional educational provision in Scotland.

One of the reasons why the *School Boards (Scotland) Act* was treated with controversy was its apparent link to radical reform occurring simultaneously in England and Wales. The central planks of the *Education Reform Act 1988* (ERA) were the introduction of a National Curriculum, National Testing, Open Enrolment (akin to parental choice), Local Management of Schools (similar to DSM), Grant-Maintained Schools, i.e. opting out, City Technology Colleges and the abolition of the Inner London Education authority (ILEA)[20]. There is a common perception that ERA

represented "a very political piece of legislation" (Deem 1990: 166). The politics underlying the act were interpreted as a popular version of New Right and Public Choice theories, with emphasis on managerialism and market forces. However, it was not to be simply a process of decentralisation, but also increased central government powers. In this move away from public sector values and process of decentralisation/ centralisation, the educational 'partners' of teachers and EAs were seriously challenged and undermined.

The promotion of ERA is perceived as representing a fundamental shift in both practice and discourse from that associated with the post- war era and notions of 'consensus':

> The objective of equal provision of a public resource (education) under local democratic control is totally rejected. (Simon 1988:16)

Cordingly & Wilby (1987:16) argue the combined elements of ERA:

> represent a proposal for a fundamental shift in how the education service works, a shift from the principles that underlay a universal, non- market service to those which underlie a selective, privatised (and hence differentiated and inequitable) market service.

Hence the emphasis on a specific notion of 'choice' which linked to a "consumerist doctrine" (Lawton 1992:47). Although much of the Act is couched in a rhetoric of decentralisation, this is a market- place conception, relying upon parental choice, individualism and competition in order to generate economic and managerial efficiency. This is quite different to the 1944 and 1945 Acts which created an essentially decentralised system due to a belief in subsidiarity, partnership and professionalism. It is argued that ERA had "nothing to do with partnership" (Sallis 1988:139) and was "a clear indication that the 'partnership years' are now truly over" (Chitty 1989:153). A shift in values, discourse and practice is evident. There was increasing emphasis on notions of efficiency (Meredith 1992). Previously, the relationship between education policy and economic criteria had been limited and focussed on outcomes. By the late 1980s, economic values gained predominance, framing the agenda, underpinning discourse and setting objectives of education policy- making. There was a belief in the values of market provision and

individualism rather than state provision and collectivism. All intermediaries between the state and the individual were to be removed or reduced as far as possible (Ranson & Tomlinson 1994). Hence the reduced power of trade unions and particularly prolonged the 'attack' on EAs. Schools were to be 'freed' from EAs (Simon 1992). Thus, the creation of a market fostering competition, increased choice through the provision of GMS and CTCs and challenges to the established education system.

In Scotland, there were fears that similar reforms would be 'imposed'. Hence, the initial hostility to school boards. The experience was that in England governing bodies were integral to many of the more radical reforms. In Scotland too, following the creation of school boards, opting out was to become legislation in The *Self-Governing Schools (Scotland) Act 1989*. School boards may decide to initiate the acquisition of GMS by balloting parents[21]. After the 'incorporation date' ,when the school achieves GMS, the school board ceases to exist being replaced by the Board of Management which contains similar membership plus the head teacher. The GMS school is out-with the direct control of the EA. It is funded by central government through "recurrent grant, capital grants and special purpose grants" (*Self- Governing Schools (Scotland) Act* 1989: 26). It is the "Duty of Secretary of State to maintain self-governing schools" (*ibid*: 1). However, in the day- to -day running of the school, the Board of Management has extensive functions, taking on most of the previous EA and school board responsibilities[22], including management of the school and property, the employment and contracting of staff, the ability to raise funds, promotion of school-parent- community links, provision of facilities for social, recreational and physical purposes, special needs and the provision of equipment. The Board of Management has the capacity also, in consultation with the Secretary of State and after a ballot of parents, to alter the nature of the GMS School. A system of free, 'public' education is to be maintained. However, there may be variations in the character of that provision. This is enhanced by the possibility of creating a "technology academy" (*ibid*: 68), similar to English CTCs. Not only is EA provision challenged, but the very nature of schooling.

Supporters of opting out advocate it on two essential grounds. Firstly, it is the logical extension of parental choice. Secondly, it overcomes the inefficiencies of a monopolistic and collectivist EA service (SLGIU 1989:5) Underlying these arguments is the assumption of managerial and economic efficiency generated by an 'education market' based upon private management and free market principles. However, the extent to which the GMS sector will be truly decentralised is not explicit. Alexander (1989) argued that increasing central intervention and direction may occur. There was a mass of hostility to the opting out proposals in Scotland. There remains a traditional approval of a collective system, the widespread development of comprehensive schools , the non- existence of entry selection in the public sector and the very low take up (4%) of private education (SLGIU 1989:8). All of these 'traditions' were perceived to be under 'threat' by GMS and arguments that the very fabric of Scottish education would be eroded. This was an explicit attempt to erode local government involvement in the provision of schooling. However, parents have not been keen to pursue opting out:

> A combination of different traditions in Scotland and reluctance on the part of School Boards to take on the responsibility for the running of the school are factors in the lack of success of this policy. (SLGIU 1995:3).

The only schools to ballot to opt out have been those threatened with closure. Of these only two, one primary and one secondary, have achieved GMS status. The linking of schools threatened with closure and the turn to opting out has forced a change in legislation during 1996. Now schools that have been identified for closure by the EA cannot ballot to opt out. The development of opting out has not been a widespread success. However, as long as the potential to opt out remained in tact, it offers a threat to the EA system, 'Partnership' and notions of 'Scottish' education.

Nevertheless, with GMS as legislated, EAs do have functions. Under Section 25 of the Act, EAs have a duty to "provide benefits and services for pupils", regardless of whether they attend EA or GMS schools. Furthermore, under section 34, the EA may provide "administrative, professional, technical or other services" to the GMS's Board of Management, for which there may be charges. Even within the attempt to remove education from EA control, there remains a reliance upon aspects of the

institutionalised structure of the EA and its services. Nevertheless, if the Conservative Government wish to 'privatise' education or let an 'education market' have free play, there is neither the assumption of an ideological nor practical role for an EA. Therefore, the ongoing practice of EA involvement serves to undermine the 'efficiency' of the 'education market'.

There were other legislative changes during this period that can be linked to the market principles and efficiency arguments exhibited by ERA. The development of 5-14 was a novel curriculum reform[23]. However, it was less controversial than proposals for primary school testing which remain hindered by public and professional hostility[24]. Both policies can be viewed as similar to proposals in ERA for a national curriculum linked to national testing. The aim being performance indicators to inform consumer 'choice' within the education market. The assumption being that if tests were published it would make schools and EAs more accountable and therefore more efficient. While the development of a national curriculum facilitates comparison of results and enables easier transfer of a pupil from one school to another. Although concerned with curriculum and assessment, the discourse of 'efficiency' argument has been extended into this arena also.

By 1990, the British education system had undergone substantial reform in practice and associated discourse. Although the 'Thatcher years' in many respects did not initiate this transition, they embraced reform and imbued it with ideological significance. Underlying these policies was an assumption of economic and managerial efficiency that could be best achieved through private sector management techniques and free market economics. There was a belief in individualism and a rejection of collectivism. The notion of 'partnership' was rejected, only being adopted occasionally as with Forsyth in a re- defined nature which included parents but excluded teachers and EAs. In the desire to spread 'Thatcherism', intent on promoting the ideals outlined through 'popular capitalism' and the aim of 'burying Socialism', this was a hegemonic project which included all of Britain. The Thatcher government sought to erode the 'Scottish dimension'. Consequently, the prevailing discourse of the historical system, 'Scottish myth' , and the discourse of the post- war period,

'Partnership', were rejected or adopted merely as a rhetorical and re- defined device to promote policies which had not been framed with these discourses. McPherson & Raab (1988) argued the need to rebuild a new consensus and a new prevailing discourse in light of the breakdown of the former two constructions of educational policy. I have argued that the most predominant discourse was that which centred upon a broad but particular definition of 'efficiency'. Notions of 'efficiency' per se were not unique to the 1980s , the idea of 'social efficiency' can be traced to the Victorian era. What was distinctive was the extent to which notions of 'efficiency' were linked to economic criteria. However, unlike 'Scottish myth' and 'Partnership', what is less clear is the extent to which this new discourse had popular appeal. And in particular Scottish appeal, where the discourses of 'Scottish myth' and 'Partnership' still hold currency. Indeed, these discourses are often the central argument against the promotion of 'economic efficiency' policies and rejection of Conservative rule.

Finally, there is the issue of to what extent was this particular discourse linked to Thatcherism, and the extent to which this was related to the lady herself. Thatcher as leader and Thatcherism reached their strongest expression during her Third Administration. However, this strength of leadership and conviction brought increasing hostility from within the Conservatives. The result was the resignation of Thatcher and her replacement by John Major. Major had worked closely with Thatcher and was Thatcher's choice if an alternative leader were to be selected. However, Major's personality and leadership style were markedly different. Debate emerged as to whether a changed leader would generate a changed policy agenda and ideology.

From 'Thatcherism' to 'Majorism'?

I wish to argue that the Major years (1990- 97) represented both a continuation of 'Thatcherism' but also shifts in style and emphasis. Public policy is notoriously difficult to reverse in the short term and Major was bound also to a Conservative Party that had been elected with Thatcher as leader until 1992. However, Major was not without influence, and increasingly after the Conservative success at the General Election in 1992 under his leadership, Major demonstrated a willingness to change

aspects of Conservative policy. Stoker (1992: 67) suggests there were three broad areas in local government policy on which Major focussed: finance, the encouragement and extension of competition in service delivery and the structure of local government. The former two were areas explicitly pursued by the Thatcher governments, while the third was "bubbling under the surface during the Thatcher years" (*ibid*). Similarly, in education policy, issues of competition, choice and reform can be traced to developments in the Thatcher years. What is notable in Scottish local government and education policy is that the Major years were even more radical than the Thatcher years. There was an assumption that Major may have been less radical, due to his less aggressive personal style. Yet, Thatcher did not become especially 'radical' in education policy until her third administration. By contrast, Major continued and extended this 'radical' approach with apparently added vigour. Local government finance, structure and purpose were questioned and reformed. The management and nature of the education system was altered. The role of EAs was seriously challenged by a notion of citizens' rights and empowerment. However, as Barnes & Prior (1995: 54) noted the Conservative's discourse "tends to collapse citizenship into consumerism" and is not the collective, democratic and human rights intrinsic to 'Partnership' and 'Scottish myth'.

Indicative of this challenge were changes in England also. Building on the White Paper (DFE 1992a) *Choice and Diversity*, the *Education Act 1993* represents the most significant 'attack' on the role of local government in education. The aim is to encourage universal opting out. Where local government provision persists it is discussed in detrimental terms. LEAs must change their role, delegate increased management powers to schools, compete to provide services to opted out schools and where LEA schools remain, a newly created Education Association has powers to intervene and assume management powers if the LEA has "failed" the school (DFE 1992a :iii). There is no allusion to partnership. LEAs are to be bypassed, marginalised and reformed- their service delivery function is to be eradicated.

While the above policy required the premises of the *Education Reform Act 1988*, it extends and alters these to such an extent that the 1993 Act makes ERA appear much

less radical than previously assumed. Policies in the 1990s can be considered as distinctive:

> Whereas the 1988 Education Reform Act sought to retain an integrated but devolved framework of institutional governance, including a revised yet strategic role for the LEA, the proposals for legislative change since 1991 now seek to strengthen the autonomy of institutions at the expense of the LEA and the traditional of local planning and collaboration. (Ranson & Tomlinson 1994: ix).

According to Baroness Warnock of Weeke there are:

> some fundamental changes in the philosophy of educational planning and provision incorporated in the 1993 Education Act. The final outcome of that act... will be that the Secretary of State and his appointed funding and regulatory bodies decide things at a national level, and individual self-governing schools decide things at local level. (In Ranson & Tomlinson 1994: vii).

The dual process of centralisation and decentralisation results in the omission of the LEA, generating "the virtual demise of the Local Education Authority as it had existed since 1902" (Tomlinson 1994a:1). Previously most educational research focussed on the school- level and below (classrooms and pupils), now in light of a political 'attack' on LEAs, analysis began to centre upon the nature and need for local government in education.

In Scotland, similar issues were arising, although differences in precise policy and historical legacy retained recourse to a 'Scottish dimension'. There is no published literature considering the impact of 'Majorism' on Scottish education policy. Indeed, there is a tendency to perceive Major's leadership as a continuation, with refinement, of many elements of 'Thatcherism'. However, Major was prepared to pursue reform with greater vigour and imbued with greater significance. The notion of 'efficiency' became predominant in discourse, affecting political agendas and impinging upon all policy areas. This discourse was promoted widely and extensively, an important facilitator being the creation of the 'Citizen's Charter' and associated Charters.

The Citizens' Charter and The Parents' Charter

The Citizen's Charter emphasises the pursuit of efficiency through the creation of competition and choice. As Chancellor of the Exchequer, Major had been keen to promote many of the principles which he later embodied within the Citizen's Charter. Speaking in June 1989, Major spoke about competition:

> Those who thought it was just an exercise in ideology are wrong. It is quite simply the best way to ensure that service to the consumer comes first. (Major 1989:2).

Major continued a similar argument for the pursuit of value for money, this was not "an arcane fetish of Treasury ministers and officials. In my judgement it is an absolute obligation that public sector managers owe to the tax payer whose money is compulsorily extracted for spending in public programmes" (*ibid*). Major adopted principles that became politicised during the Thatcher years, however he wished to argue these were not abstract political arguments but inherently pragmatic necessities. Nevertheless, in his phraseology, Major does not adopt terms, such as 'competition' or 'efficiency' in a value- neutral manner, rather there is strong value- based argument that imbues a moral significance to their pursuit. It is a particular vision of 'efficiency' linked to the promotion of 'competition' which re-interprets 'citizens' as primarily 'consumers'.

In notions of partnership and a collective welfare state, it is implicit that there are benefits from monopoly public provision. By contrast the Citizen's Charter rejects monopoly and advocates the benefits of competition. Norman Lamont explains:

> For competition is good for the *users* of public services. It gives them a wider variety of facilities and services. Competition is good for *taxpayers*, who get better value for their money. It is good for *managers*, who can concentrate on their core activities, looking for the best deal for their customers. It is good for *staff*, who can give of their best in a more competitive environment. And it is good for *business*, giving private firms new opportunities to market their services.

> Competition is also good for the economy as a whole. It releases new ideas and new ways of doing things. It cuts through red tape and speeds up procedures. (H.M. Treasury 1991: ii).

These are not objective pragmatic arguments, they are political and moral assertions relying on a redefinition of citizenship linked to consumerism and competition, rather than the post- war ideal of citizenship as collective responsibilities and universal rights.

The outcome is a redefined role, purpose and operation for local government. The Government's model for local government is the 'enabling authority'. The task of local authorities lies in identifying requirements, setting priorities, determining standards, finding the best way to meet these and ensuring they are met. There is a move away from the traditional model of local authorities providing virtually all services directly and a greater separation of the functions of service delivery from strategic responsibilities. Local authorities will then be able to concentrate on their core responsibilities (H.M. Treasury 1991). A separation between the purchaser and provider is to occur. Private sector management techniques are promoted. There is the aspiration that "public services will increasingly move to a culture where relationships are contractual rather than bureaucratic" (*ibid*: 2). Local government is no longer perceived as the direct provider of services, a principle that was intrinsic to its development and previously perceived 'core responsibilities'. Instead, competition and contractual arrangements are to ensure better service provision. The private sector is to be allowed 'fair' play in this new market. Where public provision is to remain, it must be subject to competition. Hence the simplification, extension and practice of Compulsory Competitive Tendering, including for professional services. A more 'efficient' local government is to be pursued through the extension of competition and private sector techniques. The discourse is of customers and choice not uniformity and paternalism.

All of these developments have implications for the education service, plus the proposals of *The Parents' Charter in Scotland* (Scottish Office 1991b), in which Ian Lang uses emotive language to encourage parental involvement in education. The

Charter seeks to improve education and "takes account of the distinctive character of Scottish education" (*ibid*: 1).The Charter draws on the metaphor of 'partnership' also as a means to popularise and promote its proposals. However, it is a redefined partnership "between you (parent), your child's school and the education authority" (*ibid*). In the system of rights and responsibilities relying upon accountability, Central Government no longer perceives itself as a partner. One can deduce that Central Government perceives itself as above that of the local partners as an overseer and regulator with interventionist powers. The rhetoric of 'Scottishness' and 'Partnership' are used to legitimate a significantly different policy.

The Parents' Charter posits parents as new partners in the education system. In doing so, parents have both responsibilities and rights. However, it is the latter that is emphasised through the overarching commitment to parental choice. Many of the proposals of the Parents' Charter can be interpreted as a means to improve parental rights not simply as parents but as consumers choosing the provision of education for their children. Consequently, parents' "Right to Information" (*ibid*: 8-9) concerning the EA, school and pupils is stressed[25]. All information is to be provided in such a manner as to ease comparison with other schools and EAs. This ensures accountability through visibility and facilitates the ability for parents to operate 'voice' and 'exit' in the 'education market'. Through detailed information and linked accountability, parents are to have greater involvement in their child's schooling. This is linked to a particular notion of parental choice, linked to choice of school, and parental involvement, as before and enhanced by school boards legislation. The EA and school are to be made accountable and parents ultimately have the opportunity to express their preferences in the 'education market' and to appeal against EA and school actions. Central Government has excluded itself from this new partnership but directly involved parents. The result is a particular perception of 'efficiency' in the education system which rests upon parental choice and holds the previously assumed 'educational partners and professionals' to account, especially through the development of performance indicators.

The Citizen's Charter and Parents' Charter are characterised by an attempt to radically shift the discourse and practice affecting the operation of the public sector. It is no longer viewed as the most appropriate provider of services. Monopolistic and bureaucratic public provision is deemed inherently inefficient. Rather through competition, choice and business management techniques, a more efficient and accountable system is to be created. In local government and education, the principles of the Citizens' and Parents' Charters have been enshrined in policy and legislation. Consultation was initiated on the provision of information to parents (Scottish Office 1992a), resulting in *Information for Parents in Scotland* (Scottish Office 1993a). The *Local Government Act 1992* was concerned with enacting in statute the "Citizen's Charter Provisions", the purpose being for "securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the manner in which local authorities carry on certain activities" (*ibid:*1). This necessitated the publication of information, the establishment of performance standards and the extension of CCT. The principles of Citizen's and Parents' Charters influenced policy for local government and education.

At this time, other reforms in these policy areas occurred which signified the challenging of local government and a movement towards centralisation. As discussed in Chapter Two, Major's Government had to deal with the aftermath of the Poll Tax fiasco. The result was the *Local Government Finance Act 1992*, which introduced the Council Tax. While this was perceived as a 'fairer' tax on individuals, it does not return greater financial powers to local government. Instead, the capping powers of central government are to be strengthened. Travers (1991) argues change in local government finance represent profound constitutional changes as local spending levels is increasingly determined by central government. Similarly, in education centralisation was occurring. The *Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992* removed the control of these bodies from local government, instead being controlled by Boards of Management directly funded by the Secretary of State (SLGIU 1993). A further indication of a new willingness to centralise control was the reform of the Scottish Office in 1991. All department titles were to be preceded by the strap- line of 'The Scottish Office'. This symbolised an increase in the Secretary of State's control over Departments and the consequent centralisation of the Scottish Office (Parry

1992a). The Secretary of State was exerting control over central and local government.

Reforms in the areas of curriculum and testing occurred during the Major years. The 'Howie Report' (SOED 1992a) sought to *Review Curriculum and Examinations in the fifth and sixth years of Secondary Education in Scotland.* The recommendations were radical in their proposal of an European and vocational system. The historical legacy and tradition of the Higher was to be abandoned. Stronach (1992) argues that the Howie Report "pathologises the past" of Scottish education and myth. Perceptions that the Howie proposals were radical, anti- Scottish and often inappropriately founded led to substantial criticisms of the Report (Stronach 1992, McPherson 1992a, 1992b). In the Government's response, *Higher Still* (Scottish Office 1994), alterations were made. Fundamentally, Highers will remain but in an altered form. This could be perceived as a concession to the 'Scottish dimension', but criticism continues "that the "Higher" is staying in name only, and that the 'A' level is being introduced by another name" (SLGIU 1994:1). Reform of curriculum and assessment in third, fourth and sixth years are to occur also. Changes in assessment are the consequence also of the introduction of compulsory testing in secondary schools in the *Education (Scotland) Act 1996.* Both policies demonstrated an increased willingness of Central Government to intervene and direct curricular issues. A further indication of centralisation was the creation of the Scottish Qualifications Authority in 1996, responsible to the Secretary of State. In the area of curriculum and testing increasing reform and central intervention occurred attracting controversy.

The aim remained the pursuit of an 'education market'. The development of national testing can be viewed in this light, with the capacity to use exam results as performance indicators. Under the 1996 Act the development of market forces went further with the introduction of 'nursery vouchers'. The Conservative party had considered education vouchers since the 1970s, Keith Joseph pursued but failed to achieve such an aim (Chitty 1989) . That the Major government had done this was a considerable achievement and proof that the political treatment of Scottish education in the 1990s was more radical than previously. It demonstrated that the principles of

'economic efficiency' and consumer empowerment linked to market forces were an utmost motivator and premise of political reform, but that such practices and policies were widely condemned by the Scottish education 'partners'.

Against this promotion of market principles, there was some recognition that a free market was not fully efficient. The 1996 Act gave some new powers to EAs in order to execute better operation of their local education system. EAs could "undertake school building work without prior written consent necessary from the government" (SLGIU 1996a:1). This was a limited but nevertheless significant counter- trend to increasing centralisation. Furthermore, EAs could now retain some school places in order to accommodate any potential newcomers after the start of the school year. In effect, this had the effect of some regulation and limitation of the operation of market forces. Similarly, the legislation on opting out was amended by the 1996 Act. In these compromises and pragmatic alterations to the 'market' mechanisms of opting out and parental choice, there was recognition that the education market as legislated did not unequivocally guarantee the most efficient system. However, these changes did not occur until the near end of Major's term , in light of practical problems, and did not equate with the refutation or rejection of the principle of 'efficiency'.

Therefore, it remains evident that the Major Governments were keen to promote a political agenda premised upon the creation of 'efficiency' in the public sector, affecting local government and education policy. It is a specific connotation that is linked to competition and market principles. Hence, the apparently paradoxical developments of increased centralisation alongside proposed decentralisation. This process can be traced during the Thatcher years. However, under Major, it was to become more profound.

Conclusions

This Chapter traced and analysed the conceptualisation and nature of education and local government policies from 1979 to 1997. Substantial, significant and pervasive reforms throughout the education and local government systems occurred. While some of the origins of these policies pre- date 1979, there is an assumption that the

policies under the Thatcher and Major Governments attached a particular and political significance to the nature and purpose of reform. I have argued that a unifying feature was the construction and promotion of a broad discourse of 'efficiency' which was economically determined and politically applied.

Thatcherism is a "diffuse" concept (Rhodes & Marsh 1992:72), nevertheless pervading all 'dimensions' is the promotion of economic ideals as driving policy and politics. This ideological 'discourse of economic efficiency' suggests the development of market forces and managerialism. During Thatcher's first and second terms, there were indications of shifts away from previous practices, e.g. in the by- passing of the education community in TVEI and the nature of 'parental choice'. The beginning of an undermining of the 'Scottish dimension' and 'Partnership' was inherent. However, many of the policy directions were established during the 1970s and therefore the subsequent actions were not truly radical. This changed from 1987 onwards, when the Thatcher Government sought to apply their economic ideals and a thorough application of 'Thatcherism' to social policies. Hence, the radical ERA in England & Wales, and the creation of school boards and opting out in Scotland. In this process, discourses of Scottishness and Partnership were rejected. The nature of education was to be re- conceptualised around a vision of 'efficient' markets and management. Yet despite these challenges, differences in Scottish policy persisted and 'partnership' involving the EA was not totally eradicated.

With Thatcher's departure, there was the potential that 'Thatcherism' would end also. However, the Major years were a 'shift in emphasis' rather than a rejection of previous politics and practices. Fundamentally, the discourse of 'efficiency' was promoted further and embodied in policies such as the Citizens' Charters' re-definition of citizenship and public sector. Major argued that the quest for economic efficiency was not simply ideological and political, the charge against Thatcher's stance, but that it was predominantly pragmatic. Rather than 'softening' the stance on 'efficiency', this necessity and direction of change imbued the discourse of efficiency with a sense of moral duty. The discourses of 'Scottishness' and 'Partnership' were no

longer to dominate, although they could be used selectively to legitimate and justify reform, as in the Parents' Charter.

It was within this historical context and against these discourses that the policies of DSM and Reorganisation were promoted and 'shaped'. The education and local government systems had undergone substantial and profound changes and were to continue to do so. A new discourse of 'efficiency' rejected the premises of 'Scottish myth' and 'Partnership', however Scots appeared to support traditional conceptions and ultimately were hostile to the market and anglicising direction of Conservative Government. Issues of policy, discourse, conceptualisation, process and practice are fundamental.

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[1] Thus: "for Crewe and Searing (1988:363) discipline, free enterprise and statecraft are the three political principles" (Rhodes & Marsh 1992:72); for Gamble (1988:23), Thatcherism is "a style of leadership"; for Jenkins (1989:81), "Thatcherism is more usefully regarded as a style than as an ideology"; while Campbell (1987) and Riddell (1983) define Thatcherism as primarily an 'instinct' (Rhodes & Marsh 1992:82).

[2] There is a burgeoning literature discussing the impact and nature of Thatcherism (e.g. see above). As concerns the 'dimensions' of Thatcherism, Rhodes and Marsh (1992) and Marsh and Rhodes (1992) provide a good starting point. For a more thorough consideration of each dimension, it is necessary to supplement these texts. For the Economic Dimension, see Gamble (1988) & Jackson (1985). For Electoral Dimension, see Crewe (1988), Crewe & Searing (1988), Jessop *et al* (1988) & Rentoul (1989). For Ideological Dimension, see Hall (1983) plus those referenced for electoral dimension. For Policy Style see Bulpitt (1986). For Policy Agenda see above references plus Kavanagh (1987).

[3] Some attempts at such a task have been undertaken elsewhere. There is little literature explicitly concerning education and 'Thatcherism', indeed this was the only major public policy area excluded from Marsh & Rhodes' (1992) book. Nevertheless, Dale (1989) provides such analysis. In terms of Scottish education, Arnott (1993) researched the implications of 'Thatcherism' for the secondary sector. There is a more extensive literature concerning 'Thatcherism' and local government, e.g. Butcher *et al* (1990) and Rhodes' (1992) consideration of finance. However, there is a lack of literature concerned specifically with Scottish local government.

[4] SED (1988) *Standard Grade: Setting New Standards for All Scottish Pupils*, Edinburgh, HMSO provides an outline of the Standard Grade. A critique is offered by Boyd (1997).

[5] There are various exceptional circumstances in which a placing request can be refused- these refer broadly to eligibility, i.e. a pupil wanting to attend a special needs school who has no special needs or a boy wishing to attend an all girls school; resourcing, e.g. if accepting the child would require alterations to accommodation or employment of new teachers; and educational, e.g. if transfer would interrupt the child's education or disrupt the education of pupils at the selected school.

[6]Adler *et al* (1987,1989), Macbeth (1984), Johnson (1990) and Munn (1990) analysed the impact of parental choice. The worst fears of parental choice have not been realised. For example, there has been a rising up- take of placement requests across all parents, not just the middle class. Some pupils have benefited from the ability to transfer from 'poor' schools. However, the consequence is that the pupils

'left behind' may be based in an even 'poorer' school. There are difficulties for schools and EAs in coping with the practical details of placing requests and in dealing with fluctuations and imbalances in pupil rolls, resulting in both over and under- capacity of schools. Nevertheless, despite initial apathy to parental choice, it is being practised in Scotland.

[7]In contrast, the English Education Minister was not hostile to parental choice but not a fervent supporter either and basically trusted the discretion of LEAs.

[8] Initially this was the preferred route for parental choice also. Adler *et al* (1989, 1987) document the transition to its necessity as a piece of legislation in the Education Minister's approach.

[9]In 1994- 1995, 96% of pupils attended EA schools (Clark 1997a: 6).

[10] SLGIU (1995: 20) explain the Revenue Support Grant "as a percentage of relevant local government expenditure was reduced to 55.3% by 1990/91", contrasted with its high point at 75% in 1975/76.

[11]This quote was originally included in an interview with Ken Baker published in *The Guardian* 6/12/96.

[12] This a direct quote from Thatcher published by *The Daily Mail* 13/5/87.

[13]The promise to abolish domestic rates and reform local government finance was part of the Conservative manifesto since 1975.

[14]By March 1991, over one million Scots had not paid the poll tax (*Scotland on Sunday* 1991:11).

[15]Fisher (1988:78) outlines the nature of these powers:

> **'The Floor'**
> These initial functions would include: a right to raise questions about any aspect of the running of the school; authority over expenditure on books and materials within the school; a right for parent members of the Board to be involved in the appointment of the senior staff of the school; a right of veto over the appointment of a head teacher; power to raise and spend money for the school; responsibility for communication between the school, parents and the community; responsibility for the use of the school 'out of hours'.
>
> **'The Ceiling'**
> These maximum powers would comprise: direct control over a budget for the recurrent costs of the school; direct responsibility for choosing or rejecting members of staff for the school (the education authority would, however, remain the employer of the school staff).

[16].Fisher (1988) charts the hostility expressed by head teachers' unions, education authorities, the churches, parents, STUC, General Teaching council , the Association of Directors of Education and COSLA. An independent survey by the Lothian group "found less than 1% parents in favour of the Government's plans". Overall, a survey of responses by the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) revealed:

88% condemnation, disagreement or dissent
3.4% agreement with reservation
1% unconditional endorsement

(Source: SLGIU 1988:1).

[17] According the *School Board Scotland Act* 1988:

(2) There shall not be delegated under this section-

(a) the function of giving employment to, or of dismissing or of removing from a school, any of the staff of the school;
(b) the function of selecting a person to be appointed as head teacher, or as deputy or assistant head teacher;
(c) the regulation of the curriculum;
(d) the assessment of pupils...;
(e) the function of discontinuing, changing the site of, or amalgamating with another school...
(f) the function of setting up or discontinuing any stage of education in a school, or special classes in a school;
(g) the function of determining admissions policy for a school.

[18]At the first election "only 62% of eligible schools formed school boards" (SLGIU 1995:2). However school boards have proven quite popular and the figure of schools has now risen to 75%

[19] (*ibid*).

[20] As well as the references cited, the following provide a useful outline and introduction to the debate surrounding ERA: Chitty (1989), Flude & Hammer (1990) , Rao (1990) and Simon (1988).

[21]. If a majority of parents agrees with the motion and the Secretary of State is assured that it is a valid ballot, the procedure continues. The school board produces detailed proposals about the anticipated nature and operation of their schools under GMS. If these proposals are accepted or satisfactorily modified, the Secretary of State determines a "Scheme of Government" for the GMS school, including:

Articles of Constitution- the constitution of the school's Board of Management

Articles of Management- the scope of the Board of Management's functions. (SLGIU 1989:4).

[22] "The board of management of a self- governing school shall manage the school, shall provide suitable and efficient school education at the school and shall... have power to do anything which appears to them to be necessary or expedient for their exercise of those functions in respect of the school" (Self-Governing Schools (Scotland) Act 1989: 7).

[23] The following consider 5-14: Boyd (1994), Bryce (1992), Clark (1997a, b), Fisher (1993), Harlen (1994), Harlen (1995), Malcolm & Byrne (1995), McAllister (1993), McClelland (1993), Simpson et al (1995), Watt (1997), plus the various contributions to *Scottish Educational Review Vol. 19* 1987.

[24] There is so little experience of national testing in Scotland, that analyses must be based upon the policy and principle rather than its practice, e.g. Brown (1990) and Fisher (1993).

[25] Parents are to receive school information, e.g. curriculum, examination results, pupil destination after leaving, truancy and running costs. Information about EA costs is to be published. Information about pupils is to be improved- parents are to receive information about their own child, plus comparative information about his/her peers, plus the name of a teacher to who parents can respond to the report. Additional information and "Assurance of Quality" (*ibid:* 11) is to be created by each school publishing two yearly "educational plans and targets". These plans will be taken into account by H.M.I. who will publish their findings and recommendations, in addition to the newly created Audit Unit within HMI, which will provide comparative material on schools, and EAs.

CHAPTER 4:

THE POLICY, PROCESS AND INITIAL PERCEPTION OF DEVOLVING SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

There are indications that the Government was keen to devolve more powers to school- level, particularly to parents. The Local Management of Schools (LMS) legislation for England and Wales in 1988 embodied such a policy. In Scotland, the Parent's Charter expressed: "It is an important principle that decisions affecting individual schools should, wherever possible, be taken at school level" (Scottish Office 1991b:13). It is proposed that the more powers school boards take on the "more effective they will become" (*ibid*). However, the origins of devolving school management in Scotland began with EA experimentation, particularly in Strathclyde and Dumfries & Galloway. The former held the most extensive pilot and will therefore be discussed. The fact that an EA experimented with a policy that was later to become modified by Central Government and extended as a national policy is not unique. In England & Wales, LEA experimentation with devolved school management can be traced to the 1950s (Hill 1989). It is necessary to explore the nature of this local experimentation in comparison with national developments. Therefore, this chapter begins with consideration of the movement to devolving school management in Strathclyde Regional Council (SRC) particularly after the INLOGOV Report (1989) and the subsequent piloting of Delegated Management of Resources (DMR). The later development of national Devolved School Management (DSM) is explored. Finally, the initial perceptions of devolving school management in Scotland are outlined and issues raised. Discourses of and conflicts between 'Scottishness', 'Partnership' and 'Efficiency', via markets and managerialism, are pervasive in the process and nature of these policies.

Strathclyde Regional Council and the Beginnings of Change

Strathclyde Region was the largest local government unit in Europe. There was a perception that it was simply too big and that it demonstrated a tendency towards centralisation. In terms of Education, head quarters were located in Glasgow, but six Divisional Education Offices existed also, although these did not have functional autonomy. Labour dominated its political representation. It is curious that in a Region

characterised as centralist and socialist, that a policy of decentralisation later associated with a Conservative Central Government was initiated. Strathclyde is recognised generally as having been quite pro-active and innovative in its approach to the education service. Since the mid- 1980s, attempts to reform this service can be discerned. There were two key strands: one is to tackle the problems of deprivation in Strathclyde and ensure that the education service is 'efficient' in meeting the needs of the locality; the second is the need to ensure economic and managerial efficiency. The tension between these two definitions of 'efficiency' is inherent in the development of devolving school management. This links with a wider contemporary debate about decentralisation to create managerial or democratic benefits (McGarvey 1997).

Adapting to Change (SRC 1986) began the movement towards reforming financial management. It is a broad ranging document making several inter- related points. Firstly, the scope and nature of the education service has expanded and is being reformed, due to the Region's Social Strategy and national policy changes[1]. However, secondly, against this expanded provision and introduction of new expensive methods, there has been "successive cut- backs of local authority expenditure by central government" (*ibid*: 5). This has placed financial strain on the education system that has been compounded with, thirdly, falling school rolls. Many costs, e.g. related to property and administration, "are largely independent of pupil numbers" (*ibid*:11). Consequently:

> The main conclusion of the working group is that the existing structure and pattern of school provision throughout Strathclyde Region cannot remain unchanged. There is an urgent need to improve the existing educational provision by a more effective use of resources. (*Ibid*:30).

More efficient financial management and necessary school closures are advocated.

In facilitating both approaches the development of school costs is imperative. Traditionally, education budgets were global and lacked sufficient detail. The solution is the reform of education service finance and the development of the cost centre exercise, whereby costs for individual schools/ institutions are identified. Education's

financial systems were unchanged since the Region's creation in 1975, until 1984 when:

> the department was asked to specify the base level at which costs should be allocated. The education senior management team requested that costs be kept for individual establishments (*ibid*: 44).

This was introduced in phases starting in 1985/86. The Report proposes the development of new regional financial and computerised systems. The purposes appear essentially economic and managerial efficiency. *Adapting to Change* (*ibid* :46) explains that : "It is imperative that sufficient data is provided for management purposes". Similarly:

> Unit costs... are tools to assist management and elected members to determine whether the most effective and efficient use of resources is being accomplished or whether value for money is being achieved. (*ibid*)

Such information facilitates scrutiny of individual and comparative establishments, acting as a 'management tool' to inform resource decisions. A prime motivation is to enable school rationalisation. However, there are implications for schools not identified for closure. If unit costs, accountability and related issues are to be established: "it also raises a fundamental issue as to the level of education management to which control of the budget is being devolved." (*ibid:* 44). A need for local involvement may be necessary:

> Cost centre budgets could be used to allow budget officers, who may be heads of establishments, a greater degree of flexibility in the use of the financial resources available to them. (*ibid:* 45).

In the quest for economic and managerial efficiency , developments may facilitate the identification of 'inefficient' establishments and the more efficient operation of the remaining establishments.

The issue of managerial efficiency is intrinsic to *Managing Progress* (SRC 1988a). Although aware of the context of *Adapting to Change* it takes a different emphasis, focussing primarily on curricular issues. However, its recommendations are wider concerning issues of management and structure. The essential recommendations of

Managing Progress stress a widened and modern management function for head teachers and school staff. It is posited that:

> If there ever was a period when successful management in schools meant no more than the efficient organisation of routine administration, then it has certainly passed. Today school management must be concerned with policy formulation and implementation. (*ibid:* 31).

It advocates participative management, to encourage the involvement of staff and a whole- school ethos, linked to effective communication and consultation, a "coherent decision- making structure" and "clarity of purpose" (*ibid*). These principles can be associated with 'best management practices' and the 'new public management'.

Participative and open management does not necessarily entail autonomy or a laissez-faire attitude. There remains a recognition of authority, proper lines of responsibility and accountability and the necessity for someone to take ultimate decisions. While management powers are being encouraged at school- level, the EA retains powers:

> Individual schools and individual teachers enjoy discretion. It is necessary for the proper delivery of a professional service that they should do so. It is equally important, however, that they should contribute fully to the realisation of policy objectives established nationally or by the regional council. (*ibid*).

The delegation of management is encouraged through participative styles, communication, reformed decision-making and structures, plus in- service training. However, the ultimate authority within the school rests with the head teacher and over the local system with the EA. The document combines modern notions of managerial efficiency with recourse to traditional notions of authority and hierarchy.

Alongside the discourse of managerial and economic efficiency is the promotion of education to meet the local community's needs. While the former two have resonance with the discourse adopted by the Conservative Central Government, the latter issue is more identifiable with the assumed policies of a Labour- controlled local government. The fundamental concern is to ensure the expansion of educational provision and opportunity, to minimise deprivation, and address special needs[2]. The extent to which

these differing interpretations of 'efficiency' and practices can be resolved is contentious.

INLOGOV

During 1988 a fundamental review of SRC's Education Department occurred. At the request of the Region, the Centre for Education Management and Policy Studies within INLOGOV and the School of Education at the University of Birmingham under took this consultancy. The result was the publication of *Education in the Community,* commonly referred to as the INLOGOV Report, and perceived as the impetus to devolve management to schools (Fairley 1995, MacKenzie 1994, McDowall 1994a).

The terms of the consultancy were not explicitly to create devolved school management, although this was potential. The management of the education service was to be reviewed. After discussions with SRC, it was clarified that the remit was essentially concerned with the following principles, in terms of their 'appropriateness' of existing structures and distribution of resources (INLOGOV 1989:95):

> 2.1.1 In relation to the various objectives of the Education Services, to give an initial indication of the effectiveness of existing structures and programmes.
>
> 2.1.2 To identify those areas where effectiveness might immediately/ realistically be improved and by what means (within existing resource levels). (*ibid*).

Concern focussed on management in SRC's Education Department head quarters.

The introduction to the INLOGOV Report re-iterates points raised in previous SRC documents. The education system is located within a "transformed context" generated primarily by social and economic deprivation, which consequently put "pressures upon education" , such as underachievement, truancy and exclusion, compounded by falling school rolls (*ibid*: 5-6). However unwelcome these developments are, they cannot be ignored: "No change was not an option" (*ibid*: 6). The consequence is the move to "Reforming the Government of the Community" (*ibid:* 7). This is recognised by both central and local government, but they propose to do so in different manners.

SRC had initiated reforms in terms of their "Social Strategy of Community Development" (*ibid*). INLOGOV argued the result has been moves to reform the operation of local government, ending the actions of "an insensitive professional bureaucracy" through encouraging "partnerships for development" and involving and empowering the community (*ibid:* 7-8). Such moves were to be extended and enhanced by the creation of clear 'direction', 'corporate action', but also 'working together' and 'community involvement', plus adequate 'resources' (*ibid*). Such an approach has been welcome and successful. However, there is need for further developments: "change has, nevertheless, been at the fringe without challenging or engaging the mainline programmes, especially education." (*ibid:* 9). Change is required also by Central Government's "Strategy of Consumer Choice and Accountability" (*ibid*), promoting a different view of communities as individuals and consumers who wish to exercise choice. There are principled and practical differences between the central and local visions, but a commonality in requiring reform of local government and a focus on individuals in communities.

This combination of demands for reform but potentially conflicting purposes poses "A Challenge for the Government of Education" (*ibid*: 10). INLOGOV seek to address this:

> 1.28 There is a potential conflict between the strategies of local and central government which presents the Education Service in Strathclyde with a dilemma: can it reconcile the Authority's emphasis upon community development within the social strategy with the Government's legislative programme that strive to strengthen the consumer and the institution: possibly at the expense of the Authority.
>
> 1.29 Yet underlying these competing perspectives is a common theme for the future government of the community: the need to serve and involve the public.
>
> 1.30 The message for the Education Department is clear. It must change the way it operates, learning to work closely with parents and the community to serve their needs and promote the excellence of the Authority's service. In that way the Education Department can restore

the public's confidence in the quality of education and protect the integrity of Strathclyde's public education service. The purposes of consumer satisfaction and community development can be reconciled.

1.31 The conditions for realising this difficult objective is for Strathclyde's Education Department to establish a new approach to the management of change: developing

* new values of public service and participation
* a new style of management that provides both strategic leadership and responsiveness to the public locally as well as regionally
* a modernised organisation. (*ibid*).

The Education Department must transform itself to ensure its continued existence and support. However, this assumes that there remains an important role for an EA, which is contrary to assumptions in the Central Government version of consumers and choice. The extent to which a true reconciliation of these values has been achieved is dubious.

A fundamental reform of the education service is proposed, affecting HQ, Divisions, Area and schools[3]. The nature of reform should draw upon the best of public and private sector practice, but also crucially be developed from and tailored to the fundamental values and subsequent policy purposes associated with SRC's education service. The primary task becomes to identify and clarify these values, before one can then "Develop the process of managing educational change" and "Design an appropriate organisation" (*ibid*: 14). INLOGOV identify values relating to three broad areas: "Educational Purpose"; "Learning Quality"; and "Educational Management" (*ibid*: 15-21). In general there is a combined focus on the development of managerial efficiency and SRC's concern to extend their 'community empowerment' model. Hence, the values espoused are: "Open Management", especially "open to change"; "Communication, Consultation and Participation"; "Partnership", perceived in terms of 'local partners' emphasising especially home- school- community links; "Efficiency and Effectiveness" linked to the existing emphasis on "meticulous administration", but requiring also the "value of clear organisational control and

delegation of responsibility"; and "Public Accountability" (*ibid*: 19- 20). The reformed system is to be based on and develop these values.

The outcome is the perceived need for a shift in function and role at the head quarters: "The challenge for the Education Department is to change its emphasis from administering to managing the service"(*ibid*: 11). HQ is to become responsible for strategic management, which is to be fundamentally separate from operational management and administration. The education service is to be pro-active and open rather than the old administrative bureaucracy who used 'expertise' to barrier participation and promoted a "culture of fear" (*ibid:* 30).

Consequently, it becomes necessary to consider the location of operational management and administration. In SRC's education service there are "three levels of operation: HQ, sub- region (divisions) and local (institutions)"[4] (*ibid*: 42- 43). Operational management and administrative duties could be located at any of these levels. Advocates of devolving powers and management to school would view the institutional level as the most appropriate. INLOGOV consider this as the "Decentralisation" option, but ultimately reject its appropriateness. The same is true for the "Centralisation" option of extending the role of HQ beyond purely strategic management. In both cases, the Divisions would not be necessary. INLOGOV argues the "inescapable" conclusion is that the Divisions are a vital element in the reforming of the education service (*ibid*). After considering issues of "Scale", "New technology and Resources"; "The nature of the task" and "Values and purposes", it is proposed that an intermediate tier is a positive advantage in balancing potential economies of scale with local responsiveness and personal contact (*ibid*). The conclusion supports most closely the third option offered:

> Distribution of Functions between Tiers: Under this option the functions of strategic management and operations/ administration are specialised between tiers of the organisation. HQ specialises in strategic management while the sub regional tier becomes responsible for operational implementation. Schools and colleges may assume some administrative responsibilities as accountable cost centres. (*ibid:* 47).

It is this model which is developed throughout the Report (see Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1 The Future Management of the Education Service in SRC

A STRATEGIC CENTRE

Policy planning/ Quality assurance/

public accountability

OPERATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION FROM DIVISIONS

Implementation plans/ monitoring quality

Support to institutions and areas

SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC

Excellent service delivery/ participation

Enabling co-ordination.

(Source: INLOGOV 1989: 59).

INLOGOV concentrates on distinguishing the 'Centre' (HQ) from the 'Periphery' (Divisions, a strengthened Area function and institutions). The Centre has to develop mission and culture, to harness enthusiasm and facilitate delegation of responsibilities. It has also to ensure accountability , quality assurance and therefore exert control. However, the creation of a "strong counterpoint at the periphery to the Department" is proposed (*ibid:* 52). The Division is to have a vastly extended and empowered function and be capable of operating autonomously from the HQ. The Area function is to be strengthened by the creation of Community forums plus the appointment of an Area Education Officer. The institutions are to be strengthened also. School boards could take on responsibilities for school budgets, plus the appointment and promotion of staff. The 'challenge' of improving the education service is to be met by restructuring and reform.

These were radical proposals. They were concerned especially with developing further the willingness for reform within Strathclyde as the "vanguard of innovation" (*ibid*: 41). The INLOGOV Report was a lengthy and timely exposition of the perceived weaknesses of traditional local government structures and their discord with the

proposed purposes of the contemporary education function. MacKenzie (1994:11) states: "The impact of the Report was felt well beyond Strathclyde Region.".

From INLOGOV to Implementation

Frank Pignatelli, SRC's Director of Education, considered the recommendations and devised an 'Implementation Plan' (Pignatelli 1989a, b). In his comments and 'action plan' in reaction to INLOGOV some significant reforms occurred. It was in this process that the proposals for devolving school management took form. INLOGOV may have provided a justification for reform, but it was not a blueprint. The over-arching emphasis of the INLOGOV Report was accepted. The development of the key principles of an ideal separation between operational and strategic management, the delegation of powers, the creation of a communicative, consultative and participative culture are encouraged. Nevertheless, in practice, modifications are deemed necessary.

Pignatelli (1989a, b) stresses that the proposed reform will be a profound one and that it is vital that the implications are recognised and commitment secured:

> The attempt to achieve the clearest possible distinction between strategic and operational management lies at the heart of the INLOGOV proposals... The separation of operational and strategic management will clearly involve changes in the ways in which elected members, officers of the council and outside bodies communicate with the department... Unless all of these implications are fully accepted, a satisfactory distinction between operational and strategic management cannot be made and the proposed structure would not work. It is, therefore, essential that the department should be given a clear indication of whether or not the implications mentioned above are accepted. (Pignatelli 1989a: 9).

A culture is necessary supporting shifts, gains and losses in roles and responsibilities. The proposal to separate operational and strategic responsibility is "wholeheartedly shared in the education department" (Pignatelli 1989b: 1). However, such a complete separation is not possible in practice. Nevertheless, it is posited that the only operational function which the HQ should have complete control over is the new

Quality Assurance function, although the Director wishes also to retain overall control over the education system (involving strategic and operational matters). Many of the practical proposals for the central HQ are accepted, such as development planning, mission statements, and staff training. The need to restructure the education department and consequently a 'leaner' educational directorate is accepted in principle, although the precise structures advocated by INLOGOV are rejected. Similarly, INLOGOV's proposals to restructure the Divisions are rejected, although the principle of giving them greater responsibility is accepted. A fundamental reason for some of this alteration is the importance that the Director places on the importance of delegating powers to 'establishment' level:

> The School Boards (Scotland) act requires the authority to delegate significant powers to each individual establishment. The consultants recommended that the opportunity should be taken to set up a thorough going system of local management which, among other advantages, should reduce the incentive for opting out. Again, the department welcomes these recommendations. A system for local financial management (LFM) is being devised and a pilot project will be initiated shortly. (Pignatelli 1989b: 1).

This is an explicit initiation of devolving school management, unlike the INLOGOV report, which advocated devolution to Divisional/ Area level.

There are two discernible reasons as to why SRC would want to promote LFM. Firstly, when discussing school boards, INLOGOV (1989:53) commented:

> It seems likely that the profile of powers allocated to the Boards may increase over time. Strathclyde has the opportunity by acting positively to shape these developments in a way which accords with its own policies.

It was the Government's intention that school boards should increase their powers, by pre- empting this, Strathclyde could 'mould' such development. In addition, it was possible that the Government may introduce LFM/ LMS to Scotland. By advocating such a movement, SRC were able to develop a pilot along their own principles. In both cases, SRC was taking potential national policies and developing them to their local needs and values. The second reason for advocating LFM was if the EA system could be improved it may protect that system, "the context" is one of EA survival:

> The local authority education system faces a period of unprecedented change and is required to operate in a hostile political environment. The very existence of a socially accountable education system is now in doubt. Our major task must, therefore, be to increase public confidence in the service and withstand such challenges to local authority education services. (Pignatelli 1989b: 1).

It is an emotive and urgent plea for reform. The proposed solution is a modernised education department which 'welcomes' delegation and participation.

It is in this pursuit for LFM that many of the INLOGOV recommendations are modified or rejected. Proposals for 'community forums', Area Education Officers and substantial reform of the Divisions are rejected. Whereas reform of the Centre, necessary for delegating powers, such as the creation of Quality Assurance, and the development of Strathclyde Education Establishment Management Information System (SEEMIS) is encouraged. However, like INLOGOV and the Government's proposals, SRC's implementation plan identifies LFM occurring as a product of the empowerment of school boards. The School Board legislation and political context has been as much a spur as the INLOGOV Report. The priority given to such development is explicit:

> It is considered that establishing an effective system for delegating substantial financial and administrative responsibility to individual establishments is the most important single task currently facing the department and this work will be given the highest priority. (Pignatelli 1989a: 5).

While LFM is within the spirit of INLOGOV, its emphasis and implications are altered.

The implementation plan was approved by the council in June 1989 and consequent development occurred. *Delegated Management of Resources* (SRC 1989) outlines the context and concept of LFM, plus its proposed nature within Strathclyde. The paper explains that similar schemes are now statutory in England & Wales, and that such a scheme is due to become statutory for Further Education in Scotland. *Delegated Management of Resources* (SRC 1990) juxtaposes the Strathclyde policy with the

changes in school board and opt out legislation. While devolving school management had not previously been operationalised in Scotland, SRC's policy is not completely novel and while pro- active in approach is also reactive to the British and political context.

The *Delegated Management of Resources* papers develop and modify the *Implementation Plan.* The term Local Financial Management (LFM) is replaced by Delegated Management of Resources (DMR): "to emphasise these differences in perspective from the government's notion of local financial management" (SRC 1989:3). As with INLOGOV, the clash between competing conceptions of the education system is evident. However, there remains a belief that a similar organisational device can be utilised to reconcile or alter conflicting values. The values espoused for DMR combine a concern for community involvement with notions of economic and managerial efficiency:

> Local control of resources is designed to give schools the flexibility to respond directly and promptly to the needs of its own pupils and community. Along with the delegation of increased powers goes increased accountability. Schools will have more incentive to seek efficiency and economy in the use of their resources since they will be able to apply the benefits to the improvement of their own services. (SRC 1989:1).

SRC present this as a distinctive from Central Government. However, in the language of responsibility, accountability and efficiency, there is an essential commonality between the two perspectives. It is the perception and practice of these policies that would resolve the competing conceptions of the purpose of devolving school management.

The rejection of 'LFM' was a distancing from the English system of Local Management of Schools (LMS). This system is not only founded upon unacceptable values, according to SRC's left wing stance, but also unacceptable practices and implications. Devolving a mandatory and increasing percentage of budget based on a rigid formula is argued to be unjust for schools and detrimental to the future role of EAs. Whereas SRC stress:

> The aim of any scheme to be introduced in Strathclyde must be to maximise the potential benefits of decentralising control while minimising the dangers inherent in the mechanistic approach being adopted South of the Border. Schools, colleges and other educational establishments should be able to enjoy a very high level of control over their own resources while still benefiting from the services of a very large local authority. (SRC 1989:2).

In later documents (SRC 1990:1), the importance of the "context of an enabling and supportive local authority framework designed to facilitate the development of communities", within which DMR will operate is stressed and posited as a means to avoid opt out. In the context of opting out, 'English encroachment' on Scottish policy and potential local government reorganisation, DMR provides an argument for EA involvement in education, plus the necessity of a large and strategic EA like Strathclyde.

The principle of DMR was accepted by the education committee on 31 January 1990. In moving to practice, 'avoiding the pitfalls of LMS'[5] remained utmost. Hence, unlike English governors, in DMR the head teacher is to be responsible for the delegated budget and management duties. The school board are to be "informed" (SRC 1990:1) about DMR and retain statutory responsibility for minimal areas of educational expenditure. In contrast, if a forum for consultation and active participation is to emerge it is the Staff Consultative Committees that SRC requires to be created in DMR schools. Through the centrality of both head teachers and EAs to DMR, the role of educational professionals is dominant rather than increased parental choice and lay participation. The nature of the budget construction and operation are to be different from the English model also. Rather than attaching an overall percentage which must be devolved, the DMR budget " will be the aggregate of separate amounts attributable to particular expenditure heads" (SRC 1989:2). Certain budgets are not to be devolved, e.g. relating to central administrative costs and support of individual pupils. At the outset, the budgets proposed to be devolved are those which can be 'attributed' to individual schools[6]. While a formulaic approach is retained, different formulae and adjustments are made for each budget heading, e.g. average costs for teachers, and for individual school circumstances, e.g. a 'needs- based' element for

Areas of Priority Treatment. To increase the 'flexibility' and 'responsiveness' of DMR, there is to be virement between some budget headings and carry- forward between financial years. However, the levels of virement and carry- forward, plus the regulation of budget lines, minimum and maximum standards, will be set, enforced and monitored by the Region. Similarly, while it is proposed to offer greater freedom of choice over suppliers, head teachers may still use central bulk purchasing and Regional supplies. A combination of local 'flexibility' within a Regional 'framework' is proposed.

SRC are keen to emphasises that DMR is not a narrow interpretation of budgets: "the emphasis will be upon the management of resources" (*ibid*: 3). Such a focus will not only improve the managerial efficiency of the head teacher, it will generate 'local flexibility' and 'responsiveness' which will ensure the adequate resourcing of education and therefore benefit pupils. It is proposed:

> This is not a cost cutting exercise. The educational aims of the individual school and the quality of education being offered to its pupils are paramount. (SRC 1990:2).

In addition, to avoid the impact of DMR on head teachers being to "divert them from the management of education", a comprehensive system of administrative, clerical, financial and computerised support is to be installed (*ibid*). Head teachers will not handle cash, instead transactions, invoicing and payment will occur through the central SEEMIS system which links schools, Division and Regions (see appendix C). While it is assumed that better financial management will occur, this is to be coupled with an overall improvement in managerial efficiency and educational 'effectiveness'.

DMR was piloted in six secondary schools selected to represent the geographical and socio- economic diversity of Strathclyde, and their feeder primaries, making a total of 33 schools. Piloting occurred during 1990/91, monitored and evaluated by the Region's Quality Assurance Unit. Progress Report 9 (SRC 1991a) provides a summation of the monitoring and evaluation of the DMR pilot. While recommendations are made for improvements and developments, the Report is positive in identifying benefits associated with DMR. It has been successful in

improving budgeting within education, increased consultation within schools and ultimately, though often indirectly, benefited the education of pupils. The flexibility of DMR especially through greater school- level choice and virement has enabled resourcing to improve the provision of teaching and learning materials, additional staffing and a significantly improved physical environment. The school's culture has improved through the permeation of a participatory and consultative ethos. Consequently DMR is proposed to have generated "more effective management" and improved the educational resources and experience of pupils (*ibid*). Any potential economies will only be made in the long- term as the initial setting up of DMR is costly, e.g. the IT system and support staff. 'Opportunity costs' linked to the time required to train head teachers and other staff , thereby removing them from their normal duties, exist also. However: "It is argued that the benefits of DMR outweighs opportunity costs" (*ibid*). These benefits can be discerned from the Quality Assurance progress reports and from the influential argument:

> No pilot school has indicated anything other than a wish to continue to order its affairs under the delegated management of resources arrangements. Reversion to previous centralised management, however benevolent, has found no expression of support. (SRC 1991b: 4).

The phased extension of DMR to all SRC schools by April 1994 was agreed.

SRC took the initial step of introducing devolved school management to Scotland. However, in the light of contemporary political and international developments, the emergence of such a scheme in Scotland seemed almost inevitable. By pre- empting national statute, SRC attempted to devise policy suitable to their values and circumstances. It was hoped they would have the potential to 'shape' any future national developments. However, SRC's policy was not entirely distinct from Government concerns of efficiency and participation, it was rather a difference of emphasis and sometimes of definition. The language of 'efficiency' was not as explicit, but in concerns for 'effectiveness' linked to management and budgeting there was an implicit similarity. The extent to which community empowerment arguments could be fused with issues of economy and management in practice remained to be proven. Furthermore, the emergence of DMR was influenced by factors within

Strathclyde's own political and practical context. Strathclyde's was experiencing problems related to social and economic deprivation exacerbated in education by falling school rolls. There was a clear need to improve the education system, and while the involvement of communities was believed to restore confidence in the Authority, there was a need for improved managerial and economic efficiency also. In both respects there was a need to protect and promote the role of the EA. For DMR, there were tremendous pressures placed on SRC by trade unions to reject a replication of English LMS. Hence, the mixture of prevailing values, purpose and practical arguments influenced the nature which reform would take. Nevertheless, many of the initial arguments against DMR were eradicated by the pilot and the widespread desire to retain and develop the scheme.

The National Development of Devolving School Management

By the end of May 1991, the extension of DMR throughout Strathclyde was advocated (SRC 1991b). Within a few months, the Scottish Office Education Department (SOED) began to consider the possibility of a national scheme to be known as Devolved School Management (DSM) (Henderson 1994). The extent to which the two are linked is debatable. Strathclyde Officers believe their scheme was highly influential[7], as do Fairley (1995) and McDowell (1994). However, DSM is not a carbon copy of DMR, although there are more similarities than differences. Furthermore, the Conservative Government, independent and prior to SRC's action, had began a programme of devolving school management in Britain. The SOED acknowledge the influence and awareness of both LMS and DMR, plus the Dumfries & Galloway project (Henderson 1994). Nevertheless, no existing model was to be adopted wholesale. Rather an extensive consultation exercise was initiated in 1992. Throughout this process, the values of economic efficiency, 'partnership' and a Scottish dimension are evident.

School Management : The Way Ahead (SOED 1992b) proposes DSM as the logical development and consolidation of previous legislation, e.g. parental choice and school boards. The discourse adopted promotes the values of decentralisation in terms of managerial and economic efficiency, through the creation of local responsiveness

coupled with accountability. The document is concerned also with developing the role and power of school boards, suggesting these are to be integral to the future reformed education system. However, the responsibility for devolved budgets is located with the head teacher with a consultative role for the school board. The head teacher's role is suggested to be increasingly managerial. EAs are not to be abolished, but their strategic capacity rather than service delivery is emphasised:

> Authorities, who have the statutory responsibility, will continue to provide general support and advice to schools. They will also remain directly responsible for strategic decisions on the general provision of schools and school buildings and for other aspects of education provision which are sensibly provided at an education authority level, such as school transport, bursaries, recruitment advertising and in- service teacher training. They would also be responsible for the allocation of delegated budgets to schools. (SOED 1992b: 3.2)

Although this preliminary document is keen to promote the notion of Devolved School Management, many of the details remain to be resolved.

The consultation document generated around 1200 responses (SOED 1992b). Although "the majority, at that time, were opposed to the whole principle of DSM" (Henderson 1994), the consequent policy paper claimed "there is a general consensus on the principle that decisions about schools should, wherever possible, be taken at school level." (SOED 1992c: 1). Various concerns and "constructive" comments emerged from the consultation:

> Many consultees argued for flexibility to allow different arrangements for different parts of the country, and for different kinds of schools... Concern was also expressed about whether School Boards or head teachers would be required to take on significant new responsibilities for which they might have neither the requisite time nor skills. Many consultees also expressed concern about the possible introduction in Scotland of identical arrangements to those operating in England and Wales... which might not suit all Scottish circumstances. (*ibid*).

These concerns informed the subsequent policy paper and consultation.

With the emphasis on *Guidelines for Progress*, the SOED (1992c:1) sought "consultation on the implementation of the new arrangements". In addition, a working group to generate advice was created[8]. *Guidelines for Progress* altered some of the earlier propositions taking account of expressed concerns. Fundamentally, each EA is to develop its own "administrative schemes of devolved management for their schools, against a set timetable , based on clearly- specified principles"(*ibid*). The Secretary of State explained:

> the system we adopt must be that best suited to the education system in each part of Scotland. No single scheme could cover the diversity of our schools and regional differences. That is why I am asking education authorities to devise their own schemes to suit the particular schools in their areas. (*ibid*: i).

The EAs must remain within the broad guidelines established by the Scottish Office. The earlier proposition that "at least 85% of the total expenditure within each authority on recurrent education costs at school level to be delegated"(excluding capital costs) (SOED 1992b: Section 3.1), has been reduced to the requirement of at least 80%. Both these reforms served some protection to a distinctive Scottish approach. The development of DSM has taken account of positive experiments within Scotland. Through the proposition of locally devised schemes of DSM, head teacher training and conditions relating to budget lines, *Guidelines for Progress* seeks to allay some of the previous concerns.

Guidelines for Progress advocates the educational importance of DSM. This is emphasised by the accompanying leaflet *Devolved School Management: Information about the Government's Proposals* (SOED 1992d). The overall "aim" and "principle" of DSM is: "To raise the standards of learning and teaching in schools" (*ibid*).Yet in developing the principles, both documents adopt a curious mix of educational, economic and managerial rationales and rhetoric. Of these, it is the educational dimension that is least developed. If the aim is educational improvement, it is to be achieved firstly through economic and managerial efficiency. The initial "principle" of DSM attempts to integrate these aspects:

The Government believes firmly that devolving financial and managerial responsibility to school level will improve the quality of decision- making by giving schools greater flexibility and choice in deciding on their priorities and detailed arrangements in response to the needs of pupils and the aspirations of parents. Improving the quality of decision- making is a key part of the Government's overall aim of raising standards of learning and teaching in schools, so that they can deliver the best possible service to their pupils. (SOED 1992c: 1-2).

The practicality and coherence of this principle is dubious and assumptive. Other principles in *Guidelines for Progress* and all of the "objectives" in *Information about the Government's Proposals* rely on a vision of economic and managerial efficiency. Hence:

> Devolved decision- making to school level throughout Scotland will allow schools to respond more quickly to changing needs and priorities. It will also bring with it increased accountability for the resources they use. Schools will therefore have a greater incentive to manage more efficiently and with due regard to economy, resulting in more effective use of resources and better value for money. Everyone who is involved in the delivery of school education- education authorities, teachers, parents and School Boards- has a contribution to make to this process.(SOED 1992c: 2).

It is particular view of a decentralised system where autonomy is severely limited. There are various actors involved and limits set by ensuring accountability. The rhetoric invokes a moral obligation to adopt DSM for improved economic and managerial performance and discourse of 'business language' which is assumed to improve teaching and learning.

The use of emotive language is evident throughout *Information about the Government's Proposals.* DSM is advocated as providing: "Less frustration, more freedom"; " A Change for the Better"; and "Making information public" (SOED 1992d). The first promises schools will be able to undertake minor repairs and select suppliers, ending "frustration". The second refers to proposed increase in schools'

control over their budgets. This is not just about schools, as the third issue involves reforming and making accountable the EA:

> Devolved management of schools presents an opportunity for a fresh look at the services education authorities provide to schools and how they are delivered... Authorities will therefore be expected to publish the policies, decisions and methods of allocation that determine a school's budget. (*ibid*).

DSM is being proposed as beneficially changing schools and EAs.

The proposal of local government reorganisation was also on the political agenda and open to consultation. At this stage, November 1992, the SOED recognised that local government reform may affect detail of DSM , but asserted that "the fundamental principles (of DSM)...may be expected to apply whatever form of local government organisation is decided upon" (SOED 1992c: 3). There was little recognition that the two reforms being proposed had significant implications for each other. There was scant recognition of the cost implications of reform also. It was assumed that:

> overall resource implications arising directly from the introduction of devolved management should be broadly neutral. The purpose of the new arrangements is to improve the quality of school education through the more effective deployment of resources. Additional costs incurred at school level should be offset by savings at the level of central school administration within education authorities. (*ibid*).

The principles of DSM are littered with assumptions and emotive appeal to improved efficiency, this is reflected in an idealistic, and arguably naive, assertion of economic and managerial efficiency generated by decentralising the management of education.

The practical issues relating to DSM were central to *Devolved School Management: Guidelines for Schemes* (SOED 1993), based on which EAs were to progress with implementation. *Guidelines for Progress* elicited over 1000 responses. While there were some positive reactions and enthusiasm, new concerns were voiced also:

> the likely costs of implementation; the relatively short timetable over which schemes are to be introduced; and the need to clarify the percentage of the

> education budget which is to be devolved... the future role of the School Board and ...the danger of "innovation overload" on teachers. (SOED 1993:1).

Guidelines for Schemes addresses these concerns and develops practical guidelines.

The first concern related to cost. The Secretary of State now "acknowledged that there will be cost implications" (*ibid*: 2). However, there remains a belief that overall the effect on resource implications will be "broadly neutral", but qualified by "longer term" (*ibid*: 3). The ability of decentralised management to generate economic efficiency, through better use of resources and reduction in EA costs remains a constant assumption. The principles advocated in *Guidelines for Schemes* re- iterate and develop the associated arguments for the advantages of DSM:

> First, it will improve the quality of decision- making by giving schools greater flexibility and choice in deciding on their priorities and detailed arrangements in response to the needs of pupils and the aspirations of parents. Second, it will allow schools to respond more quickly to changing needs and priorities. Third, it will result in the more efficient use of educational resources and better value for money. (*Ibid*).

The discourse of economic and managerial efficiency is pervasive, promoting economic and human benefits, which are enshrined in a fourth, and new, principle:

> it will raise the morale of Head teachers and staff as they see the results of increased control and responsibility at school level for educational decisions. (*ibid*).

There is a moral obligation to adopt a managerial reform inspired by assumptions of economic efficiency and decentralisation generating individual and collective gains.

The second concern was the impracticality of implementing DSM within the proposed timetable. Originally, DSM was to be fully implemented and operational by April 1996. *Guidelines for Schemes* amends and extends this timetable. All EAs are to submit a draft scheme of delegation to the Scottish Office by 30 September 1993. Following the Secretary of State's approval, EAs are to begin implementation. Phased introduction is permissible. However, all EAs must have the first tranche of schools operating DSM by 1 April 1994. All primary and secondary schools are to be involved

by 1 April 1996, with special schools by 1 April 1997. The continuing assumption that DSM would remain fundamentally similar despite Reorganisation and that DSM would be broadly resource neutral gave credence to a relatively fast and straight-forward implementation of DSM. In practice, this has proved problematic. Consequently, the Government extended the timetable for implementation in small primary schools to 1 April 1998.

The third concern was the need to clarify the budget devolved. There are two broad aspects of budget that should not be devolved. Firstly, responsibility for the capital programme expenditure and consequential loan charges. Secondly, costs associated with the needs of specific individual pupils, rather than school wide[9]. Special Educational Needs must be protected. The budgets to be retained centrally ensure the continuation of protection both for the school and pupils. However, this indicates that a proportion of the education budget will not be devolved. Consequently, schools will not be completely autonomous. A role for the EA, or at least a body external to the school, remains in providing and managing the specified non- devolved budgets.

EAs have a role in determining the budgets that are to be devolved. *Guidelines for Schemes* explains:

> The remaining bulk of an authority's schools' education budget, including all other central costs, would then define education expenditure at school level, of which *at least* 80% should either be devolved to the control of head teachers in the authority's area or delegated to School Boards. (*ibid*: 6).

It is for the EAs to determine heads of expenditure relating to their schools and to create a scheme outlining which ones are to be delegated. Nevertheless:

> As a matter of general principle, however, the Secretary of State will expect schemes to provide for significant devolved decision- making on at least the following heads of expenditure:
>
> costs of staff wholly or mainly employed at the school (both teaching and non- teaching);
>
> furniture, fixtures and fittings;
>
> property related costs; and

supplies and services. (*ibid:* 6).

Account is to be taken of existing legislation: School Boards (Scotland) Act 1988 relating to school board budgets and the purchase of books and teaching materials; Local Government Acts 1980, 1988 and 1992[10], relating to maintenance and service provision.

Guidelines for Schemes offers suggestions as to how EAs should approach these various heads of expenditure. The precise detail is to be determined by individual EAs. However, these must retain the general guidelines offered by the Scottish Office which do determine a particular approach. In delegating budgets, EAs are to adopt a formulaic approach. Clear and consistent criteria are to be utilised. These approaches are to be published and open to public scrutiny. The creation of budget levels is to take account of specific variations, e.g. "local, geographical and social circumstances, and the nature of school buildings" (*ibid*: 5). Nevertheless, it is the Government's aim that the determination of budget levels should move towards a formula based mainly on pupil numbers.

The management of the delegated budget is to reside with the head teacher, in consultation with the school board. If there is no school board, the head teacher retains control of the budget. In operating this budget, head teachers are to be allowed 'flexibility' due to the ability to carry- forward surpluses and deficits, and the ability to vire between budget headings identified by the EA. The EAs can set limits on the level of virement and carry- forward. The head teachers 'flexibility' is constrained also as it "should sit alongside a requirement for rigorous accounting for funds at school level" (*ibid*: 10) and EA audit. The head teacher's increased power is coupled with increased responsibility and accountability. A role remains for the EA in monitoring, auditing and overseeing the head teacher's actions.

Devolution to the head teacher is different from the situation in England and Wales where responsibility is devolved to the Board of Governors. The Scottish school board is not as powerful as the English Board of Governors and hence only receives a consultative role in DSM. A concern about DSM has been what the role of the school

board would be. School boards were created in legislation in 1988. In the Strathclyde pilot of DMR the school board was not integral as these bodies were considered too new to become the key power holders, there were concerns also that they posed a challenge to 'professionalism'. The Scottish Office did not go down this route also, although the consultative role strengthened school boards more than DMR. Similarly, in the appointment of staff, head teachers and school boards are both involved. However, the EA remains the official 'appointer' and legal employer of staff. *Guidelines for Schemes* proposes various approaches, many of which suggest a minimal role for school boards:

> This is a flexible procedure whereby the School Board can have a role in decisions on school management, while not being required to take on executive responsibility... It would be open to a School Board to give purely formal consideration within the terms of a scheme, to the head teacher's proposals, if they did not wish to be involved in detail. (*ibid:* 10).

Importantly, DSM can function without a school board. However, should a school board wish to increase its role, it can apply to extend its powers through the provisions of the *School Boards (Scotland) Act* 1988. The school board's role remains flexible and will only be resolved in practice, where a variety of approaches may emerge.

The vagueness of a specific role for the school board is replicated and heightened when attempting to uncover the specific roles of schools and EAs. The documentation is not clear. Schools are to have an increased role in the management of the education system and in particular school budgets. However, this 'decentralisation' does not eradicate the need for an EA. Importantly, EAs are to set the framework for the operation of DSM within their area, through the creation of the scheme of delegation and setting of budgets. This may give EAs the opportunity to define a specific form of DSM that requires their continued involvement. The Government's guidelines suggest the continued involvement of EAs in supporting schools. There is the practical support of the development of DSM through provision of training for head teachers and school boards, plus the setting up of administrative arrangements. There is budgetary and 'strategic' support by the retention of specific budget lines. Similarly, while DSM offers choice of suppliers to schools, the Government emphasises the

benefits of bulk purchasing offered by EAs should be retained. Finally, EAs are responsible for monitoring and holding to account the operation of DSM within schools, emphasising their responsibility to the wider public and governmental systems.

The roles of schools and EAs are implied to necessarily change. A particular emphasis is on the notion of managerial responsibility:

> The guidelines make clear that arrangements for devolved management are to be an integral part of the overall policies and management structures of education authorities. This requires that schemes should be kept under regular review on the same timescale as the authority's general arrangements for management planning. School development plans should as far as possible be timed to coincide with any review of any relevant scheme which is being undertaken. (*ibid*: 9).

The DSM guidelines imply a redefinition of roles but do not explicitly address what these redefined roles are. Rather than a straightforward delegation of responsibility, the lines of responsibility are unclear as the school gains roles, EAs have reformed roles and new bodies, such as school boards, have interventionist roles. The guidelines embody muddled lines of responsibility and practical problems if efficiency is to be assured. At the outset of the process of initiating DSM, there was some awareness of this issue. *School Management: The Way Ahead* (SOED 1992b) suggested that :

> It might be necessary in due course to make clear in new primary legislation the responsibilities and functions which would remain with authorities and those which would be delegated to school level, and also those which might be shared between the education authority and the school. (*ibid*: 3.2).

The task has never been undertaken. It could be argued that the lack of specific legislation or detailed guidance encourages local flexibility in response. However at its very heart, DSM as a policy lacks clarity as to the respective role of the EA and the school plus the division and sharing of responsibility of these bodies. The situation would require resolution and potential variations in practice.

The precise nature of DSM resulted after an extensive consultation exercise. It was not the imposition of the Government's LMS in Scotland nor was it the adoption of Strathclyde's DMR by a grateful Scottish Office. In DSM, there are both similarities and differences to the previous policies. In the political nature and emphasis on efficiency arguments, it is perhaps unsurprising that the Government's legislation North and South of the Border are similar. However, in the practical detail and application of DSM, it demonstrates many similarities to DMR. This could indicate a 'Scottish dimension'. The extent to which DMR was influential is not clear. However, it is possible that in the overcoming of protracted disagreements and controversy surrounding the piloting of DMR, SRC did not so much determine national policy as pave the way for greater acceptance of such a policy and demonstrate what was not acceptable, especially rejection of LMS and terminology of LFM. In DSM there are limited, although one could argue symbolic, indications of a more LMS- type approach than in DMR - an overall percentage target for devolved budgets has been set; while budget formulas vary and take account of needs and circumstances , they should move towards a situation of being primarily per capita based; the role of the EA is altered by the delegation of staffing appointments; and the role of the school board is strengthened to a consultative role. However, in the role of EAs and head teachers in DSM , there is nothing akin to the challenge on 'professionals' posited by the delegation of powers to governing bodies in England and Wales. Therefore, DSM is better understood if placed into the context of LMS and DMR, but cannot be understood by recourse to these policies alone. Importantly, within the guidelines for DSM, there is great scope for local variation. DSM remains at the level of policy guideline, not legislation. Nevertheless, all EAs are required to comply with the guidelines printed. For DSM, this facilitates considerable local variation provided each EA remains within the broad framework of the Government's guidelines. Rather than DMR becoming national or DSM being uniformly imposed, it is possible that differences will occur between each EA. While there is a national requirement for the shift to DSM imbued with particular values, in its practical detail each Region's DSM may differ.

Issues Arising From Initial Perceptions of DSM

Initial analyses of the policy and premise of devolving school management suggested that DSM had to be understood within the wider political context of the Conservative Party's values and project. Writing in 1989, McPherson considered the *Social and Political Aspects of the Devolved Management of Scottish Secondary Schools.* He argues that there were three important stages "in the development of Conservative educational thinking" (McPherson 1989:90). The first is "financial", influenced by notions of economic efficiency. Education is expensive and costs are likely to rise as the scope and demand for education increases, therefore "there must be a change in the apportionment of these costs between private and public sources and between local and central sources" (*ibid*: 91). The justification for such a reform can be provided by the second strand of "moral" argument (*ibid*). Parents are redefined as consumers and assumption of uniformity and equality are abandoned. In the light of socio- economic changes such a policy was promoted:

> The fall in pupil numbers saw the financial argument about costs and the moral argument about consumers come together in the much more powerful policy of parental choice. (*ibid*).

The "moral " dimension was a means also of curbing "professional autonomy" (*ibid*). The "philosophy of choice" was promoted by the third stage which sought to redefine the nature of society and the activities of individuals within, redefining the boundaries between public and private. McPherson (1989: 92) argues that it was focussed on:

> a society of increasing opportunity, but not necessarily increasing equality of opportunity, at a society governed by a smaller state, but not necessarily a less powerful state.

It was an attempt at "social engineering" , linked to Thatcher's hegemonic project (*ibid*, Bulpitt 1986). This accords with the primacy of a specific definition of efficiency linked to economic, managerial and social dimensions and enforced by moral argument.

The stages outlined by McPherson (1989) are congruent with later analyses which depict the promotion of DSM as being based upon a political imperative of promoting market forces (Arnott *et al* 1993a, McDowall 1994). In this market conception, there

is a redefinition of individual and collective rights (Munn 1992). The notion of 'producers' (schools and EAs) and consumers (parents) becomes pervasive (McPherson 1989, Munn 1992,1993, Arnott *et al* 1993a, McDowall 1994). This political drive is believed to link LMS and DSM (Arnott *et al* 1993a). However, it is argued that "the introduction of market forces, has been operationalised differently north and south of the border" (*ibid*: 1), and that the "The case is not so clear cut in Scotland" (MacDowall 1994:79). There are differences in policy detail and context between Scotland and England (Arnott *et al* 1993a).

Parental choice and participation presents the opportunity for consumer interests to be utmost, as is claimed to have occurred in England through governing body control of LMS. However, in Scotland, control of DSM is devolved to head teachers with EA involvement and flexibility in determination of schemes, suggesting 'producer' control:

> differences in tone and substance diluted one of the main policy objectives, namely a shift in power from educational producers to consumers. Head teachers and education authorities in Scotland have arguably enhanced their position as producers, under devolved management guidelines. (Arnott *et al* 1993a:2).

The explanation is presented in terms of recognition of the educational and cultural distinctiveness of Scotland. The impact of the promotion of 'efficiency' was 'diluted' by recourse to the 'Scottish dimension'. Before the policy guidelines of DSM, there was a tendency to assume that schools would become beholden to 'consumer' demands (McPherson 1989). However, in the policy created such a scenario is less likely. As DSM powers are not devolved to school boards this decision is symbolic of the 'dilution' of consumer power in Scotland (Munn 1992). Munn (1992,1993) argues that it is unlikely that true consumer power, especially as antagonistic to the producer of the school, will emerge in Scotland where parental choice is less widely practised and school boards tend to support their school. While parental choice and participation do exist, they are not adopted as a vehicle to end professional power in the Scottish education system.

Nevertheless, this is not to argue that under DSM schools are likely to achieve great empowerment and autonomy. This is due to the development of a strengthened central government with increased powers also (McPherson 1989, Munn 1992). McDowall (1994:71) comments that while a centralisation of control and involvement over the curriculum has occurred, a decentralisation of "the management structure within which schools deliver the curriculum" has been promoted also. However, McDowall (1994) proceeds to demonstrate that in practice and principle the dual process of centralisation and decentralisation is not straight- forward. He argues that the outcome of an attempt to demarcate strategic management, locating this centrally, and operational management at the locality is misguided, suggesting the need for a combination of both management roles within schools if decentralisation is to embody any meaning of power. However, this is contrary to the recommendations of the INLOGOV Report and much of the subsequent rhetoric promoting devolving school management. According to McDowall (1994) if devolved school management involves the limited activities of schools within the framework of centralised strategic management, a centralisation of power and control will actually have occurred. Munn (1992) and McPherson (1989) indicate that if an education market is to operate because of framework established by central government, an ultimate centralisation of control will have occurred. In the influence of market values on education a combined process of centralisation and decentralisation may occur, with the former having greatest potential scope (McPherson 1989, Munn 1992, McDowall 1994).

These developments place an uncertainty on to the future role of the EA. McPherson (1989) demonstrates that the outcome of DSM in combination with other policies introduced during the 1980s is contentious. He argues that the initially perceived outcome would be to "weaken the LEA" (*ibid*: 92). However, that outcome may not be straight- forward or uniform. Rather the impact on EAs will vary depending upon their acceptance of central government policy and action in accordance. It is a particular relationship between central and local government that is being advocated premised on a significant redefinition of 'partnership':

> the current reorganisation is intended to, and will, strengthen the power of the EA, provided that the EA agrees central government's policies for education

and sets appropriate accountability criteria for the schools. In other words, central government intends that the EAs be strengthened in their role as 'agents' of a 'principal' (i.e. central government). This is one component of that balance of forces we have known since 1918 as 'the partnership model'. The other component, of course, is the capacity of the EA to set its own goals as a 'principal'. This , it seems to me, is a capacity that the present Government wishes to reduce, if not eliminate. Thus, in authorities that agree Conservative policies, devolution of control from the local authority will

> increase the influence both of central government and of the local authority...In areas that do not agree Conservative policies, the intention is that an alliance between central government and schools that are disaffected from the EA policy framework will weaken the EA's capacity to make policy. In both cases... the intention and...probable outcome is an increase in the influence of central government over policy. (*Ibid*: 93).

Munn (1992) agrees that the movement to DSM enforces the conception of EA's as 'agents' of central government not as autonomous actors.

However, if one perceives EAs as acting on behalf of and in accordance with central government, one must question the extent to which this erodes their role as representatives of their locality and community. Munn (1992:151- 151) explains that:

> Education authorities are in a difficult position to say the least. If they act as government's agents and concentrate on easily quantifiable performance indicators and uncritically accept development priorities, they risk alienating schools and parents. If they develop their own performance indicators and development plan in negotiation with schools they risk alienating government and being scrapped.

EAs are in a precarious situation. McPherson (1989:94) argues that the survival of each EA as a powerful body depends upon their action in the light of change:

> the powers with which the EA emerges from the current reorganisation will ultimately depend on the political negotiation of purposes, downwards with individual schools and upwards with central government.

The future role of the EA is uncertain depending not only on the determination of structural changes but also on the perception of these changes and action towards the new system. The nature and balance of 'partnership' is changing and being challenged.

There are issues of principle underlying this transformation and its implications. McPherson (1989:94) identifies three pertinent principles. Firstly, "whether one believes in the possibility of a public service that can simultaneously achieve equity of outcome, quality of outcome and efficiency of operation" (*ibid*). Secondly, "and relatedly, there is the issue of professional expertise and autonomy" (*ibid*). Thirdly, "there is the comprehensive framework of Scottish secondary- school provision" (*ibid*). In these principles, one can discern the influence of increasing emphasis on efficiency, previous promotion of a professional partnership, and assumed importance of the Scottish dimension. They derive from the discourses of Efficiency, Partnership and Scottish myth.

However, the issues for exploration are not purely principles and perceptions, they are empirical also. In the development of DSM and related factors in Scotland, the situation is not as clear-cut as the 'acceptance' or 'rejection' dichotomy implied by McPherson (1989) and Munn (1992). A non- Conservative EA initiated devolving school management, a decreasing number of EAs were to be Conservative controlled, parents did not pursue opting out - all of these changes signify the difficulty of central government imposing its will upon the Scottish education system. Structural changes could be made, but often relied upon some recognition of the 'Scottish dimension' and negotiation within that system; in addition, the acceptance and action of those involved.

In DSM as embodied in governmental policy, the role of EAs was not completely eroded. However, the manner in which the role of EAs would emerge in practice and develop in the long term remains open to speculation. Munn commented:

> The future of education authorities is unclear. It seems likely that some administrative unit will be needed to monitor standards and quality. One possibility is that the unit will be new single tier authorities with local

> politicians exercising power and influence on schools. Another possibility is that the unit will be devoid of any political representation and report directly to SOED. Alternatively, such a unit might report directly to a Scottish Assembly which would also have responsibility for further and higher education. We must wait and see. (Munn 1992:155).

Munn's words remain pertinent to any consideration of the education system. These are issues relating to both the democratic and service principles of local government.

The difficulty of determining the implications of DSM in early analysis were further compounded by the impending Reorganisation. Arnott *et al* (1993:1) comment that the introduction of DSM will be made more complicated by its combination of timing with local government reorganisation. While McDowall (1994:79) worries that the scale of the proposed new local governments may be too small to facilitate strategic planning at such a level. The combination of DSM and Reorganisation is not merely an issue of practical difficulties, it signifies a substantial reform of the education system based upon a particular perception of the need for and nature of reform.

Conclusions

The initial practice of devolving school management was undertaken by Regional initiative not Central directive. In DMR, there is the attempt to merge efficiency arguments with notions of community empowerment. The Strathclyde policy tended to avoid the term 'efficiency' preferring the pursuit of 'effectiveness' (SRC 1993). Nevertheless, in the principles and practices advocated a similarity to the discourse of 'efficiency' is implicit. As the policy of DMR evolved the language of 'efficiency' became more prevalent (SRC 1995). However, there remains ongoing tensions between notions of 'efficiency' linked to educational and social needs and those of abstract economic and managerial efficiency. The extent to which DMR influenced Central Government's DSM remains debatable (McDowall 1994, Fairley 1995).There are indications that there was some influence, such as the role of the head teacher. In this shift, the argument has been made that in Scotland 'producers' retain some dominance over 'consumers' (Arnott *et al* 1993a, Munn 1992,1993). Therefore, there

remains the potential of a Scottish dimension within an apparently over- arching drive to devolving school management and a discourse of efficiency.

DSM suggest changes in the 'partnership' within education. The process is not purely one of decentralisation, as central government has retained and extended control. Furthermore, in the process of decentralisation, to school, and centralisation, to central government, the role of the EA is placed into question. Fairley (1995:44) argues:

> While it is widely believed in Scotland that DSM will improve school management, there is much less agreement on the likely impact of DSM on local authorities.

He continues by positing three possible implications Firstly, DSM "will inevitably alter the role of local authority education departments", it will become an enabler responsive to consumer demands and school "wishes" (*ibid*). Secondly, the implications will stretch further into the local government structure:

> there will be a 'knock on' effect for local government central support services (CSS) provided by specialist legal, finance, information technology and personnel staff. Where the role of CSS is reduced as a result of DSM , then CSS cost structures will alter, perhaps making them less attractive for the remainder of local government and more vulnerable to competition form the private sector as compulsory competitive tendering (CCT) extends to them. (*ibid*).

Or thirdly, DSM in combination with Reorganisation will generate such "pressures and uncertainties" that schools will decide to opt out (*ibid*). The scenarios provide a continuum of losses for local government, stretching beyond simply the EA service function. Nevertheless, they must be empirically explored rather then mere propositions.

Therefore, there are empirical questions relating to the process of DSM into actual practice and the perceptions of those involved towards the policy which inform my fieldwork. However, before considering the empirical evidence concerning the actual practices of devolving school management, it is necessary to explore the policy, process and perception of Reorganisation. There is a belief that DSM and

Reorganisation will combine to affect the education system and especially local government's role in significant and substantial ways (Arnott *et al* 1993, Fairley 1995, Hart 1994, Kirk 1995, Maginnis 1994, McDowall 1994, Scottish School Boards Association *et al* 1994).

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[1] These changes involve pre- fives, primary education, learning support, bilingual support, curriculum developments (10- 14, Standard Grade, TVEI, and Action Plan) and adult education.

[2]Examples of such policies are in *Generating Change* (SRC 1988b) and *Social Strategy* (SRC 1993b).

[3] INLOGOV focus on: An Approach to the Management of Change; Clarifying Values and Purposes so as to Value capacity in individuals and communities; The Process of Strategic Management: Developing the Organisation; Education and the Corporate Authority; and The Future Committee Structure.

[4] While the HQ has overall responsibility and "functional remits", the Divisions have some "territorial responsibility" (INLOGOV 1989: 42- 43)- essentially the Divisions are an example of spatial decentralisation with little autonomous powers other than those delegated by the HQ.

[5] The term "Avoiding the Pitfalls of LMS" was widely used in the communications and consultations surrounding the piloting of DMR. There was an over- head slide that was used as part of a package to promote DMR that uses the above quote as its title and outlines the implications. The term was repeatedly quoted by officers and head teachers within SRC during my fieldwork interviews.

[6]Such budgets are identified as: Teaching costs, Non- teaching staff; Property costs (rates, energy, furniture & fittings) , Supplies & Services (based on the per capita allowance), and Administration costs (relating to the school, e.g. postages, telephone, stationary).

[7] This is an issue that emerged strongly in my fieldwork also. For example, SRC Education Officers frequently referred to DMR as the national scheme, rather than the accurate terminology of DSM.

[8]The Group consisted of "representatives from education authorities, from COSLA, from the Scottish Parent Teacher Council and from the Scottish School Board Association. It also included a primary head teacher and a secondary head teacher" (Henderson 1994:2).

[9] These are expenditure specific to the particular needs of individual pupils covering:

> school meals and milk:
> bursaries, clothing and footwear grants;
> expenditure supported by central government specific grants;
> home- to- school transport;
> premature retirement costs;
> psychological and learning support services; and
> support for the integration of individual pupils with special educational needs and support for children with Records of Needs provided by other services (for example health boards).
>
> (SOED 1993:6).

[10] The relevant Acts and sections are: Part III of the Local Government, Planning and Land Act 1980, Part I of the Local Government Act 1988 and the relevant provisions of the Local Government Act 1992.

CHAPTER 5

THE PROCESS, POLICY AND INITIAL PERCEPTIONS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

Local government depends for its existence and functions on statute created by Parliament. The bulk of local government finance is determined and provided by central government[1]. This places local government in a structurally weak position as it can be radically reformed by a determined central government, as proven by Conservative Governments since 1979. The policy of Reorganisation is an example of this tendency. The proposal and consultation for Reorganisation occurred at a similar time as DSM. However, given the magnitude of change proposed and the necessity for legislation, consideration of Reorganisation occurred over a longer period, beginning early 1991 and culminating in The *Local Government etc (Scotland) Act* 1994. The outcome of these reforms occurring together resulted in the advocacy of significant reform of the management and structure of local government and its education function. This chapter explores the process and policy of Reorganisation. Initial perceptions and analyses are discussed, including the perceived implications for the education service. Various issues are raised, including the need to consider and research the combination of Reorganisation and DSM affecting schools and EAs. In understanding Reorganisation, issues of discourse, process, policy and perception are important. The traditional discourses of 'Scottish myth' and 'Partnership' were focussed on the education system, but the ideals and assumptions have implications for local government also. Traditionally, the inherent value of local government relates to its service provider and democratic functions (Smith 1985), this accords with the collective approach of the traditional discourses. However, these perceptions and practices were challenged by notions of economic and managerial efficiency dominant from the 1980s. As evident in the process of DMR and the purpose of Reorganisation, there is an ongoing tension between attempts to improve the management of local government and, on the other hand, its democratic nature (McGarvey 1997). The former has the individualistic focus of the 'efficiency' discourse, while the latter accords with the collective values of 'Scottish myth' and 'Partnership'.

The Process and Policy of Local Government Reorganisation

At the start of 1991, the Secretary of State for Scotland announced interim conclusions from the Government's 'taking stock' exercise which reviewed local government. Consultation on taxation for local government was undertaken also. Subsequently, the proposal to reorganise the structure of local government was announced and opened for consultation by *The Case for Change*[2] in June 1991 (Scottish Office 1991a), a general paper outlining the need for reform and principles of the new system. The limitations of the two- tier system are explored; this is expanded in the subsequent consultation paper *Shaping the New Councils*[3] (Scottish Office 1992b). Unlike the DSM documents which focus mainly on its internal nature, the Reorganisation documents refer to wider political, economic and social changes as requiring and informing the proposed reform. In addition, reform is required due to government policy, e.g. Citizens Charter, promoting 'enabling' authority and advocacy of internal market.

Traditionally, a core justification for local government was the provision and delivery of services. *Shaping the New Councils* (Scottish Office 1992b) argues that the expectations of planned economic development throughout the public sector and comprehensive service provision by local government manifested the two- tier system. The Government argues that these expectations no longer hold true and, in light of economic and political changes, a monopolistic and direct provision of public services by local government is no longer crucial. Rather services may be provided by the private sector or bought in from public agencies. Hence the promotion of the internal market and espoused 'enabling' authority, plus erosion of notions of collectivism inherent in 'Scottish myth' and 'Partnership'. A complex network of relationships between public sector agencies, local government, private sector organisations and voluntary organisations now exist. This complexity and diversity is extended by the increasing European dimension of local government activity. With the ending of the premise that local government carries primary responsibility for direct service delivery, the need for large-scale governmental units to achieve such a purpose is ended.

In practice, the two- tier system is claimed to have been managerially and economically inefficient, resulting in poor service delivery also. There is "duplication and waste" (Scottish Office 1991a:7). Some administrative functions were replicated in both tiers, while some services involved both tiers in a way that had not been anticipated, creating "delays and friction" (*ibid*: 7). Policies requiring co- ordination between District and Region were inherently problematic due to "conflict" and differing priorities between the tiers (Scottish Office 1992b:4). The two- tier system created problems for popular appeal and identification also. Some of the Regions are too large to generate individual's identification, "old allegiances" to the smaller, traditional counties remains (Scottish Office 1991a:7). Citizens are presented as being confused by the two- tier system, not understanding which tier is responsible for what. This makes it almost impossible for an average citizen to participate fully in influencing and informing their local government. This perception is re- enforced by the changed expectations that the Government argues citizens hold towards local government:

> People... want to be involved in the planning of the service and they want to know where to direct their complaints if they think the service is poor. As the Citizen's Charter emphasises, people should know who is in charge of public services. Customers' views about the services they use should be sought regularly and they should have ready access to someone who can help them or who can deal with their concerns. Councils cannot develop these close links with their customers when their customers do not understand which tier of local government is responsible for what. (Scottish Office 1992b:3).

It is a specific vision of the relationship between local government and public. The discourse emphasises managerial values from the New Public Management, whereby individuals are citizens and consumers. Concerns centre upon managerial efficiency, economic efficiency, responsive services and accountability, not collective democracy. The final condemnation of the two- tier system is its cost. Due to the inability of citizens/ consumers to express their priorities and concerns effectively, services cannot be responsive and are therefore inefficient. The Government wants to remedy this through an "emphasis on value for money, strong financial management and public accountability" (Scottish Office 1991a:9). While Reorganisation will incur

transitional costs, it is anticipated that an appropriately determined new structure will achieve sufficient cost- effectiveness to be worthwhile and cost- saving in the longer term.

The argument embodied in *The Case for Change* posits that single- tier authorities would fulfil the demands of the changed nature of local government and public expectations. Accountability, responsiveness, efficiency and cost-effectiveness would be assured. Arguments resting on a specific view of economic and managerial efficiency are pervasive in the principles for the new system:

> 19.5 They should be strong, cost- effectively resourced capable of discharging their statutory functions effectively and efficiently.
>
> 19.6 They should be clearly accountable to their electorate...
>
> 19.7 They should be capable of effective management of services and resources and of seeking better and more cost- effective methods of service delivery which reflect local needs, wishes and circumstance.
>
> 19.8 They should demonstrably provide value for money across the range of statutory functions.
>
> 19.9 They should be able to recruit sufficient staff of appropriate calibre and to train them effectively. (Scottish Office 1991a:10- 11).

A similarity in discourse to DSM documentation is evident. The 'silences' are direct service provision and bureaucracy. As DSM principles were pre-faced by an educational aim, the principles for local government are initiated by concern for democracy:

> The new system should be firmly rooted in the democratic tradition. (*ibid*: 10).

As education is linked to teaching and learning, democracy must remain a fundamental principle in British local government. Any reform that did not take account of this would meet with hostility. However, the extent to which maintenance of democratic traditions is intrinsic to the other principles is dubious. Although the other principles are subsequent to consideration of democracy, they are not consequent of this.

The remaining principles refer to the physical nature of the new local government structure. Firstly, the new structure "should not be based exclusively on either of the existing tiers" (*ibid*). Secondly, they "need not be of uniform size" (*ibid*). Single- tier units have potential. However at this stage, June 1991, if alternative structures are proven a better option this would be considered. Given the damning criticisms of the two- tier structure, it is unlikely this would become the preferred option. In the response to the first consultation paper, the Government rejects "that it would be possible to make do with the existing two- tier structure in Scotland" (Scottish Office 1992b:5). While, the Government is prepared to consider concerns voiced during the consultation period, single- tier status is the preferred option.

Due to the consultation initiated with *The Case for Change,* over 460 responses were received. While a significant number, this is almost one- third the number received in response to the initial DSM consultation. The comments resulting from the consultation have informed *Shaping the New Councils.* In addition, a consultancy study was commissioned, the results of which are included. *Shaping the New Councils* indicates that over two- thirds of the responses favoured the change to a single- tier structure. The reasoning of the other third that wanted to maintain the status quo was rejected. The single- tier principle has been established and accepted. McCrone *et al*'s (1992) analysis indicates little support for the Government's proposed need for reform, the principles underlying reform and the proposed nature of the reformed system[4]. This undermines the Government's assumptions, proposals and belief that there was a consensus for reform.

A common concern was that reorganisation would erode the number of local government functions. *Shaping the New Councils* states: "This concern is misplaced. The Government are firmly committed to a strong and effective local authority sector" (Scottish Office 1992b:8). Local government will be strengthened by the creation of an effective, responsive and democratic system (*ibid*: 6). However, the extent to which all existing functions will be retained is dubious. The paper continues:

> local authority sector which is responsible for all those functions which *can be best controlled at that level*... This is not to say , however, that where it is clear

> that a function can best be organised by bodies other than local authorities or where other organisations obviously have an important part to play in the delivery of services, the role of local authorities should necessarily remain unchanged in all circumstances. The ever- changing demands of modern society make this unrealistic... the new single- tier authorities will retain responsibility for the *vast majority* of existing local government services. (*ibid*: 8 - my emphasis).

This is not simply a structural reform involving a redefinition of roles and responsibilities. The discourse of the 'enabling authority' and the internal market is pervasive. For functions the new authorities retain, reform of their organisation and management may be necessary. The development of appropriate structures depends on the nature of the overall local government structure, in particular its scale. The Government suggests that joint arrangements and some decentralisation of service delivery may be necessary.

Consultation on scale is central to *Shaping the New Councils*. Various factors are posited which should be taken into consideration. Some are associated with the benefits from small-scale local governments, e.g. the enhancement of community links and accountability. The service delivery function is not perceived to be a problem in smaller units, partly because it has been eroded and secondly, where it remains joint arrangements are advocated. The paper recognises that: "There is no simple link between the population of a local authority's area and its likely effectiveness" (*ibid*: 25). Nevertheless, the arguments emphasise the benefits of smaller units. However, the situation is not straightforward. The geography of areas may determine specific boundaries. Other factors can be equated with either large or small units, e.g. affecting the experience of councillors and employees, plus for links with other public bodies. Both the financial implications and the financing of the new councils can be better accommodated by larger units. It is almost impossible to posit the optimum size for efficient local government. Differing sizes accord better with the different principles and functions of local government. The principle of democratic accountability may be better achieved in smaller units, while service efficiency and economies of scale relate to larger units. The Government presented four illustrative

models of different potential sizes of local government - the 15 unit, 24 unit, 35 unit and 51 unit structures. The essential reform contained in the 15 unit was the abolition of Strathclyde. While the 51 unit would be radical but costly. Responses were sought on the most appropriate route. Ultimately, the determination of scale would be political choice.

The structure decided upon would influence the provision of services. As concerns Education, the magnitude of this service's cost and services are recognised by *Shaping the New Councils*, as is the central role of existing local governments in this system:

> Responsibility for the provision of school education in Scotland rests largely with regional and islands councils as education authorities. Education authorities are under a statutory duty to secure adequate and efficient provision of school education for their area. They also have a duty to ensure the provision of further education, and powers to provide nursery education... the main current functions of education authorities are to plan, provide and maintain schools for their area, developing their services in response to population shifts and other factors. They determine the allocation of finance, staff and other resources to schools, and have general responsibility and liability as employers for all staff. They manage school premises and provide or arrange cleaning, meals , transport and related services. They arrange for the provision of supply teachers and visiting specialist teachers, provide an advisory service for school staff and arrange in- service courses. They are responsible for school attendance procedures. They have a duty to assess children with learning difficulties... provide educational psychological services, careers advice and related services for pupils... they negotiate contracts for supplies with the aim of gaining benefits from economies of scale. They variously direct schools or provide guidance to them in relation to the structure, content and methods of learning and teaching taking account of the policies of the Secretary of State. (Scottish Office 1992b:30).

This is an extensive list, indicative of the traditional role of EA as 'partner' in the education system. The connotation of 'education authority', rather than merely local

government's education department, implies the importance of this function. The level of funding used for education is a crucial factor in local government finance.

Although the consultation papers do not propose the abolition of 'education authorities', their functions may diminish. *The Case for Change* notes legislation proposed to remove the funding of further education colleges from local government control, enacted from 1 April 1993. The creation of self- governing schools provided another area of educational provision out-with local government. Moreover, for those schools remaining within the local government system change was occurring, due to the Parents' Charter, school boards and DSM. Nevertheless, as with the assertion in the DSM consultation that Reorganisation would not undermine DSM, in this paper it is stressed:

> no action stemming from the Government's consideration of this issue [DSM] will remove education authorities' statutory responsibility for ensuring the provision of education in their areas, and education authorities will continue to provide, *or arrange for the provision of*, a wide range of support services for schools, their staff and their pupils. (Scottish Office 1992b:31- my emphasis).

A statutory duty remains but the execution of this may change. Hence, the education function was open to 'consideration'. The assumption that the education function may diminish was radical in contrast to all other developments in the post- war period that extended local government's education role. The notion and nature of 'Partnership' was being challenged. However, the precise nature of the education function remained to be seen. According with Wheatley arguments, if an EA is to exist and be effective, a preference for a larger unit remains. Of the illustrative structures, it is posited that EAs could only be effective in the 15 and 24 unit structures.

A magnitude and diversity of responses, over 3,300, were received to the above consultation. These were considered and reactions contained within the White Paper *Shaping the Future*[5] (Scottish Office 1993b). The Secretary for State argues there is "substantial support for the creation of unitary authorities across Scotland" (*ibid*: iii). Discourse of "a strong, effective and responsive local government" (*ibid*) is reiterated. The proposed reform is to be radical:

> The reform we have embarked upon is necessarily wide- ranging and challenging. But it is also one which is rich in opportunity- opportunity for local government to embark on an exciting new era as we approach the 21st century. (*ibid:* iv).

The principles of democratic accountability, managerial efficiency and economic effectiveness are cited as proof of this beneficial purpose.

The scale of these new authorities remains controversial:

> not all of the arguments point in the same direction... a uniform structure throughout Scotland is neither possible nor appropriate. Local solutions are required to meet local circumstances and the Government have reached their decisions on that basis. (*Ibid*: 1).

Due to various functional requirements, population settlements and geographical necessities, authorities of uniform population size or geographical scale cannot be created. In *Shaping the Future*, the decision is to create 28 local authorities, including the three island authorities. There is a substantial diversity in population scale[6]. Many rural authorities cover a large geographical area. While the scale of each authority is determined, the problem of different functions requiring different scales is not resolved.

The reform of local government is to embody a change in the nature and operation of their functions. *Shaping the Future* explains of Reorganisation:

> It will also offer each new council the opportunity to re- examine its methods of service provision and to consider new and challenging ways of ensuring that its electors' needs are met. Enormous advantages in service provision, in terms of integration and efficiency, will accrue simply from having the same authority responsible for all local government services in its area. The development of compulsory competitive tendering in the last 10 years and the increasing use of the private and voluntary sectors to provide services on behalf of councils have demonstrated the advantages which can accrue from using alternative means of provisions. Councils should no longer assume that

> the best service is the one that is provided directly by staff from a central location. (*ibid*: 4).

The demise of the service delivery function makes possible the reduction in scale of local government unit. A mixed economy is to operate with authorities as 'enablers'. Assumptions of an 'integrated' authority challenges the notion of educational distinctiveness, while non- direct service provision challenges the public and collective principles - both strike to the core of the 'Scottish myth' and 'Partnership'.

The linkage between effective service delivery and efficient functioning has not been resolved. *Shaping the Future* proposes that in some respects the new authorities are still too large and remote, especially the geographically diverse. Therefore, it is to be required:

> that the new local authorities must devise and publish by 1 April 1997 plans showing how they will devolve responsibility in their new organisation, use local offices to make services accessible to local people and establish new arrangements for consulting and involving local communities. (*ibid*: 5).

These plans are "Schemes of Decentralisation". Yet for other functions, the new authorities may be too small. All authorities are to consider use of joint arrangements, especially for service provision, expert advice and specialist facilities. For certain services, it has been decided that joint arrangements are essential, namely for the "police and fire services, for the management of the Passenger Transport Executive in Glasgow and the surrounding area and to support the valuation services provided by local assessors" (*ibid*). For the remaining services, joint arrangements are discretionary. However, the Secretary of State has the power to intervene to establish joint arrangements and joint boards. There is an assumption that for a number of functions and services the new authorities are too small to be efficient and effective, undermining the overarching principle for reform. Pure 'efficiency' appears unattainable in the new arrangements.

While *Shaping the Future* does not provide detail of how the new authorities' services should operate, the previous consideration of the changed service role plus subsequent discussions of how these services "might be organised" (*ibid:* 5), outline the

Government's propositions and assumptions. Two paragraphs are dedicated to Education. It is believed that "all of the councils proposed in the new structure will be well able to ensure an efficient and effective education service" (*ibid:* 6). The use of private and voluntary sectors is encouraged, e.g. for specialist services. In addition, while an element of local responsiveness is encouraged, the Secretary of State is to have interventionist powers if necessary[7]. The new EAs are not to be omnipotent, they can be controlled by the Secretary of State through statutory powers and fiscal controls, and they are part of a network involving other bodies. However, there remains an important education function at local government level, but its nature and execution may be changing. The introduction of DSM is posited to indicate a changing role for schools and EAs:

> While the introduction of Devolved School Management will shift much of the day to day management of school education down to school level, the new authorities will retain a strategic, enabling and supportive role under these schemes. They will... still be responsible for ensuring adequate and efficient provision of school education in their area, as required by statute. (*ibid:* 5).

The discourse of "strategic, enabling and supportive" authorities is emphasised (*ibid*). No exploration of the precise nature of this division of responsibilities and its practicality is offered. The focus on school-level empowerment, plus policies of DSM and Reorganisation may undermine the EA.

The bulk of the remaining White Paper is concerned with the practical details of the financing of, and transition to, the new authorities. It is proposed that full Reorganisation will occur on 1 April 1996. The single- tier authorities will operate in a lean 'shadow' form for the year prior to gaining full power. The existing system of local government finance will be retained, giving the Government powers over setting and capping authorities' budgets[8]. While it is recognised that there will be transitional costs, it is believed that within five years these will be overtaken by ongoing efficiency savings[9]. The assumption is that leaner structures will prevail with a reduction in highly paid officials. The arguments that smaller local government units may be more costly are not explored. The transition to single- tier status is hoped to occur smoothly. A Staff Commission is to be established to advise and oversee the

transfer of staff. Residuary bodies may be set up to deal with the transfer of assets. The existing authorities are to provide profiles of their existing resources and offer advice. After election of members to 'shadow councils' in early 1995, they:

> would be responsible for appointing as soon as possible the new authorities' chief executives , chief officers and other senior officials and for putting together their first budgetary and service provision plans. (*Ibid*: 21).

As full transfer on 1 April 1996 draws nearer, more staff will be in post. This apparently straightforward process undermines the complexity and the magnitude of task. Conflicts of interest between old and new authorities may exist, and between new authorities.

The majority of the propositions, which necessitated changes in statute, were embodied in the *Local Government Etc (Scotland) Act 1994*. However, the magnitude and far- reaching nature of the proposed Reorganisation ensured the passage of the Act was controversial[10]. Key concerns were the boundaries and scale of the new authorities. Some exceptionally small units had been created, generally in areas that had a traditional Tory base, hence, claims of gerrymandering. In the debate, some changes to structures and boundaries occurred. Importantly, the number of new authorities rose to 32 councils.

The Act is lengthy. However, only two sections outline the nature of Reorganisation for Education, concerning local government organisation and parental choice. On the first point, it is no longer essential that local governments appoint an education committee. The existence for such a committee is made discretionary and the statutory requirement for a Director of Education removed. The Act concerns that should be appointed to the education committee if one is created. Three members of this committee should be members of the local authority and three are representatives of churches[11]. The second statutory issue ensured that children would be able to attend schools out-with their local authority boundary. This emphasised parental choice, but also ensured continuity in the education of children. Both policies are striking for the emphasis on actors out-with the previously 'professional partners'. Teachers and education officers are not mentioned, nor are issues concerning the specific functions

of the Education service. The approach can be related to the nature of the contemporary Conservative Party which is broadly composed of old conservatism and neo- liberalism. On the first strand, while churches have always been integral to education, their promotion accords with the moral values of conservatism. Whereas neo- liberalism supports the exercise of choice advocated in parental choice. Previous assumptions about the nature of education are not included.

The Government's assumption is that through the creation of managerial and economic efficiency, based on local flexibility and responsiveness, a better education service will emerge. Hence, in a discussion of the Act, Barry Greig (1994), a SOEID official implores:

> The Government therefore do not see any reason why the changes which have been passed should be construed as adversely affecting Scotland's education service... The Government fully recognise the importance of education as a local authority function and believe that their decisions will strengthen the ability of local government to manage the services for which it is responsible.

The aim is not to fully abolish EAs, rather they are to be reformed. Firstly, due to the overriding principles of efficiency, which may include the ending of specific education committees. And secondly, due to the diminishing need for direct service provision. In combination, this is a potentially radical change in the role and functioning of EAs.

The basis of Greig's exposition as to the removal of the statutory requirement to appoint both an education committee and a Director of Education is that it is a principled and pragmatic move. A working group on the internal management of local authorities concluded that it is best "to give local authorities the flexibility to establish committee and management structures which best reflect local needs and circumstances." (Greig 1994). Hence, logically this principle should be applied to Education. The existence of education committees and Directors have not been abolished, they have been made discretionary. A further amendment to the legislation has clarified that teachers may be appointed to such committees. The term 'education authority' is to be retained and applied even where no education committee exists.

Nevertheless, *Shaping the Future* had argued that the general review of internal management should not become statutory. Thus, the statutory change affecting Education is more specific and deliberate than the SOEID's rationalisation would allow. The second statutory amendment concerning the placing of children in schools is less contentious. Greig (1994) explains that the principle aim is to confirm existing catchment areas will remain. If necessary authorities will enter cross- boundary arrangements. As long as these catchment areas pertain, associated transport arrangements will have to be maintained also. Finally, the new authorities cannot change existing catchment areas without substantial consultation and, in certain cases, the approval of the Secretary of State. This does fulfil pragmatic requirements, but it accords also with parental choice. Nevertheless, in establishing 'catchment areas' 'efficiency', in a market conception, is undermined. Greig's (1994) final comments on the Act are the advocacy of joint arrangements where necessary. A binding factor is that the Secretary of State has interventionist powers where EAs are failing to ensure adequate services and fulfil statutory duties. Therefore, the role of the EA is being altered.

Reorganisation has significant implications for the future Education service. However, despite the established centrality of the Education function in local government, there is little detailed consideration of the needs of the Education service. Rather, the Education function is to be retained but in a reduced and reformed nature. Various polices take functions and services out-with the control of EAs, e.g. the removal of further education, opting out and involvement of private sector companies. Within the education system related to EAs, change is pervasive. However, the policies do not explore the practical ramifications of the combination of reforms. Unlike the centrality of 'educational value' to discourses of 'Scottish myth' and 'Partnership', the current reform and discourse undermines the distinctiveness and traditional values of the Scottish education system.

Initial Perceptions and Analysis of Local Government Reorganisation

The promotion of single- tier councils has been advocated by all major political parties in Scotland (McVicar *et al* 1994). However, within this 'consensus', which the

Government adopted as justification for reform and the lack of an independent review, there were divisions in opinion, dynamics in support and differing objectives. The policy of local government reform was keenly advocated by Opposition parties and some professional groups during the 1980s, whereas it was not widely supported by the Conservative Party. The beginnings of change in the Scottish Conservative Party can be traced the 1988 SCUA Conference which "overwhelmingly supported a motion in favour of reform of local government and, in particular, abolition of the two- tier system" (*ibid*: 5). It is from this time that the policy of Scottish Reorganisation began to be formed.

There are various reasons as to why the Conservatives altered their stance. Alexander and Orr (1994:33) link the imperatives of reform and political expediency:

> For the Conservatives, their dismal showing in local elections...and the consolidation by opposition parties of their control of local spending, particularly in the larger regions such as Strathclyde and Lothian, with social policies involving 'un- Thatcherite' elements of redistribution, provided a good reason to re- examine the system.

In particular, the reform of local government intended to abolish Strathclyde Region, deemed a 'monstrosity' by John Major (Hayton 1993:8). There is the continuation of Thatcherism's aims of 'burying municipal socialism' and constructing an 'electoral project' based upon ' popular capitalism'. Drawing on right- wing rhetoric, there was pursuit of the 'enabling council' (Fairley 1995, Midwinter & McGarvey 1993). This was a departure from "the Wheatley concept" reforming the service principle to constitute "market- led enabling strategies" (Fairley 1995:39). The wider constitutional question was relevant. Speaking in 1988, Ian Lang forewarned: "local government reform must not become a "Trojan Horse" for a devolved assembly" (McVicar *et al* 1994:8). Subsequently, the debate was constructed to exclude consideration of a Scottish Parliament. It was hoped that Conservative reform of local government would gather popular appeal and deflect attention away from demands for a Scottish parliament. In the development of Conservative support for Reorganisation there was a combination of political objectives predicated on anticipated political outcomes and electoral appeal.

Two further factors combined in the timing of reform. Firstly, Alexander and Orr (1994) explain that the necessity to review local government finance in light of the unpopular Poll Tax provided an opportunity to reform the wider structure of local government also. Secondly, in England, the appointment of Michael Heseltine as Minister for local government, who was keen to accelerate local government reform (McVicar *et al* 1994). These combined to impact upon the timing and promotion Scottish reform.

However, McVicar *et al* (1994) demonstrate that while there was a general will for reform within the Conservative Party, there were competing definitions of the detailed nature of proposed reform. Single- tier authorities were the preferred option. However, the issues of scale and purpose were contentious:.

> In the debate there have been two broad models of reform...represented two Conservative instincts: "managerialism" and "localism". On the one hand there is... the "anti- bureaucratic urge" that wanted less planning, small local authorities, low spending, and was suspicious of large authorities being remote and wasteful. On the other hand there was the belief that one could make savings and deliver a better quality of service by moving to large strategic authorities, better able to plan and coordinate services. (McVicar *et al* 1997:7).

There are the competing themes of managerial efficiency, economic efficiency, democratic principles and service delivery.

At the early stages of proposed reform, the former approach appeared to hold prominence[12]. However, later recommendations moved toward the 'managerialist' arguments for larger units retaining an education function[13]. McVicar *et al* (1994)explain that the changes and competing objectives must be understood within the context of a divided Scottish Conservative Party signified by the hostility between the "Forsyth/ Thatcher axis" and Malcolm Rifkind (*ibid:* 12). Neither policies of the radical right and 'localism' or those of large managerial units were fully acceptable. Hence, the compromised policy of 32 units, most closely associated with the 'weaker' proposals of the Scottish Conservative Local Government Review Committee. Consequently:

> the principle of local government reform was an idea without enemies... But the final outcome will disappoint many... From being an idea without enemies, reform now looks particularly friendless. (McVicar *et al* 1994:26)

The only Conservative unity forged was in rejection of opposition to their proposals.

Strong opposition has characterised the perception of and reaction to the Conservative's proposals. McVicar *et al* (1994) chart the transition from Labour, Scottish National Party and Liberal Democrat support for reform to rejection of the Government's policy. Opponents argued that reform could only occur within the wider consideration of the future government of Scotland (McVicar *et al* 1994, Sinclair 1993). There were demands for an independent commission to be established (McCrone *et al* 1992, McFadden 1993, McVicar *et al* 1994, Sinclair 1993). Without these initial actions , the assumptions underpinning the Conservative's proposals and the objectives of reform met hostility (McCrone *et al* 1992, McFadden 1993). It is argued that there were no demands for the type of reform advocated by the Conservatives (Sinclair 1993, McCrone *et al* 1992, McFadden 1993) and that it was designed for partisan advantage (Alexander & Orr 1994, McVicar *et al* 1994).

The 'consultation' was perceived as 'empty', framing the debate in terms of specific recommendations and systematically excluding certain issues, e.g. the maintenance of Strathclyde or two- tier authorities (Alexander & Orr 1994, Fairley 1995, SLGIU 1995):

> It is tempting to characterize this as the Henry Ford model of consultation: you can have any model of local government as long as it is unitary. The major principle of the structural change was seen to be predetermined and set aside from the consultation process. The case for unitary authorities was presented as unimpeachable. (Alexander & Orr 1994:34).

> The consultation is based upon partisan objectives and justified by inadequate and inappropriate findings in the Touche Ross consultancy report (Sinclair 1993, McFadden 1993). There is a lack of adequate consideration of the nature of service delivery or the implications of "fragmentation of services" (Sinclair 1993:21). It is premised on a "narrow definition of accountability... essentially on managerial

accountability" rather than wider political or democratic accountability (*ibid*). There is little alternative or attention to counter- argument, nor is there consideration of implementation difficulties or how this new structure relates to a wider debate about the role of local government (McCrone *et al* 1992, McFadden 1993, Sinclair 1993).

The magnitude and scope of change suggests that there will be difficulties in managing the transition to unitary status (SLGIU 1994). The nature of the transition will vary depending on the magnitude of change necessary in various areas (Fairley 1995). The process to transition will not be an universal experience (*ibid*) [14]. There is a concern about the scale of the new councils, especially if a service provision role is assumed (Fairley 1995, SLGIU 1994). Fairley (1995) comments that larger Regional units may have been more effective in fulfilling the democratic and representative principles of local government also. For example, "There is strong evidence to suggest that the large Regions have exercised considerable influence in some areas of policy development and that in doing so they have modified Scottish Office thinking and proposals", DMR is cited (*ibid:* 41). Such central- local relations serve to develop better policies based on experience and expertise and offer checks and balances. In terms of local government's service and democratic principles, the new unitary authorities may be inadequate.

Even in terms of the re-conceptualisation of the 'enabling authority', it is questionable as to how efficient and effective the new authorities will be. The Government claimed that the two- tier structure was confusing, inaccessible, unaccountable and unresponsive. The solution was single- tier organisation. However, in proposed joint arrangements, some commentators argue the imperatives of reform have been compromised (Alexander & Orr 1994, Fairley 1995, Hayton, 1993). Hayton (1993:11) suggests that joint working will be a necessary but arguably negative development in the new system:

> ... the 'unitary' local government system will in fact be a two- tier system. One tier will consist of democratically- elected authorities. However, many of these will be incapable of providing some services effectively and efficiently because of their size. Accordingly there will be a need for a second tier of non-

> elected bodies which will deliver services over areas wider than those of the individual 'unitary' authorities.

Hayton (*ibid*) argues that such an outcome is at "conflict with the principle of accountability" and cost effectiveness. The economic, managerial and democratic 'efficiency' of the new system is seriously questioned in the potential erosion of unitary status. Similar arguments are associated with the proposal for decentralisation within unitary authorities. Decentralisation may have various and unintended consequences, whereby "transparency" is "compromised", as is managerial and political accountability (Alexander & Orr 1994:36). Alexander & Orr (*ibid*) conclude:

> That a decentralized authority can assume the characteristics of a two- tier system, and accountability become confused, has been little recognized in the debate. Any need for joint arrangements after April 1996 will have implications for accountability. Similarly...schemes of administrative and managerial decentralization, especially when they are statutorily required, may have the effect of compromising the unitary status of the system. The government's case for its proposed reforms needs to be judged in the light of these complexities.

One has to question the extent to which the over-arching pursuit of single- tier status was primarily politically motivated and practically compromised.

The view that Reorganisation was highly political is compounded by the extent to which it was used as a vehicle to centralise further power within the Scottish governmental system. SLGIU (1995:23) discuss the strengthening powers of the Secretary of State and consequently the "reduction in the powers and autonomy of local government". Some functions are to be removed from local government control, such as water, and be controlled by unelected quangos responsible to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State has increased his direct powers and those relating to oversight (Fairley 1995). As with the education system , the apparent promotion of decentralisation masks the linked and arguably more pronounced centralisation of power and controls also. This challenges notions of 'Partnership' and local democracy.

The initial analyses of Reorganisation emphasise the controversial nature of this policy, the illogical nature of many of its propositions, and posit problems for the future of Scottish local government. SLGIU (1994) concludes that Reorganisation has generated uncertainty and difficulty for local government employees, the exercise will be costly and may not generate improved services, as services may be undermined and eroded; public accountability may not arise as confusion persists; the removal of functions from local government and the prohibiting of local government employees standing for local election undermines the democratic principle of local government. Whereas previous reorganisations commanded consensus and sought to empower the system and rationalise service provision, the present reform is different in removing functions from local government and proposing a plethora of service providers. SLGIU (1995:24) explain:

> there is a growing trend towards the fragmentation of local service provision, which is at odds with the historical trend towards rationalisation of structures.

The service function and capacity of local government has been seriously challenged by the principle of the 'enabling authority' and creation of small unitary authorities. The extent to which this also undermines the democratic principle of local government and the system's future role remains to be seen. The extent to which the new authorities adapt to their proposed role and are pro-active in their future development will be crucial.

Many of the political objectives informing Reorganisation and opposition to this relate to notions of 'efficiency'. McVicar *et al* (1994:7) indicate that such a discourse and belief was crucial to generating Conservative consensus for reform:

> The reform process might not have 'rolled' had there not been a belief that the new authorities would be more efficient and that reorganisation would reveal 'a pot of gold' (i.e. demonstrable cost savings).

However, by the time of the Reorganisation Bill "this belief was not credible" (*ibid*). The reorganised system, although promoted on the premise of "the capacity of authorities to operate as enablers", has not succeeded in this aim due to the influence of a "planning" ethos (*ibid*:25). The Conservative's political principles were not realised, especially due to the practical emergence of a new 'two- tier' system (Hayton

1993). McVicar *et al* (1994) attribute such developments to division of ideals and purpose within the Scottish Conservative party. There is an over- arching continuity with the division in Conservative thoughts between the need for 'free market' and 'strong state' (Gamble 1988). In local government, there is the added dimension of the tension between the need to ensure democratic responsiveness with service efficiency, both of which have divergent structural forms and operational characteristics (Sinclair 1993) . The question is whether a workable compromise has been achieved and whether such a situation can achieve its assumed objectives of reform and 'efficiency'.

Initial Perceptions Concerning Reorganisation and the Education Service

Concerns about the lack of consultation and adequate consideration given to the proposed reform are amplified in responses about the education system. In the lengthy proposals about Reorganisation, only around 200 words are devoted to 'consideration' of education (Scottish School Boards Association *et al* 1994, Corsar 1994). The consequence is an allegedly inappropriate and unwarranted reform. There is perception that the future of the education service has been 'threatened' (Corsar 1994, Hart 1994, Maginnis 1994, Midwinter & McGarvey 1994, Scottish School Boards Association *et al* 1994). Midwinter & McGarvey (1994:117) conclude that " a higher cost- lower quality education service is now a distinct possibility". While the Scottish School Boards Association *et al* (1994:8) argue that the consequence will be a "Downgrading of Education" such that "Scotland's schools are headed for a period of deep uncertainty, instability and a crisis of morale". The scope of this "threat" is widespread affecting "services and staff" (Hart 1994). The President of the Educational Institute of Scotland and the President of the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland urged the need "to develop the consensus of concern about local government reorganisation among the education community in Scotland" (*ibid*) . The notion of a harmonious consensus supporting positive development, intrinsic to 'Scottish myth' and 'Partnership', is rejected due to perceived political attack on local government and education systems.

A fundamental concern relates to the reduced scale of the new local government units. There is belief that economies of scale will be lost (Hart 1994, Maginnis 1994, Scottish School Boards Association *et al* 1994). Hart (1994) argues bulk purchasing and service provision accrued from larger scales are advantageous. Midwinter & McGarvey (1994) make the common point that 24 of the 32 new authorities will have less than 200, 000 of a population, the scale advocated by Wheatley for EAs. They seek to explore the "relationship between population size and functional efficiency in local government" (*ibid*: 112). It appears the new EAs will have "higher unit costs" (*ibid*: 115) and this may influence service levels. Kirk (1995:27) predicts the "diseconomies of disaggregation" which indicates loss of cost efficiency with a concurrent "lowering of quality or a wasteful duplication of resources". While Fairley (1995) cites successes in the island EAs, there is widespread concern that the new small mainland EAs will suffer.

Reduced scale may have a negative impact in three ways. Firstly, there are increased cost implications in creating the new EAs and their functioning (Midwinter & McGarvey 1994). Furthermore, the new local government units will have a smaller tax base and therefore smaller budgets, often compounded by the inability for redistributive policies as enjoyed during Regional status (Scottish School Boards Association *et al* 1994). Secondly, the new EAs have boundaries that take no account of school catchment areas (Corsar 1994, Scottish School Boards Association *et al* 1994), making transition, continuity and management of the education system problematic. The scope for strategic capacity has been eroded (Fairley 1995, McDowall 1995, Scottish School Boards Association *et al* 1994). These all affect the third issue of service delivery. The increased cost of the new system compounded by increasing restrictions on local government finance will influence the level of services (Midwinter & McGarvey 1994). 'Non- mainstream' education, such as special educational needs, will be "particularly vulnerable" (Scottish School Boards Association *et al* 1994:3) and "the non- statutory sector could well be an early casualty of the Act" (Hart 1994:3). SRC (1994) argue also that non- statutory areas, are "areas at risk", as are "educational enrichment activities"; "welfare benefits"; "discretionary awards"; "adult and continuing education". In contrast to previous

educational expansion, present reorganisation may result in the trimming of education to a narrow interpretation of statutory functions. Hart (1994) argues educational provision will decline as school closures and teacher redundancies are almost inevitable. The Government's proposal that joint-working arrangements will ensure efficient and effective services is rejected (Corsar 1994, Hart 1994, Scottish School Boards Association *et al* 1994). Kirk (1995) stresses that there remains a need to support schools, especially in the face of enormous reform. The support and expansion of education inherent in traditional discourses and practices is challenged.

In the drive for efficiency, it is not the Government's intention that local government should remain responsible for widespread and monopolistic education service delivery. Rather, the 'enabling authority' is promoted. According to Midwinter & McGarvey (1994:112) the essential mechanisms for this development in EAs is through DSM, CCT and "the contract model of joint arrangements" . However, all three are in practice flawed and do not equate with a truly 'enabling authority'. DSM does not fully empower head teachers, necessitating still some management and intervention by the EA. CCT and the contract model require the monitoring and involvement of local government, and are increasingly problematic to operate efficiently in small local governments (*ibid*). The time consumed on such activities "can result in an undesirable distraction from the central purpose of providing an effective Educational service." (Kirk 1995:27). Furthermore, Midwinter & McGarvey (1994:112) cite evidence that "the conventional model of direct provision remains the dominant form of service delivery". Consequently, the Government has failed to achieve its objectives of functional and cost efficiency through local government reform (Maginnis 1994, Midwinter & McGarvey 1994).

In the nature and outcome of the reform, there are perceived to be specific problems for the future education service. The proposal to have no statutory Director of Education or associated Education Committee is condemned (Fairley 1995, Hart 1994, Kirk 1995, Corsar 1994, Maginnis 1994, McDowall 1994, Scottish School Boards Association *et al* 1994). There is some recognition of the proposed increased managerial flexibility and freedom (Fairley 1995) plus erosion of negative

'departmentalism' and exclusive 'professionalism' (Kirk 1995) which is possible. However, the need for such in the education system is rejected, especially in light of the greater support for the maintenance of Directors of Education and Education Committees. To not have these is perceived as a "down- grading" of education (McDowall 1994:413), which is viewed as wholly inappropriate "given the crucial importance of Education" (Kirk 1995:27). It is argued that one must reject "unbridled managerialism" (Hart 1994) and abhor "the key theme of deprofessionalism which runs like a silent, sinister theme throughout the entire legislation" (Maginnis 1994). The need for a professional educational Directorate, with specialist expertise and understanding of education is deemed essential (Hart 1994, Corsar 1994, Kirk 1995, Scottish School Boards Association *et al* 1994). Furthermore, the existence of an education committee ensures democracy, which alongside the Director of Education provide a forum to represent and reassure parents and schools, fulfilling democratic and local responsiveness principles (Scottish School Boards Association *et al* 1994). Hart (1994) argues that without these mechanisms, the education budget will be vulnerable within local government and the education system will be subjected to increasing Central Government control. The democratic, professional and collective principles inherent to 'Scottish myth' and 'Partnership' are supported by opponents to the Government's proposals.

Some commentators argued the very principles of Scottish education were being challenged by Reorganisation. A member of COSLA's Education Committee, Councillor Maginnis (1994) argued the Scottish myth would be eroded:

> the proposals as they stand will clearly and unequivocally shatter the consensual foundation of State, Church and community from which our education system has grown strong and tall.

The post- war discourse of partnership was threatened also. Corsar (1994) commented:

> We see an end to the partnership of equals between local and central government, and we see the removal of a healthy counter- balance to the powerful centre.

The extent to which an 'equal' partnership existed is dubious, nevertheless it is increasingly less the case. Kirk (1995:26) argues that the process of centralising curriculum and devolving management has served to "weaken local government in Scotland... the reform of local government is interpretable as a further step in that process.". The discourses of Scottish myth and partnership had been rejected and replaced by the Government's pursuit of 'efficiency'.

The potential implications of Reorganisation on the education system engendered controversy and hostility. The policy was perceived as challenging the traditional practices of the Scottish education system, resting on notions of partnership and professionalism. Rather the discourse of 'efficiency' was utmost. Yet, analysis of issues relating to scale, cost and service provision , suggested that gains in efficiency may be difficult to achieve in the proposed structure. A concerted attempt to mount a "consensus of concern" (Hart 1994) was advocated. It is in the transition from policy and reaction to practice and informed perception that one must turn to develop understanding of the implications of Reorganisation, and DSM, for the future education system.

Conclusions

The Government promoted Reorganisation as creating a more 'efficient' local government, especially in economic and managerial terms. To this end, single- tier authorities were advocated. However, the decision was inherently political, linked to issues of expediency and anticipated outcomes for the Conservative Government. No optimal scale and structure of local government has been established. Indeed, for the different functions and locations of local governments, different scale and operations are more appropriate, evident in the advocacy of differing scales within Scotland, schemes of decentralisation and joint arrangements. However, in the overarching ethos of 'enabling' authorities and rejection of monopolistic, direct service provision, the Government proposed small scale, single- tier authorities as appropriate and efficient.

The nature, process, policy and anticipated outcomes of Reorganisation are very controversial. Issues of the scale and role of local government remain debatable. In particular for the Education function, there are concerns about the capacity of the new EAs to be adequate, especially if a service provider role is advocated. It is posited that neither functional nor economic efficiency will be achieved. Furthermore, the inherent qualities and benefits of the education service may be undermined, e.g. the specialist and professional involvement of a Director of Education and the array of functions offered by EAs broader than minimal statutory requirements. Notions of 'Scottish myth' and 'Partnership' are rejected by Government, but remain important to opponents of the precise form of Reorganisation. Notions of 'efficiency' offer abstract, generic, economic and managerial driven reforms, which ignore the democratic and distinctive values of Scottish EAs. Traditional perceptions and practices are undermined and challenged.

In combination, DSM and Reorganisation signify a substantial reform of the roles for schools and EAs. By implication, this alters the relationship between these bodies. However, in the Government's policies and discourse there is little explicit addressing of the practical outcomes of the combination of these reforms. Rather the discourse centres upon a particular political and ideological proposition that managerial and economic efficiencies are best achieved through decentralised structures. This argument does not take account of the particular nature and needs of the Education system. Unlike debates during the 1940s to 1970s, when reform of the education system was advocated on the basis of the nature of the education service and its function in society, the contemporary debate focuses upon the managerial and economic efficiency of the organisation and operation of the education system, with no specific reference to the purpose of this system.

There has been little attention given to the implications of DSM in combination with Reorganisation. One can discern both similarities and differences in the process of these policies. At the outset, DSM could draw on the practical experience of SRC's DMR. This offered not only practical information, but provided potential support as DMR had been negotiated to accord with the education community and was alleged to

have proven successful. This may have made the transition to DSM by national government policy easier. By contrast, Reorganisation was perceived as an unnecessary and partisan Central Government imposition. Nevertheless, both policies proceeded through stages of consultation attracting controversy in the process. Both policies offered some concessions to the Scottish dimension and the educational community, e.g. the role of EAs in DSM and the U-turn on teacher representatives in education committees. Nevertheless, of the two policies, Reorganisation attracted the most controversy with allegations of 'empty consultation' and narrow options on which to debate. The political agenda was restricting the extent to which these policies could be re-framed.

In both policies, an over-arching concern for reform based on 'efficiency' is evident. As there was the need to determine a policy that was acceptable to a divided Conservative Party and would have some wider appeal, it is possible that compromises had to be made. Neither policy has generated a complete free market or privatisation. The extent to which either was an objective is debatable. Furthermore, in light of practical experience and expediency, further 'compromise' of free market activity occurred, e.g. the limited regulation of school places under the 1996 Act. Nevertheless, market mechanisms were pursued further than previously. Overall, in the Government's framing of these polices and associated discourse, including the reaction of opponents, notions of 'efficiency' are prevalent and pervasive.

There is a need for fuller consideration and empirical research into the combined implications of DSM and Reorganisation. The initial analyses of DSM tended to present it in a more favourable light than one may have assumed given the experience of LMS. By contrast, in Scotland , there was recognition of the 'Scottish dimension' (Arnott *et al* 1993a) and through the reliance upon 'producers', the educational professionals had not been completely by- passed or undermined, retaining some notion of 'partnership'. However, reactions to Reorganisation often include reference to DSM, presenting it more negatively. Maginnis (1994) argues that "the ongoing process of devolved budgets" , combined with policies of opting out, league tables and financial cutbacks, "have all the ingredients for fracture and splinter and

atomisation that the Scottish system had so wisely avoided until now". The historical system of a collective and comprehensive Scottish system, the Scottish myth, is perceived to be at stake. Kirk (1995) argues DSM in combination with increased centralised control and Reorganisation serves to 'disturb' and 'destabilise', the 'traditional' system based upon 'partnership'. DSM is presented as an element in the process of "deprofessionalisation" compounded by Reorganisation (Maginnis 1994). Such issues are inherent in the President of the EIS's hostility to reform: "The idea that with DSM you can safely dispose of Education Committees is profoundly wrong" (Hart 1994). Hart continues to argue that Scottish schools "have no desire to be independent , competing entities" (*ibid*). There is the assumption that DSM, especially in combination with Reorganisation, has potential to undermine the traditional education system and in particular the role of EAs.

There remains strong support and recourse to ideals embodied in the rhetoric of 'partnership' and the 'Scottish myth' in the responses and reactions to DSM and Reorganisation. Although the Government does not reject outright some of the sentiment embodied in these discourses, they seek to replace their primacy with the discourse of 'efficiency' which is mooted as the overarching basis of reform. To this end, notions of 'partnership' and 'Scottishness' are re- defined and adopted to the new purpose of ensuring 'efficiency' through a substantial reform of the education and local government systems. Initial reactions to these policies have demonstrated a partial acceptance of some of the principles, e.g. DSM may generate improvements, but more widely hostility, concern and rejection of many of the proposed Governmental aims of reform. Recourse to notions of partnership and Scottish myth remains and the adequacy and practicality of 'efficiency' are questioned. However, to explore fully the impact of these policies, plus their perception and practical experience, it is necessary to research empirically the impact of these policies in schools and EAs. The actual practice and perception of those 'practitioners' concerning the roles of schools and EAs resulting from reform of the management of the education system must be explored.

[1] 66% of Scottish local authority income comes from Central Government Grants, 19% from non-domestic rates and 15% from council tax (based on 1993/94 figures). (SLGIU 1995:53).

[2] *Structure of Local Government in Scotland: The case for change- Principles of the new system*

[3] *The Structure of Local Government in Scotland: Shaping the New Councils.*

[4] McCrone *et al* (1992:1) conclude: "Among submissions which do not come from Conservative Party members and affiliates, only 27.4% uncritically support the Government's position".

[5] *The Structure of Local Government: Shaping the Future- The New Councils*, July 1993.

[6] "from 10 authorities with a population of under 100,000 to 7 authorities with a population of over 250,000" (Scottish Office 1993b:2).

[7] "The Secretary of State proposes to retain provisions such as those in section 70 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 which give him powers to ensure the discharge of an education authority's statutory duty in any case where this is required" (Scottish Office 1993b:1).

[8] Sections 5.1- 5.4 of *Shaping the Future* details the proposed "Financing of the New Councils":

> 5.2 ...the council tax will continue to be the basis of local domestic taxation for the new authorities... The current expenditure of the new councils will continue to be supported by Aggregate External Finance (AEF- revenue support grant, specific grants and non- domestic rate income). The Secretary of State will prescribe the non-domestic rate poundage for each authority and non- domestic rate income will be pooled at the national level and distributed to local authorities on a per capita basis... The development of grant aided expenditure (GAE) assessments for each new authority will now commence in consultation with the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities...
>
> 5.3 ... the Government will retain a power to cap the council tax of local authorities...
>
> 5.4 The powers available to the Secretary of State for controlling local authority capital expenditure, which are contained in Section 94 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, will be continued. (Scottish Office 1993b:15).

[9] Transitional costs are calculated as between £120m- £196m, while the potential savings over the first 5 years are anticipated to be between £110m- £330m (Scottish Office 1993b:16).

[10] 350 hours of debate in Parliament occurred before the Act gained Royal Assent (SLGIU 1996b:1).

[11] The three church representatives are to be: 1 Church of Scotland; 1 Roman Catholic Church (with the exception of the Island Councils); and 1 representative of the other most predominant church or denomination within the Council's area (2 in the case of the Island Councils).

[12] The Adam Smith institute published *Shedding a Tier* in 1989, advocating a reduced role and scale of local government and increased use of the private sector and market mechanisms. Such proposals were also advocated by the No Turning Back Group. The Scottish Conservative's Local Government Review Committee, appointed in 1988, preliminary conclusions were published during late 1991:

> These suggested a radical reform , shifting local government firmly into the enabler role and removing responsibility for many services, including education, housing, strategic planning and water and sewerage, away from local authorities. The group advocated 40 to 50 single - tier authorities (SCUA, 1991). (McVicar *et al* 1994:11).

[13] The Conservative committee review's proposals outlined above were consequently reformed. Relatively larger units were advocated of between 25 to 40 councils and it was posited that "current services should remain in local authority control and that joint boards should be restricted to police and fire", while "inter- authority contracting and non- statutory joint committees" could aid service delivery, and importantly "Education should remain under local authorities" (McVicar *et al* 1994:11). Furthermore, Malcolm Rifkind had commissioned "a concurrent internal and confidential Scottish Office inquiry into local government structure" under Dr Gavin McCrone (*ibid* :15). The 'McCrone Review' was critical of the existing structure and advocated single- tier authorities. However, these

should be large enough to facilitate strategic capacity and significantly "should have a population size large enough to support the direct provision of an education service with a range of specialist services. This meant that no authorities should have a population size under 100,00" (*ibid*: 16).

[14] Fairley (1995: 36- 37) identifies "four types of transition". Firstly, the island communities where the structure is relatively unchanged, but the nature of local government within "may be very unlike its recent past" due to the changed powers and responsibilities. Second, many of the rural authorities, such as the borders, Fife, Dumfries & Galloway, and the Highlands, where their geographical perimeter remains essentially the same, but district functions will be amalgamated. The reorganisation will entail:

> The main issues in these areas are the amalgamation of district functions, and planning for the statutory requirement to produce schemes of decentralisation. (*Ibid*).

The third type applies to "many parts of Scotland, including the four cities" whereby the new councils equate with the boundaries of the old districts:

> Here the main complexity arises from the difficulty of breaking up the large regional council services such as education and dealing with a range of specialist services which may not be viable in areas which are smaller than outgoing regions. Generally, such 'disaggregating' change is considered the most difficult to manage.(*ibid*: 37).

Finally, there are "areas such as North Lanarkshire and Aberdeenshire wholly new local councils are being created" (*ibid*: 37). It may be problematic to plan the "transfer of district and regional responsibilities, staff, resources and buildings to organisations which do not exist. It is in these cases that the pressures of the time-scale will be greatest." (*ibid*).

CONCLUSIONS TO PART 1

This section has considered the historical system of education, plus the process, policy and initial perceptions of DSM and Reorganisation, focussing on the roles of schools and EAs, plus the relationships between these bodies. However, in tracing historical developments, it is not simply policies and practices which are relevant but importantly the perceptions of these. Discourses have emerged which seek to explain and promote certain visions of the education system. These contain a fusion of fact and value. Despite practical limitations, they have pervasive appeal.

The longest standing discourse relates to the 'Scottish myth' which values collective, democratic, public education. These ideals accord also with the 'Partnership' myth, although this has a British dimension. In the post- war expansion of educational provision, purpose and opportunity, many of the ideals of the 'Scottish myth' found greater application. What was different was the involvement of local government, but this quickly became accepted as integral and necessary to a collective, public education system. These ideals, values and practices were challenged from the 1970s onwards.

The 'efficiency' discourse is broad ranging in focus and does not fully explain the values and approaches espoused since 1979, however it does indicate the centrality of economic and managerial values to proposed policies. As Thatcher commented: "Economics are the method; the object is to change the heart and soul" (cited in Rhodes & Marsh 1992: 77). Hence, a discourse of economic efficiency was to pervade policy reform and be a British project. Notions of individualism replaced collectivism. Assumptions of educational and Scottish distinctiveness were rejected by a 'hostile' Conservative Government (Paterson 1997). This discourse had less popular appeal in Scotland.

All three discourses and related values pervaded the process, policies and perceptions of DSM and Reorganisation. There remains attempts to assert a 'Scottish dimension', to retain a wide role for local government, to emphasise the powerful 'Partnership' of EA and to assert the need for a democratic, collective and public education by opponents of the

Conservative Governments' ethos and reform. The 'old' discourses of 'Scottish myth' and 'Partnership' may be less prevalent in Government policy but they have popular and educational appeal. By contrast, the creation of abstract economic and generic managerial 'efficiency' has limitations in practice and in creating a popular discourse. However, such a discourse has come to dominant Government rhetoric and the assumptions of policy reform. For local government, there is an ongoing and evolving tension between reform related to the service provider role and that that emphasises the democratic function (McGarvey 1997). This affects the role of EAs and the management of the education system also, as apparent in the conflicting interpretations of reforms possible in Strathclyde (INLOGOV 1989). More widely, there are controversies about the nature and purpose of education, collective or individual, British or Scottish.

Therefore, the historical 'context' of contemporary policies is vital to developing our understanding of the nature of these policies and potential practices. The 'Scottish myth', 'Partnership', the breakdown of consensus, and the attempt to construct a new 'consensus' around notions of economic and managerial efficiency, i.e. markets and managerialism, are relevant and pervasive to understanding of DSM and Reorganisation. Furthermore, they alert us to the need to analyse not simply the written 'policy', but the values inherent, the discourse employed, the perceptions of those affected and the likely practical outcomes. Historical traditions, conceptualisation, institutional legacy, political aspirations and cultural assumptions interact in the perception and practice of policy. Therefore, it is necessary to research the perception of those involved with DSM and Reorganisation, e.g. teachers and education officers, towards the policies plus their consequent practices.

The next section unpacks these issues further by considering existing empirical research into reform of schools and local government, theoretical and conceptual issues in the contemporary discourse of economic and managerial 'efficiency', and methodological issues in studying education policy, schools and EAs.