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ABSTRACT

Educational policy and planning in Norway are reviewed in this booklet. One of a series of reviews of Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) member countries' educational policies, this document is presented in three parts. Part I, Examiners' Report and Questions, presents the report of the OECD examiners who visited Norway in 1974. This section includes information on the background of Norway, achievements and pressure points of educational policy, and 11 questions presented by the examiners to Norwegian authorities for further consideration. Part II, Record of the Confrontation Meeting, gives an account of the discussion which took place at the December 1974 meeting between OECD national representatives, the examiners, and the Norwegian delegation. Emphasized during the discussion was the viewpoint that educational policy in Norway must be developed as part of a general social and political policy in harmony with increased oil wealth and industrial development. Part III, Background Report, is the description and evaluation by Norwegian authorities of the current situation of education. A list of the examiners and the Norwegian delegation members is included in the report. (Author/DB)

OECD

REVIEWS OF NATIONAL POLICIES FOR EDUCATION

NORWAY

ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT
PARIS 1976

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) was set up under a Convention signed in Paris on 14th December, 1960, which provides that the OECD shall promote policies designed:

- to achieve the highest sustainable economic growth and employment and a rising standard of living in Member countries, while maintaining financial stability, and thus to contribute to the development of the world economy;
- to contribute to sound economic expansion in Member as well as non-member countries in the process of economic development;
- to contribute to the expansion of world trade on a multilateral, non-discriminatory basis in accordance with international obligations.

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PREFACE

This three-part report deals with the examination of educational policy and planning in Norway, conducted as one of a series of Reviews of National Educational Policies by the Education Committee of OECD.

The group of OECD Examiners visited Norway from 23rd August to 8th September, 1974. Their visit had been extensively prepared by authorities in the Ministry of Education, particularly by the Department of Research and Planning. In the Background Report (Part III of this report) the Norwegian authorities described and evaluated the current situation of Norwegian education with notable clarity and candour, organising data and analysis around four major problem areas:

1. participation in educational decision-making;
2. educational policies for equality;
3. integration in post-compulsory education;
4. innovation and planning policies.

The Examiners were able to formulate their own version of problem areas in Norwegian education because of the extensive opportunity offered them during their visit to Norway, which involved a sampling of opinion in every possible locale from urban Oslo to rural areas north of the Arctic Circle. Discussions took place with the responsible ministers in this field, a wide range of officials at central, regional and local levels, students and youth leaders, political leaders, trade unionists, teachers and teacher organisations, members of the academic and research communities, staff in the regional colleges, the Universities of Oslo and Tromsø, in teachers colleges in Oslo and in the Lappish community Kautokeino and in technical schools.

As a consequence of these discussions, the Examiners proposed to concentrate the confrontation discussion of educational policy in Norway on two general themes:

1. Education in Norway as it is involved in a general problem of Norwegian society: The reconciliation between a) strong central authority developed to implement Norwegian social objectives, and b) the increased local autonomy seen in Norway as the next essential step for the further development of such objectives. Educational policies in Norway to meet this dilemma.
2. The consequences of current policies for Norwegian education in terms of the theory, practice and organisation of pedagogical activities in Norwegian schools and universities, and the required further policies and measures for successful realization of current policies.

Detailed discussion around these general concerns in Norwegian educational policy planning and a series of more specific questions posed for consideration by Norwegian authorities and the Education Committee, comprised the Examiners' Report, presented as Part I below.

Part II records the main elements of the Confrontation Meeting in the Education Committee, 17th December, 1974, between OECD national representatives, the Examiners and the Norwegian Delegation. It is noteworthy that the rearrangement of the questions and the course of the discussion during this meeting tended to emphasize the general viewpoint expressed by Norwegian authorities from the outset of this exercise, namely, that educational policy in Norway is conceived and developed as part of a more general social and political policy which must now take cognizance of the challenges of the increase in wealth and industrial development - hastened by the new-found oil and natural gas - and of the perceived need to maintain national geographical balance and cultural autonomy - all constituting major concerns for current and future educational policy.

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THE EXAMINERS

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Part One

REPORT BY THE EXAMINERS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Examiner group would like to express their appreciation for the extensive preparations made by Norwegian authorities, particularly in the Ministry of Education, which made possible two weeks of intensive, open and enlightened exchange with scores of people involved in every way in Norwegian educational policy, sampling every possible locale from urban Oslo to the rural areas north of the Arctic circle. The unfailing courtesy shown throughout this visit of course enhanced our efforts to understand Norway and increased our resolve to be of service.

I

THE NORWEGIAN BACKGROUND

It is a truism of policy making in education that objectives and policies depend on larger objectives in the society for which they are intended. Norway, more than any other country, allows the outside observer to test the validity of this truism. The issues we were asked to consider were clearly intended to have social, political and administrative effects. In the course of our discussions with many people, the nature of this interrelationship came up over and over again. It thus became both necessary and to some extent possible to develop some conclusions about the interplay between the educational system and other institutions that are shaping Norway at the present time.

Our perceptions were necessarily based on a brief but intensive sampling of opinion and experience; and we are very conscious that our interpretations could be wide of the mark. Nevertheless these perceptions in turn have coloured our interpretations and we consider it necessary to communicate them so as to provide the necessary background for the comments on educational policies which follow. As far as we can determine, five issues are central to an understanding of Norwegian society as it relates to educational policy at the present time: the concept of homogeneity, Norwegian society's corporate structure, the central role of the political process, the smallness of the population together with the largeness of the physical setting of the country and the force of the Protestant tradition.

Homogeneity

Norway contains no significant ethnic or cultural minorities. The Lappish minority, while increasingly important to Norwegian educational policy, is so remote from the centre and so small in relation to the total population that it has not been a factor in defining Norwegians' sense of identity - only recently were the collections on Lappish culture moved from the Ethnographic Museum to the Museum of Norwegian Folklore. While this, obviously, is a potential difficulty in dealing with the Lapps' developing sense of cultural identity, the basic homogeneity of Norwegian society has certainly simplified the problems of social policy. Although industry has had a stable share of the economy for the past forty years, Norway's industrialization was very late in comparison with other European countries and there is a significant number of first generation industrial workers. However, this

late development was matched by progressive social policies which tended to heal harsh social divisions accompanying industrialization during the first half of this century. Furthermore the lack of historical nobility and the memory of resistance to invasion promoted an egalitarian style and a lessening of divisions in the struggle to achieve these advanced social policies.

While very real in comparison with other countries, the homogeneity of Norwegian society certainly has its limits, although these are difficult for an outsider to discover. The impressions of homogeneity are highlighted by the fact that where homogeneity is not a reality it still tends to be a powerful positive value, affecting conditions no less directly than if it were real. The major tension points which were drawn to our attention are traditional, with new problems only just beginning to emerge.

The most important tensions in Norwegian society arise from the rural-urban dichotomy. Norway has until very recently been a predominantly rural society devoted to farming and fishing, with substantial regional differentiation expressed through dialect, doctrinal religious differences, strong temperance movements.

Oslo, the capital city for the past five to eight hundred years - depending upon how events are interpreted - is the symbol of a state which has been a thousand years in developing its position of centralized authority; but in spite of this long tradition, most of the critical developments concerning the present society fall into the last 150 years. The trend has been reinforced since World War II by strong central policies, including educational policies, aimed at achieving equality of services throughout the entire country. Nevertheless, there remains a strong sense of hostility towards central control in the outlying districts coupled with a by now deeply ingrained dependence on central guidance. Policies of decentralization strike a strong traditionalist chord in the Norwegian context.

Traditional analysis of social division based on income, residential or even occupational patterns do not apply to Norway. Nevertheless, one wonders whether this will continue to be the case. First-generation urban dwellers often retain many of the characteristics of their original background. Social status differentials may, however, be much more acutely felt by their children and grandchildren, even if income differentials are kept to a minimum. Moreover, the development of oil and natural gas in the North Sea may provide powerful impetus to the forces of economic division. There is a very real chance that the dynamics of the North Sea development and not the policies of the Norwegian government will prove to be the strongest force for change in Norwegian society in the coming decades, in spite of the efforts of the government to control this development. Internationally, Norway has always been a country of the periphery, and, with the disadvantages this may have brought, has also benefited from what could be characterized as an oblique position in the system of international pressures.

It is consequently uncertain how it will withstand the precipitous involvement in what is probably the most powerful international network of interests in the world today.

Norwegians are accustomed to a self-image of homogeneity. Therefore, the development of social tensions associated with modernity, laid on top of traditional urban/rural and regional division can mean that to Norwegians centrifugal forces in their society appear more powerful than they really are. Compared with other countries, such forces are weak in Norwegian society, nor do they tend to divide individual communities.

An important reason for the homogeneity of Norwegian society and a vital determinant of Norwegian attitudes towards literacy and education is the strong Protestant tradition of the country. Norway is perhaps the most distinctively Protestant of all European countries. In comparison with the other Scandinavian countries and the Netherlands the church remains a force in daily life in Norway. In several regions, fundamentalist beliefs and a powerful missionary tradition are still dominant forces in the community, overshadowing and occasionally in conflict with the schools. Norway has been influenced by the Protestant ethic in many ways: in education, this has meant a fundamental and universal commitment to literacy and an affirmative attitude towards education and its benefits. These have probably been a contributory factor in the achievements of Norwegian educational policy over the past two decades.

Corporate Structure of Society

Participation in representative organisations based on social status, place of habitation or, in more recent times, commonality of ideological, political or other interests, is a deeply ingrained habit of Norwegian life. Negotiation and compromise between these corporate organisations have become part of the Norwegian pattern of society. Moreover, they have generally been possible at a fairly early stage of any decision-making process. This explains the paradox that while status differentials are not a divisive element in Norwegian life, they appear to be very firmly established.

Role of the Political Process

The political process in Norway consequently takes the form of a delicate and extremely well-exercised form of negotiation between a large number of corporately organised interests. As a matter of fact, it is the basic forum of policy formation: in all walks of Norwegian life decisions affecting more than one corporately organised group are considered political decisions. No decisions are inherently technical since the primacy of the political negotiation process allows any group to challenge them on the basis of its particular set of values. On occasion we found that our interlocutors simply rejected on principle the notion that there could be a firm distinction between "technical"

and "political" decisions. At a time when other countries find themselves faced with the difficulty of containing overweening "technical" expertise, Norway has been relatively free from such problems. Characteristically, political party programmes are the basic planning documents of government and the power of the Storting to enter upon any discussion is almost unlimited.

The Storting (the Norwegian Parliament) is the key to this entire system. One gains the impression that nothing is put to a vote before the essential bargaining process has been carried very far. In return all groups conform to the universally accepted convention not to commit themselves irreversibly before the Storting has voted and then to abide by the Storting's decision. While this entire procedure provides Norway with a remarkably effective and open process for decision-making in the public sector, it also increases the dependence of the periphery on the central institutions, particularly as an increasing number of policy issues become interlocking.

This potentially cumbersome decision- and policy-making procedure is made more effective by strong informal networks of relationships and interlocking roles: a relatively small number of persons will be involved in the actual process. Characteristically, civil servants can be active politically, provided they are so in areas outside their field of responsibility. It is hardly imaginable that this decision-making process could function in a very much larger country: as the number of participants in the process increases, the time required for it to run its course increases exponentially; any move to maintain the number of direct participants constant in a growing population would very soon decrease openness and increase the distance between an individual and the level at which decisions directly affecting his welfare are taken. There are signs that people have a feeling that this is already occurring in spite of the fact that Norway's population growth, though substantial, is within the context of a nation of 4 million. "Participation" in this context, while an act of progressive reform, also corresponds to well-established traditions of Norwegian life.

Against this background, we discovered that educational policy-making in Norway is, in fact as well as in rhetoric, a matter of central public importance and therefore of political interest. The reforms now being undertaken in education are clearly related to general governmental policies aimed at a further increase in social equality, democratization and decentralization. Among those who seek to influence public opinion on educational issues, there seems to be considerable agreement that these are indeed issues of central importance. Whether these are the only issues to which Norwegian educational policies should be addressed is a matter that we shall refer to later. Our concern here is to underline the strong consensus we detected within the country on the issues to which government and parliamentary priorities are currently attached. Concerning the inner meaning and significance of these issues we, of course, found differences of opinion, which in

turn could colour interpretations of policies designed to achieve the basic objectives. We accordingly felt it important to probe these differences for clues bearing upon our more direct questions concerning reforms now in progress and our attempt to assess whether they could be expected to achieve their objectives. In probing these matters, we found ourselves caught up in a series of discussions about the future of Norwegian society. It does not, it seems, matter from which angle it is approached, serious discussion of education is inseparable from the vision that Norwegians have, individually and corporatively, of the future of their country. The contribution of educational policy to the totality of public policy is clearly understood.

Oil Development and Norwegian Visions of the Future

We found a striking unanimity of opinion as to the future directions of Norwegian society. It should be a society in which there will be greater social equality, in which individuals and organisations have greater self-determination, in which the aims of social policy should be to eradicate the causes rather than to treat the symptoms of individual and social ills. There is thus powerful public sentiment in favour of protecting and strengthening small local units; of policies that will favour the outlying districts and make Oslo and the other urban centres less of a magnet drawing the population out of rural areas; and of policies that will protect the Norwegian environment from destruction and pollution.

At the level of public discussion, these seem to be matters of widespread agreement. They raise, however, some questions which are equally important and upon which we detect uncertainty and elements of disagreement. The prospect of living in small rural rather than large urban districts clearly touches something deep in the self-perception of Norwegians. But the countryside has historically been unequal when compared to the urban centres. A main question, therefore, is whether policies of decentralization can be made compatible with the maintenance and extension of social equality. In the light of Norway's invariably strong emphasis on central control as a necessary means for achieving social equality, the question arises to what extent the central institutions should retain the extensive policy initiatives they have traditionally been expected to exercise and whether the centralizing policies of the last decades have not strangled local initiative to the point where it will be extremely difficult to revive it.

We will return to these questions in more detail when discussing educational policies. We feel it important, however, to discuss briefly the issue which is presently paramount in Norwegian politics because we are of the opinion that as was often pointed out to us failure to cope with it can thwart the success of most of the educational policies we have discussed.

The discovery of oil and natural gas in deposits large enough to be significant on an international scale has thrust Norway into the

middle of the most critical forum of power. The policies of containment and slow exploitation of the oil reserves set forth in a Parliamentary Report of 1973 are remarkable, in many ways unique and certainly courageous.

It is neither within our competence nor within our responsibility to comment on the likelihood of success or failure of these policies. But Norwegians are doing so; and some view these policies with scepticism. For example, representatives of the youth organisations of five political parties covering the entire political spectrum unanimously identified this single, partially external factor as of paramount importance to Norway's future. They indicated a range of dilemmas:

- The problem of pressure from other nations for a more rapid exploitation of this energy source;
- the question of Norway's relationship to the Third World as it becomes one of the richest nations of the world, based on its fortuitous wealth in a natural resource.

Both these factors may make it harder for Norway to maintain its position on the sidelines of international disputes.

- The potential internal dislocations caused by the development of the technologies and industries associated with oil. These dislocations include increasing wage differentials in an egalitarian society; internal migration of workers, families and secondary industries; unbalanced shifts of employment opportunities counter to established government policies in a presumably increasingly tight labour market, heavy pressures on research and development capacities at universities to shift towards petroleum-relevant work;
- increasing pressures to allow greater immigration; creating minority problems;
- trade-offs between the subsidized fishing industry (an historic way of life for many coastal inhabitants) and an increasingly voracious revenue-generating oil development with its potential ecological degradation;
- problems concerning the investment of oil-generated public funds, specifically problems relating to internal and external investment priorities;
- pressures to expand oil exploration, exploitation and distribution in order to provide greater increments to the national wealth in order to relieve the force of the rising material aspirations of the people, coupled with demands for even greater social equality throughout society and a rising disenchantment with the prevailing high levels of taxation.

Quite apart from its importance to the social fabric of Norway and thence indirectly to the educational system, the crisis over oil which may be expected also affects education in a direct manner. As the major economic enterprises of the country education and oil will

ultimately be competing for the limited manpower (both as teachers and as students!) and for the limited capacities of vital secondary industries, such as building capacities and all craftsmen. An example of the kinds of conflicts which can develop may be seen in the present tensions between the city of Tromsø and the new university there, a question which has received much careful attention in recent years. Should major oil exploration be located in Tromsø the conflict between the requirements of the oil industry and the educational system would become direct and open.

In comparison with the pressures associated with the oil and natural gas development the recent debate about entry to the EEC appears to have less long-term importance. Nevertheless, its impact was clearly felt and it has caused a careful rethinking of the kind of future Norwegians envision for their country. Ironically, oil development may well bring many of the consequences feared in connection with entry to the EEC. Undoubtedly, the EEC debate focused the issues and aspirations of Norwegians more sharply than any other recent event and strengthened the trend towards decentralization and participation which is central to the educational reforms envisaged in Norway. Several times we were struck by the feeling that the debate over entry into the EEC had caused a temporary realignment of traditional coalitions from which the country had not yet fully recovered, so that the impressions we were getting could have been coloured by the fact that new patterns had not yet been established. The most striking fact - the advent of minority government to a country which has been ruled by the same party for 27 of the past 39 years - most likely will also ultimately affect educational policy should consensus be lost on any major policy issue. While this has not yet been the case, it would be wrong to assume that it could not happen in spite of Norway's long-standing traditions of consensual government.

Population and Geography

Norway is both a small and a large country: small in population, large in area. With recent technological advances in communications, the problems posed by Norway's geography have started to become soluble. This leaves the small size of the country's population an enduring and important feature. A striking example of this in educational policy making is the fact that the Storting, through its Parliamentary Committee on Education, still makes decisions on the annual budgets of individual universities and regional colleges.

The city of Oslo is small by international standards, and most communities are small enough to allow informal networks to develop and cover the entire community. This means that formal aspects of society are in some ways more, and in others less important than in other countries. At their best, formal procedures coincide with the directions taken by informal patterns. The tradition of consensual policy-making assures this for a great deal of the time.

We have commented on the interlocking nature of roles: several times we would encounter persons who had widely differing roles in different parts of the educational system. The smallness of social units also means that the distance between the level of action and the level of policy making is relatively small. This certainly contributes to the effectiveness of the total process of policy making.

In considering the example of Norway, it is important to keep the informal patterns created by smallness in mind: many procedures which have proven successful in Norway may not turn out to be viable when transposed into a setting of much larger dimensions. At the same time we suspect that many of the comments in this report, while appropriate to a country of larger scale, are not so significant in the Norwegian context because the informal structures of the society are so much more important in the last resort than the formal distribution of roles and authority.

II

ACHIEVEMENTS OF NORWEGIAN EDUCATIONAL POLICY

Since World War II Norway has pursued a continuous policy aimed at equalizing educational opportunity as part of a systematic social policy. Although compulsory education dates back nearly 140 years and seven-year compulsory education has been in effect for 85 years, the amount and quality of education offered varied sharply between rural areas and population centres, the North and the rest of Norway. The main initial thrust after 1945 was consequently aimed at eliminating these differences, extending compulsory schooling to nine years and increasing the availability of post-compulsory education. All of these quantitative and structural changes could only be achieved, as was repeatedly pointed out to us, by means of vigorous and explicit control over schools from the centre, including budget, teacher training, staffing, work conditions, class sizes, curriculum, school building codes. These policies have created a system of equality in the distribution of educational provision to synchronize with the distribution of social benefits which is unusually impressive on a world-wide or even European comparative basis.

Equality of Educational Opportunity

Education is free in Norway. No fees are charged for compulsory or for post-compulsory education for youth, and no fees or only nominal fees in adult education. School materials are also free. Pupils who live more than four kilometres from the nearest school receive free transportation; and pupils living too far from a school for daily commuting are provided with accommodation. This complete programme of state support continues up to the end of the 12th year of schooling.

Students in higher education receive state grants covering a significant portion of their expenses and an extensive programme of retraining grants (provided by the Ministry of Labour) covers expenses for persons requiring retraining. Most voluntary programmes of adult education also receive direct or indirect financial support. Levels of expenditure are generally high in relation to the number of students and Norway spends 27% of public expenditure and 7% of GNP on education; among the highest percentages in the world. Central policies equalize expenditures of local authorities. This virtually complete network of financial provision is a prerequisite for all other policies being pursued.

The introduction of nine-year compulsory schooling is by now complete and transition figures to post-compulsory education are rising sharply. More than 90% of the students continue their studies after compulsory education, although not all of them will do so immediately. Of those completing general secondary education, about 75% continue in some form of post-secondary education. Starting from a relatively modest level of educational provision (on account of the disadvantages of rural areas containing a majority of the population) Norway has progressed rapidly to become one of the countries with the most generous provision of education.

More impressive still than the aggregate statistics on school finance and attendance is the achievement in equalizing rural/urban differences. This programme is virtually a complete success. All children between the ages of 7 and 16 now go to school an equal amount of time in a network of schools so complete that the number of boarding schools in compulsory education is decreasing. Norwegian policy assumes that it is desirable to keep children in the family environment as long as possible, a course which is probably consonant with the size of the communities and Norwegian traditions. In view of the difficulties posed by the geography of the country, the changes of the last few decades are a remarkable achievement. There are eight schools with only two students, and more than 50% of the primary schools have less than one class per grade. Moreover, through a systematic policy of maintaining smaller-than-average class sizes in such schools, there is evidence that children attending them are subsequently more successful in other schools.

In general, average class sizes are smaller than in any other country we know of. This is not only the consequence of a thinly-spread population leading to many small schools which in turn tend to depress average class sizes. Central regulations stipulate a maximum class size of 30, but the actual average is below 20. This reflects a Norwegian attitude that teachers are the most important teaching resource so that additional investments have often taken the form of investments in teacher time. This is particularly true of supplementary programmes of in-service teacher training and curriculum advisement which have primarily been funded in the form of released teacher time paid by central government. In primary education, individual teachers have 1-2 hours per week of their normal work load (30 hours) for course planning work, student evaluation and parent advisement; in lower secondary education 2½-3 hours (out of 24 hours work load) per week are set aside for these purposes. Within each municipality a certain percentage of total teaching hours per week is available to allow individual teachers to spend up to half their time as specialist subject advisers to their colleagues. This has been achieved through a slight reduction of total student contact hours and the results show no indication of a deterioration of the quality or quantity of what is learned, indicating that this kind of reallocation may bring significant benefits

without corresponding "costs". Overall we have the impression that the amount of resources available for in-service training of teachers is very substantial, probably higher than in most other countries.

In higher education we found the provision of study space for students at the University of Oslo to be lavish by international standards. We suspect that this is indicative of a policy of fairly generous provision of physical resources in the universities.

Norwegian policy has made a special effort to provide for handicapped children. This is the result of a unanimous policy decision of the government and the Storting. Levels of provisions for handicapped children are quite remarkable with class sizes in this area commonly falling as low as 5 or 6. Total resources per pupil range from three to four times those appropriate for instruction in ordinary schools.

For many years, special schools were maintained for the mentally retarded, the deaf and the blind. The policy now being followed is to integrate these as far as possible with the regular school classes on the assumption that this will tend to be beneficial for all students. This has placed an added burden on the regular staff and some provision has been made to develop professional assistance for them on a regional basis. Even institutions dealing with the most difficult cases, which used to virtually segregate their wards from the surrounding communities, have been seeking ways to reduce the sharp division between themselves and their communities. This has meant that the approach to the problems of handicapped children has become much more flexible, and, on the basis of the evidence we saw in two adjacent municipalities with a particularly well developed professional support system, more effective. Work with handicapped children has been additionally aided by the new grading policies (see below) which allow greater attention to be given to children having difficulties in school without stigmatizing them.

Most of these changes have been achieved in the last fifteen years. As the background report points out; there were still significant rural/urban differences in 1962; nevertheless, by 1969 the basic level of primary education was so universal that the authorities could proceed to introduce the nine-year compulsory school, thereby bringing Norway into line with the practices of most other countries. This change has obviously taken hold very rapidly. This is impressive because the integration of the final 15% of each age cohort which normally would not have continued, poses particular problems in connection with the transformation of the lower secondary schools from selective institutions into comprehensive institutions for the entire population. This is reflected in the difficulties with the practice of streaming, which can be justified in a nominally selective institution but becomes an immediate focus of contentious debate in one which is compulsory. Nevertheless, five years after introduction of nine-year compulsory schooling, there appears to be only one major residual issue which has not been identified and tackled. This is the issue of grading and evaluation practices.

Formal grading practices have been eliminated in the first six years of school and the decision has been taken in principle to extend this policy to all of compulsory education. Obviously, evaluations are carried out and communicated to parents, for example as the basis of a decision to provide remedial help or to seek counselling advice. These evaluations do not, however, take the form of letter or number grades and students move automatically from one year to the next and are graduated from primary school at the end of six years. Nor are normed intelligence or achievement tests regularly administered by the school or by a national institution. Grade level norms are reflected in teaching materials and most likely in teachers' attitudes but they are not reinforced through testing procedures. It is still too early to assess the effect of this remarkable policy, but from our discussion we were able to ascertain that there is no serious opposition to this reform at the primary level and it should certainly be viewed as one of the major achievements of Norwegian policy in the last few years to have successfully implemented a formal change which would be considered revolutionary and unthinkable in many other countries. Difficulties have arisen in connection with an effort to implement the same policy at the lower secondary level (see below) but these do not reflect doubt about or resistance to the completed change in the primary schools.

The policies directed at reforming the upper secondary level of schools have only recently been initiated. At present the traditional structure of "theoretical" (gymnas) courses leading to higher education and "practical" courses leading directly to work continues in effect, albeit much expanded. Efforts are being made in modifying admissions policies to higher education so as to mitigate the effects of this division while a more fundamental structural reform of upper secondary education is being undertaken. The direction this will take is clear: theoretical and practical branches of upper secondary education are to be brought closer to one another with some intermingling but will not be fully merged. The most impressive aspect of post-compulsory policies recently enacted is, however, the principle of entitlements to at least three years of post-compulsory education. While this policy has not yet been implemented, it is already a factor in the expansion of all forms of post-compulsory education, making this sector the area of major growth in the foreseeable future. The Norwegian approach suggests strongly that a further extension of compulsory schooling beyond the age of sixteen is not advisable but that entitlements which can be utilized immediately or at a later date after some work experience consecutively or with interruption, offer a viable, flexible instrument for equalizing opportunity at this level. This thrust is supported by the admissions policies to higher education.

In principle, access to higher education is open. In fact this has been true only of the Universities whereas the other institutions, Teachers Colleges, specialized institutions of higher education and, in more

recent years, the Regional Colleges have all had admissions policies limiting the number of students who will be accepted. Increasingly, segments of the university system (such as Medicine) or segments of individual universities (such as Law and Natural Sciences in Oslo) have also reached or are expected to reach the limits of their accepted capacity, requiring some selection decisions between applicants. The recently adopted policy of no growth in student enrolments at the University of Oslo will inevitably mean that selective decisions directing students towards available, perhaps less desired, vacancies in the system of higher education will have to be taken. The policies underlying these decisions have a decisive impact on the entire educational system. In effect, they can nullify all other policies directed at achieving greater equality of opportunity. This has been the experience of other countries which have encountered major bottlenecks in the provision of higher education.

We are convinced that, given the existence of a centrally administered examination at the end of secondary education, the policies governing admission to higher education in Norway are as good as any we know of. Other things remaining equal, they promise to be consistent with the overall goal of achieving equality of educational opportunity. Two points are of particular interest in this respect: the form of these policies and the effect of the distribution of student preferences on their functioning.

Admissions policies to higher education are formulated by the individual institutions with subsequent approval required by the government. The establishment of entry restrictions (numerus clausus) requires enabling legislation by the Storting which can consequently exert a substantial influence on admissions policies. The similarity of these policies as described to us in various institutions is an indicator of the effectiveness of this procedure in maintaining uniform criteria of admission in a small country.

Typically a proportion of students will be admitted only on the basis of their grades in the final examination of secondary schools (10-40%). A further proportion will be admitted on the basis of their grades upon completing secondary school, supplemented by other experience. Often the major positive factor will be the age of the high school diploma, but in special cases specific non-academic experience in related fields is also taken into account. A significant proportion (10-20%) of students accepted will, however, not have a high school diploma at all. In these cases, admissions decisions are taken individually, mostly on the basis of interviews. This form of admissions policy allows great flexibility and depends heavily on the judgement of those administering it, which is a matter of public record insofar as each individual applicant has the right of appeal. This element of accountability is crucial to the equitable functioning of the system. In the light of the difficulties experienced in other countries with formalized admissions policies to higher education, this element of discretionary judgement appears to be an acceptable risk.

However, the important elements introduced into these admissions criteria are those which do not depend directly upon school experience. This reduces pressures in the relationship between academic requirements, perhaps appropriate to the specialized mission and clienteles of universities and the work of compulsory and secondary schools which have quite different missions in serving the whole population.

Just as important as these admissions policies is the surprising fact that at present the pattern of student preferences in Norwegian higher education benefits institutions other than the universities. In most other countries the universities are the most prestigious institutions, requiring the greatest investments, drawing the largest number of applicants and providing access to the position of wealth, power and status in society. It is difficult to realize that the current pattern of admissions to Norwegian higher education does not bear this out: students who have been turned away by Teachers Colleges and Regional Colleges come to the universities as their institutions of second or even third choice. Nor are these the "left-overs" of a weaker group of students, since many of the most qualified graduates of secondary school are among the applicants to institutions other than the universities, particularly Teachers Colleges. This indicates that no clear hierarchy has yet been established between the institutions of higher education and that institutions such as Teachers Colleges and Regional Colleges are fully meeting the aspirations of a large number of their students. The Teachers Colleges in particular have a strong tradition independent of the University of Oslo: in the dispersed communities of Norway, the primary school teachers retained a focal role until well into the 20th century. For many years they formed the largest professional group, larger than the university-trained doctors and lawyers.

This does not mean that universities do not provide access to positions of status and power (lawyers, doctors and teachers in upper secondary and higher education are mostly trained at the universities). It merely indicates a more reasonable distribution of earning potential, power and status between the graduates of the various branches of education. This is the result of a long tradition of non-hierarchical social relationships, of a conscious policy of income equalization and of the system of government in which groups rather than individuals tend to play a dominant role. A contributory factor is certainly the relative over-investment in university places as compared with places in other institutions of higher education. While this may not have been conscious policy, it creates a vital paradox to which we will return later.

The unusual aspects of the relationship between the institutions of higher education are part of a much broader pattern in Norwegian education: thus far, it has been possible to maintain points of egress from the educational system which are substantially independent of the academic part of this system. A vital element in this pattern has been the traditional independence of the Teachers Colleges. Until very recently,

primary school teachers enjoyed high status in their communities; instructors at Teachers Colleges are not required to have academic training. Consequently the entire cycle of training and teaching in primary education is more independent of the universities than in other countries and is proud of this independence. The academic influence of the secondary school is somewhat mitigated by the very existence of this alternate path competing with the universities. There are, however, clear signs that this traditional relationship is changing in favour of greater university influence in the Teachers Colleges.

Vocational education has also been regarded as a high priority. The costs per pupil of vocational secondary education are roughly double those of the gymnas. In recent years, a significant change has taken place in vocational education with the elimination of apprenticeship programmes and their takeover by the public schools. Over the years the number of students going into vocational schools has steadily increased until in 1973 roughly two-thirds of all students entering upper secondary school went to a vocational track. On the other hand the number of registered apprentices has stayed rather constant in most of the trades and has even decreased in some. It is difficult to assess the impact of this change on the students. While the cohesion of the individual craft is likely to have been lessened, graduates from the vocational schools tend to be more flexible in their career patterns. Moreover, graduates from vocational schools can re-enter education more readily at a later stage than craftsmen trained in apprenticeship programmes. Whether this will tend to improve the possibilities of adult education remains to be seen.

Norway possesses a rich tradition of adult learning, a high rate of adult participation in formal education and a continuing commitment to expanding learning opportunities for adults. As in most other countries, statistics on adult education are less reliable, and tend to be more difficult to interpret than data collected on youth and higher education. Nevertheless, according to a report on Utdanningsstatistikk (Education Statistics) 13,622 adults participated in courses given in and parallel to the regular school system (primary, lower secondary, upper secondary): 8,104 adults participated in adult vocational education, including courses arranged by the schools at the request of and financed by the county employment offices under the Ministry of Labour, and 346,243 (more than 14% of the population over 20 years of age) participated in courses organised by 27 nation-wide popular education organisations in courses of all kinds, the most popular of which were handicraft and practical courses (14.6%), languages (14.3%), science, natural sciences, health service and sport (13.2%), economic and trade (10%), organisational work and pedagogy (9.9%), music, visual art, theatre and film (9.3%), and philosophy, religion and psychology (9.3%). Most important is that these popular education courses receive government subsidies administered by the Ministry of Education amounting to 90% of the administrative costs.

Nevertheless, the system of adult education is in transition. It was difficult to develop a clear understanding of the many issues involved in moving towards a system of lifelong education recommended by the Royal Commission on Post-Secondary Education in 1968. A new adult education law is presently under consideration, one which might promote a more rapid transition to a lifelong learning system. It may provide governmental support for voluntary organisations to expand their activities and try out new educational approaches to adult learning needs, encourage experiments which integrate education with the work place under arrangements to be agreed upon by employers and employees and require that municipalities provide some level of support to the study circles which represent a powerful tradition in the field of popular education.

Besides this continuing support for established institutions of adult education there is now a policy thrust towards assigning an increasing role in adult education to the regular institutions of education, particularly at post-compulsory level. The reform of the upper secondary school will provide for adult education in these schools and at the level of higher education. The new Regional Colleges have adult education as an explicit part of their mission.

The Regional Colleges were created very rapidly following a report by the Royal Commission on Post-Secondary Education in 1968. Once again, a remarkable level of consensus in all decision-making bodies carried this plan forward. In retrospect it can be seen that expectations for these new institutions were quite diverse, ranging from regional colleges as vehicles of change and reform to regional colleges as mini-universities in places like Stavanger which had long worked for a university of its own. Many aspects of the Regional Colleges reflect the policies of the sixties of achieving equality through extended decentralized provision. From their inception, Regional Colleges were conceived of as having a particularly close relationship to the place of their location. One of the main vehicles for achieving this purpose was to be an active role in adult education, and recently arrangements were made to allow teaching staff at the Regional College to use up to 25% of their workload in adult education if they so chose. All of these arrangements indicate that the critical decisions in adult education have yet to be taken or have yet to take hold.

In considering the achievements in providing for greater equality of educational opportunity, the position of the Lappish minority needs to be considered. Great strides have been made in this area with the recognition of the special requirements of Lappish education and the efforts to provide for them through the improvement of existing schools and the establishment of new schools, particularly of a gymnas, thus offering a complete twelve-year course of study in Lappish. The new Teachers College in Alta receives special resources to develop a programme for the training of Lapps.

A universal problem in dealing with minority problems such as that presented by the Lapps is the fact that as first steps are undertaken to alleviate a manifestly unsatisfactory situation, the level of self-consciousness of the minority concerned rises and the initial steps are rapidly overtaken by the rising aspirations of the minority groups. It can fairly be said of Norwegian policy that it has kept abreast of these rising aspirations through the first steps of a process which, judging by experience in other countries, still has several stages ahead of it.

Anyone contemplating the extensive and comprehensive provision for education at all levels in Norway will find it hard to believe that while the tradition of education in Norway is old, the tradition of universal and even of provision of high levels of education is relatively new. Most of the expansion has taken place over the last twenty years. For such a relatively recent policy, the expansion has taken hold remarkably well and has covered a significant number of areas of education. It can fairly be said that Norway is a prime example of the success of what may be termed "classical" policies for equality of education. Norwegians are, however, acutely aware of the fact that they have largely exhausted the possibilities offered by such classical policies and that the next steps which have to be taken will lead into much more complex and venturesome policies. The possibilities and constraints for these future policies will be taken up in Chapter IV of our report.

Participation in Educational Decision-making

Policies for equality of educational opportunity have been in existence in Norway for many years. Policies to increase participation and for integration are of much more recent origin. Consequently they have not yet had time to take hold.

In a very real sense, Norwegian educational policy making is already highly participatory: the tradition of policy making through the political process and the special role of corporatively organised groups in this process assure that major central policies are supported by broad consensus. Within the framework of the present centralized system, one can say that Norwegian education is guided by "open policies, openly arrived at". The role of technical expertise is tempered by tight political control over the wider ramifications of the policies it may promote.

Norway is a country in which party programmes for election purposes are considered a fairly binding commitment, with the general expectation that they will be implemented. Perhaps this is the consequence of many years of rule by one party whose election programme could therefore draw on the experience of government and the expectation of continued government. The practice of carefully drafted (and costed) election platforms has meant that important policy decisions have generally been put to a public debate even before the writing of

legislation begins. The legislative process provides a further extensive opportunity for public debate.

This deliberate consensus-oriented policy-making process is further strengthened by the practice of four-year budgeting. The annual budget process includes the development of aggregate budget figures for the following three years. Information is additionally published on certain major items (e. g. primary education) so that benchmarks are created and a certain continuity of planning can be anticipated. Such a procedure also requires rough disaggregation within the individual ministries. This ensures a measure of medium-term planning even though the resultant figures are not published. It also encourages the practice of four-year budgeting at all lower levels and allows the ministry to be reasonably responsive to the needs of developing institutions to have indicators of growth over time.

At the local level, the "participatory" character of educational institutions, in the sense of representative politics is replicated. Primary schools are under the authority of municipal school boards composed of persons appointed by the representative political body in the municipal government in proportion to the strength of the various parties. These boards have discretionary authority within the limits laid down by central legislation.

Boards also exist for the governance of institutions in secondary education and for the Regional Colleges. The boards for secondary education are formed by the county authorities which in turn are dependent on the municipal bodies. There are at present no directly elected representative bodies at the county level. However, direct education of members of the county council will be introduced from 1975. The boards for the Regional Colleges are selected by the central and the relevant county authorities and include representatives of the institution itself, both faculty and students.

Within the institutions, widely differing practices exist, but student representation is the rule. In some Regional Colleges, the student bodies have one-third of the vote, and representatives of the non-academic staff a further proportion to make just under one half.

The Teachers Colleges have a rather special place in respect to participation, also. Teacher Training at the primary level has strong elements of apprenticeship requiring fairly close co-operation between practising teachers, students and the instructors of the College. Consequently, good Teachers Colleges have highly effective informal modes of participation which can be supplemented by formal participation rules; poor Teachers Colleges can be very authoritarian and remote and it is unlikely that formal procedures will do much to affect this. Moreover, the majority of Teachers Colleges are small and have fairly high student/teacher ratios, a situation which tends to favour informal arrangements over formal ones.

At the universities, wide variations exist. Universities in Norway - like universities elsewhere - have been participatory institutions in

the sense that members of the university have controlled them. When speaking of participation in universities, one is actually referring to a different issue than in dealing with schools: the major issue is who is to participate in the autonomous rights of the university other than the faculty members who already do so, and at what level. It is important to note that the students exercise complete and independent jurisdiction over the aspects of the university which directly affect their welfare: housing, food services, book stores, student health and counselling. The students of the University of Oslo, through their Student Welfare Organisation, control the largest publishing house for scientific books in Norway with some 85% of the relevant market. Their facilities form a major conference centre, complete with accommodation, conference rooms and catering. Further participation therefore involves the strictly academic elements of the university.

Since each university is free to vary its internal governance within the (generous) limits set by the Education Ministry's willingness to approve changes, it is not easy to make generalizations. Apparently, however, the universities of Bergen and Trondheim correspond roughly to the pattern of the University of Oslo, whereas the University of Tromsø has developed distinctively different forms of governance since its inception in 1968.

At the University of Oslo, student representatives sit on all university bodies, generally with only a small minority vote. In some divisions, students have one-third of the votes. In addition, a student parliament regulates the affairs which are the sole concern of the students. Participation in the elections for these various positions tends to be low, between 20% and 40%. Opinions vary on the adequacy of such representation but it is certainly true that students have been part of the normal governance of universities in Norway as long as anywhere else, the initial steps in this direction having been taken well before the crucial year of 1968. The arrangements being followed at Oslo correspond to what one may by now term a common pattern of student participation in the affairs of universities.

When it was decided in 1968 to open a new university in Northern Norway in Tromsø, this was also seen as an opportunity to develop new models of participation, interdisciplinarity and integration of the university into the community. In a certain sense, the University of Tromsø defines the present limits of participation in Norwegian Universities. In all university bodies, students constitute somewhat more than 25% of the members and non-academic delegates generally complement this number to raise it to just below 50%. More important than these proportions is the fact that in no matters are student representatives excluded from participating and voting and that important issues such as hiring priorities and budget preparation and allocation are decided in open forum. This has led to the establishment of an impressive budget procedure; institutes prepare programme notes for the

University Council (an eleven-member executive body of the University Assembly, which has 47 members) describing their activities and giving projections for further programmes and estimated costs. On the basis of these documents, the Council produces guidelines for the preparation of the university budget. These are communicated to the institutes which then rewrite their budgets for a final discussion in the Council, which decides how to cope with remaining priority requests of the institutes which run over the total amount made available by the Ministry. A similar procedure is followed in allocating funds ultimately appropriated by the government. This means that budget priorities coincide with programme priorities and are arrived at in a manner that is open and generally accepted. Undoubtedly the participation of students in this process is important in maintaining its openness and assuring that adequate attention is given to the teaching concerns of the university.

In primary and secondary schools, new policies for participation are coming into effect in the next year. They are aimed primarily at setting up the formal structure of participation by students, teachers and parents in the affairs of the individual schools. Interlocking collaboration councils are to be established at class and school level for each of these constituencies. These new policies must be seen against the background of open policy-making and the traditional inclusion of local representatives in the governance of most educational institutions. There is now a clear policy to extend the principle of democratic control and co-determination as far as possible to the schools. Parents are to be brought into closer contact with the schools, teachers are to be given a clear-cut role in determining the conditions of their work locally; students are to be educated for active participation in society. The legislation is described in the Background Report. At this time it is still too early to comment on the effect of these policies, although results from a number of preliminary experiments over several years appear to be uniformly satisfactory.

Policies for participation and decentralization have required a shift in the relationship between the ministry and the educational institutions. As the Background Report states "development expertise" becomes more essential than control expertise. A first important step has been taken in this direction by the revision of ministry guidelines governing teaching in schools. This revision has been a lengthy process culminating in the publication this year of the "Mønsterplan for Grunnskolen", an indicative curriculum plan for classes 1-9 replacing the previous obligatory plans. The tenor of the Mønsterplan is set by the statement that it is a frame of reference, which is to point out the general direction of studies (p. 25). The Mønsterplan contains a long discursive introduction describing background, purpose and guiding principles. Guidelines are then developed for each subject. In the principal subjects (Norwegian, Mathematics and English) the indicative curriculum will typically contain a general statement of goals, a general discussion of means, a listing of more

specific goals grouped in three-year periods and then an exemplary break down of these guidelines into annual plans which is, however, not binding. School boards are also given a certain, though limited, amount of discretion in setting curriculum priorities. Of the obligatory minimum 129 class hours/week required in classes 1-6, the subject content of six can be determined by the school board. Moreover, the school board can decide to increase the total number of hours quite significantly and can undertake a reallocation of time per subject between the years. In the classes 7-9, pupils can exercise an element of choice over 15-16 week/hours of their total programme of 90.

The Mønsterplan corresponds to developments in most other countries. It derives its special significance from its relationship to the broader policy of school decentralization and increased participation. Insofar as it signals a move to new approaches to defining the relationship between the schools and the supervisory bodies, it is probably a significant first step.

Integration

In recent years, the concept of "integration" has become important in the education debate in Norway. The term is not easy for an outside observer to understand since it does not convey any specific meaning outside Norway, and also in Norway itself no concerted effort has been undertaken to specify its meaning. Nevertheless, it crops up again and again in discussions of Norwegian policy. Probably the only way in which one can obtain a clearer understanding of the meaning of "integration" for Norwegian education is to trace the areas in which policies for integration have been implemented. At a later stage we will discuss the difficulties we have had with the concept of integration.

The importance of policies for integration is in itself a comment on the previous diversity, even disaggregation of the educational system: rural schools were distinct from urban ones; primary schools separate from secondary ones; theoretical education sharply distinguished from practical, vocational education, both at the secondary and at the post-secondary level; within institutions of higher education, subjects were sharply divided one from another. This entire complex of divisions reflects the historic origins of the Norwegian educational system, growing simultaneously "upwards" from the primary schools and "downwards" from the universities, ultimately overlapping and coming into conflict. In particular, the educational institutions within the academic tradition were not integrated into the communities in which they were located, creating further divisions as the academic preparatory schools were extended throughout the country in the form of the gymnas and the streams in lower secondary education preparing for the gymnas.

Most countries have some of these problems, but hardly any is confronted with all simultaneously because the educational system will have developed in a more coherent fashion with either the universities or the requirements of universal education as its principal forms. Perhaps the relatively large degree of pre-existent diversity in the Norwegian educational system explains the importance of the "integration" theme to Norwegian policy.

In many respects, the policies for integration are the policies which were initiated for achieving equality of educational opportunity. To a certain extent they provide an important motive for policies to increase participation. Consequently we have discussed "integration" policies as part and parcel of these other concerns: "integration" of rural and urban schools so as to make them more comparable and to provide equal educational services; "integration" of primary and lower secondary schools to create the nine-year comprehensive school; "integration" of school and community through policies for participation; even the grading policies can be understood in terms of their contribution to integration of class levels, streams and institutions within the sector of compulsory education. Nevertheless, there remain a number of policy initiatives which can only be properly understood in terms of the thrust for "integration".

Through a Royal Commission for Secondary Education, policy proposals have been developed for the integration of upper secondary education. A number of experiments with this format have been tried and appropriate legislation is currently being drawn up. This will attempt to encourage counties to bring their institutions of upper secondary education more closely together, if possible to integrate them organisationally and to develop overlapping curricula. At the same time there is an expressed desire to see closer integration of youth and adult students in secondary education, a matter which has also been taken up in these experiments.

Both the Regional Colleges and the University of Tromsø have important integration functions, and several of their salient features can only be understood in this context.

The University of Tromsø is preparing to develop a close co-operation with the region it serves. All institutes are directing their attention to the needs of the Northern Region, both in their research and in their teaching. The medical programme is based on the major regional hospital and is also responsible for providing health care of last resort to the entire area. Fisheries, and the social problems of the region are the focus of other institutes, and the university will include two major pre-existing institutions of Tromsø: the Museum and the Northern Lights Observatory. Internally, the desire to integrate subjects is equally visible. There are no faculties, the institutes being co-ordinated directly at the all-university level. Medical training is directed towards community medicine and includes much stronger elements of clinical training and study in the Social Sciences

than are usual. Similarly, other programmes of study are defined in an interdisciplinary fashion, drawing on the resources of the entire university rather than on one institute for their support. What is particularly impressive is the way in which programming, governance and budgeting procedures of the university coincide to provide the basic pre-conditions for success in this venture which would make the university at Tromsø a particularly interesting attempt to grapple with the issues which universities everywhere have been trying to cope with in the last years, largely unsuccessfully.

In respect to "integration", the Regional Colleges are again an important policy instrument. The intention is to create 18 such colleges, one in most of the 19 counties (six are currently in existence). The Regional Colleges are to be a vehicle for decentralizing higher education and integrating it more fully into the life of the community. Two policy objectives play a central role in this endeavour:

- the development of interdisciplinary, application oriented courses of study with particular relevance to the region they are located in (e. g. shipping administration; oil technology; fishing economics);
- the opening of the Regional Colleges to adult education.

Because of variations between existing colleges, it is difficult to say whether these objectives are being reached. Certainly, some of the organisational pre-conditions for interdisciplinarity are fulfilled (a balance between subject-oriented and interdisciplinary organisational units within the institution, adequate student participation in the formulation and execution of policy). The governing board is integrated with the local political bodies. The government has provided that faculty at Regional Colleges and they may assign as much as 25% of their time to adult education concerns. In this respect, the Regional Colleges are part of another more comprehensive integration effort, the integration of work and education in adult education into a pattern of life-long learning. The strong Norwegian tradition of adult education is a tradition of independent organisations. Only in the last few years have the public institutions of education (with the exception of the university) entered adult education hesitantly. In the coming years, the hope is to extend the availability of public adult education to all regions and to draw the private institutions into a coherent overall pattern of education. Many issues remain unresolved in this plan, but the Regional Colleges and the more integrated institutions of upper secondary education will play a central role in this process.

In the past few years, Norwegian educational policy has been evolving rapidly. Many of the measures of expansion and concomitant transformation are similar to those of other countries. In Norway, they have often been strikingly successful, probably because the timing was right, the co-ordination careful and the conditions in Norway particularly suited: a fairly compact homogeneous society

setting high value on equality with an educational system which was not up to the tasks expected of it, but did not have strongly entrenched positions either. The policies which have been embarked upon more recently are much more ambitious. The remaining portion of our report will address itself to these policies and our major comments will be developed in relation to them.

III

PRESENT NORWEGIAN POLICY COMMITMENTS

From our conversations and from the relevant documents we were able to identify nine areas on which Norwegian educational policy is currently focusing.

1. Maintenance of opportunities for access to education and equal quality of service at all levels

In discussing the array of present policy commitments as well as future policies with Norwegians at all levels, a constant theme emerged; no matter what additional policies are adopted, the historic commitment of equality of educational provision will not be abrogated. However, our examination of present policy commitments (see below) suggests some inherent conflicts which will require either trade-offs among priorities or a substantive reinterpretation of the meaning of equality.

2. Training of teachers for pre-school education

The assumption is that the Ministry of Consumer Affairs and Administration will fulfill the government's commitment to provide 50,000 additional spaces in the next four years (an increase of 286% over the number of spaces available in 1972). In spite of our questions concerning the possibility of achieving such an expression, we were assured that it was likely. Responsibility for the training of pre-school teachers lies with the Education Ministry. Through reallocation of capacities in Teachers Colleges, the Ministry will be able to meet the sudden demand for new teachers in the pre-school sector. These capacities are available because of the ending of expansion of the compulsory schools and the decline in the size of the age cohorts now entering the schools.

3. Steady expansion of spaces available and development of more integrated institutions at the upper secondary level

The goal here is to provide spaces equivalent to 100% of an age cohort. Because of continued use of upper secondary institutions by persons not transferring directly from lower secondary schools this is slightly less than universal provision for upper secondary education.

4. Continued expansion of higher education, particularly through the University of Tromsø and the Regional Colleges

The expansion at the lower secondary level can be expected to spread through upper secondary education into the institutions of higher education. By choosing the Regional Colleges and the Universities of Tromsø and Trondheim as vehicles for this anticipated expansion, Norwegian authorities expect to be able to meet this demand and still to maintain their decentralization policies.

5. Continued decentralization and regional development

In this area, educational policy is part of much broader social policies aimed at approximately maintaining the present population balance between rural and urban areas. This requires the upgrading of all social services of which education is but a part. Moreover, decentralization is itself a prerequisite for:

6. Increasing opportunities for participation through the creation of channels for wider collaboration and participation in governance at the local level. Whereas the basic structures have been created by law, Norwegian policy is now facing the task of making these policies effective. The policies this requires are different in kind from those which have thus far served to develop and spread the educational system. They must motivate persons to act independently, collaboratively, without mechanisms of control since these would tend to negate the very purpose they are set up to serve. A number of policy objectives relate to this goal.

7. Fostering co-operative forms of learning

Every school system is caught between its internal value system - defined by aspirations for self-motivated learning - and the pressures, real and imagined, created by the social role it plays in certifying levels of competence to external agencies (including particularly the next following educational institutions) and fostering certain basic social attitudes. Norwegian authorities appear determined to shelter the schools from such pressures insofar as they may tend to foster competition, particularly in the form of normative evaluations. An important means of achieving this is:

8. Widened criteria for access to educational institutions at all levels

Educational institutions have an ingrained tendency to try to get preceding institutions to define their goals in terms of preparing for more education rather than for life tasks. The values underlying decisions on selection for the institutions which come later in a student's life often become a major focus, even an obsession, in the preceding

institutions. Moreover, this interlocking of educational institutions has the effect of making it exceedingly difficult for those who have gone out of step in their development to regain admission, a phenomenon which has sometimes been called the "lock-step" of educational institutions. Norwegian authorities have been acting consciously to develop multi-dimensional criteria of access to all institutions of post-compulsory education and to eliminate streaming in institutions of compulsory education as a means of loosening the lock-step. This, in turn, allows adults to re-enter education more easily and is part of a policy to:

9. Integrate work life and education, not only through expansion of the traditional institutions but through the support of adult education, the better co-ordination of labour market policies and education policies, and through the support of special programmes directed towards education near the work place.

The overall effect of these new policies is to be a shift in the public expectation from equality in youth education towards lifelong learning, the provision of equal chances for educational experiences throughout the life-span - irrespective of the age or social condition of the participant. This policy commitment has perhaps the longest time perspective of all, and is least amenable to classical policy interventions.

IV

PRESSURE POINTS IN NORWEGIAN EDUCATIONAL POLICY

Undoubtedly Norway is currently pursuing a carefully co-ordinated, ambitious, advanced set of educational policies. It may seem churlish to pick at the complex of interlocking policies which have been set in motion, particularly when many of them are in conformity with what we would consider some of the best theoretical work on education available. The preceding discussion should have shown that the Norwegian authorities are not blind to the complexities of the policies being pursued, that they are not pursuing isolated policy objectives without awareness of the existence of peripheral effects and have not fallen into many of the pitfalls which have made progress towards established goals so difficult in other countries. In fact, we consider Norway an example of the successes which can be achieved with what might be termed "classical" educational policies and would agree that many of the newer policies represent an important step beyond such "classical" policy measures. Precisely because of the significance of the policies which are being adopted we felt compelled to address ourselves as directly as we could to the following questions.

1. Education in Norway is involved in a general problem of Norwegian society: How to reconcile strong central authority developed to implement Norwegian social objectives with the increased local autonomy seen in Norway as the next essential step for the further development of such objectives. How will policies for education in Norway meet this dilemma?
2. What are the consequences of current policies for Norwegian education in terms of the theory, practice and organisation of pedagogical activities in Norwegian schools and universities, and what further policies and measures will be required if these current policies are to be successfully realized?

Our answers to these questions are, of necessity, informed or misinformed by our own prejudices and by the limits of our experience in Norway. Moreover, we can hardly claim them to be original since there was not an issue which we wished to raise which had not been recognized as such by at least some, and very often by many of our interlocutors.

Central Authority and Local Autonomy

a) Centralized Decentralization

Very often the greatest strength of institutions is also the source of their most persistent weaknesses. This widespread phenomenon makes improvement of system performance so difficult, because attempts to rectify the weaknesses end up modifying the system's strengths in such a manner as to exact a greater price than one may be willing to pay. This general observation seems to apply with some force to the overall policy-making processes in Norway. The very effectiveness of current central policy-making practices and their strong dependence on action by the Storting with all this entails makes changes increasingly difficult because they will involve more and more complex negotiations and trade-offs between representatives of previous phases of the development of the educational system. This difficulty is particularly evident when trying to change fundamental aspects of the existing system. The policies for decentralization and participation are of this nature.

We gained the strong impression that central policy making is not merely a phase in the development of the Norwegian educational system but has become a fairly fundamental characteristic. While we agree with the widely expressed opinion that centralization was necessary after World War II to achieve the stated policy objectives, we are doubtful whether the implied assumption that this is a reversible decision is correct.

It seemed to us that dependence on central guidance has become an attitudinal characteristic of many of the very people who would be required to develop independent initiatives to make the new policies work. Certainly, great emphasis is placed on the ethic and self-image of rugged individualism. But the reality as it appeared to us is a careful conformity to accepted norms while waiting for changes through the broad consensual processes. This is hardly surprising since such an attitude is a prerequisite for the existing system to work.

Undoubtedly, the only source of decentralization decisions carrying adequate authority to have them accepted is the central government. This leaves us with the paradoxical question whether decentralization which is initiated by central authority does not defeat itself. How can a strongly centralized system transform itself into its opposite? Is centralization a trend which can be reversed? Or can central authority only be relinquished if it is seized, not given away (usually a process more painful than central authorities are willing to endure)? The situation is, in policy terms, like lifting oneself by one's own bootstraps. In all likelihood, the answers to these questions depend on the degree of heterogeneity in the society in question. Whereas past policies depended on a significant degree of homogeneity in Norwegian society to take hold, the newer policies

build on the elements of heterogeneity. We are in no position to judge whether they will provide an adequate basis for decentralization, although we did suspect that they were more significant than is generally acknowledged. The paradox of the developing situation is, however, that the previously marginal pockets of heterogeneity, such as, for example, the Lapps, have a vital function in the new phase of educational policy.

Most of these issues are quite apparent to the Norwegians. We wonder, however, whether the anticipated time span for these policies to take hold is adequate. Changes such as those which are being envisioned occur in generations, not in years. We believe that the changes which will ultimately be required will be much more substantial than current policy envisions; otherwise it will prove impossible to counteract the existing centralization. What is essentially involved is the transformation of complex existing systems into new ones which explicitly seek to devolve authority. In the process of transformation, particular attention must be paid to new patterns of access to the production and distribution of information. The Mønsterplan is but one element of such a transformation and is, on our reading, still a document which will tend to determine options rather than to create new ones. In many areas, crucial decisions concerning curriculum and pedagogy are strongly implied even when they are not explicitly prescribed. Teachers accustomed to ministerial prescription will be very conscious of such pressures. Consequently, the Mønsterplan should be considered the first step in a lengthy process.

Central authorities always tend to underestimate their capacity to control, most often because they are aware of their inability to change patterns of behaviour in a desired manner. Control is exercised through a multitude of formal and informal channels and can generally only be modified when most of these channels are modified in a coordinated manner. Perceptions of the degree of latitude which is actually available will differ sharply depending on whether one views conditions from the centre or from the periphery. Central authority can signal its intentions in many ways, and often stated policy carries less weight than habits unreflected and unchanged. We wonder whether it was wise to create the entire complex of collaborative bodies through explicit prescriptive, rather than indeterminate enabling legislation. A vital step in the progress of decentralization of policy decisions is thereby again viewed by participants on the periphery in the context of an imposition rather than an opportunity. Very often the stated purpose of such a measure carried less information value than the manner of its implementation.

Central control, or the complaint about central control, plays an important part in allowing participants at the periphery to circumvent issues they are incapable of dealing with or whose resolution threatens to cause conflict. Weaning local bodies from central control will

require them to change some well-established habits and also to accept some rather disagreeable consequences which they were hitherto able to avoid. This requires a higher determination to confront issues than we were able to detect in our brief conversations with some of the people responsible for schools at the local level who might ultimately be involved in such a change.

Difficult as the curricular and personal aspects of decentralization promise to be in the next few years, we would expect the loosening of budgetary and legal strictures to be even more difficult. The latitude provided by possible changes in budgetary and legal controls must also not only be real, but must be seen to be real. The minimum requirements which central government will certainly continue to impose must be no more than a bare minimum. This is generally much less than institutions which have come to view themselves as guardians of standards are willing to countenance. Such minima have a strong tendency to escalate under pressure from interest groups, particularly large dispersed minorities or professional groups, and from the perceived constraints arising from existing facilities and staff.

Apart from the better-known control mechanisms of budget, laws and advisory bodies there are also others whose effect is indirect and which are not as readily identified as mechanisms of control. In Norway, the system of indirect controls is still very strong, despite some recent moves to relax it. The most important of such mechanisms are:

1. the national examination system;
2. teacher training and national criteria for teacher employment;
3. institutional accreditation by the Ministry, for purposes of subsidies;
4. research budgets and research priorities;
5. innovation budgets and innovation priorities;
6. the special role of the University of Oslo among the universities and regional colleges.

We will deal with several of these mechanisms separately. They are listed primarily for the purpose of pointing out the complexities of the present system of control which needs to be transformed.

Question 1: In the course of developing a centralized system of education, Norway has had to institute a number of controls over the development of institutions of education throughout the country. In recent years, a loosening of such controls has been envisaged, described variously as a policy of regionalization, decentralization, participation or differentiation. How do the Norwegian authorities plan to solve the paradox of decentralizing from the centre? Which measures of control do they feel need to be maintained unchanged, which need to be transformed into frames of reference, and which would they expect to abolish altogether? We refer

specifically to: Budget rules, legal requirements, the activities of advisory bodies, the national examination system, national criteria for teacher training and teacher employment, central control over research budgets and research priorities and centralized innovation strategies.

b) Ministry/school board relationships to local bodies

The Norwegian educational system has seen growth as substantial or even larger than that experienced by educational systems in other countries. It has accommodated remarkably well to this growth. We suspect that greater difficulties will be encountered within the Ministry of Education, which has also grown over the past years. One of the priorities may be to reduce the Ministry to the size where the necessary interaction between civil service officials and the political leadership is again possible to the extent which would be desirable.

The Ministry presently deals with large numbers of local institutions: school boards at the municipal and county levels, individual schools and institutions of higher education, officials in intermediate administrative institutions. A surprising amount of detail is still handled in Oslo in connection with financial subsidies of local boards, the administration of the advisory councils for the various aspects of education and the examination systems at all levels of education. Here again, satisfactory contact between the Ministry and those charged with executing policy is not always possible.

The Ministry itself does not engage in significant pedagogical guidance and advisory activities for teachers. The Council for Innovation in Education undertakes a certain amount of these activities. We feel that a number of problems are not being adequately addressed under this system which we will discuss in a later section. Structurally, the present arrangement does not seem to offer satisfactory means of ascertaining the quality of interaction that is actually taking place between the Ministry and local bodies. The centralized control of Norwegian education is maintained through legal measures and by virtue of broad consensus within the population. To the extent that it needs to be administratively enforced, the major emphasis appeared to be on "desk" rather than "field" guidance. This may mean that prior orientation and experience thus far have not equipped the officials involved to propagate new ideas and to encourage persons they have thus far largely controlled to act with independent initiative.

To meet these problems we would suggest that the Norwegian authorities might consider strengthening administrative bodies at an intermediate level. There are, of course, dangers in creating or strengthening such intermediate bodies: they may prove to be no more than a further layer of administration in a centralized system, viewing themselves as conduits of information from the local to the central and orders from the central to the local level, and thereby reinforcing

the undesirable characteristics of the system without contributing to its better functioning. On the other hand, creating new bodies is one of the few ways of rapidly changing existing systems; it would be critical how such bodies were defined and by what kind of a process they were initiated.

We expect conflict between local bodies and central authority to be the almost inevitable outcome of a successful policy of decentralization. The values governing the conduct of a decentralized, participatory body simply cannot be expected to coincide consistently with those of a centralized hierarchical one. The University of Tromsø offers some indications of this.

While conflict is not in and of itself undesirable in a dynamic system, measures are required to ensure that it be more constructive than destructive and that it should not simply be obliterated through the exercise of overwhelming authority. Interface institutions play an important role in this process of turning conflict to constructive ends. Interface institutions are institutions which are required to operate between other institutions with potentially divergent values and which are dependent on both to accomplish their mission. To become interface institutions, intermediate level institutions in Norway would have to be designed in such a fashion as to be responsible both to the local institutions and to central bodies. This obviously implies assigning significant authority to local institutions, as is ultimately envisioned in Norway. In those instances, such as the pedagogical/psychological guidance centres, where we encountered substantial independent initiative in local institutions, there were clear signs that such institutions could develop and make important contributions.

Should a decision be taken to create intermediary institutions, one consequence would have to be a redefinition of the Ministry's role within the educational system. The changes implied by the previous question presage such a redefinition. This can be viewed as a desirable necessity because the thrust towards decentralization and greater participation certainly necessitate a re-evaluation of the role of the Ministry anyhow. In practical fact, the necessity to sharply reduce central Ministry staff would be the main vehicle for forcing such a redefinition.

Question 2: Are Norwegian authorities considering the development of intermediate interface institutions at the country or regional levels? If so, what aspects of the present work of the central bodies would be transferred to such institutions and would their role be defined in terms of controlling decentralized institutions or providing support functions?

c) The role of the Teachers' Organisations and the Definition of "Working Conditions"

Centralization of control over education has led to a concomitant centralization of the interest groups most involved in education. This

is particularly true of the teachers' organisations. This process of centralization is beyond the government's control and poses a serious threat to the implementation of new policies. The teachers' organisations take the view that salaries and working conditions must be centrally fixed by collective bargaining. This position is eminently reasonable in principle. The question is how "working conditions" are to be defined in practice.

There are clear signs that the interpretation of what may be included as "working conditions" is gradually being extended, in Norway as in other countries with strong teacher unions.

It already covers the number of hours which teachers will be free to plan their school's programme, the amount of teacher time to be available at the municipal level for subject advisement of teachers by other teachers, the amount of time available to teachers for evaluation and parent conferences. Several other questions, while not subject to the central bargaining process themselves, have become major issues in the relationship between the government and the teachers' organisations with consequent repercussions on the bargaining process on the one hand and the course of reform on the other. The extension of non-graded evaluations to the last three years of compulsory schooling was one such issue.

The existence of several major teacher organisations which have originated from the traditional divisions of education - primary school, secondary school, vocational education, teacher training - and the possibility of conflicts between them as the process of integration proceeds, will tend to reinforce the temptation to resolve conflicts at the centre. Apparently the extension of compulsory education to nine years to include a portion of the secondary schools caused friction between the two teachers' organisations involved, and we would anticipate that the closer integration of theoretical and practical education in upper secondary schools will provide issues which could cause renewed tensions. These difficulties are likely to be heightened by the progressive transformation of the teachers' organisations from a social pressure group of high prestige to an economic interest group of significant power, a process which may be expected to occur as the role of individual schools in the socialization process is diminished by spreading education over many years and several institutions.

The new legislation providing for the establishment of participation bodies in the schools also recognizes the creation of teachers' councils. These are established institutions fitted into the new system, but their relationship to the established teachers' organisations remains unclear. Any attempt to convince teachers and their organisations that it is in their interests to decentralize their activities in accordance with overall policy would have to begin by resolving the questions which arise from the relationship between teachers' councils in the participation bodies and teachers' organisations as a representative group.

Question 3: The definition of "working conditions" in central negotiations with teachers' organisations is important within the context of policy implementation in Norway. In particular, steps must be undertaken to ensure that the teachers' organisations view the new conditions arising from the policies which are being implemented as a constructive improvement both to teachers' working conditions and to the work of their organisations at local levels. What measures are the Norwegian authorities considering to engage the teacher organisations in the major thrusts of decentralization and regionalization policy? What issues would they consider subject to local negotiation in future years?

d) National Councils

There was some evidence that not only the teacher organisations, which have a strong and legitimate interest in preserving general uniformity of conditions for their members throughout the system, but also the network of National Councils, which advise and supervise the various branches of education, have developed entrenched positions of influence in central policy-making which it will prove very hard to modify or circumvent. There are by now 14 such bodies which seem to be in danger of getting in each other's way and could be proving an obstacle even to experiments which had been centrally sanctioned by other policy-making bodies. One wonders how they will respond to the varied conditions arising out of increasing decentralization. We suspect that they will be particularly prone to the temptation of inflating "minimum" frames of reference for decentralized initiative to the point where they virtually pre-empt all flexibility.

The National Council for Innovation in Education has been unique among such national councils in its original capacity to help circumvent the difficulties in innovation posed by such established interests as the teachers' organisations and the various councils. Over the years, the Council has supported many local initiatives and has been one of the strongest advocates of decentralization. Nevertheless, it may now be seen as a centralizing influence, within the educational system. As a source of advice it is obviously identified with the central authorities, particularly since its publications cover areas often under the direct responsibility of Ministries of Education in other countries, such as advice on buildings and information about approved instructional materials. Moreover, the advice is probably not perceived as serving the teachers, rather than serving the purposes of further central innovation strategies. While these do not necessarily have to be in conflict this at the very least serves to define the role of the Council in the eyes of teachers in the schools. The Council was an effective vehicle for innovation strategies in a centralized system, but it is questionable whether it will remain appropriate in an increasingly decentralized environment. We feel that the entire system of Councils, including

the Council for Innovation in Education, will need to be reviewed and probably overhauled if the policy aims are to be fulfilled. Even if all of these bodies are always supportive of the necessary flexibility to allow new policies to proceed, probably a doubtful proposition, the proliferation of national bodies would tend to become an obstacle in efforts to decentralize: even good advice becomes oppressive and virtually prescriptive if it is too often repeated by too many outside bodies.

This is part of a more general difficulty in Norwegian innovation strategies. Very few initiatives have come from really local levels, and the focus is still on changing the entire system, on finding solutions which may have general applicability. The typical strategy leads through the creation of Royal Commissions to the initiation of experiments under the authority of the Ministry or the Council for Innovation in Education, from there to the preparation of legislation based on these experiments and the subsequent dissemination of the experiment throughout the country. This is an appropriate innovation strategy for a centralized system, but it will create conflict in one which hopes to develop significant levels of participation at local levels, and will probably prove an obstacle to the proposed policies. The fact that they are being proposed by the bodies themselves with the best of intentions does not obviate this difficulty. We were struck by the extent to which innovation strategies in the present Norwegian system are also control mechanisms. The effectiveness of all of these bodies in a decentralizing system has not yet been properly tested. From the controversies of the sixties there emerged nearly consensual policies, such as the introduction of the nine-year compulsory school, the abolition of graded evaluations and the measures to provide additional support for handicapped children today. There is no comparable consensus concerning the next major policy steps, both in upper secondary education and in the implementation of collaborative bodies. The danger in such a situation is that a body such as the National Council for Innovation in Education will serve to promote partial solutions by virtue of its exclusive position rather than assist in developing the necessary consensus at the appropriate implementation level.

Question 4: The National Council for Innovation in Education has played a central role in initiating and carrying out most experiments of any significance during the past few years. However, if diversification is to take place according to local prerogatives, such experiments should be initiated, operated and evaluated locally (although assistance could be provided from outside but only when requested); the teachers, whose attitudes and sense of mission will be affected by any lasting innovation, should have co-determination in the initiation, operation and evaluation of such experiments. By what measures could such a perspective for innovation be implemented in Norwegian schools? Specifically, what measures

must be adopted to devolve the authority and responsibility of existing National Councils in such a manner that local bodies will take advantage of the new opportunities which are being made available to them?

e) Education and Oil Development

Effective oil policy will involve the exercise of strong central power, yet in all of Norway, particularly in those localities directly affected by oil development, the maintenance and the strengthening of the country's physical and social fabric against the intrusion of this industry and the new high levels of personal wealth, will ultimately rest on effective action at the level of the local community. This prospect will exacerbate the problem to which we returned time and again in our discussions on the future of Norwegian education: the problem of effective implementation of nation-wide policies such as that of social equality in such a way as to be compatible with a decentralized participatory policy.

A major concern of Norwegian policy makers is that a relaxation of central control will create the danger of "local tyranny". It is open to question whether such "local tyrannies" are more damaging in their total effect than mistaken central policy imposed on local conditions; and in any event there is a wide range of mechanisms by which to deal with that possibility. We are not in a position to assess this issue properly since our discussions were confined to those exercising central authority, or were viewed by our local interlocutors in the context of central authority. Nevertheless, the concern is real, and if it is well-founded may ultimately prove a crucial factor in defeating the new policies. Unless central government can bring itself to trust local autonomy, even to the point of allowing actions which are viewed as mistakes, the conditions for decentralization do not exist.

The major problem for the implementation of the new participatory policies is consequently the capacity of Norwegian society to maintain its stability without the corset of central control which has been carefully erected in the past decades to hold it together. Norway's initial experience with its oil development, pushing an already prosperous economy forward, suggests that it will create new centres of local power. These could become new localized baronies dominated by a few interests which might in turn become allied as a divisive power block at the national level. The rapid growth of local power centres on the other hand could add momentum to the first steps in decentralized participation. But if this were seen as a dangerous acceleration of centrifugal tendencies, central authorities could be expected to tighten their reins. In any event, the growth of the oil industry in Norway generates unprecedented and contradictory forces both for centralized controls and for decentralized power - forces whose resolution in the immediate period ahead will engage all of Norwegian

society. While the problems of reorganisation of Norwegian education have been posed in exactly the same terms, the depth of the social issues attached to the oil development points to the needs for education to play a direct role in meeting these larger issues.

Question 5: Norwegian education has a long tradition of direct contribution to political and social development at important junctures of Norwegian history; moreover, it is generally agreed that Norway's most immediate problem will be to keep the growth of the massive petroleum industry from dismantling the fabric of Norwegian society. This perspective underlies the present Norwegian oil policy which conflicts with powerful and historic international interests. To implement that policy will require substantial contributions from every major sector of Norwegian education. Do the Norwegian authorities contemplate mobilizing educational institutions to contribute to the effective implementation of that policy? If so, in what ways?

f) The new Social Economy and Norwegian Education

One of the most striking features of the information available in Norway on the problem of equality in education is the absence of material concerning economic or social disadvantage and the attendant educational handicaps. In most other countries this is the very essence of the problems of inequality in education. The background report refers to these groups only three times: once with the observation that in Norway nobody would accept being called socially or economically deprived; once with the remark that "social and geographical factors are so tightly intertwined that they can hardly be separated"; and once with information on the social composition of secondary school graduates in 1963 and of new students in 1970. Characteristically, the comparable data on the population at large are not included in the annual statistical handbook, nor in the historical statistics to 1968. Thus it is nearly impossible to make any statements in this issue of socio-economic inequality. Moreover, in a society such as Norway's, income differentials are not very substantial and cannot, therefore, be the basis of such an analysis. The question remains whether disadvantages also exist in Norway which are comparable to those normally associated with low social status and identified by income statistics or residential patterns.

From the available figures it would appear that between 1963 and 1970 "workers" made significant gains in their percentage participation in higher education whereas farmers and fishermen had decreased their share more than their share of the population had declined (provided of course that the statistical basis of both sets of figures is comparable).

This observation is certainly surprising since the availability of primary and secondary education has increased most in rural and

remote areas. At the time these statistics were compiled, however, the Regional College did not play a role in the availability of higher education. Consequently, the segment of the educational system to which these statistics apply remained highly centralized. The figures bear out the contention that geographical disability is more serious in Norway than purely socio-economic disadvantage. It remains to be seen whether the Regional Colleges will have an impact on this problem at the level of higher education.

Sometimes we had the impression that Norwegians preferred not to know too much about the socio-economic aspects of educational disadvantage. The underlying assumption is that wage differentials are not significant and socio-economic class distributions apart from income distribution criteria need not be seriously taken into account. We are convinced that these matters warrant more careful attention. Norway is still in an earlier stage of industrialization by comparison with other countries. A significant proportion of the work force still has strong and direct links to farming and craftsmanship traditions from which to derive their social identity. Their children cannot, however, draw on these traditions and may tend to exhibit the kind of disadvantage seen in workers' children in industrialized countries. In several conversations we received first impressionistic indications of such a development. Particularly disturbing to our mind is the unemployment reported among young people of working class background who have recently left compulsory schools, both in remote regions and in Oslo, in spite of the general conditions of labour shortage.

This may be an example in which the predispositions of centralized policy and organisational control, if not sufficiently balanced by a recognition of changes in local conditions and problems appearing in the schools themselves, and by a local capacity to respond to these developments, would result in major areas of policy failure to anticipate and to meet vital needs.

Question 6: Norwegian society is in a state of rapid transition involving the processes of industrialization, urbanization and modernization - a transition being given an extra velocity through the development of oil and natural gas. Experience in other countries suggests that such developments have strong deleterious effects on the children and youth of the workers in this kind of economy. It would be most unfortunate if Norway's educational policy were to find itself overtaken by unanticipated problems related to socio-economic disadvantages which experience shows easily get beyond control. What measures are being undertaken to monitor the effectiveness of the educational system for special groups of children, identified not by school performance alone but by school performance correlated with the personal background of the child?

2. The Consequences of Current Policy

Norwegian policies for education disclose a recognition that they are associated with social ends, and therefore the technical problems of education involve the expression of such ends. This means that changes and reforms in education have a deeply social character, with all of the concomitant resistances, and that the technical aspects of such changes must be very carefully conceived, monitored and augmented to see to it that they actually serve the ends toward which they were directed.

A difficulty of any new social policy which does not meet the needs of the "clients" is the tendency of the system which is to be affected to regress to the pre-existent norm. After a brief period in which changes take place, the complex of pressures operating within the system will cause the reform to be cancelled out. Reformers then find themselves in the unhappy position of having to keep on reforming, not to progress any further but simply to avoid being thrown back. Rolling reform, in itself an attractive concept, thereby becomes a screen for the failure of a given policy to take hold. Several of the newer policies being considered or implemented by the Norwegian authorities - for example those governing grading and participation - may have proven premature and will need to be given new impetus several times if they are to retain their vitality.

Our concern here is to call attention to some of the many implications contained in these policies in terms of their pedagogical, organisational and political consequences which, it seems to us, would have to be recognized if these policies are ultimately to be realized. This is the direction pursued in the following group of questions.

a) The impact of an abolition of grades

The elimination of grading in the first six years of school was not a matter of controversy and the transition was by all accounts a smooth one. Nevertheless the new policy raises fundamental issues concerning the goals of education which are far from being resolved, as could be seen when an attempt was made to extend the non-graded policy to all of compulsory education. At that time, strong public resistance to the change appeared, both among parents and teachers. This resistance was based not only on the form of the proposed change, which would have led to an over-emphasis on the academic subjects (Norwegian, English and Mathematics) which would have been continued to be graded, but also on a fundamental resistance to the shift it implied in the relationship between the schools and society. As long as this resistance remains, we believe the reforms of grading practices by themselves will not change the basic relationships which are supposed to have been modified. What the new policy touches upon is the relationship of teachers to students and parents and the relationship of what is learned in school to society at large.

The elimination of grades has not and cannot remove the need to evaluate a student's progress and to communicate this evaluation to the student, his parents, his subsequent teachers and social institutions to which he will move when leaving school. Grades are symbols of a generalized standard to which all of these groups can refer in trying to assess a student's abilities. By removing this standard, teachers are being required to develop new bases for evaluation. This requires skills which most teachers lack, and the process of acquiring them implies a redefinition of the teacher's role relative to students, parents and the community at large. Evaluations are to measure not what a child has achieved but to help those who will be dealing with it to understand more exactly what its capabilities are and to provide a basis for future teaching. Unless this becomes the very goal of future teaching, the evaluations will rapidly become formalistic and almost as meaningless to those concerned as the symbols which have been abolished.

Many countries wish to redefine teacher roles in this easier manner, but none has come close to solving the difficulties which are involved. Underlying the decision to abolish grades is a much more fundamental change involving the social psychology of teachers, a change which cannot be achieved through structural or formal reforms. What is required is a process of learning on the part of teachers. This demands not only time but a willingness to learn as well as supporting professional services without which no progress will be made.

Attempts to meet this particular difficulty have thus far concentrated on developing evaluation schemes for teachers, such as exemplary evaluations and, even, forms. We doubt whether this approach is constructive, particularly coming from a central institution such as the Council for Innovation in Education. You cannot short-circuit the learning processes of teachers, and these occur at the place of their work: in the schools, and in the Teacher Training Colleges. This is the very kind of issue which requires participatory, decentralized institutions if it is to take hold at the level at which it must be implemented.

Question 7: By abolishing grades in the first six years of school and announcing them through the end of the ninth year, Norwegian authorities have launched themselves on an ambitious reform of the relationship between the schools and the community and between the participants in the schools To provide the basis for successful implementation of new evaluation procedures what measures are envisaged to ensure that the necessary learning processes get under way within the schools, the communities and the teaching profession as a whole?

b) The Content of Education and Lifelong Learning for Teachers

We were not expected to study Norwegian experience in curriculum development, teaching methods and resources for teaching. The

materials prepared for us and our programme of visits and discussions emphasized the organisational aspects of the system and the political context within which policy decisions are taken, but of course, such policy decisions are made to affect ultimately the content and character of the educational activities in the schools. It may be useful, therefore, to record from our fragmentary and possibly faulty experience some of our strongest impressions.

For example, with respect to the content of Norwegian education we were left with an impression of serious problems in finding a better relative emphasis on "non-examinable" subjects, particularly creative and cultural ones. Then also, we were surprised to see classes with fewer than 20 pupils organised for frontal, whole-class teaching, which gave the clear impression of teachers oriented mostly to the methods of traditional whole-class teaching. What we saw of Norwegian classrooms was distinguished by a striking absence of the kinds of teaching aids which can be so important in enlivening the child's school experience. This may in part be explained by the fact that we visited Norway during the very first days of the school year when the character of classrooms had not yet been fully established. However, our assumptions and observations lead us to surmise that this is the kind of pedagogic development which has not yet received adequate attention. All of this kind of impression we have ascribed to the Norwegian preoccupation with equality of educational opportunity and the quantitative expansion of the system which has left insufficient time for a whole range of pedagogical matters of great importance, or has caused available resources to be allocated in a less than satisfactory way.

Furthermore, these impressions concerning the problems of the content and teaching process in Norwegian education were reinforced by our observations in the area of in-service training of teachers. This field represents the other end of a process in which educational content could be developed. While resources for in-service training are apparently quite adequate - even generous - they have not been arranged in an optimal manner. The major part of these resources takes the form of released teacher time which could be important for teacher self-development. However, our reading of how this time is engaged is that it does not constitute a whole process of in-service training. Important criteria for a system of "lifelong education for teachers" which would be congruent with the principles of current Norwegian policy would be:

i) that services in support of teacher development would be supplied primarily in response to their expressed needs and be focused close to the teacher's place of work, in the schools; and

ii) that the development of new curricula would be an important aspect of such in-service teacher development.

The time made avilable for teachers' planning and continuing education includes substantial state grants to local authorities to pay

substitute teachers when others are attending courses away from school, time off for some teachers to advise other teachers, and one week for all teachers to do course planning. Further, these resources are augmented by efforts of the Teachers' Organisations to provide professional support also at regional levels, by specialists attached to a variety of institutions who have a commitment to working with teachers. Teachers have been participating in very large numbers in courses on the new Mønsterplan, but it was unclear whether this activity could be considered part of a continuing system of professional teacher development. In the area of curriculum development, the National Council for Innovation Education with its substantial staff has taken some major initiatives, but during our two-hour discussion with members of the Council staff, the professional needs and constraints of teachers did not emerge as its major concern.

Under these circumstances, we feel that the overall effect of these very substantial efforts is not commensurate to the resources and energies which they are consuming. With resources of this magnitude, Norway should have conspicuous, successful professional support for teachers in service, and this is not the case. We feel that the better articulation of the entire process of in-service teacher training (lifelong learning for teachers) should receive more attention than it does and that institutions at the county and regional levels need to be created or strengthened. Particular emphasis should be laid on providing teacher support services at their place of work, that is in their schools. Perhaps in line with such an emphasis, the role of the National Council for Innovation in Education in the process of curriculum development might need to be re-assessed. The highest priority in this area should be that services - stripped of their function to impose central policy - should be supplied in response to the teachers' expressed needs, always, of course, identified and assessed in the light of the expressed needs of the pupils.

Question 8: Norway devotes a remarkable amount of resources to all forms of in-service teacher training. Nonetheless the effectiveness of these resources is open to doubt. The goal of such activities should be lifelong learning for teachers with a balance between the elements of teaching self-development and professional re-qualification.

- What steps are envisioned to assure that resources committed to these programmes are really devoted to them and that the results are satisfactory to the teachers involved?
- What steps are envisioned to assure that these efforts result in changes in the classroom? Specifically, are measures currently envisioned to increase the amount of such activities taking place as close as possible to the schools?

c) Adult education policies

Related issues concerning the development of content arise in connection with the effort to transform the educational system from a "front-loaded" system to one which is based on life-long learning. By "front-load" we mean that education precedes work experience and is not subsequently taken up again. There are indications that several of the measures which are being undertaken will have the unintended effect of strengthening the front load more than the lifelong learning aspects of the educational system. A policy of lifelong learning cannot simply be grafted onto an existing system of education; it requires fundamental changes in the role of all institutions of education.

The primary schools must learn to prepare students for lifelong learning. Several of the changes this implies are identical to those which are being required to implement the new evaluation policies, and we appreciate the mutually supportive nature of the policy on evaluation and the policy for lifelong learning; unfortunately this also means that many of the difficulties which must be surmounted are comparable and interlocking. Experience shows that most people who disliked their school experiences are reluctant to return at a later time. Consequently the burden on the primary schools is increased to include not only transmitting basic skills but also an attitude towards learning which will later contribute to a student's willingness to engage consistently in learning experiences. This requirement also applies to the secondary school and all other institutions of initial learning but the ground-work for this, as for all other aspects of education, must be laid at the primary level.

A number of issues have emerged as particularly important in present policies for adult education in Norway. Crucial to the whole development of lifelong learning is the question of its degree of integration into the formal system of education, including upper secondary schools, universities and Regional Colleges. The number of part-time students in all of these institutions is rising rapidly. In Regional Colleges the number of part-time students is apparently rising faster than the number of full-time students although some of the further projections we saw indicate that this is a very limited trend. The University of Oslo could probably recruit, accommodate and develop a wide range of special courses for adults if equivalency arrangements comparable to those operating for Regional Colleges were offered in budgetary calculations and if there were appropriate shifts in internal budget allocations. This again implies a substantial change in the self-image of the teaching faculty, who are probably even less likely to be susceptible to accomplishing such a change than the primary school teachers.

The larger issue is, however, which persons and organisations can best define adult learning needs, formulate goals and programmes and which are best equipped to provide services and resources to adult

learning. Current Norwegian policy seems to assume that the traditional independent institutions for adult education, such as the folk high schools, which have provided the basis for past achievements in the field of adult education, cannot change and expand enough to accommodate the new demands upon adult education. While they offer the advantage of close integration into work and life of the community, they are relatively removed from the requirements of formal education. Consequently, a major burden of future growth in adult education must be carried by the public sector through its established educational institutions. We wonder, however, whether their traditional functions, which have determined their present character, are not too special, too strongly oriented towards front-loaded education, whether they are not inherently remote from the life and work of the community and pedagogically ill-equipped to handle the problems of adult education. They certainly will remain so without adequate provision for training of adult educators and the appropriate revision in the training of "regular" teachers. We were struck by the lack of such training, and particularly retraining programmes.

The reorientation of existing institutions towards lifelong learning would result in a fundamental restructuring of institutional priorities as reflected in training of teachers in these institutions, governance, budget allocations and the design and utilization of facilities. Otherwise strengthening and enlarging these institutions will only have the ultimate effect of strengthening the emphasis which is placed on the "front-load" aspects of the system. This phenomenon is often obscured by the fact that with increased front loading there is usually also an increase in the demand for adult education at the levels experiencing most growth. This form of adult education is not an enrichment or a revitalization but simply a matter of maintaining minimum standards in the face of rising educational attainment in society at large. It is a well known feature of educational provision that increasing its level has the initial effect of increasing the level of educational requirements throughout society, that is also for those who have already entered the labour market on the basis of less education. This will in turn be met not by a continuing shift to lifelong learning but by a rise in adult education activity replicating the rise in general provision for young people, so what appears to be a long-term increase in adult education in direct response to a purposive policy is in fact a short-term increase in adult education in response to a misdirected effect of that policy, namely increased front-loading.

The difference between the requirements of adult learning and those of institutions which deal with the entire population of a certain age is vital, because it is a difference based on the content rather than the structure of education. Too much adult education is no more than teaching grown ups what one is teaching children or young adults. Too little of the education of young people is devoted to preparing them for learning as adults. One of the most promising initiatives to remedy

this problem lies with the expressed desire of the framers of the Mønsterplan to try to involve students in planning what they will learn. Nonetheless, it remains true that by committing adult education activities to institutions which have traditionally defined their role in terms of educating young people, one runs the risk that this decision based on the structure of the educational system as a whole will end up determining the content by default.

> Question 9: Lifelong learning requires a reorientation of all institutions in the educational system. This reorientation must be expressed in changed content both of what is taught during the "front-loading" phase of education and during the subsequent periods of further education. By what process do the Norwegian authorities intend to redefine the content of education in an appropriate manner and what measures do they propose to take to avoid structural decisisions (such as the assignment of adult education to existing institutions) which makes the necessary change in content unlikely? By content we mean who learns, what is learned, where is it learned, how is it learned and who determines these matters?

d) The Regional Colleges and the future of Higher Education*

No country has yet been able to devise a set of policies which will counteract the tendency of established institutions to do more of what they have traditionally done if they are given new assignments and augmented funds for a special purpose. We are not convinced that the policies which are being adopted in Norway will be able to do so. In particular we doubt whether any policy which relies on the "mainstream" institutions of education is likely to succeed in shifting the burden of education from "front loading" to life-long learning. There exists a conflict between the requirements of a front-loading, lockstep education and those of recurrent, lifelong learning which is every bit as fundamental as the traditional conflict between academic and vocational education. To assign "regular" institutions the central role in adult education is a way of disregarding this fact.

The Regional Colleges have a very special position within adult education since they do not have a determining institutional past and

* Subsequent to the Examiners' visit, a shift occurred in the definition of Regional Colleges, which are now being viewed as clusters of non-university institutions of tertiary education within the various regions, all under the authority of a Regional or County Board for Higher Education. The new institution discussed in this section is the Distrikthogskole, which has recently been created and would be but one among the institutions in the cluster. The responsibility for regional specialization and the special mission for adult education would consequently be transfered to the County Board. We feel that this change could meet many of the concerns expressed in this section (see the account of the Confrontation Meeting for further details).

have been given the explicit task of integrating post-secondary education into the communities where they are located. We would tend to agree with Norwegian authorities who attach great importance to the success of this venture.

In spite of the impressive start which Regional Colleges have made, it would be unwise to generalize from the present developmental phase to a future relationship between them and other segments of the educational system, particularly secondary schools, Teachers Colleges and Universities. Much is being made of the fact that applicants who have been rejected at the Regional Colleges have subsequently been accepted into the Universities. This suggests that the universities and not the Regional Colleges will be the "open admissions" institutions maintaining freedom of access to higher education for all who wish to pursue it.

Is it actually the case that Regional Colleges have first pick of the eligible students? A more precise analysis of which students are rejected at Regional Colleges and what becomes of them would be very helpful. There are, to our minds, strong indications that the present pattern of student admissions is not as significant a phenomenon as is supposed and may consequently prove transient. The Regional Colleges must accept as many as 85% of their applicants to produce an entering group of 38%. That is, the figures are much inflated by multiple applications, not only between Regional Colleges themselves, Regional Colleges and universities and (most significantly we suspect) between Regional Colleges and Teachers Colleges Moreover, the number of local applicants at one of the Regional Colleges has remained constant over the past few years, suggesting that the reservoir of applicants is much smaller than some people suppose.

These interpretations lend weight to the possibility that the future demand for university places will grow more rapidly than that for places in the Regional Colleges. The actual direction of this trend will, of course, be connected to whether the Regional Colleges will be able to develop a sufficient proportion of their total programmes which will have a greater student appeal compared to the universities, making the Colleges more generally preferred institutions. A critical issue in this regard is the successful placement of graduates from Regional Colleges in positions which they view as commensurate with their training. This has proven a major stumbling block to attempts to develop alternative short-cycle institutions of higher education in other countries. We feel that not enough attention has thus far been given to this particular problem which is made intractable by the fact that graduates from the Regional Colleges cannot be employed in the education system.

On account of these factors, we would suspect that with a spreading of the numerus clausus at Oslo University and an increase in the availability of places in the Regional Colleges, the present rather striking relationship in terms of applicants could very quickly be reversed, so

that the Regional Colleges become the institutions of last resort for applicants to Oslo University or the Teachers Colleges. Should this happen, other factors in the present dynamic of Regional Colleges development promise to be more powerful than the force of student preference.

In all likelihood, hiring practices in the Regional Colleges will determine their role more strongly than any attempt at defining their mission through legislation or present student preferences. Virtually all instructors must fulfill qualifications equivalent to those required for university teaching. Moreover, this rule is enforced by external appointment committees dominated by university people. The main difference between the universities and the Regional Colleges lies in working conditions, with many advantages on the side of the university. Of the teaching faculty we spoke to, many had chosen employment at a Regional College for lack of opportunity at a university rather than in preference to a university. On account of such hiring practices we suspect that the Regional Colleges will tend progressively to become adjuncts of the universities, with lower initial status and a strong thrust towards an equalization of mission between themselves and the universities. Already now, there are signs that university preparatory course sequences are particularly attractive to many of the faculty. We are conscious of the fact that this assessment is at odds with the stated goals of the Regional Colleges and in conflict with some of the evidence which we were able to see. Nevertheless we felt that we had to make an assessment of the future prospects of the Regional Colleges rather than report on an interim development. In weighing various presently identifiable influences, we found that our scepticism about the future tended to outweigh our admiration for what had been achieved. As a matter of fact, the distribution of budgetary priorities by the Ministry of Education appears to reflect a similar estimate of where demand will lie and how the future prospects of Regional Colleges should be estimated. Although we suspect that the reasons for the relatively poor provision for Regional Colleges when compared with the Universities (the four universities received 98 new positions for 1974 compared with 26 for the six Regional Colleges) are not the same as those we have mentioned, the present budgetary priorities are an element in the situation which should not be overlooked.

Should our assessment of the further development of the Regional Colleges prove accurate, their ability to contribute constructively to the requirements of lifelong learning will be very much reduced. Not only does a stronger connection to the universities mean that the Regional Colleges will suffer from the disabilities of those institutions in dealing with lifelong learning, but also the measures which may be taken to combat such a tie-in might be expected to reinforce the front-load aspect of the Regional Colleges, because exclusive emphasis on their adult education mission is unlikely to be considered a satisfactory goal by those involved in the internal decision-making processes.

There are also clear signs at the upper secondary level that the Regional Colleges are likely to be integrated into the academic streams of education. At the present time, the Regional Colleges are still drawing on a pool of applicants who planned their course of studies at the upper secondary level before the Regional Colleges were a factor. This probably explains part of the present diversity among applicants. As Regional Colleges become a regular feature of the educational system, students will begin to prepare more consciously for entry into them. Significantly, the way to do this is to pursue the theoretical track.

Question 10: The almost unanimous support for the Regional Colleges could be interpreted more as an expression of the long-standing demand for greater equality in terms of equivalent services for all parts of the country and less a commitment to newer missions connected with lifelong learning and the development of regionally specialized institutions. Despite notable advancement toward these new missions, this report briefly tries to recognize major factors which seem to be working against them. What are the policies and measures designed to avoid having the Colleges become adjuncts to the universities, and to assure their growth as uniquely regional institutions which can also serve the needs for adult education?

d) Internal Democracy and External Mission in Higher Education

Both in the Regional Colleges and at the University of Tromsø new arrangements have been tried to achieve greater internal democracy in the institutions. In both instances we perceive a conflict between the internal democracy and the external mission which threatens to frustrate either the internal governance or the wider goals of the institutions.

The Regional Colleges are essentially institutions of short-cycle higher education. There are, however, substantial differences in the length of time most students spend at the institutions as full-time members. Introducing internal democracy will tend to weight governance in favour of those missions requiring longer periods of full-time attendance. The weakest group are part-time students, such as those in adult programmes or students who only attend intensive course sequences. We do not believe that this difficulty can be overcome by using proportional representation or other devices to assure that all parts of the institution are represented, since there will still be substantial differential effectiveness between persons who have several years of experience in the institutions and those who have none. In times of growth, such conflicts are readily obscured but in times of stringency they become very important. Moreover, participatory governance procedures in a multi-purpose institution will tend to

redirect energies from concern with external relationships to the resolution of internal issues. Participatory governance is inherently inward-looking since it assumes that all those affected by a decision are participating and that the process has value in itself to those who take part in it. This tendency is reinforced if there are very diverse internal constituencies participating in the decision-making process. This is particularly serious in institutions which have important external relationships to maintain.

None of this argues against participatory decision-making as such: it is intended to point out some of the factors involved, so that the level of decision-making at which participatory processes can most fruitfully be employed can best be identified. We would tend to assume that in institutions such as Regional Colleges this level is probably reached in the context of single mission units appropriately defined. Participation is not an absolute value and at some level it must interact with the hierarchical decision-making patterns of the large organisational units which are a feature of all educational systems.

The issues surrounding participation at the University of Tromsø are even more complex. The difficulties of the Regional Colleges do not obtain; since all courses of study extend for a significant time, the overall mission of the University is reasonably uniform and commonly accepted and the boundaries between major organisational units have been left intentionally undefined. Yet here, too, there were unmistakable signs of a conflict between participatory governance and external mission as represented both by the community of Tromsø and the Ministry of Education. The University of Tromsø is characterized by its desire for particularly close integration into the region. This in itself poses problems: the world of universities is international, the standards applied studiously independent of time and place, and one wonders whether "academic excellence" and a regionally defined mission are not in fact contradictions in terms. At the very least, the task orientation of the University touches at a most sensitive academic nerve, since it overlays standards which are considered satisfactory in most other institutions with a further set of requirements oriented towards the regional task: when both sets of standards can be met simultaneously, there is no problem; difficulties arise when the necessary balance has to be struck between academic excellence and appropriateness to a specific situation. We feel that the participatory processes being employed in Tromsø are an effective way of maintaining awareness of these issues. But the very nature of the principles involved implies the possibility of conflict. We do believe that Tromsø is confronting what is one of the key weaknesses of traditional academic institutions and that its experiences are consequently of great significance. In view of the fundamental character of the issues at stake, however, we do not feel overly sanguine about the chances of success.

These difficulties are reflected in the participatory processes. It is a well-known fact that faculty-dominated universities tend to overemphasize the research functions of the institution. The concern of

students is weighted to more short term and to teaching issues. Moreover, in the Tromsø situation the relationship to the local community has apparently become a contentious political issue. This is not entirely surprising, given the intentions of the university to affect the quality of life in the region. Unfortunately, the university does not appear to have developed the ability to cope with such political pressures in a fashion consonant with its internal governance and effective at the same time.

One of the paradoxes of participatory decision-making is that it magnifies the importance of personalities of a number of individuals in key positions. This is best understood in terms of the necessity to "interface" the environments of participation with the hierarchically organised institutions it depends on. Most often this is done by defining the position of a person or office in contradictory terms: the hierarchical organisation will hold him responsible in terms of normal delegation of authority while in the participatory environment he is normally responsible for, he is held fully accountable to the participants. This contradiction can only be resolved if the interface person or institution manages to retain the confidence of both sides in terms acceptable to both. Again, the critical issue is to find the level at which best to interface participatory with hierarchical environments.

There is always a certain danger that new forms become ends in themselves rather than means to more important ends. The ultimate goal of participatory arrangements is to improve the internal relationships between members of the institutions involved and particularly to improve the quality of relationships between teachers and students. It appeared to us that a disproportionate amount of time and effort is expended on the structural, formal aspects of participation which may not have commensurate effect on teaching and research situations.

Question 11: In the course of the last few years, many Norwegian institutions have experimented with arrangements for increased participation of many constituencies in the decision-making process. The Regional Colleges and the University of Tromsø have developed particularly intensive formats and have had some years' experience in working with them. In the schools, an elaborate formal arrangement is now being put into practice.
By what means will it be possible to identify the appropriate level of interface between the environment of participation and hierarchical institutions?
What measures are being undertaken, by Norwegian authorities or, more importantly, at decentralized levels, to ensure that participation takes place in a form which affects the fundamental transactions of education?
What measures are being undertaken to prepare teachers and students for the processes of participation?

Other than head counts, what criteria, standards and indicators will be employed by ministry and institutional officials to judge success in participatory environments and in terms of external mission?

f) Integration and diversity

Taken as a whole, recent developments and proposed policies for Norwegian education represent an attempt to deal with it as a total system which should be integrated. The educational systems of most countries retain aspects of earlier historical periods and of unplanned process of growth, and the resulting educational discontinuities usually lead to serious injustices. In the case of Norway the elimination of such discontinuities is the purpose of well-reasoned policies toward integration.

However, we were struck by the fact that certain discontinuities in the Norwegian educational system appear to play a vital role in maintaining its diversity: the relative independence of the Teachers Colleges from the universities, and the attraction which the non-academic aspects of the Regional Colleges exercise on students are probably a vital force in maintaining the policy of differential exit points and multi-dimensional criteria for success. In view of the importance of this "uncoupling" of the educational system, we feel that one of the dangers of pursuing a policy of integration is that one set of values may tend to predominate throughout the educational system; experience in other countries suggests that this most likely will be the value represented by the universities. Consequently we feel that any policy of integration should be accompanied by one emphasizing the vital diversities of the educational system. The Norwegian authorities may actually wish to adopt policies which make direct transition from certain branches of the educational system to others difficult or impossible; for example requiring work experience of one or two years after graduation from vocational schools, Teachers Colleges or Regional Colleges before allowing access to the universities, and possible work experience of some length of time after graduation from the gymnas before allowing access to any institution of higher education.

A danger of planned educational systems is that they may come to resemble planned cities: intelligently conceived, good to look at but difficult to live in because of a lack of diversity. To some extent, a successful policy of increased participation would counteract this tendency; but there remains the distinct possibility that lack of differentiation within the overall system of education would tend to defeat policies for participation rather than be remedied by them.

Question 12: In recent years, Norwegian education has become a much more complex but also much more unified phenomenon than before. A conscious policy of integration has been pursued to break down barriers between institutions which were viewed as

increasingly artificial and which appeared to contribute to the inequities of the system. Do the Norwegian authorities consider that the policy of integration should be limited so as to serve future needs? How would they determine the limit at which it should be curtailed? Are they considering measures to achieve a degree of "uncoupling" between institutions, as a means of preserving diversity, a diversity which will be necessary ultimately in a system serving people's needs for lifelong learning?

V

QUESTIONS FOR THE CONFRONTATION DISCUSSION

In the above Section IV, 12 questions on Norwegian educational policy are posed for further consideration by the Norwegian authorities. (These questions were accepted as a basis for the discussion which took place between the Examiners, the Norwegian delegates and members of the Education Committee in the Confrontation Meeting in Paris, 17th December, 1974. They were reproduced in this space for the convenience of this meeting but are now included in the following account.)

Part Two

RECORD OF THE CONFRONTATION MEETING

Paris, 17th December, 1974

I

OPENING STATEMENT

by

Mrs. Ingrid Eide
for the Norwegian Delegation

Let me first thank the OECD for arranging an examination of Norway's educational policy, and for recruiting such competent and devoted persons to perform the examination. Norway wanted this examination. During recent decades many changes have been made in our educational system, involving extensive national discussion and debate, and it was time for us to exchange opinions with outsiders.

My comments will only offer some observations, mostly of a more general nature, in addition to and as possible explanations of what is already presented by our examiners.

An evaluation like this is a kind of joint venture, where the examined party organises the examination and to some extent thereby becomes responsible for conclusions drawn on the basis of evidence provided, including possible misunderstandings. So, if we are critical across this table, we are in a way mutually responsible for what is criticized.

In organising the tour for our Examiners we tried to correct a misunderstanding that frequently occurs in communications with foreigners about Norway. Foreigners have the impression that Norway is at the periphery of the world, and that is correct, and they have the idea that Norway is small, which is correct too. But fellow Europeans mostly overlook the fact that in shape Norway is almost as long as all of the rest of Europe. This makes us a "big" country, in a sense. We wanted to show the examiners the entire stretch of the land, we sent them from South to North, from East to West. An image of the country may have developed that is almost the image you get from an airplane: the country is almost uninhabited, mostly uninhabitable; it is not a modern, industrialized country. We brought the Examiners to the periphery of the periphery. It gave them perhaps a cultural shock, where Norway was considered as more strange, less industrialized, more unique than we really are. If an exaggerated impression of uniqueness developed, it is our fault, because of the way we organised their stay in our country.

What we wanted to explain was the ways in which we try to match institutions to this strange land of ours. In planning we have to take

into account the small number of people, the dispersed settlement, the peculiarities of our geography and climate.

I have already mentioned that the Examiners may have exaggerated the uniqueness which has made us rather reluctant to import and automatically put to use what we have learnt abroad. We have tried to filter, and to seek solutions at home rather than just copying. This makes it particularly important for us to be examined, observed, and corrected from the outside. We feel that the OECD examination has served this purpose.

Despite the characteristics of our geography, we are a homogeneous population, ethnically speaking. This population is dispersed in small communities, on islands, in valleys; there are few towns by European standards. Communication was traditionally difficult and still is. We have had population moves like other countries, and urbanization corresponding to it. But it is on a scale different from what is found elsewhere.

And more important: there is political consensus that the country must continue to have a population living a dispersed pattern, and that we must pay for it and construct for it. We do not want an excessive amount of mobility, either geographically or in other terms. Equality, dignity, self-respect must have a basis different from that offered by steps on a ladder of prestige.

In this country, and this for us is a fact of life, it has to this day been necessary for people to work hard in order to survive at all. Everybody had to work. Compared to the rest of Europe, we never had a large leisured class that could live in urban centres and be "civilized" in the European tradition. We had to be rather practical about attempts in this direction. I believe that it is correct to say that we always had to combine the head and the hand more than most other European countries.

Some of the observations our Examiners made refer to more recent efforts in the same tradition: we shall try to combine different types of school that normally lead to very different positions in life into one, cohesive system, one school, if you like. Neither in the individual human being nor in the population at large did we ever want a segregation between doing a practical job, and using one's head.

Let me briefly also draw your attention to another factor of importance to our educational policies: we are at the same time an old and a new nation.

As a new nation we have in this century had to face the problem of nation building. In order to make one cohesive nation out of a population as dispersed as ours, a centrally organised school system became an important mechanism. A common, basic amount of knowledge, a common set of values were crucial, and the school system was the channel. However, from the very beginning some decisions were decentralized: the selection of teachers, the necessary adjustments of school days to seasonal work, the provision of classrooms, the local

use of school facilities etc. But the decision to have schools, their structure and content, and partly their economy, were subject to central decision. It is only today, with other mechanisms providing the necessary degree of cohesion and with new channels of communication, that new efforts are made to decentralize decisions concerning the educational system.

As an old nation, the country had a fairly strong legal tradition. The vikings stated a thousand years ago that it was with law the country should be built, and not ruined by non-law. Even today Norwegians frequently and perhaps naively refer to law, and law-making as the source of power. Law-making is of course centralized, resting in the national assembly. Any changes in the way the country is run must, by definition, be a centralized effort, as correctly remarked by our Examiners when they refer to the system as being decentralized from the centre. In a way, this is a formal argument, but it must be understood against this local belief in law-making and in "building the country by laws".

As noted by the Examiners, the school system has expanded gradually, inspired by the belief in the value of education for the individual and for society. Expansion has partly been dictated by the availability of resources: money, buildings, time available for those who shall be educated, teachers adequately trained. Recent years have seen the expansion from seven to nine years of school for everybody, and we are now in the middle of expanding the school system so as to offer facilities for those who want an additional one, two or three years. You can look at this also from the point of decentralization: educational opportunity exists today in an ever more widely dispersed pattern geographically and socially, but also in expansion of subjects and methods, and the challenge is now to avoid a corresponding expansion in centralized decision making.

For us the value of education does not lie primarily in the mobility - socially and geographically - it offers to the individual who goes through the system in a certain way and with a certain amount of success. I have already mentioned education and nation building. In a democracy it makes you belong to society, it is a condition for participation, more generally speaking. It is of course also related to specific occupations and professions. But increasingly the aim is to gear education to the local community or region, preventing us from becoming "a nation of movers".

The collective aspect, in addition to the individual one, and sometimes as a contrast to it, is seriously considered. Particularly in adult education the idea is emphasized that education shall improve the conditions of a collectivity, at work or in a community. The idea is not to offer another and better career to the few most successful.

If our people are to make a living in a country like ours with many communities so small that they would not be judged viable by European standards, the life of those communities must offer a wide spectrum of

activities to its inhabitants. Each citizen must have more knowledge, more innovative and creative capacity, more ability to participate than that which is strictly required in his or her particular job.

The labour movement is committed to improving the relationship between man and work. One of the ways in which to improve the quality of working life is to educate the individual beyond what is strictly required. We want intellectual capacity, creativity and responsibility preserved and activated in a much wider variety of jobs than today. Hence the way work is done at school, the way organisation and participation functions within the school is not important only with a view to the school itself, but as a training ground for later phases in life with responsibility at work, in the community and in the family.

The Examiners paid attention to the recent debate we had over the grade issue, but missed one aspect of it: by our abortive attempt at abolishing the traditional grade system, we wanted to develop a system of evaluation that took better care of the relationship between the individual pupil and the work carried out. It was the work itself, rather than the expectation of a grade, good or bad, that should carry value to the child, and motivate it.

You may say that our attempt is to add those qualities to the school that we feel society and working life should have, thinking that there may be a "spillover".

You may choose to call this an adjustment of schools to working life, but it is at least an attempt at an offensive adjustment. The Examiners point to the importance placed on teachers rather than teaching material in Norwegian schools, and the resources used on training and retraining of teachers. We are increasingly aware of the necessity to use the environment as such as teaching material, particularly in communities away from the bigger centres. The world is brought to children via modern mass media, also used in schools. What the school can offer is to help the child relate to and identify with the local community and its physical environment. A teacher who also has local knowledge is a better medium here than any centrally produced teaching material.

Another critical point mentioned, with reference to other countries, is the particular problems of working class youths, and you warn us of a possible similar development. But our hope is that our reforms in the school system, our community and district policies, and our efforts to enhance the qualities of working life can prevent an undesired development with breakdown of identity, dignity and other human qualities.

Another question is whether we shall in the future be able to break the trend all modern societies seem to be following: the segregation of learning and teaching, pupils and teachers from the rest of the population. Formerly schools had a more limited set of tasks, school less time, and a lot was learnt from people other than teachers in

intergenerational settings. One aspect of adult education is the creation of new intergenerational settings where the young and old can learn simultaneously, where the teacher may be younger than the pupils, and the pupils in many ways more knowledgeable than their teachers, where learning can take place outside schools and add qualities to working life: a whole new set of educational situations will emerge.

You also point to the need for some reforms in our system of public administration. This is indeed a problem of which we have been aware for some time, for several years it has been discussed in a special committee, and its suggestions are now gradually implemented.

I have tried to give you an idea of what our country is like, and what our political goals - and constraints - are. If we are to succeed in maintaining a population that lives dispersed, but still takes part in a general process of modernization, we must make communities and regions more viable also in the sense of having a more complete system of education. We are presently in a phase where the decentralization of higher education is a fact: the country has four universities, including the newest at Tromsø which is far North. In addition a system of regional colleges is being developed, and to the present regional colleges some of which were visited by the Examiners - will be added existing schools at the level of higher education in the various regions. They will be linked together organisationally but not moved to one big campus. Between the schools of engineering, social work, teacher education and the presently established regional colleges an integration process will take place that corresponds in many ways to the integration of "chairs" into universities in European history. Some of the problems mentioned by the Examiners in their report on the regional colleges will, hopefully, be counteracted when the well-established, practically-oriented schools are joined to them.

I shall not, Mr. Chairman, go into more detail, but only again say how fruitful the examination has already been to us. The Examiners' report will continue to be for us both mirror and source. I thank you for the report and look forward to today's discussion of the 12 questions raised by the Examiners.

II

OPENING STATEMENT

by

Mr. Konrad von Moltke
for the Examiners

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, friends from Norway. This is the first time in the course of this exercise that we have sat this far apart,* and I hope we will succeed in bridging the distance and entering into a full discussion of the many issues which the Norwegian system of education has raised in our minds.

Perhaps I should begin with a point of clarification about my role in introducing the Examiners and their report. I speak not as a chairman but simply by virtue of having spent more time on the writing of this report than my colleagues. At no time have we worked in any way other than as colleagues, and I hope you will understand that it will be impossible for us to work in any other manner today. When questions are introduced, one of us will initiate the question, but we will all feel free to enter the discussion to supplement or complement what has been said.

I speak for all three of us with full confidence in saying that we have felt it an honour, a pleasure and an enlightening experience to participate as Examiners in this exercise. It is not always that things which are honourable and pleasurable are also enlightening. In this sense we all owe a debt of gratitude to the OECD for inviting us to participate and particularly to our Norwegian friends for the way in which they have conducted this exercise.

The discussions which we have had - all over Norway, as Mrs. Eide pointed out - with between three and four hundred persons in the course of only two weeks - were invariably open, frank and helpful. I would like to emphasize that all of the questions we have raised were also raised by someone during our conversations in Norway; however, of course, formulation and relative emphasis are only our own.

It is one of the ironies of an open discussion in a situation such as this that the questions the Examiners ask in the end can be unpleasant questions, simply because the discussion has been open and frank.

* A reference to the size of the meeting room.

Therefore, we would all like to make a few general comments to preface the discussion which will follow so as to make quite clear that we are in general, and often in specific, sympathy with the policies and with the means for implementing them which the Norwegian educational authorities have adopted. I believe that to agree does not mean to cease to raise critical questions. In fact, it would be most unfortunate if those who applaud a set of policies were unwilling to ask the most difficult questions.

Let me therefore quote from our document a brief passage which may be viewed as a summary of our impressions. We say there:

> "Undoubtedly, Norway is currently pursuing a carefully coordinated, ambitious, advanced set of educational policies. It may seem churlish to pick at the complex of interlocking policies which have been set in motion, particularly when many of them are in conformity with what we would consider some of the best theoretical work on education available. The preceding discussion should have shown that the Norwegian authorities are not blind to the complexities of the policies being pursued, that they are not pursuing isolated policy objectives without awareness of the existence of peripheral effects and have not fallen into many of the pitfalls which have made progress towards established goals so difficult in other countries. In fact, we consider Norway an example of the successes which can be achieved with what might be termed "classical" educational policies and would agree that many of the newer policies represent an important step beyond such "classical" policy measures."

The order of the questions for discussion

Because Norway is pursuing policies which in our view should be of interest to all Member countries, we hope that the documents which have been prepared can provide the basis for a discussion in which all members of this Committee will wish to participate. The series of questions which we have raised are questions we felt were appropriate to a written argued statement. However, in our opinion the oral situation presented by today's meeting dictates a different approach to the questions. We have discussed among ourselves the most productive way of entering into today's discussion and we would like to raise the questions - the flow of the discussion permitting - under the following general headings:

i) The Process of Decentralization
   Questions 1 and 2 (page 74)
ii) The National Councils
   Question 4 (pages 78, 79)
iii) The Regional Colleges
   Question 10 (page 81)

iv) Lifelong learning and the Content of Education
Question 9 (page 85)

v) Lifelong learning for teachers
Questions 7 and 8 (pages 87 and 88)

vi) Participation
Question 11 (page

vii) Integration and Diversity
Question 12 (page

viii) Education, Oil and the Industrial Society
Questions 5 and 6 (pages 89, 90)

Question three, which we have presently bracketed, can perhaps be dealt with while discussing the other eleven questions. We will be glad indeed if we can cover in the time available the entire area on which questions have been raised.

(To anticipate this record it should be noted here that the actual course of the following discussion - because of time limitations - dealt with only six of the above areas; (i) through (v) and (viii).)

III

THE DISCUSSION

THE PROCESS OF DECENTRALIZATION

Mr. Renwick introduced questions one and two:

In the course of developing a centralized system of education, Norway has had to institute a number of controls over the development of institutions of education throughout the country. In recent years, a loosening of such controls has been envisaged, described variously as a policy of regionalization, decentralization, participation or differentiation. How do the Norwegian authorities plan to solve the paradox of decentralization from the centre? Which measures of control do they feel need to be maintained unchanged, which need to be transformed into frames of reference, and which would they expect to abolish altogether? We refer specifically to: Budget rules, legal requirements, the activities of advisory bodies, the national examination system, national criteria for teacher training and teacher employment, central control over research budgets and research priorities and centralized innovation strategies.

Are Norwegian authorities considering the development of intermediate interface institutions at the county or regional levels? If so, what aspects of the present work of the central bodies would be transferred to such institutions and would their role be defined in terms of controlling decentralized institutions or providing support functions?

Mr. Renwick pointed out that these questions were based not only on the text immediately preceding them but also substantially on the Examiners' general perceptions of Norway outlined in Chapter I. He emphasized how much the Examiners were impressed by the processes of consultation which prevail in Norway and then said:

> "Historically, the essential initiatives have been taken centrally after exhaustive national debate, and the resulting policies have been applied nationally. But the Norwegian government is now committed to a wide range of policies that aim at decentralization, regional development and diversification of institutions. We found ourselves asking whether and to what extent the attitudes, values and institutions that are at the heart of Norway's success as a centralized democracy will need to be transformed if the policies pointing toward decentralization were to flourish."

There seem to be two political themes that are central to Norwegian public life at the present time that bear on this matter. One is the impulse towards equality, the other the impulse towards self-determination. Many of the educational policies of the central government are policies for equality, and all the legitimating devices of Norwegian public life are directed towards their success. But in the current mood in Norway there is a strong pull towards self-determination at levels below that of the nation itself. The question is the extent to which the values of equality and self-determination may find themselves compatible in decision-making arenas below the level of central authority.

The above two questions accordingly raise issues of power, legitimation, administrative organisation, attitude and expertise. While they arise in the context of one country - Norway - the Examiners were suggesting that they may have relevance to several other Member countries.

Mr. Eide responded for Norway by pointing out that there exists in Norway an historical tradition of strong political bodies at local levels. It can be emphasized that centralization in education is much older than the Examiners' Report would suggest. However, since early in this century there have been indications of a trend toward decentralization, and this has been reinforced in recent years. Mr. Eide did not believe that Norwegians recognized in the issue of decentralization the paradox identified by the examiners: "If there is no local wish to take decisions, there is, of course, no point in not making central decisions." When pressures for decentralization arise at local levels, then is the time to decentralize. At the same time, it is not necessary to wait until you cannot avoid it.

The dilemma more likely to be recognized in Norway is that when one central body relinquishes authority, there is always the risk that some other central body such as groups of experts or professional associations, or even other government agencies, may move in to take up the power.

This became a central issue to which this part of the discussion returned several times. For example, the Delegate from Denmark (Mr. Goldschmidt) mentioned that Danish policies for decentralization in education raised similar questions. Since 1970 many central administrative functions have been transferred to counties and municipalities subsequent to a reform of the size of these bodies. This process of decentralization may be raising unforeseen problems. In Denmark there are associations of municipalities and counties and in these forums negotiations can take place with the government concerning investment and financing priorities or other issues of national concern. These associations have been developing their own bureaucracies. For example, salary negotiations with municipal employees now take place within the framework of these associations so as to avoid competition between the municipalities. There has also been a tendency

for these new bureaucracies to set standards for school buildings and equipment and increasingly for other activities in the schools. The danger in this development is that it may result in a shadow Mininstry of Education which is far removed at the local level from the parliamentarians who are responsible for education. "Do you foresee any development of that kind in Norway, and if you do, how would you try to avoid it?" asked the Danish delegate.

In response to this question Mr. Eide stated that the Norwegian authorities could understand the danger of such a development in principle since similar associations exist in Norway. The bureaucracy at this level, however, is not yet very substantial. Moreover, in educational matters, national authorities and the associations of local authorities have had a number of joint interests. For example, there has been a joint determination to maintain central salary scales. Correspondingly we have certainly an alliance in another general policy area: namely, in trying to avoid the emergence of differentiation in quality between similar institutions - an institutional hierarchy in which, unofficially at least, some schools are "good" and others are known to be "bad". On issues such as these, cooperation with the common body of the municipalities is possible. In the long run, however, the risk is very real. The Norwegians cannot say that they have a definitive answer to this risk, and coming circumstances may provide the means for individual municipalities to promote themselves above the others. "Up to now politically this has not been a major problem in the education field because there has been a kind of commonality of policy objectives," concluded Eide.

Later, the Examiners again pressed for further clarification on this question of conditions for decentralization, asking:

> "Does one create the mechanisms for participation before the demand is there, or does one wait until the demand arises? Norway has now, as far as we can see, decided to create a mechanism of participation in the schools which could become a vehicle for channelling the demand. The question which we are raising is whether this action does not also channel the kind of participation one then gets into a context which is viewed as being initiated from the centre and contributing to the implementation of centrally defined policies? This is a danger which can serve to negate the positive effects one may hope to achieve."

Mr. [illegible] agreed to the proposition that one should not decentralize before there is a demand for it; but on the other hand, one should not wait until everybody wants it. The minimum requirement would be that "... quite a few should already have demanded it - I don't think one can give a more exact answer to that particular question."

In his opening remarks Mr. Eide had pointed out that "centralization" and "decentralization" are very loose words. He had been surprised to

discover that in some ways the highly decentralized British system was much more centralized than that of Norway where, for example, central authority cannot control the establishment of new schools or new courses as is possible in England. In consequence he urged caution in the use of general terms such as centralization and decentralization. In order to bring the discussion to more specific issues which might illustrate the meaning of these general terms, supplementary questions were raised concerning examinations and on the authority to establish new courses.

Mr. von Moltke pointed out that in referring to the "abolition of examinations", the examiners were not referring to the present policy to abolish grades but rather more specifically to the examinations at the end of upper secondary school. Consequently, he posed the question: "Is there a policy in principle to abolish this examination, as the response of the Norwegian Delegation might suggest? If so, this is a very significant decision, and one which is sure to be of interest to other countries which are facing the same problem." He then requested further clarification on the measure of control exercised by central authorities in Norway over the establishment of new courses: "It was our understanding that in the compulsory sector the amount of flexibility in the distribution of hours between courses was very clearly defined. There was a certain amount of flexibility in the form in which courses were then conducted. In the post-compulsory sector there certainly was more flexibility."

In response, Mr. Eide pointed out that while only a limited amount of the minimum curriculum is open to free choice by the schools, nearly all schools offer more than the minimum number of hours - up to 20% more - and everything that goes beyond the minimum is at the school's discretion subject to approval by the Ministry. This approval gives substantial leeway.

Mrs. Eide linked the reforms of the curriculum through the Mønsterplan to the question of examinations. Increased flexibility in the compulsory sector had effectively made it impossible to maintain centralized examination systems for the first six years of school. Moreover, the reality of the teaching situation nowadays often brings a merging of subject areas as teachers use new pedagogical approaches, such as project-oriented teaching. Again, even where a municipality restricts itself to the minimum prescribed curriculum, this leaves some flexibility at the disposal of individual schools - time during which they can establish contact with "non-teaching teachers" in the local environment, characteristic elements of the local community.

What was emerging from this discussion was the picture of the movement toward decentralization in Norway as a delicate political process. Mr. Eide described the process for choosing which central controls to relinquish as a dynamic one and stated that Norwegian policy would be evolutionary, moving a few steps at a time. Thus, the recent changes in grading policies in Norway have given rise to serious

consideration of the corollary idea that the examination system may be abolished at the upper secondary level. However, Norway is not prepared for that political move yet, and it may turn out that the decision cannot be made in the future.

An even more striking example was drawn from the Norwegian experience in the field of innovation. Twenty years ago there was fairly rigid regulation of local schools by central prescription. The Experimentation Act then made it possible to take any class, any school or any municipality out of the existing regular legislation for schools and to put it under the Experimentation Act, under the condition that it be approved by the National Council for Innovation in Education. In the last twenty years this measure has been a driving force for innovation in Norway. In the meantime, however, national legislation has changed in such a manner as to allow any school to initiate experiments on its own authority which would twenty years ago have required the approval of the Council. As the Examiners point out, said Eide, the role of central innovation bodies may have become superfluous. What they have overlooked, however, is that this situation has been created by the central body of innovation.

Mrs. Eide further supplemented this description of relevant political developments by pointing out that Norway was planning to introduce direct elections to representative bodies at the county level next year and that these bodies will have the ability to levy taxes. These changes would tend to make decentralization more of a reality. The financing of the Norwegian educational system can be described as horizontal: the elementary schools are the responsibility of the communities, the secondary schools are controlled at the county level, and higher education is a responsibility of the state. The new development in the Regional Colleges is that they are subject to a board which has a majority of members nominated by county-level authorities - even though appointment rests within the Ministry. Thus, the principle of horizontal decision-making and horizontal budgeting in Norwegian education is a firm principle.

THE NATIONAL COUNCILS

Mr. Ziegler introduced question 4 concerning the role of the National Councils in general and specifically of the National Council for Innovation in Education in the process of innovation at the local level.

The National Council for Innovation in Education has played a central role in initiating and carrying out most experiments of any significance during the past few years. However, if diversification is to take place according to local prerogatives, such experiments should be initiated, operated and evaluated locally (although assistance could be provided from outside but only when requested); the teachers, whose attitudes and sense of mission will be affected by any lasting innovation,

should have co-determination in the initiation, operation and evaluation of such experiments. By what measures could such a perspective for innovation be implemented in Norwegian schools? Specifically, what measures must be adopted to devolve the authority and responsibility of existing National Councils in such a manner that local bodies will take advantage of the new opportunities which are being made available to them?

Mr. Ziegler pointed out that policy-makers and education experts tend to discuss major policy issues in a formal language. Terms such as decentralization, participation, innovation or experimentation have become part of an international language of educational policy: "We have tended to reify those terms rather than to ask what will be served in education if we begin to really enable its participants to differentiate themselves." Mr. Ziegler emphasized the Examiners' sense of sympathy and even identification with the historical development of Norwegian educational policies. He then turned to the problem of the identifiable needs of the future and asked, "What are the variety of skills, attitudes and understandings which a population must have in order to be able to live in a world and, therefore, in a country, in which the economic, social and political problems magnify and become less connected with the past history? What I am asking, in effect, is whether policies for decentralization, for participation at the local level of students, parents, and teachers for the development of new kinds of ideas and practices in teaching and learning is not indeed a matter for survival. Also a question which is now posing itself is: "How much can one perturb a system before it is in danger of running out of control?"

Mr. Ziegler continued by stating a principle: that the more diverse the society, the greater the likelihood that it will find within itself the necessary resources to meet new situations. Perhaps the new policies which are emerging in Norway after the highly successful effort at providing universal formal educational opportunities must be seen in this light. After the exemplary role which the Council for Innovation in Education has played in the process of changing Norwegian education in past years, it appeared to the Examiners that it had taken on the character of a part of the central authorities. If the Examiners' understanding of present Norwegian policy is correct, it may be necessary to develop some new kinds of instrument to enable local initiatives to emerge. The National Councils have reached a point in their development where it may be difficult for them to serve the purpose of encouraging local initiative. Thus, "We would be very interested to understand more precisely what measures may be adopted to devolve the authority and the responsibility of the national councils in such a manner that the willingness and the capability to develop these new initiatives and understanding of the new practice of teaching and learning emerge from the local initiatives."

Mr. Aase responded for the Norwegian Delegation. He mentioned that there are 14 national councils which have played an important role in developing equality in education. The Council for Innovation has played a dominant role in developing the nine-year comprehensive school, as it will in the extension to twelve-year comprehensive schooling In addition to these national reforms, the Council has assisted local and regional initiatives. In the next five or ten years this may be its main duty. Mr. Aase then stated:

> "I think we have to discuss the possibility of abolishing this Council altogether because once we want to decentralize I think we have to let the educational initiative come from the bottom, from the schools, the local areas or the regional authorities. We also have to start the discussion about other national councils. We may have to discuss the possibility of abolishing the Council for Teacher Training Colleges. This may help them to get away from their present uniformity. In a new White Paper, the Ministry has proposed to do away with the national council for the Regional Colleges. So this development may already have started. On the other hand, the Ministry is, in the same White Paper, discussing the possibility of creating a new national council for higher education, including universities as well as regional colleges."

Mr. Aase emphasized that nations which have created centralized systems face difficulties in decentralizing and expressed his opinion that many local initiatives had been killed in the course of implementing the policies for equality and that he would hope to see these local initiatives come up in the future.

Mr. Björnes then pointed out that the role of the councils was subject to review but that no final decision had been taken. The National Council for Innovation in Education and the Council for Teachers Colleges cut across the borders of several types of schools, creating much potential conflict, especially in the case of the National Council for Innovation in Education. "We don't think that restructuring the council system will have much decentralization effect; but what we hope will lead to more decentralized innovation is the new legislation which is in part the result of experiments carried out by the National Council for Innovation in Education. The new laws make it possible to carry out innovation and experiments without using the special law on innovation in education and the corresponding council."

Furthermore, Mr. Björnes expected that the role of the Innovation Council would be reduced as more innovation took place in the schools, which would also tend to involve the teachers more heavily through their role in the recently created school participation bodies. The Ministry is aware of the potential role of the councils as centralizing agencies so that much care is taken in delegating authority to individual schools and to local and regional authorities rather than through the councils.

Mr. Eide added that the actual role of the councils may differ from their apparent position as central agencies: in some instances they may

tend to act as central representatives of the schools. Moreover the examiners may have focused too heavily on the role of the National Council for Innovation in Education in bringing about the major reforms in comprehensive education. Besides this, the Council was able to sanction individual experiments in single schools so that most schools in Norway have run an experiment on their own initiative under the authority of the Council in the past years. In some areas, Norway has gone even further towards decentralizing than the examiners seem willing to countenance, for instance, by placing the very substantial resources for teacher development in the hands of the teachers themselves rather than creating the kind of intermediate institutions which the Examiners appear to envision.

Mr. Renwick reaffirmed that the Examiners were aware of the role of the National Council for Innovation in Education in sponsoring local initiative. He felt, also, that the discussion had clearly focused on the issue the Examiners had been wishing to raise, namely how the Norwegians are going about decentralizing those elements of this system which up to the present time have been centralised. In particular, the introductory remark made by Mrs. Eide concerning the profound importance of legal measures in Norwegian society had been highlighted. The characteristic respect for law was being turned against the long-standing tendency towards conformity by enactment of a law which prescribed the legal limits for deviation from the law. This is a particularly striking illustration of the way in which Norwegians are attempting to decentralize a centralized system.

THE REGIONAL COLLEGES

Mr. von Moltke introduced question 10 concerning the Regional Colleges:

The almost unanimous support for the Regional Colleges could be interpreted more as an expression of the long-standing demand for greater equality in terms of equivalent services for all parts of the country and less as a commitment to newer missions connected with life-long learning and the development of regionally specialized institutions. Despite notable advancement toward these new missions, this report briefly tries to recognize major factors which seem to be working against them. What are the policies and measures designed to avoid having the Colleges become adjuncts standardized to the universities, and to assure their growth as uniquely regional institutions which can serve the needs for adult education?

Mr. von Moltke observed that the term Regional Colleges was being used most recently in Norway to designate not only the new institutions which have been created under the name of distriktshögskole but that it is coming to mean a cluster of institutions of higher education of different character within a given region. The redefinition, which has taken form in the months since the Examiners' visit, affects

what the Examiners' Report has to say about the new institutions within this cluster which were thus far known by themselves as Regional Colleges and have received so much attention both in Norway and abroad. It is important to differentiate between these two definitions of the term Regional College. "The possibility that the newly created institutions might tend to identify more strongly with the universities is less worrisome if they are part of a cluster of institutions. What it leaves as a major question is how the new and special roles of adult education and regional provisions which were originally assigned to the new institutions will be performed within the cluster which is now to be known as a Regional College." Referring to the written question in the report, von Moltke observed that its specific thrust must now be broadened to cover the issues raised within the context of a cluster of institutions, some of which have a strong and clearly defined mission in relation to the "front load" element of the educational system.

In reply, Mr. Aase mentioned that not only the Regional Colleges but also the Teacher Training Colleges have been offering a third year of instruction to practising teachers; the Technical Colleges have perhaps the widest experience with adult education. The experience of the Regional Colleges is varied. Some have been able to develop programmes for adult education while others have not. To achieve results, "I think the Regional Board for higher education within a country has to decide that a certain amount of money must be devoted to part-time education." Although Parliament passed legislation enabling Regional Colleges to devote 25% of their resources to adult education, the actual figure is closer to 5%. If this is to increase, the County Board should act to increase the percentage gradually.

Mrs. Eide emphasized that adult education should develop both in the new and in the old institutions within the cluster of institutions, "both as a cooperative enterprise between these units which are now segregated and as a task within each single unit." For instance, the task of imparting the skills required to make possible the new ambitious forms of worker participation in industry which are currently being developed may provide impetus to cooperation between the units of the Regional Colleges.

The problem of front-loading was not as serious in Norway as in most other countries, Mrs. Eide stated: enrolment figures show that there are many older students in the universities who have not been studying continuously but have alternated between work and study. In the vocational schools one will find many students 25 years of age or more. The Regional Colleges have an even higher average age than the universities.

Mr. Papadopoulos from the Secretariat requested clarification of the rationale for the creation of the Regional Colleges in the context of the policy for integration at the post-compulsory level; whereas the Background Report had specifically rejected the Danish approach of creating university centres, he could not tell from his reading of it

what had been the positive goals which were being pursued. In particular, there remained the question whether the Regional Colleges would not find themselves serving as institutions which prepared students for universities. In this regard it is particularly important whether the Regional Colleges have indeed established their independent status with respect to rewards and career opportunities for graduates. Mr. Aase responded by pointing out that differences between the geographical situation of Norway and Denmark. The main purpose in the creation of the Regional Colleges had been to provide higher education in all counties. Moreover, the Regional College courses were mainly short-cycle vocational and oriented towards local job opportunities so that graduates could enter work directly.

The delegate from Canada (Mr. Hrabi) referred to the examiners' questions concerning the need to reorient all educational institutions if lifelong learning is to be achieved in later life. He asked whether the Norwegian Delegation accepted this thesis and if so, what changes they foresee in the earlier phases of education in their country.

Mr. Eide agreed that the principle of lifelong learning implies a reorientation of primary education. The disagreement with the examiners would arise concerning their proposition that introducing lifelong learning requires the creation of special institutions of adult education. Norway would consider achieving the proper orientation in institutions serving both regular education for younger people and adult education the lesser problem, in comparison with the need to orient the entire teaching process towards lifelong education. The inclusion and proper recognition of the obligation towards adult education in the mission of the Regional and the Teacher Training Colleges may actually be an important means for orienting the entirety of teaching towards a strategy for lifelong education. He added that at present folk high schools do not play quite the role in adult education which the examiners attribute to them: a wide range of other popular organisations carry the major burden of reaching a large portion of the population. Norway will certainly continue this form of providing adult education since it is often much more flexible than doing it through regular institutions. "But in the long run and in a development toward lifelong education, regular institutions would also have to be brought in and to carry their share of responsibility for the development of both adult education and a general orientation towards lifelong learning."

The Delegate from Denmark (Mr. Goldschmidt) requested clarification on whether the existing institutions which are to become part of the new cluster Regional Colleges are to give up their own identity to become local campuses of a regional institution. If the Ministry finances these clusters and the Regional Board submits budget proposals to the Ministry, who is to decide on the relative emphasis between various branches at the local level, and who, for example, is to determine the number of places assigned to teacher training? How are national figures determined?

Mrs. Eide referred to the fact that Norway has a population of only 4 million, so that the country does not have the personnel or the economic resources to afford more than four fully-fledged university institutions. The purpose in creating Regional Colleges was to achieve a more even distribution of higher education resources throughout the country: but this was not to be done only by creating new institutions: existing ones had to receive due consideration in order to create a sufficiently broad non-university base of higher learning. "We hope that these institutions will retain a prestige of their own." Moreover, there was evidence in the pattern of applications that students wished to attend such institutions.

It would be a misunderstanding to think that the existing local institutions are about to lose their identity. What they are giving up is direct access to the Ministry which some may perceive as a loss of status. The budget will now initiate with the institutions as before and go to the Regional Board, which will balance the needs regionally. It then passes to the Ministry and enters the budget proposal to Parliament. If it is decided that certain national goals need to be served, part of the budget may be earmarked for specific schools in specific regions. If this is not done, "The Regional Board will have more or less the same authority over its budget as we now give to the universities." This new procedure is still a matter for dispute in the country; it has been presented to Parliament in the months since the examiners' visit.

The Delegate from Italy (Mr. Sette) expressed his doubts concerning the possibility of offering education without increasing geographic mobility, whereas containing mobility has been identified as a major goal of Norwegian educational policy. This appeared to be an especially serious problem when economic pressures were all towards greater mobility. In particular, he wished to know whether the Regional College clusters were intended to address this problem. Mr. Eide did not agree with the assumption that certain economic conditions necessarily created greater mobility: this was rather the consequence of a certain set of policies favouring or counteracting geographical mobility. Norwegian policy is not trying to stop mobility but rather to modify the levels which might otherwise have existed. Moreover, Norwegians are troubled not only by geographical mobility but also by social mobility at the expense of others, so that educational policies were designed to raise the general level of achievement rather than individual attainment.

The Delegate from Turkey inquired whether he was correct in seeing the Regional Colleges as one of the main features of an educational decentralization which is meant to meet the needs and aspirations of the local population, and Mrs. Eide confirmed this general view.

Mr. von Moltke asked how transfers from Regional Colleges to other institutions would be handled in view of the strong impact such

transfers are likely to have on both institutions involved. He then referred to the difficulties which the Regional Colleges were experiencing in using the 25% of their resources which they were theoretically allowed to devote to adult education. This is an all but universal problem of institutions devoted to both full-time and part-time students: they cannot reallocate their resources away from full-time towards part-time education. "The comments by Mr. Aase suggested that there is scope for prescriptive action in this area to assure that the funds flow in the direction in which the policy priorities indicate they should flow. Is this a decision which the district boards should take?"

Mr. Aase confirmed that he would like the Regional Boards to prescribe the percentage of resources to be devoted to part-time education while realizing that this percentage may differ between the regions. The policy should, however, be to raise it up to 25%.

Mrs. Eide stated that obtaining proper credits is still a problem in the case of new institutions devoted seriously to the problems of the regions. The curriculum is much more diversified and interdisciplinary and the universities cannot properly evaluate what kind of credit should be given, "We are very eager that the Regional Colleges do not view this problem as one which directs the course of their studies. We want them to gain an integrity and identity of their own." Transfer should be the problem of the university and of the student involved. While initially reluctant, the universities have come to look at the educational programmes with much greater favour and therefore may increasingly find solutions which cut through the red tape.

LIFELONG LEARNING AND THE CONTENT OF EDUCATION

Mr. Ziegler then introduced question 9:

Lifelong learning requires a reorientation of all institutions in the educational system. This reorientation must be expressed in changed content both of what is taught during the "front loading" phase of education and during the subsequent periods of further education. By what process do the Norwegian authorities intend to redefine the content of education in an appropriate manner and what measures do they propose to take to avoid structural decisions (such as the assignment of adult education to existing institutions) which make the necessary change in content unlikely? By content we mean who learns what is learned, where is it learned, how is it learned and who determines these matters?

Mr. Ziegler directed the delegates' attention to "the metaphor of lifelong learning which in Norway, as in a number of other countries, has in recent years become a new interpretive metaphor which enables persons to raise many questions about the development of educational systems." He expressed his admiration for what has been done in Norway but felt that there remained some fundamental questions. The central one is "how to enable lifelong learning, without its being taken

over by a formal education system which has historically had the characteristics of compulsion and front-load." Are the existing institutions of the educational system - including the Regional Colleges - the best place to achieve continuity of youth and adult learning? Historically there have been two fairly separate systems for youth and adult learners. As more places are opened at the secondary level, the average level of education rises, creating a kind of non-legal compulsion to attend school for longer and longer periods. In Norway there has been some experience with youth leaving schools for periods of work and subsequently returning but, even so, the system of youth education and the "non-system" of adult education have remained apart. The rich, historically grown, highly diversified system of adult education has, in spite of extensive subsidies, remained largely out of the reach of the central administrative structure. The vital decisions concerning who learns, what is learned and how it is learned remain the province of those actually involved. The new policies seem to aim at bringing the adult sector into the formal system of education which has historically been a mechanism for socialization, whereas adults are already socialized. This leads to the question, "Which persons or organisations should define needs, aspirations, goals, teaching strategies, content, curriculum and the pedagogical practices in adult education?" Should adult education become more or youth education less systematic?

In responding to this question for the Norwegian Delegation, Mr. Björnes restricted himself to the secondary schools since questions concerning the Regional Colleges had already been discussed. Under a new law, the institutions of secondary education also have a measure of responsibility for adult education. Moreover, the instructors in the "non-system" part of adult education are often teachers from the schools working part-time. Vocational schools provide the greater portion of adult education in secondary schools. As far as the content of "front-load" education is concerned, much greater emphasis is now being placed on the teaching process and methods rather than on the results. Participation in planning one's course of study and reduction of grading are further means to teach young people to learn to assume responsibility for their education and can contribute to making the school appear as a place to which it is natural to return, even at an older age.

A Royal Commission is presently enquiring into new and improved forms of co-operation between the schools and the place of work with the purpose of better utilizing available technical and human resources of industry for further technical education. Also the trade unions have taken a very active interest in these matters, especially through the representation of workers in advisory bodies for vocational education.

The Delegate from Germany (Mr. Roeloffs) noted the relative lack of concern in the Background Report for vocational training as occupational training rather than as a general preparation for working

life and a social role in society. There is evidence that in Norway a great deal of emphasis is placed on general aspects of vocational training. The shift from apprenticeship programmes to full-time vocational training in schools appears to have been possible without great friction. This reflects a remarkable ability to make major changes successfully.

Mr. Björnes admitted that the Background Report did not cover the aims of vocational education as such but stated that this does not reflect a lack of attention to these matters. Vocational education being at least 50% more expensive than general education, present resources devoted to upper secondary education would only be sufficient to provide the whole age group with a general education. This is in fact not being done, and instead, vocational education at this level is made available to as many people as possible. The intention is at least to maintain a proportion of nearly two-thirds of pupils entering the vocational stream in upper secondary. As far as the question of apprenticeship is concerned, the number of apprentices has remained steady for a number of years so that growth in vocational education has occurred in the schools, but not by reducing the number of apprenticeships.

Mr. Eide pointed out that the relative lack of status difference between an academician and someone who had vocational training contributed to the success of present practices relating to streaming into institutions: the decision on which institution to attend is a decision relatively open to the individual's deliberate choice because the universities are partly open access institutions and because of a relative absence of extraneous social pressures in making career choices.

This kind of progress in the regular school programme can set the stage for more effective adult education, but as Mrs. Eide emphasized, adult education requires a pluralistic approach if one is to succeed in reaching many different people in many different places. "To systematize would endanger the recruitment" into adult education.

Mr. Ziegler agreed to this estimate of the necessity to maintain as pluralistic a character to adult learning activities as possible. As institutions of higher education confront the possibilities of adult education there is a danger that this will be viewed in the light of its possibilities to maintain their traditional activities. Historically there have been two different kinds of activities - youth education and adult learning - which are now beginning to converge. There is the immediate and urgent need to see to it that institutions of youth education do not divert to their own very different traditional activities the impetus toward more, and more adequate, education for adults.

LIFELONG LEARNING FOR TEACHERS

Mr. Renwick introduced questions 7 and 8 together:

By abolishing grades in the first six years of school and announcing their intention to abolish them through the end of the ninth year, Norwegian authorities have launched themselves on an ambitious reform of the relationship between the schools and the community and between the participants in the schools. To provide the basis for successful implementation of new evaluation procedures, what measures are envisaged to ensure that the necessary learning processes get underway within the schools, the communities and the teaching profession as a whole?

Norway devotes a remarkable amount of resources to all forms of in-service teacher training. Nonetheless, the effectiveness of these resources is open to doubt. The goal of such activities should be lifelong learning for teachers with a balance between the elements of teaching self-development and professional requalification.

What steps are envisioned to assure that resources committed to these programmes are really devoted to them and that the results are satisfactory to the teachers involved?

What steps are envisioned to assure that these efforts result in changes in the classroom? Specifically, are measures currently envisioned to increase the amount of such activities taking place as close as possible to the schools?

Mr. Renwick pointed out that Norway had devoted very extensive efforts to a restructuring of the educational system but that the Examiners came away with the distinct impression that less time and effort had been and were being devoted to professional education and re-education of the teaching force. The questions the Examiners posed relate to the changing role of the teachers in the changing educational system and whether the Norwegians have been able to come up with the necessary support to help teachers adjust effectively to the new and more demanding role that is being thrust upon them.

Mr. Eide replied that considerable time and resources had been devoted to this matter. Nevertheless there admittedly remains a question whether this has been done as effectively as desirable. There is certainly awareness of the question in Norway. By way of illustration, statistics for 1973 on participants in teacher courses show figures representing 130% of all teachers in compulsory education. However, many years of experience show that it is almost impossible to retrain teachers in advance for an educational system that does not exist. The undertaking is too theoretical. "You have to accept to a major extent that you must introduce reform for teachers who are only half prepared for it, and then a positive learning process has to occur as part of the reform itself." Norwegian reforms have all had lead times of ten years or more, allowing a good deal of time for everybody concerned to adjust. Reform also implies a shift in power relationships, and this is not simply a matter of teaching the teachers some additional theory or technique.. "You may have to create a fait accompli situation and then the learning process can be very fast."

The continuing question is whether the very substantial amount of available resources has been put at the disposal of teachers in the most effective way. This is a question which can hardly be answered because the effects of such a policy are very local and hidden.

Mrs. Eide said that Norway's approach to this problem was a mixed one: train and reform simultaneously and train after reform. One of the problems is that young teachers trained for new situations are at the bottom of the school hierarchy and therefore cannot be effective disseminators of new ideas in the schools. Consequently, it is necessary to train also those already in service. A new policy provides for extension of teacher training from two to three years: thus far, however, the third year of training has mostly been devoted to teachers who have already had some experience, rather than to providing student teachers with three consecutive years of training. The advantage of the 38th week - the Norwegian programme under which teachers work 37 weeks and then receive a 38th week spread over the year for course preparation - is that it reaches all teachers, whereas more selective programmes tend to benefit mainly the active teachers. One should not underestimate the importance of the contacts between teachers in remote areas which this programme makes possible; and local authorities are thereby constrained also to think about the substantive issues of education in preparing such meetings of teachers.

Mr. von Moltke asked whether this was an area in which the intermediate interface institutions discussed earlier could be created as part of the policy of decentralization, so that this work would not have to proceed either at very local or at highly centralized levels.

Mr. Björnes pointed to the regional teacher centres which had this task. Moreover, very often the experiments in relation to reforms have the character of local in-service teacher training since typically more experiments are initiated than would strictly be required for the purposes of a given reform. By having as many teachers as possible take part in such experiments, a substantial cadre is being trained for what will be normal conditions under the envisaged policy. In response to a question by the Delegate from Canada, Mr. Eide estimated expenses for in-service development of teachers at 5% of the total educational budget.

EDUCATION, OIL AND THE INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY

Mr. von Moltke indicated that the examiners had decided to omit questions 11 and 12 in the confrontation meeting in view of the brief time still available. He then turned to the question concerning oil development, question 6:

Norwegian society is in a state of rapid transition involving the processes of industrialization, urbanization and modernization - a transition being given an extra velocity through the development of oil

and natural gas. Experience in other countries suggests that such developments have strong deleterious effects on the children and youth of the workers in this kind of economy. It would be most unfortunate if Norway's educational policy were to find itself overtaken by such unanticipated problems which experience shows get easily beyond control. What measures are being undertaken to monitor the effectiveness of the educational system for special groups of children, identified not by school performance alone but by school performance correlated with the personal background of the child?

The examiners felt that the problems raised by the discovery of oil - repeatedly identified in Norway as the premier contemporary social problem - were likely also to exert fierce pressure on the educational system. The goal of limited mobility is built into the fabric of Norwegian educational policy. The Norwegian government has enunciated policies on oil development which make every effort to contain the social effects of the oil industry. Nevertheless, there remain many unresolved and potentially disruptive issues. The issues of the effects of high mobility and rapid social change are, moreover, ones which are likely to interest all the Member countries.

The Delegate from the United States (Mr. Leestma) commented that most countries would like to have the problem which Norway presently has and that they would understand Norway's need to control this development. Given the target of balanced development, how does the Ministry approach the question of the role of the schools in debating the question of quality of life and examining where the point of balance shall be between limited mobility and the aspiration of a new generation to new experiences and life styles?

In response Mrs. Eide referred back to her opening remarks about the importance of work historically in Norway and how the notion of equality is related to the work ethic. Relative to the importance of work, new resources should be devoted to improving the conditions of working life. Further, the relationship to nature, traditionally a central theme in the schools, should remain so. This is related to a new world-wide interest in understanding ecological relationships, a broad subject which recurs in the new Mønsterplan. "The challenge is to define the quality of life in a way that is not related to the level of consumption only - a good life but not in the sense of a leisurely life."

Mrs. Eide emphasized that oil policy was a matter of national policy in a heavily state-controlled sector. This should allow a slow rate of oil extraction and control of the attendant economic and social consequences. Moreover, the number of people directly employed in oil is only 15,000, many of whom are recruited from analogous industries. In spite of the relatively modest scale of the immediate adjustment, oil development poses unresolved problems. However, with the problems come great opportunities derived from the new resources which are becoming available. Increased mobility may ensue to a certain extent.

In the process of these developments it is important to maintain a reasonable balance between economic sectors. There is a labour shortage, but nevertheless, Norway wishes to avoid importing labour. These changes also affect the school system because other ministries are interested in reducing the manpower needs of education, for example, by increasing class sizes and reducing the length of time spent on education.

"What the oil industry will mean to Norwegian society at large will depend heavily on the degree to which we are able to control this new industry and to take care of other parts of the productive sector," said Mrs. Eide. The problems must thus be seen in the context of a national policy which needs to be constantly re-evaluated. The main fact remains, however, that Norway is aware of the issues and, through state control, has the means to confront them. This control provides at least a chance to make political decisions on these matters.

The Delegate from the United States (Mr. Leestma) made the key observation that Norway in its deliberations concerning oil and its interrelationship to all the social sectors such as education, was showing a concern for the consequences of a new accretion of wealth before the fact, rather than after the fact, and was thereby providing a remarkable example of how to approach problems being faced by many other countries.

Mr. Hayward of the Secretariat called the Committee's attention to the Norwegian white paper on Oil Policy prepared by the Ministry of Finance. This report reflects a broad policy consensus with respect to oil development to which all Ministries contributed. The report illustrates that the existence of a policy which is congruent throughout the government can be the result of broad and active participation in substantive work toward this end. Rearrangements of organisational structure cannot be substituted for a determination to do such work.

The Delegate from Japan (Mr. Mitsuta) enquired about the capacity of the educational authorities in Norway to resist economic pressures: he would anticipate that representatives from the Ministry of Finance would be pressing for greater economic development on the basis of the new oil wealth.

Mrs. Eide responded by mentioning the fact that the Norwegian Ministry of Education has responsibility for most sectors of education, agricultural education being the main exception. This means that the Ministry is in the position of providing educational services to all other Ministries, and is thus also in a position to engage in policy formulation within its sphere and within the context of total government policy.

The nature of policy development and planning coordination in Norway was further elaborated by Mr. Eide when he pointed out - in response to a question by the Turkish Delegate (Mr. Ozdil) - that while there is no planning Ministry in Norway, there is a fairly tight network of planning activities associated with government agencies at all

levels. Moreover, the relatively small size of the country in terms of population allows fairly general and effective informal contacts. In this context the educational sector does not simply supply services in support of goals laid down in other sectors. Furthermore, educational planning can set important goals of social policy and can often draw on the support of other sectors in meeting these goals. In response to a clarifying question from the Delegate from Turkey, Mrs. Eide pointed out that education represents 20% of the national budget of Norway and that 20% of the populace are engaged full-time in education. Consequently education represents one of the central sectors of Norwegian social policy and planning, and there is substantial political debate concerning the proportion of resources going into education. In this context, the issues of mobility, equality and regional provision, of course, play a very vital role.

Mrs. Eide commented that the White Paper on oil policy did indeed illustrate Norwegian policy not to expand the number of ministries. Consequently, new issues could not be avoided by creating new ministries. Instead, existing ministries are obliged to make adjustments and cooperate. In this instance of oil development, an inter-ministerial working party of Under-Secretaries under the chairmanship of the Ministry of Finance was created which was responsible for preparing this particular document.

IV

CLOSING STATEMENTS

In a closing statement, Mr. Renwick stated that time did not permit discussion of the remaining questions. He expressed the Examiners' appreciation for the spirit in which the Norwegian authorities had conducted the review and hoped that the entire process would prove to have been helpful both to the Norwegian authorities and the Member countries participating in this meeting. Mrs. Eide responded by thanking the Examiners and the OECD Secretariat for the effort expended which had led to a fruitful dialogue.

Part Three

BACKGROUND REPORT

THE NORWEGIAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM
OVERVIEW AND MAJOR POLICY ISSUES

by

the Ministry of Church and Education

FOREWORD

The following report has been prepared at the request of the OECD, as background material for a review of Norwegian educational policies. It contains a general overview of the Norwegian educational system, as well as more specific information and analysis concerning four major issues identified together with the OECD Secretariat. The four issues are as follows:

- Participation in Educational Decision making;
- Educational Policies for Equality;
- Integration in Post-Compulsory Education;
- Information and planning policies.

Within our Ministry, the main responsibility for the preparation of the report has rested with the Department for Research and Planning. However, valuable contributions and comments have also been made by other parts of the Ministry. Hopefully, the report will provide a fruitful basis for the work of the OECD Examiners in Norway, and for the final examination meeting in the Education Committee of the OECD.

Oslo, November 22nd, 1974.

I

THE NORWEGIAN BACKGROUND

Educational policies are important factors in shaping and changing a modern society. Simultaneously, however, educational policies are also largely determined by existing conditions in a society. Some general background information about Norwegian society seems, therefore, appropriate as an introduction to this report on educational policies. Geography, population, characteristics, economy, political and administrative conditions, etc., all play their role as underlying factors.

The Norwegian population is small, and the land area is large. Scarcely four million people have at their disposal an area of 323,886 square kilometres, more than, for example, the area of Great Britain. A sparsely populated country faces both advantages and disadvantages. Administratively and economically it is difficult to operate. The straight distance from one end of the country to the other is 2,650 kilometres and the topographic conditions are such that the construction of roads and railways costs enormous sums. The population is scattered. Even if more recently there has been a marked trend towards concentration of the population, small local communities are still very frequent. According to the census of 1960, 43% of the population lived in areas of scattered settlement, defined as places with less than 200 inhabitants. In 1970 this proportion had declined to 34%. This gradual change in the localization pattern runs parallel to changes in the economy. Tertiary sectors grow, while primary sectors decline. In 1960, 22% of the working population were found in the primary sectors, 40% in industry and 39% in the services. * In 1970, the services claimed 51% of the work force, industry 37% and the primary sectors only 12%.

Administratively, the country is divided into 19 counties and 444 municipalities, out of which 47 are towns. The municipalities have autonomy in many questions, based on a legislation nearly 140 years old. The municipalities have their own taxes covering a major part of their activities, primarily in education, social and health services, roads, water supply, sewerage systems, etc. There are, however, major differences among the municipalities in terms of their fiscal capacity, and to a considerable extent such differences are compensated for by an extensive and selective system of transfers from central Government to the municipalities.

* Rounded figures.

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The municipal council is the highest political body at this level, consisting of representatives of the various political parties in proportion to their local strength. The representatives are elected for a four-year period. The municipal council elects its mayor and appoints special committees for the different services, including the municipal school board. Even this body is composed according to the strength of the local political parties.

While municipalities may vary in size from about 1,000 inhabitants to nearly half a million, the size of counties ranges from somewhat less than 100,000 to about half a million. The highest political body within a county is the county council, composed of the mayors of all the municipalities within the county. Direct election of the members of the county council will be introduced as from 1975. The same applies to proposals made for independent taxation rights for the counties. At present, county activities are financed through subsidies from municipal budgets, and from central government.

The counties have gradually increased the scope of their activities in recent years. Presently, they are important bodies in the field of health services, transportation and upper secondary education. The county administration is headed by a "fylkesmann" who is, at the same time, the representative of central Government in the county, and a servant of the county council.

Nationally, the political power rests with Parliament ("Stortinget"). Its 155 members are elected for a four-year term, with specific quotas for each county. The number of representatives for each county is roughly proportionate to its population, though there is a certain bias in favour of peripheral, sparsely populated areas. Eight political parties are represented in Parliament at present, the Labour Party, as the biggest one, forming the basis for a minority Government. Parliament has only one house, but with a separate section for legislation. All other decisions are taken in plenum. Legislation and financial appropriations are prerogatives of the Parliament. Parliamentary Government has been the established practice for 90 years, ensuring strong political powers for Parliament, including fairly detailed control functions in relation to Government. The Government consists of the Prime Minister and 14 ministers each heading a ministry. The political leadership of each ministry consists of the minister and usually one political under-secretary (0-2) and possible 1-2 personal secretaries. The ministries are the highest administrative bodies within their sectors of responsibility.

Widespread public involvement is a typical feature of Norwegian society. This has its background in historical, geographical and political conditions. The scattered population necessitates extensive public engagement in the provision of services which in other countries are privately organised. In addition, long-standing emphasis on public responsibilities for equalization of individual conditions has been an additional cause for strong public involvement in the provision of cultural, social and economic services.

A gross national product per capita of about 20,000 N. Kr. places Norway among the ten "richest" countries in the world, when measured in such terms. Most probably, Norway is also one of the countries with the most equitable distribution of income, partly as a consequence of strong, long-standing policies to this effect.

Culturally, the country is fairly homogeneous, sharing largely a common language and history. * The common basis is a popular culture with its roots in traditional rural society. Nobility has been practically non-existent since medieval times, and there is hardly any privileged economic upper class in the European sense. Civil servants constituted for centuries a kind of upper class and developed their own culture in relation to the rural society. Since medieval times, the farmers have largely maintained their independence and the ownership of their farms, in spite of extreme poverty; however, it is from their ranks that the civil service has largely been recruited. Ethnic minorities have till now played only a minor role. The Lapps have maintained some of their particular cultural features, but have not been able to exert influence beyond their own group. Thus, the country is relatively poor in terms of cultural variations.

In short, Norwegian society may be said to be characterized by fairly equally distributed economic wealth and probably less social and cultural class distinctions than in many other countries. Egalitarian political ideas and arguments about equality between classes meet with fairly general response corresponding to previous political developments and traditions. Revolutionary ideologies, on the other hand, have never had a wide following. Contrasts and conflicts in society may not have reached a sufficient level of intensity to promote extreme political attitudes. The welfare state has become a fairly generally accepted political objective.

Historically, the egalitarian tradition in Norwegian society may simply have its origin in extremely poor economic conditions. For many centuries the country was isolated and without the resources needed to support an upper class. Farms were many and small, and even if rural society had its social ranking, poverty was shared by most. Wealth was first acquired through industrial development, gaining momentum only relatively late, in a European context, and through the expansion of trade and shipping. The gross national product has grown during this century from 990 million N. Kr. in 1900 to 109,500 million N. Kr. in 1973. Out of this, the proportion channelled through public budgets has increased from less than 10% to 46%. Of the latter, about half, however, is in the form of transfers aiming primarily at income re-distribution.

* The common language, however, being divided into two branches, "bokmal" and "nynorsk". The fair balance between the two versions of Norwegian is the subject of considerable controversy and requires major efforts in educational and cultural policies.

Recently, substantial oil resources have been identified in the Norwegian part of the North Sea; a fact which already significantly influences the structure of the Norwegian economy. In spite of a deliberate go-slow policy in the exploitation of available oil resources, it is estimated that government income from oil activities will be 7-8% of GNP five years from now, and 12-14% of GNP ten years from now. Annual GNP growth may come close to 10% by the end of this decade.

In the initial stages of the development of oil activities, new legislation has brought these developments under firm political control. At the same time, Norwegian industry has proved flexible enough to achieve, in the course of a couple of years, a strong position in the production of capital equipment for oil production in the North Sea. What remains to be seen, is the extent to which Norwegian industry can establish itself firmly in advanced petro-chemical production. Furthermore, it may still be an open question to what extent go-slow policy in terms of exploitation can resist potential external pressures. Finally, and most importantly, it still remains to be seen whether the strong political intentions to control the social and structural effects of oil activities on the social fabric of Norway can be implemented.

The last point is in fact the most essential underlying factor in Norwegian policies for the future. Oil income should be channelled into high priority areas from a societal point of view, and should at the same time not be permitted to cause drastic changes in the economy, in the localization of the population, etc. As major immigration of foreign manpower is not foreseen, part of the income must be channelled away from internal markets.

Education has long standing as a priority sector within public activities in Norway. Last year public expenditure on education amount to about 8,000 million N. Kr., or 7.2% of GNP. This may be compared with a share of GNP in 1947 of 2.2%. Of public expenditures for education, central Government covers about 60% and local authorities - municipalities and counties - about 40%.

Out of a population of close to 4 million, nearly 900,000 have their predominant occupation within the educational system. In addition, nearly half a million adults avail themselves in the course of the year of facilities for adult education. The compulsory part of the educational system has nearly 600,000 pupils, while about 150,000 pupils are found in educational institutions at the upper secondary level, and more than 60,000 at the post-secondary level.

According to stated policy intentions, education will remain a priority area in the future. Increased public income due to the exploitation of oil resources will also benefit the expansion of this public sector. However, the nearer future will face us with the dilemma of a very tight labour market and the rational desire to develop the available human potential as far as possible. The exact balance point between such concerns is not possible to predict at this stage.

II

THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM. AN OVERVIEW

This chapter offers an overview of the Norwegian educational system, in terms of recent developments and current trends. The following main sectors of the system are treated separately:

- Pre-school education,
- Compulsory education,
- Upper secondary education,
- Post-secondary education,
- Adult education.

Finally, we try to summarize some main features of the system, and to indicate some overall directions of policy pursued by the present government.

Pre-School Education

The term pre-school education is used for a variety of institutions of an educational nature for children below compulsory school age. As compulsory school in Norway normally begins at the age of 7,* the relevant age groups for pre-school education are 0-6 years. The institutions in question may be day-care institutions for children up to 3 years of age, full-day institutions for children up to 6 years of age or kindergartens offering 3-4 hours a day for children from 3-6 years of age.

Until now, pre-school education in Norway has not been a fully integrated part of the school system. Historically, the first pre-school institutions were organised by private humanitarian organisations and were meant as social aid to children from poor workers' families. Gradually, institutions with more emphasis on educational objectives were established, usually by private individuals. Their activities were financed through payments by parents, and such institutions were therefore mainly attended by children of relatively wealthy parents. Today, such distinctions have largely disappeared, and pre-school institutions are now supposed to have a variety of functions: to provide social aid to parents with special needs, to provide married women with a real choice in terms of participation in the labour market, and to provide adequate educational facilities for the

* Some 10-15% of an age group start compulsory education at the age of 6, after maturity testing.

promotion of the social, emotional and intellectual development of children.

However, the number of places available for children in pre-school institutions is not sufficient to meet the need for such functions. Up to 1950, only a few major municipalities had become engaged in pre-school education, apart from the privately-run institutions. The expansion of facilities offered has only gained momentum in the last fifteen years, especially after the introduction of government subsidies to the institutions. The Child Care Act of July 17, 1953 stated that pre-school institutions must be recognized by the Ministry of Social Affairs, which provided special regulations for their activities. When the Ministry of Family and Consumer Affairs was established in 1956, the responsibility for pre-school education was transferred to this ministry. * A regular system of government subsidy for pre-school institutions was introduced in 1963, and from 1966 government subsidies for building purposes were added. The new subsidy system contributed to the expansion of the number of places in pre-school institutions from about 7,500 in 1960 to about 17,500 in 1972. Though public efforts in this field expanded most rapidly, in 1970 slightly more than 50% of the children were still in pre-school institutions run by private organisations and firms.

The capacity of pre-school institutions still corresponds to less than 10% of the children in the age groups 4-6 years, and is far from sufficient to satisfy manifest demand for such services. In 1969, a Ministerial commission was asked to prepare suggestions for the further development of the system of day-care institutions. The commission completed its final report in 1972, and it estimated the total need for places in pre-school education at 150,000 to 160,000, an estimate based on surveys of parental preferences. As a concrete programme, the commission suggested that the present supply of places in pre-school institutions should be expanded to 125,000 by 1981. Each municipality should prepare its own programme for the establishment of pre-school institutions and such programmes should in turn be recognized by the ministry. New standard requirements and regulations for government financial support to the municipalities, covering both public and private institutions, were also proposed by the commission. The commission found it desirable that each municipality should establish a political body with special responsibilities for the establishment and operation of pre-school institutions. This municipal body would function as a steering board for pre-school institutions run by the municipality, but would also be entitled to delegate its responsibility to separate boards or co-operative bodies for each institution. The municipality should also appoint representatives to the board of private pre-school institutions and to co-operative boards. On the question of integration between pre-school education and compulsory schooling,

* Now Ministry of Administration and Consumer Affairs.

the commission did not make specific recommendations. It indicated, however, that decisions in this respect must be based on extensive research, practical experimentation and experience.

As yet, Parliament has taken no definite stand on the recommendations from the ministerial commission on pre-school education. Yet, its thinking appears already to have influenced practical policies in this field, and its proposals are largely reflected in the work programmes of the main political parties, as well as in the Government's long term programme.

The question of strengthening pre-school education has also been taken up by the Ministry of Education. Upon initiative from the Council for School Innovations, experiments with a pre-school year for 6 year old children in connection with primary schools have been undertaken. However, the number of classes has been small and the activities have been purely experimental as yet.

The question of lowering the entry age to compulsory schooling has been raised. A ministerial commission under the Ministry of Education has clarified the economic and practical consequences involved in the lowering of the entry age by half a year. Yet, no further political initiatives have been taken for implementing such a change, and it does not appear likely that the idea will be followed up at present.

At this stage it is difficult to draw up clearly the future lines of policy towards pre-school education in Norway. There is wide agreement on a rapid expansion of the number of places available, and the expansion is already in progress. On some other points, however, the confrontation of conflicting views has not reached a stage where clear directions of policy emerge. One issue of this kind is the exceptionally high standards of resource input imposed upon pre-school institutions by government regulations. The number of children per teacher is only 6-7, and costs per child are as a consequence more than twice as high as in the lower stages of primary education. Suggestions by the commission on pre-school education that resource input per child might be somewhat reduced have been met with negative reactions from the parties involved, in spite of the fact that such high resource standards are an obvious hindrance to rapid quantitative expansion.

The educational standards of most pre-school institutions, measured by such criteria as physical facilities and teacher qualifications are also fairly high. Yet, the emphasis is still mainly on the function of pre-school institutions as a favourable social environment for children, rather than on specific measures of cognitive achievement. The administrative location of pre-school education under the Ministry of Social Affairs, and later under the Ministry of Family and Consumer Affairs (now Ministry of Administration and Consumer Affairs) is an indication that social needs are regarded as the predominant concern of policies in this field. Such views appear to be rather generally shared. The Ministry of Education would also stress the need to see social, emotional and intellectual development for children at this age as a whole,

and advise against any undue emphasis on promoting specific intellectual abilities. The idea of pre-school education as a remedy for potential failures in school achievement later on, measured mainly in cognitive terms, has never found broad support in Norway, as it appears to be a far too narrow measure of the performance of pre-school education.

Even with a rapid expansion of the number of places in pre-school education, demand is likely to exceed supply for many years to come. This means that criteria for selection will play an important role, but this is also subject to considerable controversies. If the main emphasis is put on the active participation in work life of both parents, this may lead to a social bias due to the fact that highly educated women have much higher work participation rates than women with less education and usually lower social status. Social background criteria are, on the other hand, not too easy to apply in Norway. Apart from specific, easily identifiable groups (e. g. single parents) the definition of special areas or special groups of the population as "socially depressed" or "disadvantaged" is hardly politically acceptable in Norway, especially from the point of view of the potential groups in question. Furthermore, environmental conditions are felt to indicate more need for pre-school education in urban areas than in rural ones, in spite of income differentials pointing in the opposite direction. At the same time, one would not like to introduce systematic geographical biases in the provision of educational facilities.

What seems unquestionable at this stage is that we are facing a period of rapid quantitative expansion of the supply of pre-school education. Closer contact with primary education can also be expected, partly as a consequence of the gradual involvement in pre-school teacher training of the teacher training colleges. It should be borne in mind, however, that this development runs parallel to a major pedagogical shift in primary education, bringing the pedagogical philosophy of the two stages of the educational system much closer together, as exemplified by the abolition of examinations and marking in primary education.

Our awareness of the fact that extended educational facilities, at the pre-school level, may easily lead to increased inequality in education, points towards a policy counteracting social biases in the use of pre-school facilities. However, clear guide lines for such a policy have not yet emerged.

Compulsory Education

General Structure

Compulsory education in Norway is operated by public authorities, with very few exceptions. Private schools may receive government support if their curriculum is largely in line with that of public schools, but there are only a handful of such schools in existence. This situation is a consequence of a consistent policy all through this century of

building up a comprehensive school system securing all children the same quality of basic education, and forming the basis of all further education. In recent decades, there has been broad political agreement that such aims can best be achieved through a public educational system.

Compulsory schooling is nearly 140 years old in Norway, and since 1889 the compulsory period has been seven years, starting from the age of 7. With special permission, children may enter primary education at the age of 6 or 8. The system whereby children are kept together in classes without any ability streaming up to the age of 14 has been in operation for half a century. Compulsory education is organised in school districts, each with one school. Parents need permission to send their children to a school in another district. Normally such a permission is readily given, but parents rarely ask for it. The most typically found primary school has one class at each grade, the maximum class size being stipulated at 30 pupils, and the actual average being 20. Such typical primary schools as this have 120-150 pupils. At the lower secondary level three parallel classes in each grade is the most frequently found type of school, though the "two parallel school" may eventually become more frequent. At this level also, class size may not exceed 30 pupils, and the actual average is about 25. Typical schools at the lower secondary level have 150-250 pupils.

In urban areas, schools are often bigger than indicated above. According to the new legislation on compulsory education, however, new schools shall not have more than 600 pupils. In rural areas, the number of pupils in primary schools is often too small to permit one class at each grade. The smallest schools have only one class for all grades. In this case, the minimum number of pupils is 6 and the maximum 12. For schools with two classes the maximum number of pupils in the school is 30. Such small school units are mostly found in sparsely populated areas with difficult communications. There has been a clear trend all through this century towards bigger school units in these areas, corresponding somewhat to a concentration of the population. Yet, in 1971 - 72, more than 50% of the primary school units in Norway had less than one class per grade, although such schools had only 16% of the total number of pupils.

The seven-years comprehensive school never quite succeeded in providing an equivalent schooling for all children at compulsory school age. As a consequence of structural differences in urban and rural areas, two different sets of legislation were applied to the primary school. In principle, curricula were at the same level in what were seen as the main subjects, Norwegian, mathematics and religion. But in urban areas pupils attended school every day, while rural children attended school twice a week during the three first grades and every second day during the four last grades. This inevitably led to a certain quality difference in the education offered in various parts of the country.

In 1959, the first common legislation for all primary education in Norway was passed. This legislation at the same time permitted the municipalities to extend compulsory education to nine years, and nine years compulsory schooling was started on an experimental basis in several municipalities. The 1959 Act must be seen as transitional, pointing towards the full implementation of nine years comprehensive education. Ten years later, in 1969, a new education act made nine years compulsory education an obligation for all municipalities, and this reform is now fully implemented.

The nine years comprehensive school is divided into a primary stage comprising grades 1-6 and a lower secondary stage comprising grades 7-9. At the primary stage, the aim is to maintain a decentralized school structure with many small school units. At the lower secondary stage, school districts are somewhat larger. Normally schools at this stage must have at least one class at each grade, and two or three parallel classes is the most usual pattern. A number of optional subjects should be available for pupils at the eighth and ninth grade, and this requires somewhat larger schools. Lower secondary schools may therefore have somewhat less intimate contact with the local environment than primary schools. As compared with the previous system of separate grammer schools and continuation schools at this level, the comprehensive 9 years school still represents a major decentralization of educational facilities at this level.

In developing education at the lower secondary level, different approaches have been tried, in order to adapt the teaching to the rather heterogeneous needs of the whole age group. Initially, a form of streaming was applied in the eight and ninth grade, based on one theoretical and several vocationally biased "lines". Even if the pupils were free to make their own choices, this streaming was felt to lead to a too early selection according to achievement in theoretical subjects, thus implicitly discriminating against more practical abilities. Such streaming also required relatively large school units.

Later on in the experimental period this form of streaming was replaced by a more flexible system based on tempo differentiation. While maintaining a common direction for all pupils, curricula in the three main subjects, Norwegian, mathematics and foreign languages, were developed for three groups of pupils, distinguished by differences in their speed of progress. Choice between tempo levels was left to the pupils and their parents. This form of tempo differentiation permitted more flexible combinations of subjects than the differentiation in "lines", but even this system tended to create a ranking of pupils according to theoretical abilities only.

The forms of organisational differentiation of teaching in lower secondary education has thus been a key problem in the Norwegian comprehensive school in the last two decades. The aim of the comprehensive reform, to create greater equality of educational opportunity, has focused political attention on extern[illegible] pressures for certification

and ranking of pupils by the school. Forms of organisational differentiation, aiming at more appropriate pedagogical approaches to individual children, are being used after compulsory schooling for selective purposes, both by institutions of further education and by employers, thus involving far-reaching social consequences for the children's future. Pupils wanting to enter general education at the upper secondary level have to meet specific requirements in terms of subject combinations and tempo level in the comprehensive schools. As the freedom of occupational choice offered by general upper secondary education is attractive to both youngsters and their parents, they tend to orient their choice of pedagogical measures at the lower secondary level in terms of future aspirations, rather than in terms of pedagogical appropriateness.

New regulations, passed in 1973, therefore state the intention to abolish the current system of organisational tempo differentiation in the eighth and ninth grade of the comprehensive school. Individual differentiation within heterogeneous classes will be the main approach to this question in future. Experiments in a number of schools have shown this to be feasible, but the amount of resources required for all schools to implement such ideas is still an issue for heated debate. Correspondingly, examinations and ranking of children have been abolished in primary education, and will be abolished in lower secondary education as soon as the capacity of upper secondary schools to receive everyone who wants further education has been reached. A recent move in this direction, maintaining exams only in three main subjects at the end of compulsory schooling has, however, met considerable resistance and will not be implemented at this stage.

Administration

The responsibility for building and operating compulsory schools in Norway rests with the 444 municipalities, in accordance with general directions drawn up by the Compulsory School Act and regulations provided by the Ministry of Education. Each municipality elects a school board with from 7 to 35 members. The composition of the board reflects the relative strength of the local political parties. The municipal school board is the steering body for schools run by the municipality and also supervises possible private schools. The board appoints teachers in public schools and generally guarantees that requirement for proper functioning are satisfied. The board also appoints a school superintendent for the municipality. His office serves as the secretariat for the school board.

In order to secure co-ordination of the development of compulsory education, each of the 19 Norwegian counties has a "school director", appointed by government. The school director is a government representative, and functions as a co-ordinating link between the ministry and the individual municipalities. His functions are mainly administrative and controlling, but there is a trend towards building up certain advisory and counselling functions at the county level.

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The Ministry of Education is the highest administrative authority for compulsory education. The Compulsory School Act makes the ministry responsible for establishing general regulations and curriculum guide lines which in broad lines determine the content of compulsory schooling. As from 1973, previous curriculum directions were replaced by an indicative curriculum plan providing more freedom of choice for individual schools and teachers, but still maintaining central control over the relative emphasis on various subjects and indicating a general framework for the curriculum in these subjects.

In content and structure, the Norwegian compulsory school is thus still relatively homogeneous and centrally directed. Individual schools and teachers have recently gained more discretion in terms of pedagogical approaches and sequencing of curriculum. Municipal authorities have, however, only limited possibilities for influencing the teaching offered in compulsory schools.

Financing

The strong government involvement in structuring education at compulsory level aims at an equivalent education for all children irrespective of their geographical or social background. Major differences in the economic situation of individual municipalities, and variations in the actual costs of operating compulsory schools necessitate an extensive and selective use of financial policy instruments, in addition to legal measures. Small school units represent a rather costly form of education. Such schools are often found in economically weak municipalities. The costs per pupil may be 2.5 times as high in such municipalities as in the urban municipalities with bigger school units.

Operational costs of compulsory schools are paid by the municipalities. Average operational costs per pupil amount to about 4,000 N. Kr. in primary schools and 6,500 N. Kr. in lower secondary schools per year. Such expenditures, however, are partly refunded by the central government. The present system of government subsidies to the municipalities for operating costs in compulsory education is mainly concentrated on teacher salaries, of which from 25% to 85% are refunded. Existing regulations on school size, class size and other input of teacher resources imply that even cost differences are taken into account by the government subsidies. At the extreme, the present subsidy system for the municipalities may give six times as much government support per pupil in a one class school in an economically weak municipality as the government subsidy per pupil in a major town.

As a consequence of this highly selective system of financial support by central government, local differences in operating costs and in financial strength have largely been prevented from influencing school standards. There is no expectation in Norway, among parents or others, that one compulsory school is likely to be much better than

another, and this is reflected in the tendency of parents to send their children to the nearest school. This general feature of the system is also reflected in available data on pupil achievement, which appears to be somewhat better in small rural schools than in urban ones.

The financial support system outlined above implies rather extensive control of the use of resources, and of teachers in particular, by the schools. This is one of the reasons for the present centralization of decisions, and the corresponding limitations in the discretion of local authorities. The present system of financing also encourages the use of teacher resources, while other expenditures must mainly be met by the financial resources of the individual municipality. In order to avoid such biases and to increase the range of local decisions regarding the allocation of resources, the ministry intends to introduce a new system of financing, based on differentiated cost standards per pupil. In the short run, the new subsidy system will not change the distribution of government finance among municipalities, but it will permit many current regulations and control mechanisms to be abandoned, thus leaving more decision-making power with local authorities.

The municipalities are responsible for school building, in accordance with general regulations given by the ministry. The gradual implementation of the 9 years comprehensive school has caused a major school building boom. For years the annual volume of school building has been at a level corresponding to full replacement of the total stock of school buildings in less than 15 years. Even for school building, central government offers financial support to the municipalities, partly as grants and partly as loans. The relative importance of central government finance in school building is, however, much less than its support to operational costs; the average government share in financing being about 20% and 45%, respectively. The government support for school building has been very selective, being based on an individual evaluation of applications from the municipalities.

Upper Secondary Education

Present School Structure

Norwegian education at the intermediate stage, between compulsory schooling and higher education, comprises a wide variety of school types, ranging from grammar schools ("gymnasia") to a wide variety of vocational schools. At present this stage can hardly be said to represent an integrated system. There are wide varieties in respect of subjects, duration of courses, entry requirements and the value of certification. There are two main types of schools for general education, the "gymnasia" and the folk high school. The former, which qualifies pupils for entry to the universities, has by far the largest number of pupils. More than one-third of an age group enters the gymnasia, and between 80 and 90% of the entrants complete their studies successfully. In addition, about 10% of those taking the final

exam of the gymnasia are not regular students, but have acquired their knowledge by other means. The gymnasium is the school type with the longest tradition in Norway, the first gymnasia being established in connection with the larger cathedrals before the reformation. Today, subjects taught in the gymnasia are all of a general nature, organised in "lines" with differing emphasis upon the various subjects. Until now, the gymnasium has been the predominant road to universities, but about half of the graduates prefer a shorter vocational or professional training. Among the various types of education offered at the upper secondary level, the gymnasium provides the best opportunities in the choice of further careers, which may explain the great attraction for young people who have not made up their mind definitely in terms of their future vocation. The number of gymnasia students is just over 60,000.

The folk high schools offer courses of one or two years duration to youngsters of 17 years of age or more. They are run partly by the counties, partly by various popular organisations. The schools have complete freedom in establishing their own curricula. Historically associated with rural areas, the folk high schools which number about 100 have, in recent years, increasingly attracted young people from urban areas and a growing number of graduates from the gymnasia. In total the number of folk high school students is about 7,000.

The various types of vocational schools have usually been established to meet specific needs for practical training, and have only after a while been brought under government regulations. While there are few private gymnasia, a considerable number of vocational schools are privately run, the tendency being that when the need is proved to exist, such schools are included in the public school system. Vocational schools provide training oriented towards preparation for specific vocations or professions. Yet, most of the schools offer some teaching in general subjects, such as Norwegian, mathematics, civics and often natural science and English. The extent to which such general subjects are taught, varies considerably among the different types of schools. The length of courses in vocational schools also varies considerably, from three years full time courses to half a year or less. One year's duration is fairly typical for industrial and commercial schools. Some schools offer part-time courses. In addition, a traditional apprenticeship system, usually of three years' duration, exists in a number of professional areas. The apprenticeship system has been declining for a long time, and has recently been abandoned for commercial and clerical professions. The total number of pupils in vocational schools is about 75,000 corresponding to somewhat more than one age group. About 50% of an age group will sooner or later attend vocational schools at this level. The age distribution in the schools covers, however, a rather wide range, students in their mid-twenties with considerable work experience being quite numerous.

The possibilities for transfer between schools at the upper secondary level are relatively limited. This can also be the case for different kinds of training preparing for the same sectors of the economy. The choice of vocational training often therefore implies also a choice of career level. There are, however, several exceptions to such a rule, as formal possibilities for moving from one stage to another do exist.

Since the reform of the comprehensive school at the lower secondary level has been completed, the exam at the end of compulsory education plays an important role as entry criterion for schools at the upper secondary level. Many types of schools at this level have established specific requirements in terms of level of tempo differentiation and composition of subjects in lower secondary. Such entry requirements, combined with prestige differences among the various types of schools at the upper secondary level, tend to allocate pupils according to school achievement in compulsory education. Some types of upper secondary schools require practical experience or some kind of further education in addition to completed compulsory school. In a number of cases, such types of school have gradually moved from the upper secondary level to the post-secondary level on the basis of increasingly stiff entry requirements. Technical schools and schools for social work are examples of this sort. Though completed general secondary education is not a formal requirements in such schools, their students are more and more recruited from the gymnasia.

New School Structure

The number of young people attending school at upper secondary level is rapidly increasing, comprising now more than half of the age group 16 to 18 years old. The number of pupils at this stage has more than trebled during the last 25 years. This expansion has run parallel to the prolongation of compulsory schooling by two years. This quantitative expansion, as well as the problems created by the lack of integrated structure at this stage had led to widespread research, discussion and planning for major structural reforms.

In 1965, the government appointed a Royal Commission to study the educational needs of the age group 16 to 19 years. The commission presented three major reports - the last of which appeared in 1969 - including a proposal for common legislation for all education at this level. The aim of this legislation should be to create an open and integrated comprehensive school system at this level, under the common term "further education". The system would include all types of education at this level, excluding only Folk high schools, internal training in firms and public administration and military training. The further education system would build upon nine years compulsory education and would normally provide training at grade levels 10-12. The distinction between uper secondary education and higher education would not, however, be too clearly defined, and some institutions at

the upper secondary level would provide training beyond the twelfth grade. Most of the pupils in further education would belong to the age group 16 to 19 years, but quite a few would be older. A considerable number of the new student places created in institutions at this stage would in fact be for adult education. The general tasks of schools at this stage would be to provide general and vocational education and to form the basis for higher and recurrent education. The system of further education would imply a major restructuring of upper secondary education, creating a common framework of educational units with extensive possibilities for combinations.

After extensive discussion and practical experimentation, the new legislation for this stage of the educational system was passed by Parliament in June 1974. The comprehensive further education system will, in the future, offer the following types of courses:

i) Basic courses of one or two years' duration. One-year courses provide basic vocational training or general education. Two-year courses will have a common nucleus of general subjects. In addition, the pupils can choose among vocational or general subjects, aesthetical subjects, physical training or combinations of such subjects.

ii) One- or two-year advanced courses emphasizing either general or vocational subjects. In such courses, part of the training can take place at work.

iii) Shorter courses, some of which can be taken intermittently and be combined in such a way as to correspond to courses of longer duration.

iv) Courses as mentioned above as part-time education. Pupils may also attend the teaching in specific subjects of their choice, as offered in full-time education.

The combinations of courses offered may vary from school to school. Some schools will offer both theoretical and vocational subjects, while others may specialize more. The range of combination of courses within one school unit will primarily be decided by the county authorities responsible for the integrated planning of education at this level in their districts.

The main principle governing decisions about the dimensions of schools at this level is the right for everyone to obtain up to three years' education beyond the compulsory stage. The government's estimate is that this will require a 50% expansion of the number of places in upper secondary education during the next ten years. The total number of places will then correspond roughly to the total number of individuals in the three age groups 16 to 18 years. As major efforts in adult education are foreseen, this does not mean that the government aims at compulsory education up to the twelfth grade.

The choice of direction in secondary education shall in principle be free. The course offered will be co-ordinated so as to permit easy transfer with minimum loss of time. A combination of vocational and

general training at the upper secondary level will provide access to higher education.

Practical experiments preparing the new reform have been going on for several years, and extensive preparations are in progress for reshaping curricula, trying out new structures of decision making, etc. The counties have been invited to forward long-term expansion plans for their system of upper secondary education, in accordance with the new legislation. Practical questions concerning facilities, teacher training, buildings, etc., will, however, necessitate a considerable transition period. The exact time for making the new legislation effective has not yet been stipulated. The Parliament, in passing the new legislation in principle, asked for a renewed debate on the more detailed ministerial regulations and curriculum framework as developed by the government, before agreeing to a specific date.

Administration

As from 1964, educational institutions at the upper secondary level are being established and operated by the counties. There are only a few examples of such schools run by municipalities or by central government, in addition to a number of private schools. The county school board functions as a steering body for the schools. Members of the board are chosen by the general county board, which reflects the political predominance in the municipalities of the county. The county school board has from 7 to 15 members. Its task is defined as ensuring that schools are run in accordance with existing legislation and county decisions and that they function properly. The county authorities engage a county school superintendent, chosen upon the advice of the county school board. The county superintendent prepares matters for the school board's deliberations.

Private schools at this level have about 17% of all pupils. They mostly offer commercial training or training in social or medical fields. Even private schools must be operated in accordance with general public regulations, and need recognition by government if they offer courses such as are offered by schools within the public system. The granting of authorization of private schools according to the new legislation is also judged by the counties.

The highest administrative authority for the schools is the various ministries. Most schools at upper secondary level report to the Ministry of Education, but a few types of schools report to other ministries. The more important are agricultural schools under the Ministry of Agriculture and paramedical schools under the Ministry of Social Affairs. The trend in recent years has been toward the grouping of all such schools under the Ministry of Education.

The Ministry of Education has established special advisory councils for each major type of school. A special council - National Council for Innovation in Education - is administratively responsible at the central level for experiments under the School Experimentation Act

(since 1954). The Council's activities concern both compulsory schools and upper secondary education.

The new legislation for upper secondary education may lead to the merging of various advisory bodies concerned with different types of schools at this level. The more open-ended regulations for the new school system may also reduce the need to use the School Experimentation Act in connection with practical experiments, thus leading to a re-definition of functions as among the various advisory councils.

Financing

Operating costs in public upper secondary schools are covered by the counties. A selective system of government subsidies to the counties ensures equal standards of quality in spite of differences in economic ability among the counties. Pupils pay no fees. This is also the case for most private schools receiving public grants. Government subsidies are based on standard costs per pupil, varying from nearly N. Kr. 7,000 per year to about N. Kr. 15,000 per year. Central government refunds to the counties form 30% to 75% of those costs; the percentage refund is fixed, stipulated by the ministry according to the economic ability of each county. Central government and the counties together cover 85% of the operating costs of recognized private schools, normally according to the same standard costs per pupil as in public schools. The counties are responsible for school building at this level. Building costs are often shared between the counties and the municipality in which the school is located. Subsidies from central government are given on the basis of applications judged individually. Equipment is subsidized by central government within certain limits, with the same percentages of refunding as used for operating costs. Private schools may apply for government subsidies for equipment and buildings.

The new legislation will not basically change the financial arrangements as indicated above. The integration of schools and courses may, however, call for a simplification of the current cost standards. The principles outlined by the new legislation for upper secondary education are estimated to require another 50,000 pupil places in institutions at this level. This may lead to an increase in annual operating costs from 1,200 million N. Kr. to more than 1,800 million N. Kr. and may call for investments of the magnitude of 2,200 million N. Kr. in the next ten years.

Special Education

Special schools have been established for handicapped children who have difficulty in following the usual course at primary or secondary level. Nearly 2% of the pupils in compulsory education are in such schools, where the education usually lasts ten years. The percentage of pupils in special schools at the upper secondary level is

somewhat lower. The operation of special schools has been regulated by an Act on Special Schools of 1951. According to this act, the government is responsible for the necessary capacity in special schools to take care of the various groups of handicapped. To the extent municipal authorities engage in education of this kind, the major proportion of the costs is refunded by central government.

There are special schools for deaf, blind, mentally retarded and socially disturbed children and for certain other special groups. Schools are of two types, compulsory schools and general or vocational schools at the upper secondary level. Most of the institutions are boarding schools, but there is also a number of day schools in the towns. Costs per pupil in such schools are from five to ten times higher than those in ordinary schools, depending upon the kind of handicap and whether boarding facilities are offered. The pupil/staff ratios are very low, often below 2:1.

The comprehensive schools act of 1969 opened the possibility for integrating pupils from special schools into ordinary compulsory schools. This spring the government has proposed a full merger of the Special Schools Act and the Comprehensive Schools Act. According to this new legislation, the main responsibility for the education of handicapped children will be transferred to the municipalities, as one of the functions of their local school system. Special schools will still be operated, but it is assumed that an increasing proportion of the pupils in such schools will gradually be integrated into the regular schools at this level. The high costs per pupil in special schools will in such cases be transferred to the regular schools in order to facilitate the transfer. The government will pay the municipalities for costs exceeding standard costs per pupil in regular schools. Remaining special schools will largely be transferred to the municipalities, their operating costs still being subsidized to a great extent by government. A few special schools for categories of handicapped children too rare to be served by individual municipalities will still be operated by government. The new legislation on upper secondary education also provides legal openings for the transfer of pupils from special schools to county-operated regular schools at this level.

This policy of gradual integration of handicapped children into regular education is based on the experience that under certain circumstances in terms of facilities and pedagogical principles, handicapped children are better served by being taught together with children without handicaps. It is also hoped that such a policy will reduce the discrimination against handicapped individuals in society. All children should be used to the fact that a certain number of individuals in their environment are different and should learn to treat them as equals. How far this integration can be brought is a matter of time and experience, and of the willingness to maintain a high level of resource input into the education of such categories of children.

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Apart from the operation of special schools, ordinary schools have already considerable resources for remedial teaching for children lagging behind in the learning process. Nearly 15% of teacher time in primary and lower secondary education is spent on such remedial measures. In addition, schools have personnel available for counselling, organisational activities, contact with homes and general social aid. Special centres for such aid activities are being developed in several local areas.

Higher Education

General Structure

The term higher education is here used for all forms of institution-based education at the post-secondary level. The institutions in question form a rather heterogeneous group as regards the kind and duration of education offered, organisation of teaching and the administrative structure. The universities and the traditional academic "högskoler" have a predominant place in this part of the educational system. Historically, nearly all post-secondary education was offered by such institutions, but new types of institutions have gradually broken down the monopoly of the traditional academic institutions. The latter have traditionally the double function of carrying out research and training graduates in various specialities. The new institutions are mainly oriented towards teaching functions.

The University of Oslo is the oldest and biggest in Norway. It was established in 1811 and was the only university up to 1946. It comprises seven "faculties" and offers studies in all traditional university subjects. Parallel to the University of Oslo, a number of special "högskoler" in the European tradition were established by the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. They included "högskoler" for agriculture, technology, veterinary medicine, dentistry, commercial economics, pedagogy and sports. The organisational structure implied relatively isolated scientific milieux and prevented closer interdisciplinary collaboration. On the other hand, the new specialized institutions permitted more geographical distribution of higher education than a more integrated organisational structure would have done. Higher education in agriculture was located in Ås, south of Oslo, higher education in technology and pedagogics in Trondheim and higher education in commercial economics in Bergen. The trend in recent years has been towards the integration of some of these specialized "högskoler" into broader university structures. In Oslo, the "högskole" for dentistry became one of the "faculties" of the University of Oslo. In Trondheim, "högskolen" for technology and "högskolen" for pedagogics together with the local scientific museum formed the basis for a new university formally established in 1968. The University of Trondheim is gradually expanding in the direction of humanistic, natural and social sciences, and medical studies are being introduced.

The University of Bergen was established in 1946, on the basis of an older scientific institution, Bergen Museum. The University of Bergen has four faculties: humanistic sciences, social sciences, natural sciences and medicine. In addition, a school of dentistry is included within the university.

The University of Tromsö is the youngest in Norway. It was established in 1970, especially in order to strengthen post-secondary education in Northern Norway and to increase the availability of highly trained manpower in that part of the country. In this case also a local scientific museum formed the basis for the new university. Courses are offered in humanistic sciences, social sciences, natural sciences, medicine and fisheries. The latter is intended to become a speciality of the University of Tromsö, situated as it is in the middle of the most extensive fishing districts in Norway.

The wide variety of other post-secondary institutions in Norway offer mainly courses of two to three years' duration. Their graduates become professional or paraprofessional personnel in such areas as school teaching (at the level of compulsory schooling), engineering, social work, administration, health professions, libraries, journalism, etc. Higher military schools also belong to this category. Most of the institutions are more specialized than the universities and also more oriented towards specific professions. Their functions are mainly teaching ones, although some research activities have developed in recent years. The teacher training colleges, in particular, have recently had research activities officially added to their functions.

The most recent type of post-secondary institutions outside the universities are the regional colleges, of which six have been established on an experimental basis in various parts of the country. They were initially thought of as institutions which would integrate all forms of post-secondary education outside the universities. Up till now they have mainly launched professional courses in areas not covered by other institutions, and, to a limited extent, university courses at undergraduate level. Their courses are usually of two years' duration and they have proved to be very attractive to secondary graduates. There is no doubt that the regional colleges will increase in number and become a permanent feature of the higher education structure of Norway. In a white paper on higher education presented to Parliament in 1974, the government proposes to implement the initial idea that the regional colleges become a general framework for all post-secondary education outside the universities. The attitude of Parliament to this proposal is not yet clear.

Dimensioning and Further Expansion

The number of graduates from general upper secondary schools has more than trebled during the last twenty years. Today, slightly above half of them enter universities and traditional academic "högskoler". About 40% enter other institutions of higher education,

while nearly 25% enter vocational training at the secondary level. Among students in the latter two categories, several will later on pursue university studies, which accounts for the percentages adding up to more than 100. Very few secondary school graduates enter working life directly. The percentage of an age group completing secondary education shows considerable regional variations. County-wise the percentage ranges from about 15 to about 40%. The geographical distribution of students in higher education shows similar variations. The distribution of secondary school graduates among fields of study is to a considerable extent influenced by the existence of "numerous clausus" in a number of fields. Quantitative restriction of entry is applied in medicine and dentistry and by practically all "högskoler". As a consequence, secondary graduates must have very good marks to get into, for instance, medicine or engineering. Entrants to teacher colleges, preparing teachers for compulsory schools, have on the average better secondary marks than entrants to the university faculties of arts and sciences, preparing teachers for upper secondary schools.

The need for substantial expansion of the system of higher education and for major structural reforms at this level, led to the establishment in 1965 of a Royal Commission on Post-Secondary Education. Before completing its work in 1969, the Commission had prepared five reports on various aspects of such problems. Those reports have been the focus of heated public discussions on higher education in the last six or seven years. This Autumn the government presented to Parliament a white paper on higher education, putting forward proposals for a long-term policy in this field. The white paper has not yet been debated in Parliament. While the commission on higher education suggested a trebling of the number of places in higher education for the twenty years period 1965 to 1985, up to a total of about 100,000 students, the number of students was already about 54,000 by 1973. The government proposals imply a further expansion to about 80,000 in the course of the 1980s. This implies that the government has not found it possible to accept the commission's proposal to expand higher education so rapidly as to admit all applicants. For the next ten years, the government expects that quantitative restrictions to entry to many fields of study in higher education will have to be maintained, though the stated long-term aim is to abandon such restrictions.

The Commission reports suggested major efforts towards geographical decentralization of higher education. According to its proposals, the country would be divided into twelve districts of higher education, each with a central body responsible for the provision of such education within the district. The nucleus within a district would either be one of the four universities, or a regional college. The Commission advised against increasing the number of universities within the period in question.

In its proposals to Parliament, the government accepts largely the commission's proposals for a decentralized system of higher educational institutions, and also the limitation of the number of universities to four. The number of higher education districts will, however, be increased somewhat as compared to the twelve proposed by the Commission. The number of regional colleges may become fifteen to twenty.

According to the government white paper, a regional college will not necessarily be based on one single institutional unit. In many regions they will encompass several institutions with different locations, including the specific centres called regional colleges today. Yet, a regional college will not only be a co-ordinating body, it will be entrusted with extensive autonomy, parallel to that of the universities. Its steering board will have strong representation from the respective counties. The main emphasis of the regional colleges will be on courses of one to three years' duration, mostly with a clear professional orientation, but also with possibilities for combining subjects including elements of general education. University courses at undergraduate level will still be provided, but should be regarded as a secondary function and should not dominate the general orientation of the colleges. Arrangements for mutual transfer between universities and regional colleges will be further developed, but the large majority of regional college graduates are expected to enter the economy upon graduation. The institutions will have great freedom in their use of allocated resources, also for research purposes, with special emphasis on research as a pedagogical tool and studies specifically oriented towards problems of the region. However, major research facilities will rarely be established in the regional colleges in the period concerned.

As to the organisation of teaching within universities, the Royal Commission suggested a firmer structure of studies, mainly along the following lines:

a) basic education, normally four years;
b) specialized or further professional education; normally two years beyond the basic stage;
c) research training;
d) recurrent education courses.

The Commission further suggested that in the rather freely organised university studies the basic stage might be divided in two sections, each of two years' duration, and with a preliminary exam of some independent status after two years.

In its white paper, the government adopts the general suggestion by the Commission that the actual length of study in some of the longer university studies might be shortened, and indicates that the government will invite the universities to give this very serious consideration. A uniform pattern of the kind suggested by the commission is not, however, adopted by the government. The quantitative expansion suggested by the government will specially emphasize expansion of

institutions within the Regional College system. Their relative share is 35% of the student body today. On this point the government is in line with the proposals made by the Royal Commission, which emphasized the restricted entry to shorter post-secondary courses as the cause of distorted distribution of students among alternative studies at this level.

Administration

In higher education, the vast majority of institutions are operated by government, though there are a few examples of municipally or privately run schools. The highest administrative responsibility rests with the Ministry of Education except where agricultural institutions are concerned. The trend in recent years has been towards bringing together all institutions for higher education under this ministry. Traditionally, universities and scientific "högskoler" have a considerable degree of autonomy within the general budgetary framework set by government. A brief description of their administrative structure is given below:

At the University of Oslo, the highest body is the "akademiske kollegium", consisting of the rector, pro-rector, the deans of faculties, one representative of the scientific personnel and one representative of the students. The rector and the kollegium are responsible for the activities of the university within the competence established by existing legislation. Their responsibilities include the preparation of the university's budget, distribution of appropriations for the operation of institutes and other purposes, appointment of staff up to a certain level and the definition of their functions, recognition of study programmes, etc. Each faculty is headed by a dean and a faculty council including all full and associate professors, and representatives from other scientific staff and the students. Major disciplines within each faculty have their own institutes and special libraries. One of the scientific staff - usually a professor - serves as director for the institute, which functions as a research centre within the discipline. Joint administrative matters are taken care of by the secretariat of the university, headed by the university director.

The University of Bergen follows largely the administrative structure of the university of Oslo. The University of Trondheim has until now maintained separate administrative units for the parts corresponding to the previous technological "högskole" and pedagogical "högskole" and the scientific museum. For the university as a whole, there exists an interim board with its own secretariat. The interim board is responsible for the further expansion of the university and for the coordination of activities by the traditional units. The question of the future structure of the University of Trondheim is an issue for public debate. Legislation on this point is expected to be brought before Parliament in a year or two, probably aiming at a further integration of the various parts of the university.

The administrative pattern adopted at the University of Tromsö deviates considerably from that of the others. There is no division into faculties, only five scientific sections, each represented in the highest body of the university, the university council. The representatives are chosen by the following groups:

Permanent scientific staff	17
Fellows and assistant teachers	5
Non-scientific staff	7
Students	14

In addition, library staff, data processing staff and Tromsö Museum have one representative each. The university council decides on matters of principle and long-term significance, such as budgets, development plans and proposals for legislation. An executive board prepares matters for the university council and can decide upon a number of issues defined in the statutes. The executive board consists of five representatives from the scientific staff, two from the non-scientific staff and three representatives of the students. The rector is the highest university official and a permanent member of the university council and the executive board. He also chairs their meetings. Both rector and pro-rector are elected from among the full or associate professors. The rules established for the University of Tromsö secure a stronger representation of students than do the rules for the other universities. The rules for Tromsö also ensure representation of non-scientific staff.

The regional colleges have a local steering body consisting of representatives from the institution and from the region. Each institution has a director responsible for current administrative matters. The structure of internal co-operative and directive bodies varies. Each institution has considerable freedom in its choice of organisational patterns and is encouraged to experiment in order to achieve a pattern fitting local conditions. Co-ordination among regional colleges is the responsibility of a Central Board for Regional Colleges, consisting of individuals appointed by the government. In addition, regional college directors have regular co-ordination meetings.

No corresponding central board exists for the universities and the traditional "högskoler". There are, however, special boards affiliated to the Ministry of Education for teacher colleges, schools of social work and technical education. The latter institutions have no local boards, and their internal organisation is largely hierarchical with a rector as the responsible leader.

In addition to defining the budgetary framework for individual institutions of higher education, the Ministry of Education also appoints staff at the higher levels. In the universities this is restricted to full and associate professors, while it applies to all professional staff in the other institutions. Appointments by the Ministry are based on proposals from the institutions and such proposals are normally followed by the Ministry.

Financing

Practically all public institutions of higher education are fully financed by government. Institutional budgets are usually decided upon in Parliament in broad categories, leaving the institutions a large degree of freedom in terms of internal resource allocation. No fees are paid by students in higher education, except a small sum for social welfare purposes to welfare organisations which are usually run by the students themselves.

Adult Education

Adult education in Norway has traditions going back to the "enlightenment period" in the eighteenth century. Since then activities in this field have been continuous, but societal conditions have influenced their forms. The first enlightenment campaigns were conducted by private individuals from the intellectual elite, who considered it their duty to share their knowledge with the ignorant masses. Later on, more organised forms of activity developed. As in Denmark, folk high schools played an essential role in this respect, especially in the last part of the nineteenth century. The folk high schools were, and still are, institutions for general education with no exams, emphasizing national culture traditionally related to rural society. The folk high schools were primarily for young people, but their influence on the general development of adult education justifies mentioning them in this context. There are nearly one hundred folk high schools in Norway, with a student body of about 7,000, and they have adapted their activities to modern society, including young people in urban areas, and seem to be able to find their place within our present school structure.

In this century, the main part of adult education has been developed by voluntary organisations. Some of these, such as the People's University and the People's Academy have education as their sole function. Most of the other organisations represent major interest groups in society, based on political, cultural or religious principles, sports activities, professions, etc.

In 1935, a Joint Council for Adult Education was established, with representation from the organisations involved. Its task is to co-ordinate the activities of member organisations and take care of common interests. Member organisations automatically receive government support for their educational activities.

The educational activities of voluntary organisations have mainly been concentrated on the transmission of general and practical knowledge, aiming at personal development rather than vocational application. Another important aspect of their activities has been training and information for their own members in organisational activities. Last year, voluntary organisations operated 28,000 courses with a total of 330,000 participants.

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Parallel to the expansion of the regular school system, there has been a gradual acceptance of public responsibilities for strengthening the system of adult education. Activities in this field have developed in many directions. Needs are many and various and they are met in a wide variety of ways. The strength of the present system of organisation for adult education is its ability to reach potential clients in all parts of the country and in all social groups, and the ability to identify new needs and find the necessary personnel resources to meet them. In pedagogical terms, adult education courses have often been of a pioneering nature. Yet, the totality of courses offered is dependent on rather arbitrary factors in terms of priorities, financing and content orientation. Rapid changes in work situations and increased knowledge requirements in professional activities have created a substantial demand for vocationally oriented adult education. This kind of learning takes place on the job, in the daily work or through courses organised by the firms. Such internal training activities are usual in most companies of some size, and in most branches of public activity. In particular, well-developed systems of internal training exist in the postal services, the telecommunication services, the railway system, the customs services, the prison management, the police, etc.

Special needs for vocational training or retraining emerge among employees threatened by unemployment through structural changes in the economy. Vocational training is therefore also seen as an instrument for labour market policies and is carried out in close collaboration between educational and labour market authorities. Since 1959, special retraining courses of up to six months' duration have been organised for individuals threatened by unemployment. The Ministry of Education is responsible for arranging the courses, while labour market authorities judge the need for such courses and their location. Students are paid salaries from the social insurance system. Such vocational courses for adults have become a regular part of the activities of many vocational schools. The increasing demand has also led to the establishment of a number of special course centres. A further expansion of such training activities, emphasizing up-dating and supplementing of skills, is foreseen. The number of courses arranged last year was about 660 with a total of about 8,000 participants.

The main principles for government policy in the field of adult education were established by Parliament in 1965. The following main directions were agreed upon:

1. Adult education should be regarded in terms of educational policy measures as equivalent to education within the regular school system. It should be expanded to permit adults to obtain further education of a general or practical nature. General education courses and courses aiming at vocational skills should be treated in the same way in terms of government support.

2. All individuals should have possibilities for documenting their acquired knowledge and skills irrespective of the means by which these have been acquired. Exams should be offered in special subjects, to be added up to the equivalent of general diplomas at various levels.
3. Educational institutions within the regular school system should make their facilities available for adult education to the extent their regular educational tasks permit it.
4. Pedagogical and methodological problems in adult education should be subject to extensive scientific studies. Teaching personnel in adult education should have improved pedagogical training appropriate for such tasks.
5. Regular school institutions should have the main responsibility for adult education aiming at the kind of exams provided within the regular school system, e. g. secondary graduation, or technical or vocational tests. A preparation for exams in specific subjects and general education not aiming at any formal certification should be the main responsibility of the voluntary organisations.

In accordance with these principles, the Ministry of Education has directed county school authorities to ensure that their institutions offer aid to correspondence school pupils and others studying on their own. In addition, general and vocational upper secondary schools organise evening courses for adults. Exams in single subjects are arranged according to demand. Last year nearly 800 such courses were operating, with nearly 14,000 participants.

Correspondence courses constitute a significant part of adult education. It is one of the means used by the voluntary organisations, but there are also a number of private correspondence schools. Regular public school institutions also to some extent use correspondence education combined with other forms of education. Fees for correspondence courses are paid by the government, provided that the courses lead to presentation at a public exam, and that the student completes the course.

The major economic organisations, such as the trade unions and the employers' union also operate extensive adult education activities. Through negotiation among the main organisations, a special fund for such training has been established. In addition, the trade unions also receive support for such activities directly from government. Such funds are spent on the training of union leaders at various levels. The employers' union spends its educational funds for leader training and other training of employees. The major economic organisations have also engaged in educational policy questions in general. They have thus generally advocated more liberal practices concerning educational leave.

Civilian training offered by the military services is today a major feature within adult education. Since 1955, an extensive course activity has cared for several thousand pupils annually. The courses offered

reach practically the total male population at a time when the need for skills and up-dating of skills relevant to work life is particularly felt. In many units, up to 80% of non-commissioned personnel make use of the courses offered. The military services co-operate with voluntary organisations. They mutually draw upon each other's resources, especially for military units located in remote areas.

Administration

The Ministry of Education is preparing a general framework of legislation for adult education. In this it is aided by the work of a Royal Commission on Adult Education, which presented its report in 1972. The commission suggested the following administrative structure for educational activities in this field:

Adult education corresponding to legally regulated education within the regular school system should be the responsibility of the corresponding public authorities. Thus, adult education at the post-secondary level would primarily be the responsibility of the government, adult education at the upper secondary level should be taken care of by the county authorities, while adult education at the lower secondary level would be the responsibility of the municipalities. In the counties and municipalities, adult education would come under the authority of the school boards, which would establish separate sub-committees for adult education with certain decision-making responsibilities. At the post-secondary level, general regulations for supervision should be stipulated by the ministry. The various public bodies should provide for adult education through their own educational institutions or through financial support to activities by other organisations.

Within the Ministry of Education, a separate department is in charge of adult education. An Advisory Council for Adult Education is attached to the ministry. The question of establishing a special "directorate" for adult education, with a semi-independent position in relation to the ministry, was raised by the Royal Commission on Adult Education. The government has not taken any position on this proposal.

Financing

Government grants for adult education have increased rapidly in recent years, from about 5 million N. Kr. in 1965 to 44 million N. Kr. in 1974. In addition, various ministries appropriate funds for special updating or refresher courses for personnel within their sectors. The biggest single item under the Ministry of Education is subsidies for courses held by voluntary organisations. They are paid according to special rules for study circles, correspondence circles, evening courses, and university circles. In addition, the organisations receive special subsidies for administration. Adult education offered by school institutions is subsidized by government according to the same principles

as the regular education offered by counties and municipalities. The latter cover the rest of operating costs.

Future Policies

The main problems underlying the proposals from the Royal Commission on Adult Education are related to the questions of rights and duties in this field. To what extent should the acceptance of adult education as having an equal status with formal schooling and enjoying the same financial support by the authorities, lead to a stricter control of adult education activities outside the schools and hence to limitations of the integrity and free status of the voluntary organisations? The importance of the problem is illustrated by the fact that, according to the official statistics, approximately 90% of the total number of students enrolled in adult education activities participate in courses arranged by these organisations. This is a key question the government has to face when the new proposals for legislation in this field are presented to Parliament.

There is, however, fairly general agreement on most of the more far-reaching conclusions of the Royal Commission. Lifelong education is accepted as a leading principle, even if it has not yet been found appropriate to consider fully its practical implications for the educational system as a whole. It seems likely that the government will endorse the general principle suggested by the commission: "Adult education forms part of an educational system which aims at adapting conditions so as to make it possible for everyone, both as an individual and as a member of the community at large, to continue his personal development throughout his life by means of education at work and/or in his leisure time." The distinction between general and vocational education is generally felt to be out-dated within the Norwegian educational system, and this is particularly apparent in adult education.

Ends and Means in Educational Policy

The Ministry of Education also has a major responsibility for research policy in Norway. A general statement on political aims in these fields, prepared for the government's long-term Programme 1974-1977, still reflects the government's position:

> "The main common goal for political work in these areas is the desire to increase the level of insight and understanding in the population as a whole. This is far more than a matter of "production" and transmission of factual knowledge. The way in which such knowledge is transmitted will be decisive for the insight and understanding achieved. This is true for both education and research. In extreme cases, it is quite feasible to transmit factual knowledge in a way which reduces the possibilities for understanding.
>
> Goals of this kind must be necessity be dynamic. The stream of information is steadily increasing, facing our system for processing,

selection and transfer of information with constant requirements for increased efforts. Changes in our society raise new problems and consequent needs for new information. The maintenance of a general system of information and research at an adequately functioning level requires in fact constantly growing resources and efforts.

Knowledge is power. It may also mean power to increase the dependence of others, if a few are supposed to monopolize relevant knowledge and control the information streams. In the same way as countries' level of welfare cannot be measured irrespective of its distribution, research and education policies must also be concerned about distribution. An essential task in our times is to reduce the gap in insight and understanding among various groups of the population.

Basically, this concerns the ability of the individual to master his own situation and our joint ability to find solutions to common problems. This must exert itself in political decisions, in organisational activities and in interactions among individuals in general. It affects our ability for productive performance and our possibilities to use the opportunities offered in our society.

The education of children and young people affects a period of intensive personal development of the individual. This development is based on a multiplicity of impulses, from the family, from the local environment and through mass-media from the society in a national and global sense. Formal education is just one of the sources of intellectual and emotional stimulus at this age. Yet the school has the potential to influence this development in a decisive way.

Human development is not, however, limited to childhood and youth. We know today that the potential for learning and personal growth is present all through adult life when conditions permit it. Largely, this must happen outside school, but educational institutions must also be prepared for an increasingly important task in relation to adults.

Such general goals for education and research form the basis for a wide spectre of functions within these sectors. It has thus little meaning to apply simple measures for the "efficiency" of activities of this kind at our present technological level. We might be able to programme strictly both education and research, aiming at their application as instruments for specific tasks in society. However, in view of the interdependencies existing in this field, we would then not be able to prevent other, perhaps equally central tasks, from suffering.

The decisive criterion of "efficiency" in such activities must, in the last instance, be that the individuals involved - and this will gradually mean most of us - find them useful as a basis for meaningful personal development. Education must primarily be a

service towards the individual, and it is first of all the clients of such services who can judge the results. Even research must, in the last instance, be judged by the individuals influenced by its effects. A corresponding line of thinking is in our view valid for the whole field of cultural policy.

The means used to implement such policies cannot be judged solely in terms of expected outcomes. The selection of means is closely related to the values implied by general political goals. The trend today is to move gradually away from central direction through legal measures, the emphasis being more on financial and informative instruments of policy. This is part of a policy of delegation of power from central to local institutions, and in the last instance to the individual actor within the system. In research, such a distribution of responsibilities has old traditions, research activities must not be too tightly bound to short-term political concerns. In education, concern for equality has been felt to speak against such a development. However, the more ambitious aspirations for the future involve an attempt to merge concerns for equality with greater autonomy at lower levels in the decision-making system.

A system is envisaged in which local and regional bodies have great freedom to use their own judgement in the allocation of resources within given general frames, and in which binding directives are replaced by guiding information. We still maintain, however, that individuals with different social and geographical backgrounds shall have the same initial possibilities, and this requires general principles for the allocation of resources ensuring not only formal but real equality of opportunities.

The aim to improve the possibilities of the individual to master his own situation, even within the systems in question, cannot be realized simply through a decentralization of government power. The range of choice of the individual can be just as restricted by conditions in the local environment. A strict vertical decision-making process may deprive the individual of most choices important to him. Yet, dependence upon forces in the environment may be as strong. The individual can be dominated by others who are stronger within a school class, in an institution, in a local milieu as well as within a system of institutions. It is thus still a central task for government to secure the individual's possibilities for choice independent of pressure from the environment. For this purpose, legal measures will still have their justification."

For the specific purposes of this paper, certain key areas of policy have been selected for more detailed discussion. These areas are as follows:

- Future directions of the decision-making process;
- Educational policies for equality;

- Integration problems in post-compulsory education;
- Innovation and planning.

The following chapters will deal with each of these issues in turn.

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III

PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATIONAL DECISION-MAKING

Introduction

This chapter focuses on "participation" in internal decision-making processes of the educational system. The presentation is based on official documents which deal with such issues.

In the Government's Long-Term Programme 1974-1977, one of the annexes presents a "special analysis" of decision-making processes relating to education. The analysis was prepared for the Ministry of Finance by the Ministry of Education, and is annexed to this report as it illustrates essential choices facing future educational policy-making in Norway.

In many respects, the Norwegian educational system is relatively centralized. The central public authorities, such as Parliament, Government and Administration, have a decisive influence on the main features of the system. But the system is also characterized by a hierarchical decision-making process, in which decisions are taken at many different levels; apart from central bodies, at county level, in the municipalities, in the individual school, in the single class and by the individual pupil. Within this hierarchy, high levels will draw up limits to the discretion left to lower levels.

Many groups of individuals participate in the decision-making process: politicians, administrators, experts, teachers, pupils, parents, representatives of the economy, representatives of professional groups, etc. Such groups of individuals operate partly at the same level and partly at different levels in the hierarchy. The degree of participation and influence varies according to the nature of decisions and the level at which they are made.

Public governance is exerted through an extensive set of policy measures. Largely, such measures can be grouped in three different categories; legal measures, financial measures and informative measures.

Financial measures of policy include monetary appropriations and allocations of funds. As the Norwegian school system is mainly run and financed by public bodies, priorities set by political authorities largely determine the provision of resources to this sector, and their internal distribution.

Legal policy measures include legislation, and more detailed regulations and statutes for the functioning of the system. Such measures are most extensively used by central authorities in relation to

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compulsory education. At higher stages in the educational system, educational institutions decide their own regulations to a greater extent.

An important function of central administration is to prepare such legal measures and to control their use. Professional groups, such as teacher unions, exert considerable influence on the formulation of central regulations, and teachers are also in a key position when interpreting the implications of such regulations at the local level.

Informative policy measures include research and development work in education; practical experiments and diffusion of information are important parts of such measures. The information system relating to education is essential, and informative measures are increasingly used by public authorities, replacing to some extent legal measures. However, the predominant input of information is not that of central public authorities, but rather of groups of experts such as researchers in Norway or abroad, teacher training institutions, other teachers, etc. Though central authorities can make use of informative measures, they have no means of controlling the information system.

In designing policy measures the Government has been increasingly concerned with the degree of rigidity involved in the use of various measures. Legal measures often define expected behaviour in great detail but may also legitimize behaviour within rather wide limits. Financial measures are often used to encourage the use of resources for specific purposes, but frequently leave a fair amount of discretion to bodies at local levels. Informative measures are in principle indicative, but may, in certain cases, be conceived of as being authoritative.

Any formal description of decision-making processes provides only limited information about the actual distribution of power within a system. Decisions are often the outcome of long and complicated processes, in which many instances have taken part and made their influence felt. Such informal aspects of decision-making are less visible than the formal ones, but may in fact play a greater role. This should be kept in mind in the context of the following analysis.

The central governance of the educational system has many purposes, an essential objective, however, reflects a strong commitment to providing equal educational conditions for everyone, irrespective of geographical and social origin. Both legal and financial measures are applied to this effect. Central political aims thus call for regulations and limitations to the discretion of individual institutions and influence the possibilities for participation within them. The shape of the external framework established for institutional operations is a major factor in relation to questions of participation. In recent years Norway has seen an extensive discussion about educational governance at all levels. Decentralization of decision-making power has become a key concept in this discussion, together with such terms as democratization, self-governance, participation, partnership and self-development. Recent official documents on educational policy have reflected this discussion, putting strong emphasis on internal democracy in the schools and the possibilities for decentralization. This does not mean that equality

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aspects have lost their importance, but it implies a search for solutions where concern for equality and participation may be combined.

In the "special analysis" of alternative decision-making processes, the Ministry of Education has underlined that decentralization is no objective in itself. The aim would be that "the individual should have possibilities to control his own situation and his personal development at least as long as it does not restrict those of others". Decentralization may be a means to achieve such aims, but the connections in this context are not simple. Increased decision-making power at the local level may under certain circumstances lead to forms of discrimination restricting the possibilities of the individual. The educational system is vulnerable to pressures from strong interest groups both internal to and external to the system. The balancing of such interests and the safe-guarding of individual discretion are to a significant extent dependent upon central decision-making power. "Extensive local governance may leave local units defenceless against predominant local interests, or strong national pressure groups representing professional, economic or ideological interests". (The "special analysis".)

The political processes leading towards more emphasis on participation and decentralization are interesting, but will not be discussed further in this context. We would like, however, to stress the following point: Changes in the relative emphasis on objectives can occur without changes in the formal structure of governance, but can hardly be implemented without the latter. Changes of this kind are not easily achieved. The present system of education is largely adapted to the use of financial and legal policy measures; budgeting, formal regulations and control are essential features. A development towards increased self-governance and internal democratization calls for more development work, open experimentation, research and information. Developmental expertise becomes more essential than control expertise. Developmental activities must also take place to a greater extent at the local and regional level. Teaching methods must be changed, with all that this implies for teacher training, etc.

Changes in the relative emphasis on various objectives thus threaten established structures at many points implying a considerable potential for conflicts. We shall describe how the problems of participation are dealt with and how we have attempted to solve them at different stages within the educational system. As the system as a whole is undergoing major changes at many points, we shall concentrate on a few important features of the development.

Compulsory Education

The general framework for reform activities in compulsory education is provided by the compulsory Education Act of 1969 and the new Indicative Curriculum Plan. * Those documents strongly emphasize

* Cf. the general description of compulsory education in the previous chapter.

co-operation among the different actors in the school society: teachers, pupils, parents and the local community. In concrete terms, this emphasis exerts itself in the following ways:

- The idea of collaboration is formalized through the legally based establishment of a series of new bodies for collaboration.
- The Indicative Curriculum Plan underlines that the teaching process shall be the result of discussions between teachers and pupils. Collaboration is part of the teaching method.
- Decentralization of decision-making is strongly emphasized in the debate, and some practical steps in this direction have already been taken.

In the following, we shall treat those three issues separately.

Means of collaboration

Origin

When the Government presented its proposals for new legislation on compulsory education to Parliament in 1966, the establishment of a school council, a teachers' council and a pupils' council for each school was included. The proposal mainly confirmed existing arrangements. This was also true for the suggestion that the Ministry of Education should establish general regulations for such councils, and that more specific regulations should be endorsed by the school director in each county.

The decision of Parliament, however, was that each school should have a school council, a teachers' council, a council for other employees, class councils, a pupils' council and a general collaboration committee. The Ministry should formulate indicative regulations for the councils, but they themselves should finally determine their own rules. This decision in Parliament was prepared by its Committee for Education Affairs, upon initiatives from outside Parliament. The present system for collaboration in compulsory schools is thus an example of important political decisions being taken without extensive previous research and experimentation.

The more detailed preparation of the reform was entrusted to a ministerial Committee on Collaboration in Schools appointed in 1969. Its mandate was formulated as follows:

a) To clarify the need for collaboration among the various parties involved in school affairs.

b) To suggest appropriate forms of information and necessary organisational bodies to increase collaboration between these parties.

c) To judge the relationship among the different parties in terms of the right to make proposals, to take part in decisions and in responsibilities in different types of schools.

The committee consisted of representatives of parents, teachers, pupils and public administration. Their report was presented in October 1971,

and was submitted by the Ministry to a wide range of interested bodies for comments.

Legal Regulations

On the basis of the proposal from the ministerial committee, comments from interested parties and the general debate on these issues, the Ministry has proposed to Parliament certain changes in the Compulsory Education Act of 1969. The changes aim at providing wider opportunities for the various bodies to establish their own rules. If Parliament agrees, the Act will stipulate the following regulations:

Para. 29 - Parents' Council

1. Each school shall have a parents' council including all parents with children in the school. The council elects an executive group which elects two members of the general collaboration committee, one of which shall be the chairman of the executive group. Elections are valid for one year.
2. The Ministry of Education formulates general directions for the functioning of parents' councils.

Para. 31 - School Council; Teachers' Council, Council for the Employees and General Collaboration Committee

1. Each municipality shall have a school council consisting of the school superintendent, all head-masters and all teachers employed at least on a half-time basis. The council elects its own chairman for one year at a time.
2. The school council has the right and the obligation to express its views on all matters relating to curricula, text books, regulations and statutes.
3. Each school with more than one teacher shall have a teachers' council including the headmaster and all teachers who teach half time or more. The Council elects two members to the general collaboration committee, and its own chairman for one year at a time.
4. When applicable, each school may have a council for employees other than those mentioned under point 3. The chairman of this council is a member of the general collaboration committee.
5. The municipal school board can, with the approval of the school director, establish other roles for the composition of the school council, the teachers' council and the council for other employees, and thereby limit the number of members in order to adapt its size, or to bring in members other than those mentioned under points 1, 3 and 4.
6. Each school shall have a general collaboration committee with two representatives from the teachers' council, one representative for other employees, the headmaster, two representatives from the pupils' council, two representatives from the parents'

council and one representative elected by the municipal school board. The committee elects its own chairman for one year at a time.

7. All elections mentioned in this paragraph shall be held by ballot if anyone so wishes. The Ministry establishes general guide-lines for councils and committees mentioned in the paragraph.

Para. 32 - Class Councils and Pupils' Councils

1. Each school shall normally have a pupils' council with all pupils as members. The pupils' council elects an executive group with chairman, vice-chairman and a secretary. The executive group elects two members of the general collaboration committee.
2. Pupils' councils in primary schools are represented in the general collaboration committee by the chairman and vice-chairman of the executive group, but only when the council has raised a matter for debate or commented in written form upon such a matter, or when specially invited by the collaboration committee.
3. A teacher shall be assigned to assist the pupils' council in its work.
4. Each class shall as a rule have a class-council including all pupils. The class council elects its own chairman and vice-chairman for a term of up to one year at the lower secondary level and up to one half year at the primary level.
5. The Ministry of Education establishes general guide-lines for councils mentioned in this paragraph.

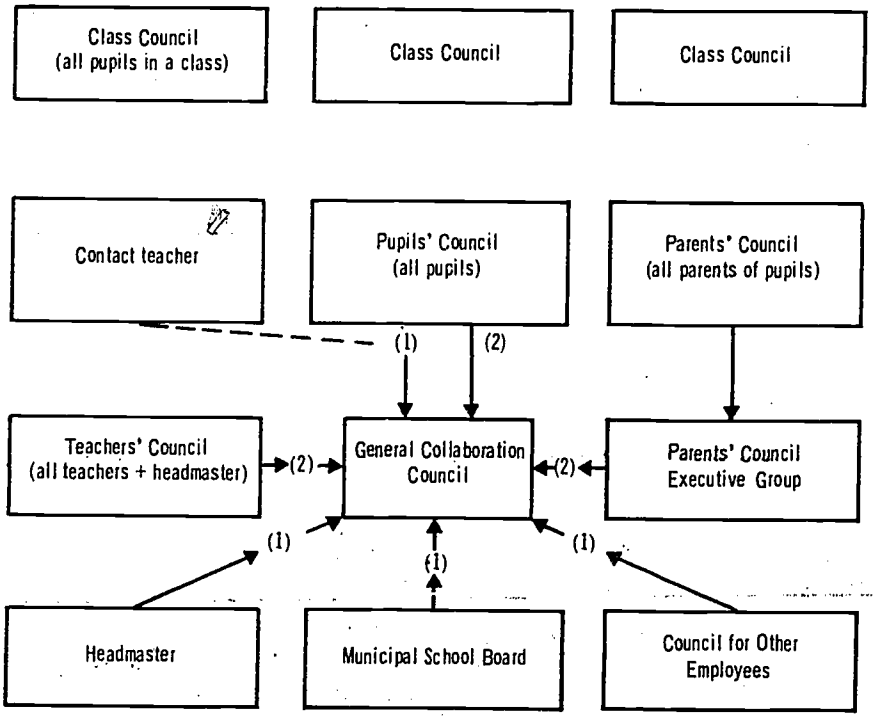
A schematic presentation of the system of councils in a school is given on the next page.

The Central Council for Compulsory Schools has established a special contact group in order to obtain views from pupils in relation to general questions concerning compulsory schools, such as the work of pupils' councils, curriculum, examinations, and the system of appeals. Initially the group consisted of 7 pupils, but later it was expanded to include representatives from all 19 countries.

Functions

In the general debate, the question has been raised as to what specific functions the various collaboration bodies should have. The councils are only to a limited extent in a position to make definite decisions. Most decisions are, in fact, taken outside the individual school, and decisions by the schools themselves are mostly adaptations to such external decisions. If the present division of responsibilities is maintained, the main functions of councils in individual schools will be:

- to serve as channels for dissemination of information on school matters;
- to serve as forums for discussion;



- to offer suggestions and recommendations for decisions to be taken;
- to operate occasionally as pressure groups;*
- on some issues the councils have independent decision-making authority.

In principle, the councils can put any matter relating to the school on its agenda. As an illustration, the Ministerial Commission on Collaboration in Schools provided the following list of typical issues:

- Budget proposals from the headmaster;
- Optional subjects offered;
- Use of available teacher resources;
- Experimental activities;
- Changes on the school premises;
- Holidays and days off;

* There is good reason to believe that when the councils can act on the joint opinion of parents, pupils and teachers they may be rather influential. A case in point is the function of the general collaboration committees in the schools of Oslo, in connection with a new plan for sex education proposed by the municipal school authorities. The councils were brought in upon the initiative of both politicians and parents, and their deliberations have influenced the further course of this issue considerably.

- The use of the school buildings;
- School rules;
- Traffic conditions;
- Transportation to school;
- Rationalization measures;
- Safety and health measures;
- Social measures and hobby activities;
- Beginning and end of the school day;
- School meals;
- The school's information activities;
- Choice of text-books (pupils' councils excluded);
- Appointments (only the general collaboration committee).

The Ministry has issued general guidelines for the various collaboration bodies. It is stated that the councils shall have mostly an advisory function. The municipal school board may in some matters delegate decision-making power to the collaborating bodies.

Some measures have also been taken in order to provide better working facilities for the collaboration bodies. In lower secondary education one hour per week is set aside for the work of class and pupils' councils. Many municipalities have done the same at the primary level. A contact teacher with reduced teaching obligations is responsible for assisting the pupils' council in its work. General collaboration councils are provided with secretarial assistance. The Central Council for Compulsory Schools prepares information material. The National Council for Innovation in Education runs a number of practical experiments with different patterns of collaboration. Research projects aiming at a follow-up of work by the collaboration bodies have been initiated.

Critical assessments

The establishment of an extensive system of collaboration bodies in individual compulsory schools has given rise to some criticism, and we shall try to summarize some of the key points raised:

a) Collaboration bodies are said not to change significantly the existing power positions in the school, but simply to institutionalize formal collaboration within an unchanged power structure. According to such views, the easiest answer to the demand for participation has been chosen but has achieved on the whole purely formal solutions. Instead, the internal structure of the schools should be analysed and attempts made to find solutions providing individual pupils and teachers with a maximum of influence on the teaching situation. Power must rest on the principle of one person, one vote. In functional terms, however, the teacher will have a different role to perform than the pupils.

b) The philosophy of collaboration is based upon a naive conception of the possibility of increased influence for all parties. This

may, in fact, mean that the parties involved are deceived, as it presupposes a total harmony of interest. If this were true, however, much of the point in the establishment of representative bodies would disappear. The true situation, however, is one of a mixture of joint and conflicting interests. Quite often, therefore, one of the interested parties can only increase its influence at the expense of that of other parties.

In its report, the Ministerial Committee on Collaboration in Schools touched on this point: "The Committee emphasizes that the parties involved must respect each other as equal members of the school community. This may mean that some actors in this collaboration will have to renounce some of their influence, while others will be able to bring their views forward more strongly than previously."

An important problem in this context is the emergence of the upper socio-economic groups as the most active and articulate within the parents' council. Politically elected bodies appear more representative in social terms, and stronger parental influence may mean additional advantages for higher social groups.

c) Much criticism relates to the limited decision-making power of the new bodies, as they are mainly permitted to give recommendations. As a measure of democratization, the work of the collaboration bodies appears irrelevant, mainly consisting of the shuffling of paper among the various groups. Administrative procedures become complicated and bureaucratic, creating new claims for simplification, potentially leading to the abandoning of broader participation. More decision-making power must, therefore, be delegated to the individual school and to the various collaboration bodies. Special emphasis must be put where the teaching really takes place; in the classroom.

d) Many teachers doubt whether this form of democracy in the school represents progress. Parents may invade the proper professional domain of the teachers, and in particular internal classroom procedures. Furthermore, decision-making procedures may become very complicated and lead to inefficiency.

e) All official documents have emphasized the need for increasing the influence of the pupils. Yet, the established organisational structure may not achieve this, since pupils have too weak a power basis and are too dependent upon the benevolence of others. On the whole, pupils are not too well organised. They have few possibilities for working out alternatives to existing arrangements. They may also risk being confronted with a firm alliance between teachers and parents, leaving them in an even weaker position than before.

Generally, it seems likely, as mentioned under point e), that reforms of this type can easily be accommodated within the existing power structure without changing it. The ideal aims of the reform may,

therefore, appear unrealistic. Remedying this will mean extensive further work on the internal organisation of the school. This part of the reform will probably claim more time and resources than the formal changes. Designs for such work can be found in the indicative curriculum plan and related documents, and the next section will deal particularly with this question.

Collaboration in teaching situations

The Committee for Collaboration in Schools underlined the importance of the learning situation in which pupils and teachers meet. It stated that "it is above all here that reforms are needed if increased collaboration in the school is the aim". It also stated that "reforms aiming at increased democracy in school can do incalculable damage if they do not reach beyond democratic forms". The Commission pointed out that the present structure of the school is not well suited for influencing the teaching situation at field level. Too much is decided too far away. "Instead of authoritarian patterns based on formal powers, it would be more fruitful to develop authority relationships based on differences in professional and personal competence."

The indicative curriculum plan also underlines the need for more collaboration in the practical teaching situation. It states that "everyone working in the school must share responsibilities and influence concerning their own work situation. Collaboration in the school must be a confrontation between the experience of the adult and the ideas and views of the younger generations. Pupils must gradually achieve more responsibilities. The forms of their influence and responsibilities related to the choice of teaching material and forms must depend on their age and competence. Their efforts and their responsibilities for themselves and their environment must increase in step with their growing maturity and experience." The aim is thus clearly increased participation in decision-making. Yet, questions are raised about how this can be most effectively achieved. The "Normal Curriculum Plan" of 1939, preceding the new indicative curriculum plan, also emphasized pupil activities, individualization, group work and collective achievement. Since then, not too many of these principles have been put into practice. Excuses for this have been lack of teaching material, inadequate teacher training and inappropriate systems of evaluation, combined with compulsory minimum requirements.

The new plan for comprehensive education at least assumes that more decisions will be taken locally. This includes decisions on the content of teaching, pedagogical methods and the internal organisation of the school. The indicative curriculum plan is only supposed to be a general framework, pointing out general directions and intentions. The indicated objectives refer to periods of three years' duration, instead of the annual curriculum objectives stated previously. Compulsory minimum requirements are abandoned, in order to facilitate

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adaptation to the ability and interest of individual students. This also implies more freedom of choice in the use of teaching materials. The responsibility for the choice of curriculum content, working methods and teaching aids rests with the teacher, but the wishes of the pupils are supposed to play a major role. As a corollary, the system of public recognition of text-books is supposed to be dropped and replaced by a public "consumers guidance service".

The indicative curriculum plan aims at teaching based on a variety of forms, the underlying principles being those of active methods of collaboration. Pupils should learn to learn, they should learn to find relevant material, to process it and to present it orally and in written form in an independent manner. Group work is supposed to be more common, and the traditional class teaching replaced by more flexible groupings, e. g. a combination of large and small groups and individual instruction. Collaboration is supposed to function in all directions; teacher-teacher, pupil-pupil and teacher-pupil. More freedom of choice in these fields provides better possibilities for joint planning of the teaching, involving both teachers and pupils. The time sequences for this planning may be a day, a week, a month or a year. The indicative curriculum plan states that "pupils can participate in decisions concerning the sequences of subjects and the time spent on individual items. New items might be brought in at the request of the pupils. To some extent even the rate of progress may be planned by teachers and pupils together, as well as questions relating to home work, testing, etc. The pupils must also learn to plan and implement independent tasks." Compulsory schools shall not be tied to the traditional school day. On approval of the municipal school board, the organisation of the school day can be adapted to local conditions. The same applies to the traditional organisation in classes. Teachers get more time for mutual contact and collaboration. One week of the school year is set aside for joint teacher planning, to be spent as found appropriate.

Decentralization

Experiments have been going on since 1966 with a general system of quotas of teaching hours per class. This quota system has now been generally adopted in compulsory schools. Within the limits established by such quotas and general regulations, teaching resources can then be used for educational purposes according to priorities set by local authorities and the individual schools.

Experiments with "open schools" have been going on since 1968, and are now fairly widespread in compulsory education. Traditional classroom teaching is then replaced by more or less open "school landscapes" and correspondingly flexible arrangements for the school as a whole. New possibilities opened up in such schools include:

- the school building provides a more open and free atmosphere;

- teachers find themselves in a situation in which collaboration becomes necessary;
- collaboration among the pupils is facilitated;
- the forms of school work may be more varied;
- individualized teaching is facilitated without separating out individual pupils;
- material and equipment may be more effectively used.

Facilities for pedagogical guidance and teacher training are gradually being expanded within schools, at the municipal level and centrally. Guidance centres are also being established at the county level, their tasks including, e. g. teacher training, course of information material, demonstration of teaching aids and consumer orientation in this context, development of school workshops, initiation and assistance in practical experiments, etc.

The Ministry of Education is currently preparing further steps in the direction of more freedom in resources allocation at the local level. The present system of tying subsidies to the amount of teacher time spent may be replaced by a general system of subsidies per pupil, differentiated according to actual differences in the costs of running schools in various municipalities, and according to local economic resources. Such a system would make the present control of the use of teacher resources superfluous and thus reduce the need for legal regulations concerning the use of resources at the municipal and the school level. However, this question forms only a part of the wider issue of financial relations between central and local authorities, and may find its solution in this wider context.

Evaluation

The system of evaluation is an important guiding mechanism within an educational system, and the question of central evaluation is essential to the level of decision-making. When discussing the indicative curriculum plan, Parliament agreed that marks should be abandoned in primary schools, and this has now been implemented. The Parliament also agreed that marks should be dropped in lower secondary education, as soon as entry to upper secondary education could be made available to all who wished it. A first step towards abandoning marks at this stage was made when the Ministry recently stipulated that marks should be given in three of the main theoretical subjects only. However, this caused reactions both from the teacher organisatic :s and the general public, and their reflections in Parliament caused the Ministry to withdraw its decision on this point. The criticism was partly that marks in a few theoretical subjects only, would mean too strong a focus on such subjects in the schools. Furthermore, there is still competition for entry into upper secondary education in many fields. Finally, there are clearly in many circles doubts about whether marks should be completely abandoned in compulsory education.

The idea is not, of course, to stop evaluation in schools, but to get away from the main emphasis on relative ranking through marks and exams. The performance of pupils is still evaluated, especially in relation to their individual capabilities and previous progress. More emphasis is put on guidance and supervision. Evaluation is not seen as a verdict, but as an aid to the individual pupil. Individual institutions should also have the possibility of developing their own forms of evaluation without being tied to a national evaluation scale. The evaluation will still be related to the general aims of the educational system, but not to a specific quasi-professional interpretation of such aims.

The Local Community

In its analysis of future directions for the decision-making process in the educational system, the Ministry of Education underlines that more local governance is not in itself a guarantee of more democratic participation. Strong local interest groups may gain control over the school, and it is hardly realistic to assume that a local community constitutes an harmonious unit without internal conflicts. The idea of "integrating the school into the local community" may, therefore, involve far-reaching problems.

A more extensive use of local resources in the school for its own pedagogical purposes may be less problematic, and the indicative curriculum plan assumes a development in this direction.

Final Remarks

As indicated above, changes of the kind dealt with in this chapter are not easily made. The main formal instruments for policy in this field are school legislation providing for formal bodies for collaboration, and possibly also for certain changes in the local balance of power, and the guidance provided by the indicative curriculum plan, outlining general ideas about how a certain educational philosophy may be implemented. Yet there are still doubts as to the effect of such measures on a traditional system such as education. Reforms in such matters will of necessity take time, and also require active follow-up by educational authorities. New initiatives must be stimulated, and the actual consequences in practice must be clarified. Research, experimentation, dissemination of information, training and retraining, new teaching materials, regional and local guidance services, etc. are necessary means in such a context. Yet the basic condition for reforms of this kind is the understanding and approval of the aims involved by the individuals they concern.

Upper Secondary Education

Education beyond compulsory schooling, mainly for the age groups 16-19, is in rapid transformation. More than eight years of commission

research and extensive practical experimentation has led to proposals for new legislation, finally passed by Parliament in June this year.

"Further education" will be the name given to the part of the educational system situated between the end of compulsory and entry to higher education. In the future the system of further education will be more closely integrated, with a wide range of opportunities for combinations. Ten main directions of study have been suggested for the new system of further education, most of them combining elements of general and vocational training, and including elements of fully integrated theoretical and practical education. All forms of further education may be offered within the same school units, or in more specialized units, according to organisational plans decided by county school authorities. The National Council for Innovation in Education and other advisory bodies are involved in the preparation of curricula for the various directions of study in further education. This work now includes not only the basic content of the various subjects, but also the main objectives and principles, main features of the school society, forms of differentiation, working methods, teaching aids, evaluation, qualification requirements, and social measures.

The new legislation implies the delegation of decision-making authority in many respects. An essential role is that of the counties, since they are responsible for planning, locating and deciding upon the dimensions of school units at this level, with central authorities acting only in a general advisory capacity. Increased possibilities for choice also represent an element of decentralization in decision-making. The main points in the new legislation relating to "participation" are the following:

a) Wider range of choice for the individual in terms of combinations of subjects, transfer between directions of studies and in terms of the duration of studies, including easier possibilities for returning after periods away from education.

b) More emphasis on collaboration and participation by pupils in decisions. Establishment of bodies for collaboration and co-ordination at the individual schools.

c) More general and indicative curricula, with more possibilities for individual schools to plan their own teaching, and to choose their methods according to their own preferences.

d) Tendencies towards a reduction in the use of external evaluation, in order to modify the effects of a joint system of exams and grades, and the selection functions of such a system.

The following sections will deal particularly with the points b), c) and d) above.

Means for collaboration

Previous legislation for different types of schools at this level had certain regulations about bodies for collaboration on school affairs. A "gymnasium" should have a teachers' council and a pupils' council.

Teachers teaching in the same class could also form a class teachers' council. Each gymnasium should have a steering board, appointed by the county school board. Rules for vocational schools were somewhat different. Each school should have a teachers' council and a steering board, but the regulations said nothing about pupils' councils. Supplementary regulations could be decided locally, but would have to be endorsed by the Ministry. In practice, pupils often meet in various councils and boards.

In the preparatory work preceding the new legislation, much thought has been given to the internal structure of schools at this level. The Royal Commission on Further Education underlined that a school preparing individuals for active participation in the life of society must itself be organised according to democratic principles. Pupils must be brought into the general decision-making process within the school, and decisions made higher up in the hierarchy today must be left to those primarily concerned, i. e. teachers and pupils. The above mentioned Commission for Collaboration in Schools supported this general view, in stating that "increased participation for pupils should also imply their involvement in discussions and decisions about content, working methods and the rate of progress".

Proposals from these commissions form the basis for the new legislation on this point. Below, this part of the new legislation is cited, together with some of the Government's comments on each paragraph.

Para. 27 - School Councils

Each school shall have a school's council consisting of seven members, two appointed by the county school board, two by the teachers' council, one by the council for other personnel and two by the pupils' council. The representatives of the pupils' council are appointed for one year, the rest for two years at a time. The school's council elects its own chairman for one year at a time. The principal takes part in the meetings of the school's council, but has no vote except as an appointed representative from the teachers' council.
The County School Board may approve exceptions to these regulations.
The Ministry may give further regulations about the functions of the school's council.

The Royal Commission on Further Education suggested rather wide functions for the school's council, such as:
a) deciding what optional subjects should be offered by the school, and the organisation in classes and groups;
b) deciding on rules of order, etc. , and on individual disciplinary cases;
c) deciding questions relating to holidays and free days within given general framework;

d) preparing reports and advice on matters for decisions by higher bodies, e. g. the general directions of study to be offered by the school, investments, appointments, etc.

Para. 28 - The Principal

The principal is the pedagogical and administrative leader of the school. He shall ensure that existing regulations are followed. The school's council has significant steering functions at the individual school. The principal, however, is the responsible daily leader of the school. His pedagogical leadership should be especially emphasized.

Para. 29 - Teachers' Councils

Each school shall have a teachers' council consisting of the principal and all teachers who reach half-time or more. The teachers' council elects its own chairman for two years. The Ministry may establish further regulations for the arrangement of teachers' councils.
The teachers' council is primarily a professional pedagogical body and a forum for daily discussions among the teaching personnel. Teachers reaching less than half-time may be invited to take part in the deliberations of the teachers' council. The teachers' council will primarily make suggestions and give advice to the school's council.

Para. 30 - Council for Other Employees

Each school may have a council for employees who are not members of the teachers' council, and who are employed for at least one year.
The council elects its own chairman for two years.
The Ministry may establish further regulations for the council for other employees.

Para. 31 - Pupils' Council and Plenary Meeting

Each school shall have a pupils' council consisting of at least one member for each 20 pupils. The pupils' council elects its own chairman and vice-chairman.
Plenary meetings may be held when the pupils' council or 1/5 of the pupils so wish. The pupils' council is elected by ballot.
The pupils' council shall take care of functions related to the pupils' working conditions and welfare interests.
The Ministry may establish further regulations on the functions of pupils' councils.
In the same way as other groups in the school society, the pupils should have their own body for internal discussions on matters of common interest, as a basis for taking up issues with higher authorities.

Among those who have commented upon the formulations in this paragraph, many have wanted the number of representatives in the pupils' councils to be related to the number of classes in the school. The Ministry does not share this view, because among other things in many schools the class may not form as important a sub-unit within the school as previously.
It should be pointed out that many of those expressing views on this paragraph have warned against the institution of a plenary meeting for all pupils.

According to the new legislation, the Ministry may put forward regulations for the various councils, but the implicit understanding is that such rules should be few and relatively unspecified. The schools are supposed mainly to develop their own rules as they find appropriate. In this respect, upper secondary schools are placed in a somewhat freer position than schools for compulsory education.

An important lesson learnt from the practical experiments with new organisational structures in the schools is that of the need to strengthen internal bodies for collaboration. One of the teachers - called a contact teacher - with reduced teaching obligations will, therefore, assist the pupils' council in its work. Experimental schools have increasingly kept one hour free in the middle of the school day for meetings and other work relating to the various bodies for collaboration.

Critical Comments

In the section on compulsory education, several critical views on the new bodies for collaboration were cited. The same critical points may relate to upper secondary education as well. Schools at this level have more autonomy than schools within compulsory education. Parents play less of a role in decision-making, and there is more emphasis on the independent judgement of pupils. It is less commonly felt that the school should shelter pupils against ideological propaganda and pressures. All this means that the internal power structure of the schools is very important, and the teachers and the pupils are the main elements in this power structure. The possibilities for genuinely changing the power balance - and this is clearly one of the intentions underlying the new legislation - emerge as a key question in the discussion.

The assumed integration of general and vocational training within a joint system of further education raises a number of problems, and is also the subject of a heated political debate. The existing "gymnasium" has had a near monopoly on the preparation for higher education. Its teachers normally have post-graduate degrees from the universities. They have more limited teaching obligations and often higher salaries than teachers in vocational schools. The latter are practically oriented and tend to provide education of shorter duration. Their teachers often lack university training. This lack of balance among the various types

of schools, in terms of prestige, formal qualifications, salaries, working conditions, etc., may cause conflicts within an integrated system, and we may also risk a certain dominance of elements belonging to the traditional gymnasium, with its theoretical orientation. Two "educational cultures" may confront each other within the new school system, and the way in which they will accommodate to each other will be decisive for the character of the new types of integrated schools. Several critics are worried on this point, though on rather different grounds, ranging from fears that the traditional gymnasium will lose its identity, to fears that the same will happen to vocational training dominated by standards set by the old gymnasium traditions.

Collaboration in educational situations

The new legislation on further education underlines the need for collaboration in concrete teaching situations and in the planning of such situations. Closer co-operation among teachers, teachers and pupils and among pupils is seen as an important aim. In this context, the principle of "continuous reform" is important. The individual school will have possibilities for gradual self-development, through the commitment of pupils and teachers. Such dynamics require a flexible organisational structure and fairly wide discretion. They also require continuous analysis of ends and means in education, and of content and methods, as underlined in the Further Education Act. Such analysis must take place both centrally and within the individual school. Central school authorities must use policy measures in order to facilitate such a continuous reform process.

More autonomy for individual school units is necessary if the collaboration between pupils and teachers is to have real substance. What should be decided by the individual school, and what decisions will have to be taken by other bodies, become essential questions. The curriculum plans prepared by the National Council for Innovation in Education will largely determine such factors for individual schools. According to a recent decision by Parliament, the Ministry will also have to present its proposed solutions to these problems to Parliament in the form of a white paper. This may be seen as an illustration of the extent to which such issues as curriculum plans, evaluation methods and forms of differentiation in teaching have come to be seen as issues of major political significance.

Curriculum Plans

Curriculum plans can be formulated in many ways. They may provide very detailed and binding instructions on texts to be read, knowledge requirements, methods of teaching and forms of evaluation. Such plans leave little leeway for independent decisions by the school, except possibly in terms of passive sabotage. However, curriculum plans may also be formulated in such a way as to provide more general guidance for those teaching and taught. Such a plan forms a basis for the work, but does not set specific requirements for implementation.

The new plans prepared for both compulsory and further education are a combination of indicative and compulsory elements. There are some minimum requirements in terms of time devoted to various subjects, and certain minimum requirements in terms of subject material to be covered. As long as final exams are maintained, they also serve as directing factors. The indicative parts of the plans point to objectives and intentions, discuss problems and indicate possibilities, but do not prescribe specific solutions. In principle, the curriculum plans prepared should permit rather wide discretion for the individual school units, and also for individual teachers and classes. Restricting factors in this respect are not necessarily to be found in the formulation of curriculum plans. Such plans are not extensively read and discussed within the schools, and the relationship between ends and means as set out by the plans and actual school practices is somewhat dubious. There is always the possibility that traditional forms of teaching will persist in spite of reformulations in curriculum plans. At least it seems necessary to discuss other conditions which must also be fulfilled in order to facilitate the implementation of ideas reflected in the new curriculum plans.

Subject and Task Structure

Traditionally a school day is divided among various subjects. The subjects emerge as independent units, taught independently of the teaching in other subjects. The political debate on educational issues has also touched upon the question of the isolation of individual subjects. Integration of subjects, orientation towards general interdisciplinary problems and towards general values to be served have been emphasized as alternatives to current practices. The new curriculum plans indicate that, in principle, such views have found strong support. It is stressed, however, that one should not move too fast in this field, as subject integration is a fairly recent phenomenon, only tried out pedagogically in experimental situations.

The main reasons for subject integration given in the curriculum plans are as follows:

- Artificial border lines between subjects may often prevent the teaching from corresponding to the reality experienced by pupils outside school. Isolated elements of knowledge within the framework of the one discipline are often more difficult to comprehend than knowledge seen in a meaningful context.
- A broader context increases the feeling of relevance among pupils and thus also their interest in the issues.
- Highlighting issues from different disciplinary angles increases the pupils' awareness of the variety of views which can be justified on many issues.

One may add that emphasis on value orientation and subject integration also changes the authority position of teachers, as they cannot to the same extent act as professional specialists on all aspects of the issues concerned.

Task structures concern the way in which problems are formulated and solved. One may distinguish between closed and open structures. Pupils may be invited to undertake tasks, the solution of which is already known to the teacher, or they may be invited to approach tasks to which no a priori solution is given. The new curriculum plans see it as objective to develop a task structure in which the pupils take an active part in the definition of problems and their solution, instead of being mainly passive recipients of "knowledge".

Working Methods

The question of working methods is closely related to that of subject and task structure. Traditional forms of teaching imply little co-operation among teachers, and rarely legitimize such co-operation among the pupils. Communication between teachers and pupils is rather asymmetric. The new curriculum plans particularly underline the need to get away from teacher-centred methods, and to increase active collaboration on tasks. The teachers must have more time and opportunity for planning together and for discussions with the pupils. The pupils must develop meaningful tasks suitable for collaboration. Such working methods are complex and time-consuming. The so-called "reform gymnasia" have experimented widely with more group work and independent individual work. The possibilities seem to vary considerably from subject to subject, but experience is still limited.

Time Allocation

The amount of time of which the school may freely dispose is an important element in the autonomy of individual schools. Until now, a compulsory plan for subjects to be covered has left few possibilities for choice to pupils following one direction of study, and also little spare time for institutions for non-subject-based activities.

The new curriculum plans introduce wider options in terms of subjects. The general study direction, lasting three years, has less than half the time tied to compulsory subjects. The shorter courses of one or two years' duration have somewhat more limited options. In further education, fewer resources are devoted to social measures as compared to compulsory education. However, guidance services, already developed within the existing system, will be further strengthened.

The organisation of the school day is in principle up to the individual school unit. Even the traditional division into lessons of a given length may be abandoned, though the present links to the salary system may hamper such a development. Teachers have their tasks defined in terms of teaching obligations, presumably corresponding to a normal working week. The question has been raised as to whether the working conditions of teachers should be expressed in terms of a normal work week, leaving the exact distribution between teaching and other functions, and the distribution of such tasks among individual teachers to the schools.

Correspondingly, questions have been raised about the freedom of pupils to allocate their own time among classroom teaching, independent reading and other functions. Wide options in this respect have been practised experimentally in a number of schools. The more far-reaching ideas about time allocation for teachers and pupils have not been adopted by the curriculum plans, which take but a few cautious steps in such directions. Yet, important political questions for the future are connected to regulations governing allocation within the school system. One set of such questions relates to the connection between time allocation and teaching quality. Reduced time allocation is often assumed automatically to lower the level of quality. On the other hand, how the time is used may be more decisive in terms of learning experience. "Quality" is also a function of what the teaching means to the students - their concepts of relevance may be more essential to questions of quality than "objective" measures of acquired knowledge.

Evaluation

The new legislation for further education does not take a final stand on questions relating to evaluation, as the system of evaluation is under examination by a special Royal Commission. Preliminary indications point towards the maintenance of public exams at the end of further education, but with a reduction in their scope. Testing in three unspecified subjects after three years has been suggested. The distinction between passing and failing should be abandoned. No marks should be given in optional subjects unless the students ask for it. Evaluation is still regarded as an important part of the educational process. Yet, it should mainly serve as guidance to pupils and teachers, and marks may not be its best expression. The work programme of the present Government party states the gradual abolition of exams in further education as an objective. No concrete proposals to this effect have as yet been put forward. It should be mentioned that the folk high schools have always operated without exams, and without any external curriculum plan. Each of the schools, which number about one hundred, develops its own curriculum.

What Can Be Done?

In the preceding text references have been made to the principles of the new curriculum plans accompanying the new legislation for further education. There is no doubt, however, that the distance between those principles and the reality of today's schools is often considerable. The road towards implementation of such principles may be both long and costly. It is quite clear that the new legislation implies significant changes in the objectives of further education. Social functions come more into the picture and the schools are made more responsible for the total development of individuals. There is also more emphasis upon the school as a social organisation in which

a desirable social milieu based on collaboration becomes an aim in itself. Pure transfer of knowledge has lost some of its importance, and the traditional position of the "subjects" is questioned.

It is probably correct to say that the traditional gymnasium has been dominated by a subject-based transfer of knowledge. The teachers' training and their qualifications are tied to the individual subjects, and measures of "quality" are defined in such terms. Vocational training has been more practically oriented, with a somewhat different definition of tasks, but even there a kind of subject structure has often developed. Individual elements of the curriculum are often treated in isolation, with little reference to the wider context in which they operate. Discussions about reforms have concentrated on economic conditions, more teaching aids, smaller classes, reduced burden of teaching and more retraining for the teachers, etc. In all likelihood, this is too narrow a basis for defining conditions for success of the reforms. Some additional factors are indicated below.

Decentralization of decision-making is one of many conditions. It means that individual schools, teachers and pupils will have more choices than previously and will have to define explicitly the premises for such choices, and defend them against others concerned.

Changes in the system of evaluation and certification will be essential. Excessive uniformity created by such systems may conflict with other important objectives. Specific formal requirements for entry into higher education may squeeze out more meaningful educational activities. On these points, modifications of existing practices are being prepared.

The subject structure in further education corresponds roughly to discipline structures in higher education. Inter-disciplinary approaches to studies at the latter level may be a necessary condition for appropriate training of teachers in further education, and such inter-disciplinary approaches are emerging within the universities, and even more frequently within the regional colleges. Inter-disciplinary aspects are particularly frequent in shorter retraining courses.

A system of pedagogical guidance is being developed for compulsory and further education, possibly based on joint institutions. It will be located both locally, regionally and centrally, with the aim emphasis upon individual schools in further education. The pedagogical guidance centres will have an important role to play in disseminating the results of practical experiments, and initiating further experimentation.

The active engagement of pupils, teachers and parents in the problems of educational development is essential to the whole process of change. There can be no doubt that the political implications of changes in the school system are much more clearly realized today than they were a few years ago. There is widespread involvement of the political parties and other ideological organisations, organised interest groups and individuals concerned in often rather lively debates on these issues. Any genuine change in the school at the operating level

will need substantial support by local groups of this kind, including their willingness to fight for what they regard as improvements.

Some Forward-Looking Experiments

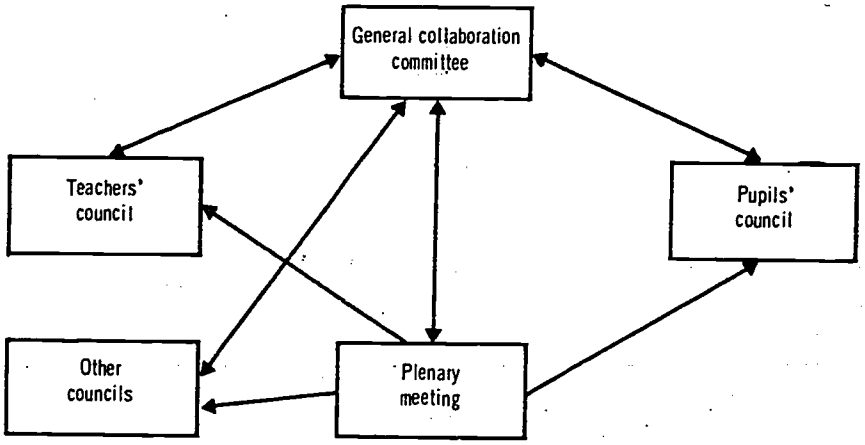
Two main models of the theoretical part of the future further education system, roughly corresponding to the present gymnasia, have been tried out in more than a dozen schools, called "reform gymnasia". The main model has the following features. All pupils have a common core of general subjects. In addition, pupils may work more thoroughly with subjects belonging to a general direction of study, such as natural science, social science or arts. A third component is a number of optional subjects chosen freely among those the school can offer. New working methods and new forms of collaboration and active engagement of pupils have been important elements of the experiments. Among reported experiences are:

- Collaboration among teachers of the same subjects has been intensive and fruitful, covering, for example, planning, development of task structures and material, etc.
- Inter-disciplinary collaboration has proved more difficult to achieve, though there has been more of this than in the usual gymnasia.
- Pupils have taken part in the preparation of annual plans for teaching and in more short-term task formulation. In some schools the pupils have been formally represented in the subject planning groups.
- Free time at the disposal of pupils has been effectively used for independent work and for guidance. Spare time for meetings in various councils has been intensively used.
- Teaching directed by teachers still occupies most of the time, but group work has increased substantially, especially in optional subjects. Independent work by individual pupils has also increased significantly.

A few schools have experimented with more far-reaching reforms, including the integration of general and vocational further education in one school unit. The following is abstracted from a report on such experiments at Björkelangen school centre:

The model for school administration used at Björkelangen is the result of a developmental process spread over some years. The radical change appeared when it was decided that everyone connected with the school should participate in decisions at all levels. The following chart illustrates the decision-making model.

The report traces the decision-making process relating to a number of concrete cases from the initial raising of the matter to its final settlement. Most matters have been raised by pupils (single pupils, groups, or formal pupil organisation), while the principal is the second biggest initiator of cases. Cases raised by pupils show the



greatest dispersion in terms of content, with a certain concentration on extra-curricular activities. The process as a whole shows real decentralization in terms of who influences the decisions made. Teachers were initially more favourably disposed towards the experiment than the pupils. Pupils who were engaged in long general study were most favourable towards the experiment. Pupils in combined general/vocational courses were more reluctant and pupils in vocational training rather disinterested. Teachers tended to take an instrumental view of the projects; it should promote training in democracy, learning, etc.; while pupils' views were more of the essence, seeing democracy and collaboration as objectives per se. After three years of experimentation teachers and pupils in general study are still most favourably disposed to the principles underlying the project, but the pupils in general education are more critical than other pupils towards its practical implementation. As a whole, the vast majority of both students and teachers are in favour of maintaining the new forms of decision-making processes in the school.

More emphasis on collaboration in the teaching process itself is shown in experiments undertaken in a number of schools in Sandness in South-western Norway. These experiments are assisted by researchers from the Work Research Institute in Oslo, and the following is an extract from a report by that institute:

> We concentrated on the structuring of tasks, especially those tasks which could be defined as open and which were clearly oriented to practical problems in work life. Common to such problems were that they concerned problems directly related to industry. Thus, in a sense, pupils work on contract. Their tasks vary considerably in terms of complexity and initial specification. They range from open research questions to details of routine. Tasks formulated by industry usually have components covering such a wide area.

The starting point is usually a more general complex of problems where solutions are unknown, as are to a great extent the approaches to solving the problems. In order to find solutions, some theoretical insight and technical skill are needed. In a normal educational situation, one would tend to break down such a problem complex into sub-problems or specific techniques and skills, and then structure teaching programmes for each type of skill and each technique. In the project concerned, the move is in the opposite direction. The pupils handle the whole task, and carry it through from the initial analysis to final testing and evaluation. The same group of pupils or individual pupils may be responsible for the task from the beginning to the end. As shown within the project, tasks can be formulated so as to correspond to different levels of competence represented by individual pupils or groups of pupils. The pupils mainly organise their own work, they take breaks when they feel the need for it and have no standardized "hours". They rarely operate on the basis of instructions from the teacher. Pupils find their own solutions to the problems, using the resources which they feel the task requires, including the teachers' competence.

We thus find that four groups are in frequent interplay in this kind of educational situation, the school administration, the teachers involved, the pupils and local industry.

The role of the school administration has been to regulate the general framework for the experiment. The administration establishes the necessary contacts with local and central school authorities and makes sure that the educational activities within the school satisfy general requirements for vocational training in this field. This is necessary in order to maintain financial support. Furthermore, the school administration ensures external appraisal of the real competence achieved by the pupils, beyond the minimum requirements set by testing practices for all schools.

The main function of teachers is to prepare the kind of educational situations described above. They need to know all ongoing projects and tasks, and the equipment and material necessary for the pupils to handle them. The teacher is no formal authority or leader in the usual sense. He functions as a resource person to be used by the pupils, mainly upon their initiative. In the present school situation, however, the teacher will have certain control functions in addition to his role in preparing the external conditions for task solutions and serving as a resource himself.

Work life in the community also serves as a resource in relation to this kind of education. The pupils are in a situation where they learn to master practical work situations. Most enterprises have problems and tasks, parts of which they find difficult to solve with their own resources. Pupils struggling with such problems realize that they are facing real questions, and that their solutions will have to be tested in practice.

The pupils themselves formulate the problems and share the responsibility for their solution. This responsibility is a real one, as no a priori answers exist. The pupils have only limited influence on the choice of problems to be tackled since they are determined by what enterprises, and also the teachers, feel to be important. But there are some examples where pupils have played an essential role even in identifying problems. Pupils have, for instance, established contacts with external enterprises or research laboratories on their own, and thus brought problems into the school for joint efforts. The effect of this kind of work situation on the pupils seems profound, especially in terms of their training to co-operate in solving meaningful tasks. This teamwork and the human interactions implied by it are very highly rated by the pupils themselves.

The experiments sketched above may be seen as pointers towards the future of further education in Norway. They do not necessarily represent prototypes of future educational institutions. Yet, they illustrate fairly convincingly that many of the ideals expressed in the new legislation and curriculum plan can operate in practice, and they constitute early steps in a long learning process concerning the conditions under which general policy aims in this field may gradually be turned into reality.

Higher Education

In this context, the term "higher education" means the same as "post-secondary education", completed general secondary education ("Examen artium") or the equivalent being the typical entry requirement. Historically, a distinction has been made between university-type institutions and institutions for the training of para-professional personnel. The former would traditionally devote a fairly high percentage of their resources to research, while the latter would have practically no such functions. Such distinctions have become increasingly blurred, and the regional colleges especially deviate from the traditional pattern. Their courses are relatively short, as in other non-university institutions, and the research element is limited, though developing. The content and the organisation of teaching, however, are mainly left to the institutions. The teachers have no individual teaching obligations, and the individual institution has in certain respects even more autonomy than the universities.

External Governance

The governance of institutions for higher education is shared between political bodies and the institutions themselves, usually in the sense that the former make essential decisions relating to resources allocation and organisational structures, while the latter have a high degree of autonomy in professional matters. In the application

of such principles, however, the Government tends in practice to leave a rather wide discretion to the universities, and less to the more traditional non-university institutions.

Budgetary decisions are essential instruments of governance for the central government. Such decisions determine the general allocation to the higher education sector, and also largely the allocation of resources among individual institutions. Major investment decisions are made by the central government, though usually according to the internal priority lists of individual institutions. The Government budget for 1974, as approved by Parliament, shows, for example a preference for the expansion of the University of Tromsö and the regional colleges, while the expansion of the University of Oslo was given relatively low priority. Such budget decisions moreover reflect the Government's general position on higher education, and its aims relating to the dispersion of higher education and the promotion of development in Northern Norway.

Appropriations for individual institutions are allocated as among main purposes, such as salaries, equipment, maintenance, etc. New positions are specified according to category, the internal distribution of such positions being decided by the institutions themselves. Exceptions are positions of full or associate professor, which are earmarked for specific disciplines. The institutions usually have well-developed administrative bodies, preparing their own budget proposals which form the basis for the budgeting by political authorities. The internal distribution of resources among faculties, institutes and subjects is mainly the responsibility of internal bodies of institutional governance. The spending of resources for main purposes other than those specified in the budget does, however, require endorsement by political authorities.

Legal regulations by central authorities are used far less in higher education than in other parts of the educational system. Regulations governing institutional activities are to a great extent left to the institutions themselves. Types of decisions still subject to some central legal regulation are the system of institutional governance, the main features of institutional organisation, entry qualifications and often the general arrangements for graduation. Forms and realities may not always coincide closely in such contexts. The engagement of professors may be mentioned as an example: Formally a professor is engaged by the King in Council on the basis of suggestions from the institution concerned. In practice, political decisions follow the suggestions by the institutions so regularly that any deviation would be seen today by most people as a misuse of power. The institutions thus have a decisive de facto influence on their own recruitment policies, and also on their own professional development.

In questions relating to the internal structure of governance, the views of the institutions themselves are regularly adopted by political authorities. Strong internal conflicts within the institutions may,

however, be brought to political bodies for decision, which leaves a certain possibility for influence by the latter. An internal institutional conflict must, however, be extremely serious for central authorities to intervene. The regular practice is to leave it to the institutions to find their own solutions to their internal problems.

The universities have full internal control of their forms of teaching, their curriculum, testing procedures and professional level. Inter-disciplinary problems and decisions relating to new subjects are also mainly internal to the institutions. Scientific personnel are not subject to any external control of their research programmes, and even when they turn to research councils for additional financial support, the councils mainly consist of their own colleagues. A conflict area between the institutions and public authorities is the duration of studies in the universities. Public authorities are reluctant to impose specific regulations upon the universities, yet they exert a definite influence through general budgetary allocations, and through the fact that institutions cannot regulate entry without acceptance by Parliament.

Professional organisations, the hierarchy of discipline-based authority and internal power structures within the institutions are essential factors in the development of higher education. Formal contacts between the institutions and external bodies are rare. External influence in professional questions, from public bodies, the economy, organisations or public opinion, is normally rather indirect, through general discussions on the societal functions of post-secondary institutions. Such a discussion provides important feed-back for the institutions and may influence their choice of research projects and educational programmes. Thus, indirectly, criteria set by others may have an impact on institutional policies.

Non-university institutions at the post-secondary level have not generally achieved the same level of institutional autonomy. Their budgets are externally determined in more detail, and legal regulations leave less discretion to individual institutions. Even though they frequently have a considerable range of choice in professional matters, their decisions will often have to be endorsed by central bodies. Their final exams are often centrally determined, for instance in the case of the teacher colleges. Entry requirements are usually determined centrally, as is partly the case with the universities. The formal organisation of decision-making is also different in the case of non-university institutions. Their leader, steering bodies and central advisory bodies are usually appointed by the central government. There is, for example, a central advisory board to the Ministry on teacher training, and a similar advisory board on the training of social workers. Such councils have great influence in professional matters, and co-ordinate institutional activities in many respects.

The Future System of Governance for the Regional Colleges

The report to Parliament on post-secondary education puts strong emphasis upon the development of post-secondary education in the various regions, and on regional involvement in the governance of post-secondary institutions. The report suggests the establishment of one central body for post-secondary education outside the universities in each of 16-17 regions, corresponding roughly to the counties. The report proposes that the members of such regional bodies shall be appointed by the central government, but the counties are supposed to nominate the members. Students and teachers are represented on such bodies, but representatives of the region are supposed to be in the majority. Among the functions of such regional bodies may be mentioned:

- To be responsible for post-secondary education in the region within established budgetary limitations and in accordance with general regulations and decisions;
- to prepare budgets for post-secondary education within the region, allocating the means among the various centres and studies;
- to examine the need for post-secondary education within the region and to propose the allocation of training facilities among studies;
- to plan expansion in order to meet such needs;
- to co-ordinate the activities of different units within post-secondary education, and among such units and other educational institutions;
- to examine the needs for adult education at this level within the region and to co-ordinate efforts to meet such needs.

Professional matters within the individual educational centre or branch of study will be the responsibility of internal bodies of governance, composed of the representatives of teachers and students, as the college finds appropriate.

Governance through Qualification Requirement

Post-secondary institutions constitute the top level in an educational hierarchy, within which entry to one level is determined by achievement at the preceding level. Control of criteria for transfer from one level to another is an essential means of governance. Such control is not only a matter of institutional autonomy, it is also a means by which certain types of institutions exert influence over other institutions. For this and other reasons, public control over general regulations of this kind is found essential to the general functioning of the educational system. It may, for instance, be necessary to prevent individual institutions from developing elite characteristics through exceptionally high entry requirements. Such institutions may easily become dominant, setting the standards for a wide set of institutions

which again may be ranked formally or informally according to presumed quality. For most of the institutions, this would make professional autonomy a mere fiction.

Entry requirements become particularly important when institutional training capacity falls far short of student demand. In studies where "numerus clausus" is applied, applicants have been ranked in terms of qualifications, e. g. in medicine, where top performance at upper secondary graduation was needed. This system of selection has been somewhat modified through the introduction of a quota system. Only a small proportion of applicants to medical studies at the University of Oslo gain access on the basis of marks at upper secondary graduation alone. Another fraction of applicants is admitted on the basis of a combination of graduation marks and other formal educational achievements, a third fraction is admitted on other educational achievements only, while a fourth group of applicants is admitted on the basis of special, often informal, qualification criteria. Similar quota systems are also applied by other institutions, such as the regional colleges where a certain percentage of applicants is admitted without upper secondary graduation. Teacher colleges apply special quotas for men and women, in order to prevent female dominance in the teaching profession. Similar quota systems, based on sex, social background or more or less formal achievement criteria are under consideration for other studies also. A system of lottery among formally qualified applicants has been suggested for certain studies applying "numerus clausus", but such proposals have not yet been adopted by post-secondary institutions.

Previously, graduation from upper secondary was a condition for entry to universities and other institutions at the same level. Selection for higher education was thus pushed down to the level of entry to upper secondary education, and to some extent even to the eighth grade in compulsory school, where relevant choices of subjects were made. A wrong choice at the age of 14 would not block any possibility for access to higher education, but the road towards such education would then become long and complicated. This system of selection for higher education has long been under attack, and major modifications are in progress. The system of organisational differentiation in compulsory schools is on its way out. Upper secondary education will be expanded to receive all applicants from compulsory schools, and general and vocational training at this level will gradually merge. Elements of vocational training and practical work experience will serve as part of the qualification basis for entry to higher education.

In its programme of work for the period 1974-77, the Government has stated that "admission to post-secondary education shall be widened and based upon general background knowledge and experience, rather than upon formal graduation from upper secondary education. Individuals with professional experience should be offered access irrespective of their formal training." The new report to Parliament on

post-secondary education goes somewhat more specifically into those issues.

Governance through qualification requirements constitutes a particular problem for such new institutions as the regional colleges. Training provided at regional colleges may be part of a longer study undertaken primarily at a university. This means that the universities may influence quite strongly the extent and the content of a number of courses offered at the regional colleges, possibly also qualification requirements for teachers and the forms of evaluation. This may limit the scope for experimentation at the regional colleges, and the general policy of the Ministry tends to emphasize the independent "profile" of regional college courses. Eventually, the Central Board of the regional colleges, an advisory body to the Ministry, may assume a more active role in defining criteria for the inclusion of college courses in general university studies.

Internal Governance

Extensive institutional autonomy means that the internal governance becomes vital. Forms of institutional democracy have been in the focus of public discussions in recent years, especially as a consequence of student demand for more influence. Such demands have spread from the universities to other educational institutions. The usual pattern of governance has been, and still is, participation in representative bodies. Within a university, such bodies exist at the level of institutes, faculties, and the university as a whole. Scientific personnel and students elect representatives according to specific rules. The pressure in recent years has been towards less dominance by the professional top layer, the professors, and more representation for other personnel and particularly the students.

In its report to Parliament on post-secondary education, the Ministry of Education underlines that the structure of governance of post-secondary institutions must be seen in the context of their general role in society. The importance of such institutions for general societal development brings to the forefront the question of influence upon such institutions of general democratic bodies within society at large. The report to Parliament argues as follows:

> Within some institutions for higher education, the traditional collegial form of academic governance has been taken up for revision, since it has been recognized that higher education institutions are work places for many groups of individuals, who may all have a legitimate need to participate in decisions about their own work. The development of an internal "industrial democracy" has been an ongoing process within the universities since the principle of student participation was established in 1905. Most internal bodies now have representatives from lower scientific personnel and the students, and to some extent also representation is being discussed within the universities, leading to new rules for the composition of the various decision-making bodies.

A recent change in the legislation for the University of Oslo implies the adoption of certain new rules of this kind, such as:

- increased representation in decision-making bodies for students and non-scientific personnel;
- equal voting rights on all matters for all members of governing bodies at institute, faculty or university level;
- legal confirmation of institutes as organisational units;
- legal confirmation of the position of the university director (non-voting member of the kollegium);
- the eligibility of associate professors as rectors.

The question of representation from external institutions on governing bodies of post-secondary institutions is still the subject of debate. Economic institutions as well as central and regional political bodies have been mentioned as entitled to formal representation in the governance of higher education institutions. The Ministry of Education has announced that this question will be considered when the present separate legislation for each university is merged into one joint law for the universities.

The Ministry has also announced that it considers the possibility of establishing a general advisory body for higher education, composed of representatives from the educational sector and society at large. The existing conference of university rectors has advocated the establishment of such an advisory body for the universities, as well as national bodies for each type of university faculty and each major subject area.

All power is not channelled through such formal structures of governance. The somewhat less formalized professional hierarchy is certainly as essential in this context as the formal organisational structure. For the students, an essential part of their claims has been to obtain more influence on professional questions relating to the design of studies, curriculum, teaching methods, forms of examination and also research programmes. Students have claimed that such questions should be the subject for general debate and decisions in representative bodies. At the extreme, certain political groups have even claimed that research projects should be subordinated to specific political purposes.

The general results of actions at this institutional level have not been systematically collected. There is evidence, however, that students have gained increased influence in professional matters. Particularly important are the students' own efforts to prepare alternative proposals and their pressure for the acceptance of such proposals. The report to Parliament on higher education offers the following comments on this issue:

"The Ministry regards it as important that the highest governing bodies within the universities have the authority and independence in relation to bodies at lower levels which is necessary for the

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allocation of resources and general governance required by a comprehensive view of the institution as a whole. The central body within an institution should thus be widely representative of all groups who have their daily work within the institution. According to their general functions, the work of the universities at the institute level requires an interplay between teachers and students and professional contacts with society at large. This is the level at which new professional orientations emerge. Decisions taken by central governing bodies, such as the kollegium and the faculties, should not regulate in detail professional activities at the institute level, in order not to inhibit professional innovation and creativity. A strengthening of decision-making bodies at the central level should lighten and not increase administrative tasks at the institute level.

a) Composition of the "University Thing". An initial agreement within the university that 14 out of 43 members should be students broke up, the alternative of 10 student representatives being advocated by one fraction. The Ministry eventually fixed the number of student representatives at 14.

b) Election Procedures

One fraction advocated the election of group representatives at meetings for all members of each group, while another fraction advocated written and secret ballots. This is a typical conflict in most educational institutions, and both idealistic and tactical considerations may be assumed to influence the positions of various groups. Some feel that they can dominate meetings for all, while others feel better served by secret ballots. The Ministry eventually established the use of secret ballots.

c) Withdrawal of Representatives

One fraction wanted the right to withdraw representatives for a given group during their period of service, provided that 2/3 of the group (present at a meeting for all) so wished. The other fraction would not accept such a right to withdrawal. Such rights were in the end not accepted by the Ministry.

d) "Thing", Executive Group and Budget Committee

One fraction wanted a "strong" general assembly and an executive group with limited responsibilities. A budget committee should prepare matters related to budget and future planning for the "Thing". The other fraction wanted a strong executive group preparing most of the matters dealt with by the "Thing". Efficiency in relation to the enormous tasks facing the institution in its building-up period was the main argument of the latter fraction. The Ministry has not taken any decision on this point. Central bodies should be a forum for general debate on policy issues related to the situation of the universities, yet this discussion would lose

its momentum if the lower levels of the organisation were not continuously engaged in important questions of principle.

As indicated above, non-university institutions at the post-secondary level have a less developed internal system of representation. The students usually have their own bodies, and may also be represented in the steering body of individual institutions. The trend is towards more student representation in such bodies.

Illustrative Examples

As the examples in this chapter show, the situation is somewhat fluid as to the future structures of decision-making for institutions of higher education. Maybe the future is best illustrated by a few concrete examples, and we have chosen the University of Tromsö and the current practices of the regional colleges in their experimental period for somewhat more detailed descriptions.

The University of Tromsö has from the start seen wide participation in decision-making as part of its institutional philosophy. This relates both to the more formal structure of governance and to the somewhat more informal arrangements for teaching. Such practices were already envisaged in the preparatory stage for the new university and were endorsed in principle by the political authorities when the university was established.

Structurally, the university consists of institutes with from 10 to 40 teachers. The institutes have their own budgets, nominate individuals for scientific positions and develop their own programmes of research and teaching. The institutes have, in other words, considerable discretion in relation to the central bodies of the university. Faculties have not been established at the University of Tromsö; the central leadership of the university being entrusted to a "University Thing". The functions of this body have caused major conflicts within the university, and have hampered collaboration in the development of the university. The elements of conflict illustrate central points in the debate about university democracy and may deserve closer attention. Primarily, the issues were as follows:

e) External Representatives in Governing Bodies

One fraction was strongly against such representation, arguing for maximum autonomy of the institution, which was seen as consisting of teachers and students. Others strongly emphasized the need for representation from the region, pointing towards the service for the establishment of the university.

The regional colleges in their experimental period have tried out new forms of teaching and evaluation, and forms of governance according to various models. The main common features are indicated below. Each regional college has a steering board, reporting to the Ministry of Education. The board has 7 members, one nominated by the teachers,

one by the students, three by the county authorities and two chosen by the Ministry. The steering board will concern itself with the following issues:

- organisation of teaching;
- allocation of facilities and personnel;
- engagement of personnel;
- advising on matters raised by the Ministry;
- promoting the best possible supply of higher education in the region;
- planning the development of the regional college.

Internal matters are handled by a kind of assembly (the names vary), usually with equal representation of teachers and pupils. This body has the following main functions in the interim period:

- establishing general directions for teaching;
- establishing general directions for construction activities;
- preparing budget proposals;
- proposing new courses;
- carrying the responsibility for admission and graduation arrangements.

Each field of study ("linje") has a "linje-meeting" consisting of all teachers and students in that field. Its main function is general debate and information. It also elects an executive group. Teaching personnel within each subject may organise "subject sections", responsible for research and development activities.

As regards evaluation, the following principles have been established:

- teachers and students shall assess the extent to which the aims of studies have been achieved;
- this evaluation relates both to individual students and to teaching provided by the institution;
- the evaluation shall function as an advisory and controlling mechanism towards the student and towards the teaching, as well as serving as an informative function towards the external society;
- tests and tasks forming the basis for evaluation shall be modelled on typical cases related to professional and societal activities;
- examinations have increasingly taken the form of certificates for the successful conclusion of a task, and the simple passed/failed formula has replaced individual ranking.

Limitations to experimentation in this field do exist, as illustrated by the following quotation from the report to Parliament on post-secondary education:

> In spite of extensive experimentation, evaluation procedures at the regional colleges are still often rather traditional. This is because there is a need to establish a recognized competence for graduates. The external acceptance of such competence often means that

examination procedures must bear some resemblance to what obtains in the universities. In addition, the desirability of having courses at regional colleges accepted as elements of university degrees also has a role in this context.

Teaching personnel at the regional colleges have no fixed teaching obligations. The teaching is organised as mixture of lectures, seminars, "colloquia" and independent studies.

A Final Comment

In the "special analysis" of future developments of decision-making processes relating to the Norwegian educational system, four possible future directions have been outlined: One would point towards an externally governed educational system, directed according to specifications set by expert groups or other particular interest groups. A second direction would point towards a system run by experts within the system, primarily the teachers themselves and their professional organisations. A third direction would aim at the integration of individual schools into their local community, opening up the institutions to governance by predominant forces in the local environment. Finally, a fourth direction would point towards decisive influence by the pupils and students themselves, both on their own educational situation and on that of their educational institutions.

It appears hazardous to predict what directions the Norwegian educational system will actually take in such respects in the long run. Current policies indicate a certain shift towards more discretion for the individual school and a somewhat more active part to be played by the pupils and students. Whether, politically, this will be regarded as more than redressing a felt "imbalance", is still an open question. Even the recognition that some definite choices have to be made may still not have been fully accepted.

Traditional political attitudes in Norway could certainly point towards a simultaneous rejection of the harmony model of the school system, as well as the pure conflict model. Conflicting interests among various parties involved will be accepted as a fact to live with, and calling for political judgement. At the same time, in all likelihood there will be a search for common ground, upon which at least temporary agreements and compromises among the parties involved can be based.

Correspondingly, the present wave of enthusiasm for decentralization may eventually be seen to be more a redressing of an historical imbalance, than a basically new approach. Rather than substitute new aims for old, current educational policies tend to add new, more ambitious aims to one previously adopted.

The eventual outcome may, as indicated in the "special analysis" be determined primarily by the "voting with their feet" of those directly involved in the educational system, and primarily by the general

developments in the system of information supply in society, and the shift from information shortage to information affluence. Such a shift must, of necessity, profoundly influence the situation of school, and also the relationships among the different parties involved in educational activities. Present power structures within the education system may have to adapt to basically different circumstances.

These are speculations on underlying factors not clearly discernible in Norwegian educational policies as yet. Decisions and choices made on political grounds will certainly dominate the directions in the years ahead, and will decide the ability of the education system to adapt to new tasks and new circumstances.

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IV

EDUCATIONAL POLICIES FOR EQUALITY

Introduction

All through this century, the quest for greater equality in education has been a main theme in Norwegian educational policies. Yet, educational inequalities still exist among groups identified by a variety of characteristics: social background, geographical location, sex, age, religious or ethnic features, etc. The distribution of pupils at different levels in the educational system according to such characteristics may be the most significant criterion demonstrating educational equality or inequality.

In its simplest form, the right to education implies a claim for equal right to access for all groups in the population. A more demanding definition of equality objectives claims equal chances to obtain education in practice. A special version of this claim would be that everyone should have an equal share in resource for educational purposes.

An even more ambitious definition of equality is that all groups should have equal chances for educational performance. This would involve differential treatment, devoting more resources to groups with less favourable initial predispositions. One may even stretch the equality objective one step further, towards equality of opportunity for different groups in terms of desirable positions in society. Education is then seen as an essential instrument in a general policy for equality.

But equality objectives cannot only - and perhaps not even primarily - be seen as a matter of chances for a certain proportion of individuals from various groups to obtain a desirable future. Increasing such chances for low-status groups will certainly increase social mobility, but will not necessarily lead to greater equality in society at large. A far more important objective for the striving towards equality in Norwegian educational policies is the reduction of social differences among major groups in society.

This may imply, however, that educational achievement cannot only be measured in terms of one, given scale. The ability of various groups to influence standards set for educational performance becomes an essential criterion. Eventually, a variety of standards may come to co-exist, reflecting quite different values and group objectives, but no ranking in terms of status.

Ultimately, Norwegian policies aim at equality in this latter sense. At present, however, we are struggling with the provision of increased

opportunities for individuals, effective compensations for various forms of handicaps, modifications of traditional, socially biased curricula, etc. The following sections will examine in some detail how far we have got, and the efforts being made at present.

One set of measures against inequality cuts across distinctions according to social and geographical background, sex, etc.; the compensatory measures aiming at improving the educational situation of handicapped children. The main categories of such children are the mentally retarded, the blind, the deaf, the dumb and the mentally disturbed. Severe cases of such handicaps are educated in special institutions, and the resources provided for such education far exceed normal expenditures per pupil in other schools. Central Government subsidies to special schools run by the counties are thus based on the following standards:

Boarding Schools
Mentally retarded, primary, 38,800 N. Kr. per pupil;
mentally retarded, lower secondary, 41,880 N. Kr. per pupil;
mentally disturbed, primary, 49,600 N. Kr. per pupil;
mentally disturbed, lower secondary, 53,450 N. Kr. per pupil.

Non-boarding Schools
Mentally retarded, primary, 14,600 N. Kr. per pupil;
mentally retarded, lower secondary 16,860 N. Kr. per pupil;
deaf and blind, primary, 17,350 N. Kr. per pupil;
deaf and blind, lower secondary, 20,300 N. Kr. per pupil.

Average costs per pupil in ordinary schools are calculated at approximately 4,500 N. Kr. in primary and 6,500 N. Kr. in lower secondary education.

Recent changes in the legislation on compulsory education open up the way for increased integration into ordinary schools of pupils who up till now have been referred to special schools. Less institutional segregation may facilitate the choice of appropriate pedagogical measures and make the child's adaptation to normal environments easier. An ordinary school teaching a handicapped child will receive the same amount of resources as would have been devoted to the child in a special school.

In addition, ordinary schools already devote much attention to low achievers or other pupils with problems at school. As well as a system of psychological and medical diagnosis and more specialized treatment, about 15% of all ordinary teaching resources are devoted to remedial teaching in various forms, both at the primary and the lower secondary level. More recently, substantial resources have been earmarked for similar purposes in upper secondary education. The general trend is towards delegating responsibilities for the treatment of handicapped children from central Government to local authorities and individual schools. In order to prevent differences in local economic resources from causing unequal treatment, county school

authorities have a certain responsibility for the allocation of resources for such purposes. A special equality problem relates to the two versions of Norwegian and their use in the schools. About 17% of the pupils in compulsory education are taught in "nynorsk". Decisions about the written language of the individual school rest with the parents. All text books are published simultaneously in the two language versions.

Educational Equality in Social and Geographical Terms

There are clear differences in educational attainment among children from different geographical districts in Norway, as well as among children from different social groups. Social and geographical factors are, in fact, so tightly intertwined that they can hardly be separated. Thus, geographical differentials may to a great extent be "explained" by differences in the social structure of various geographical regions. In other words, children from specific social groups utilize educational opportunities roughly to the same extent wherever they live.

Available data on the social background of pupils and students are scarce in Norway, and even geographical data are often based on the localization of the school, instead of the localization of the pupil's home. In spite of this, it seems possible to conclude that for more than a decade, there has been a trend towards more equal educational standards in the various geographical regions. Most probably there has been a similar trend towards more educational equality in social terms. The possible contribution to such a development of various policy measures is discussed in the following pages.

The expansion of pre-school education has mainly been a question of local initiative, more wealthy municipalities frequently taking the lead. About 75% of pre-school educational institutions are located in towns, where the need is often assumed to be greatest. Places in pre-school education have been reserved for the "most needy", usually defined in terms of the situation of the parents. Families with a single parent or where both parents are at work have frequently been given preference. Whether the most needy children are, in fact, identified this way, may be debatable. In all likelihood, the development of pre-school education in Norway up till now has not contributed to more educational equality, possibly to less.

Developments in compulsory education in recent years are partly characterized by the expansion of compulsory education from the seventh to the ninth grade, and partly by substantial equalization in resource standards in education at this level. Thus, in 1962, urban schools had still 30% more teaching hours than rural schools in the three first grades, and 22% more teaching time in the grades four to seven. Today, the difference is insignificant.

Previously, lower secondary education was voluntary, and its general branch was mostly developed in towns and populous areas.

Many locations without any institution at the lower secondary level can now offer education to the end of the ninth grade. Even before the introduction of the nine years compulsory school, school attendance at the eighth and ninth grade was fairly extensive. For the country as a whole, the reform meant that 15% more of the 14-16 age group were brought into school. For the more outlying districts, such as the Western coast, Trøndelag and Northern Norway, the increase was between 25 and 30%, indicating a considerable equalization effect in terms of educational attainment.

The development towards greater equality in teaching standards in compulsory education, is perhaps primarily the result of the financial policy followed by central Government. Firstly, differences in local resources are not permitted to determine the resource standards of compulsory schools. Poor municipalities get up to 60-70% of their actual expenditure on compulsory education covered by central Government, while wealthy municipalities may get as little as 15% refunded. In addition, standard requirements are set in real terms, so that resources input per child in outlying areas is often much higher than in the main towns. Current expenditures per child in a one-class primary school is, for instance, 2.5 times higher than in an ordinary six-grade primary school. As such small schools are mostly located in poor municipalities, some municipalities may get as much as 5-6 times more funds from central Government per child than the wealthiest municipalities.

In addition, salary regulations also favour less prosperous districts. Extra allowances are given to teachers in one- and two-class schools, and certain other advantages are offered to teachers in outlying areas. Wealthy municipalities, on the other hand, are not permitted to offer their teachers salaries beyond the scale given in the country areas.

The exact effects of such measures are not easy to assess. The subsidy system has certainly contributed to the maintenance of many small schools in locations which would otherwise not have been able to keep their own schools. Yet, it has not been enough to prevent the closing down of quite a few of the smallest schools, possibly mostly as a consequence of population migration. In terms of school performance, there are some indications that achievement in primary education is slightly better in the outlying rural areas and in small schools than in larger urban schools. The general impression is that the highly differentiated resource standards have provided a system with fairly equivalent quality standards all over the country.

In upper secondary education the increasing spread of school institutions also benefits the sparsely populated areas. Thus, while the number of pupils in the "gymnasia" in the country as a whole increased by about 75% from 1962 to 1972, the corresponding increase was about 95% for Western Norway and 155% for Northern Norway. In the Oslo area, on the contrary, the increase was only slightly above 50%. However, variations in school attainment at this level are still

considerable. The first class of the gymnasium recruited in 1972 about 50% of the age group in the Oslo area, compared to about 22% of the age group in Northern Norway, in spite of the long-term trend towards more equal attainment. Significant differences are also found between the towns and the rural areas, especially in terms of attendance at the "gymnasia", while vocational schools recruit relatively better from rural areas.

Even at the upper secondary level, central Government subsidies to the countries for current school expenditures are selective, according to the economic strength of the counties. From 30% to 75% of the total current expenditures are refunded by central Government, according to cost standards per pupil which vary with the type of education offered.

Costs in upper secondary education show little variation according to school size, and present regulations prevent major variations among regions. The general assumption is that, by and large, upper secondary schools offer the same quality standards all over the country; possible deviations being accidental and temporary.

The geographical biases found in school attainment at the upper secondary level, are maintained in higher education. There is little indication, however, that such biases grow worse; secondary graduates tend to go on to post-secondary education to the same extent, irrespective of geographical background. The only geographical factor at work at this stage appears to be the location of institutions for higher education. University towns show a higher transfer rate to universities among secondary graduates than for the country as a whole. This is one of the reasons why the distribution of new higher educational institutions, such as the regional colleges, to new regions is expected to promote educational attainment in those regions. In addition, the regional colleges are actively encouraged to engage in extramural teaching, in order to bring new groups into contact with higher education.

More generally, the rapid development of adult education including the use of radio, TV and correspondence material, may be seen as a measure for geographical and social equality as well as a means of equalizing educational opportunities among different age groups. Various forms of distance teaching, combined with the active search for clients by adult education organisations, have undoubtedly reduced the importance of the geographical dimension of educational opportunity in Norway, and probably also the importance of the social background factors involved.

There are some indications that differences in education attainment among children from various social groups remained largely unchanged during the first 15 years after the last war. The first part of this period showed a certain stagnation in the recruitment to the "gymnasium" (after an explosive expansion during the war), and the social composition of its student body remained unchanged. After 1960, pupil numbers expanded very rapidly, and parallel to this a certain social equalization appears to have taken place. The expansion

of attendance has been most rapid among children of workers and artisans.

Exact data on the social composition of secondary graduates are obtainable for 1963 only, showing the following entrance ratios for secondary graduation for children from various social groups:

Workers	7.5%
Farmers	8 %
Fishermen	3 %
Independent in business	37 %
University graduates and higher level employees	60 %

Corresponding figures for university students in 1963 show roughly the same picture. The latest figures on the social background of university students show the following relative distribution of students according to the occupational background of their parents:

DISTRIBUTION OF NEW STUDENTS BY BREAD-WINNER'S OCCUPATION, 1970

BREAD-WINNER'S OCCUPATION	PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS
Professional, technical and related work	27.1
Administrative, executive and managerial work .	13.7
Clerical work	5.4
Sales work	7.3
Farmers, fishermen, hunters, loggers and related work	8.5
Miners, quarrymen and related workers	-
Workers in transport and communication occupations	5.1
Craftsmen, production-process workers and labourers NEC	12.7
Service, sport and recreation work	3.2
Members of the armed forces and economically inactive persons	6.1
Unknown	10.9

SOURCE: 'Educational Statistics. Universities. Central Bureau of Statistics. Autumn Term 1970".

Compared to the situation in the early 1960s there has been a certain relative increase in the recruitment from workers and farmers, and a corresponding decline in the relative recruitment from more wealthy parents. Yet, the chances for a child of a university graduate or a higher level employee to enter university are still several times higher than those for the child of a worker or farmer.

The reasons for this social bias in the recruitment to education at the more advanced levels are certainly complex, and have to be counteracted by a variety of policy measures. One set of such measures aims at compensating for differences in the ability of students to finance their studies. Publicly supported education in Norway is offered free of charge at all levels. In compulsory education, free transportation is also offered to pupils living more than four kilometres from the school. If the distance to school is too great, free accommodation is provided for pupils in compulsory education.

Most municipalities offer similar arrangements for free travel for pupils in upper secondary education. In addition pupils having to live away from home get a special government allowance to compensate for the extra costs to the family. Grants are provided on the basis of a means test, and students in vocational and technical training beyond the first year, and all students in post-secondary education, can obtain loans on the basis of a mild means test. For students 20 years of age or more, no means test is applied.

Families with children below 16 years of age can deduct a certain amount from their taxes. If the children are still in school, such deductions may be maintained after the children have reached the age of 16. If the children are still in education at the age of 20, the tax reduction is replaced by a direct, automatic payment to the student.

The system of grants and loans for pupils and students is thus rather complex, and attempts to take into consideration extra costs for students living away from home and the particular needs of students with poor parents. By and large, it may be said that no student in Norway is prevented from continuing his studies for economic reasons. Yet the economic situation is rather troublesome for students with little financial support from their families, and many students prefer to take part-time jobs during their university studies. Economic factors may still be an important element in creating social biases in educational attainment, especially at the upper secondary level.

The organisation of welfare activities for students in higher education is taken care of by student co-operatives, with some financial support from Government. The student co-operatives ("Studentsamskipnader") take care of student housing, restaurants and canteens, bookshops and other services, printing and publication, travel arrangements, etc.

Educational institutions at the upper secondary level have not been able to organise welfare services to the same extent, though student co-operatives were established in 1970 for the technical schools and the

maritime schools. The question of how to organise welfare services for all post-compulsory institutions is currently being examined by a special commission.

The general structural reforms of the Norwegian educational system are outlined in other chapters, and will not be discussed here. It should be mentioned, however, that even such structural changes have as one of their essential aims the democratization of education, in terms of greater equality of access to education for social and geographical groups. Such concerns were behind the introduction of the comprehensive school for youngsters up to 14 years of age by 1920, and the expansion of the comprehensive principle of school organisation to the age of 16 in the 1960s, and corresponding developments even beyond this age group.

The deliberate emphasis upon balance between theoretical and practical subjects, the encouragement of a variety of options without discriminating consequences for further careers must be viewed in the same light. This also applies to the modification of external selection functions entrusted to school institutions, including the right to at least three years of post-compulsory education established in principle by Parliament.

The widening of criteria forming the basis for entry to higher education belongs to the same picture. In this context, especially the upgrading of vocational and technical training as a basis for further studies, and the acceptance of practical work as providing real qualifications for further studies, are potentially very important.

Finally, Norwegian educational policies attach fundamental importance to the equivalence of educational institutions, and the avoidance of prestige ranking of institutions at all levels. We have little confidence in the argument that elite institutions are needed to provide examples for other institutions, and we are extremely aware of the danger that formal selection of students may be replaced by an informal selection through the ranking of institutions. Having largely avoided the latter till now, we are likely to continue a policy of counteracting institutional inequalities.

Correspondingly, more effective policies are under consideration to avoid great status differences among various types of studies, at least as far as they are caused by artificial scarcities created by the educational system. There is no reason to believe that specific professions need much more talent than others at the same educational level, and the vicious circle of special attractiveness for specific studies should be modified. Quota systems may be applied in this context, as indicated in chapter III.

More basically, the general income redistribution policy in Norway plays more of a role in this context than most educational policy measures. Deliberate efforts to counteract too large income differentials, through taxes and income transfers, and the establishment of minimum levels of acceptable living conditions, are essential in this context.

The same applies to strong and far-reaching policies aiming at geographical equalization, and the maintenance of an economic and geographic distribution of the population found politically desirable. Cultural policies, involving extensive public commitment, run parallel to educational policies aiming at social and geographical equality.

Sex and Educational Equality

The population censuses for 1960 and 1970 provide information on the level of educational attainment for adults of the two sexes:

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	MALES %		FEMALES %	
	1960	1970	1960	1970
Up to 9 years	80. 7	64. 3	85. 8	74. 4
10 years	11. 1	14. 8	10. 0	14. 2
12 years	5. 4	12. 1	3. 9	6. 8
Completed higher education	2. 8	8. 8	0. 3	4. 6

The figures for 1960 and 1970 are not fully comparable. However, they do indicate the declining percentage of both males and females who have only compulsory education. 10 years of education is achieved by as many females as males, while the level corresponding to completed upper secondary education is still reached by more men than women. A similar difference is also found at the level of completed higher education, although the percentage of women completing such education has grown much more rapidly than the percentage of men.

The higher average level of education reached by both men and women today does not imply a basic change in the pattern of choice of education for the two sexes. The distribution among subjects, branches and types of schools has largely remained the same over the last decade, indicating attitudes that are deeply rooted in social and cultural traditions.

Men appear to see their educational careers more clearly in relation to future occupational careers, while women show a preference for education of a somewhat shorter duration, providing fewer opportunities for promotion to top positions. However, nearly as many women as men continue their education beyond the compulsory level today.

Of 90,000 students in vocational and technical schools* in 1970, about 40% were female. Schools for social work and for commercial

* Including non-university higher education.

occupations had a fairly balanced representation of the two sexes, while vocational schools with industrial orientation showed a clear majority of males. Home economics schools had nearly all female students, who also dominated schools for nurses.

In general education the development towards equality between the sexes has been relatively rapid in recent years, and females now constitute nearly 50% of the students in upper secondary general education. Their share of the graduates from secondary general stayed around 40% from 1945 to about 1960, but had grown to 47.3% in 1972. The percentage of an age group of males graduating from the gymnasium has increased from 21% in 1966 to 26% in 1972, while the corresponding percentage for females has increased from 16% to 24.5% in the same period.

However, there are clear differences between the two sexes as regards their distribution among the various branches of upper secondary general education, and those differences have remained largely unchanged since 1945. Today, nearly 70% of all female graduates have come from the "language branches" of the gymnasium, while this is the case for only 26% of the male graduates. Only 22% of the female graduates have taken the science branches, compared with more than 60% of the males.

In the teacher colleges a slight majority of female students has tended to increase in recent years. As a consequence, entry requirements have been kept somewhat lower for male applicants, maintaining a proportion of female students of about 55%.

At the regional colleges, the proportion of women is now about 27% or somewhat less than at the universities. The reason is probably the composition of subjects, and the proportion of males and females varies greatly as among subjects. Some subjects attract a majority of female students, while economic, administrative and technical subjects have a very low percentage of female students.

At the universities, female participation has grown much more rapidly in recent years than male. Among the new entrants, the female proportion has increased from 24% in 1962 to 38% in 1972. The female share of the total number of students has grown from 20% to 31% in the same period, while the female share of the graduates has only increased from 13 to 17%.

Graduates from the science branches of the gymnasium enter university studies more frequently than graduates from the language branches. This is also true for female graduates. Yet, in recent years, graduates from the language branches have appeared to catch up with other secondary graduates in terms of university entry. This has primarily led to an increase in the number of female students in humanistic studies. In Arts, 50% of the students are female, and the percentage is nearly as high in sociology, psychology and education. Science, medicine and law have a female percentage of about 20 and economics a corresponding percentage of only 5. As a consequence,

the College of Business Economics gives preference to female applicants if their other qualifications are equal to those of male applicants.

Behind the biased recruitment to higher educational levels from the two sexes there are probably a number of social factors. Data from the 1950s indicate that the daughters of parents belonging to higher social levels may reach an even higher educational attainment level than the sons of similar parents. Daughters of parents belonging to lower social levels, however, have much lower educational attainment levels than the sons of similar parents. The tendency towards more educational equality between the two sexes in recent years may thus be both the result of social equalization in society at large, and of changing attitudes towards the education of girls in certain social groups.

There is hardly any discrimination between the two sexes in existing school legislation, statutes and regulations. Existing biases are thus in all likelihood a reflection of attitudes found in society at large. Within the school system, compulsory education may be the most important factor influencing basic attitudes. According to the curriculum plans, the schools are expected to engage actively in counteracting attitudes pointing towards unwanted sexual role patterns. One example is the rule that boys and girls get the same kind of education in home economics, sewing and textile designing, woodcraft, etc. Boys and girls are also taught together in compulsory family and sex subjects. More generally, co-education has always dominated in Norwegian schools, and is practically the rule today.

The indicative curriculum plans for compulsory education emphasize the need to break down traditional barriers to male and female roles and functions in the family and in society. Special consultants examine the textbooks, in order to prevent them from reinforcing traditional attitudes in this context. Experiences up till now have clearly demonstrated the need for such examination. Corresponding examinations of textbooks in upper secondary education are being considered. The curriculum plans also suggest that problems of equality should be taken up at all grade levels, and constitute a special theme at the lower secondary level. The plans also point out that "a precondition for genuine equality between the sexes is economic independence. The schools should, therefore, adapt the pupils to the idea that girls should have as good a vocational training as boys. The school should actively counteract traditional definitions of different occupational roles for the two sexes, and assist the individual pupils in the development of their talents irrespective of their sex." Educational and occupational guidance within the school also aims at increasing the awareness of both sexes of possibilities for a wider range of choice than traditionally considered. Information is also provided for the parents, in addition to 50 "hours" of vocational guidance in the 7th to 9th grade.

The policy objective in this field is not an equal proportion of both sexes in all subjects and in all professions, but equivalent education for both sexes in terms of future incomes and careers. The new system of upper secondary education may offer more opportunities for vocational training for girls. The integration of theory and practice in many courses may help to obtain more variety in the educational choices of boys and girls. The wider set of criteria for entry to higher education may also facilitate specifically the education of women at this level. Emphasis on experience other than formal schooling may be useful in this context.

Furthermore, the question of expanding a system of quota arrangements, such as those applied by the teacher colleges today, is being discussed. However, there is no full agreement on this as an appropriate measure to obtain greater equality between the sexes in education. It has been pointed out that the use of quotas in this context may create increased biases in terms of other social dimensions.

Wider geographical distribution of educational facilities, e. g. through the regional colleges and new institutions at the upper secondary level, may also benefit particularly women who find it difficult to attend school away from home. Active client-searching adult education may serve similar purposes. The continued expansion of adult education should offer increasing possibilities in this respect. In addition, special courses have been prepared for women who have had to break off their professional training, but would like to return to their studies and complete their training. Important in this context is the offering of small elements of major courses as part-time studies, through mass media, study circles, etc. The trade union branch for local authority employees, for example, has engaged strongly in the development of such courses, in order to offer possibilities for a gradual building up of educational qualifications in the field of health, social work and administration, particularly for married women.

A survey, undertaken in 1973, showed 20% of married women in Norway to be in full-time occupations, and another 20% in part-time occupations outside the family. Another recent survey found 56% of married women declaring their interest in further eeucation, provided that practical problems were removed. Difficulties of access to pre-school institutions for their children were among the most important practical barriers. Such data are among the strongest arguments underlying the present plans for rapid expansion of pre-school education.

The possibilities for financing further education are in principle the same for men and women. In formulating the rules for grants and loans to students, any form of discrimination against female students has been systematically avoided. There are, however, some complaints about the fact that the income of the husband may play a role in the availability of grants for married women, and current age limitations for grants are said to affect women more than men.

Furthermore, additional loans granted to student families with children should rather be given as grants, according to female students.

When having a child, a female student will automatically get one term's leave from her studies. But if she breaks off her studies or her later occupation for such reasons, she may face difficulties in the repayment of educational loans. It should be mentioned, however, that legally speaking, a married person is not committed to repay the pre-marriage debt of his or her mate. The well-known argument that female students may carry a "negative dowry" into a marriage, is not valid in Norway.

Age and Educational Equality

The educational level of the population as a whole has been improving all though this century. This is partly a question of the length of education, but also of improved teacher qualifications and of resource standards in terms of equipment and building. A rough illustration of the development of the average length of study among those leaving the educational system is provided by the following approximate figures:

1930	7 years
1940	8 years
1950	9 years
1960	10 years
1970	11.5 years

Compulsory nine years education is now fully implemented all over the country. Increased demand for upper secondary education is expected. Historically, it appears that the prolongation of compulsory education is accompanied by an increase in the demand for education beyond the compulsory level. The "gymnasium" has seen an increase in its attendance from about 35,000 to about 60,000 in ten years. In the same period, vocational and technical schools at the upper secondary and post-secondary level, have increased their attendance from about 60,000 to nearly 100,000. * The stated political aim is to offer education at the upper secondary level to everyone wanting it. The number of students in the universities has trebled in the same ten-year period, and attendance at other post-secondary institutions has grown nearly as fast.

Such an increase in educational attendance mostly concerns the younger age groups. Education offered by secondary and post-secondary institutions usually serves a pre-work preparation. However, the age range found in such institutions indicates that a significant percentage of the students has spent some time at work. About half of

* Students of non-university institutions in higher education included.

the students in vocational and technical secondary education are 19 years of age or older, and about 10% are 25 years of age or more. In general education at the upper secondary level, about 15% of the students are 19 years of age or more. Among university students, about 35% are 25 years of age or more, and the corresponding proportion of the students in other post-secondary institutions is 25%. Nearly 10% of the students at this level are 30 years of age or more. Thus, regular educational institutions also serve to train a number of people with considerable practical background outside school. Institutions are, nevertheless, primarily for the young, and the courses offered are regularly adapted to this purpose.

There are reasons to believe that the expansion of educational facilities at all levels in the period following the last war, aiming at more equal educational opportunities for all youth, irrespective of social or geographical background, may have created more inequality in educational terms between the younger and the older generations. Data illustrating this are scarce and largely outdated. It may still be of some interest to present some findings from the 1960 census on the educational attainment level of persons 15 years of age and above (1970 census data on this point are not yet available):

As can be seen from the table, lower age runs parallel with higher educational attainment level. Exceptions for the youngest are caused by the fact that by 1960 they had not yet completed more advanced forms of education.

The proportions in the table with education at the upper secondary or post-secondary level are quite small, and will be substantially different for even younger generations. The nine years level is reached by everyone today, and the twelve years level by close to 50%, as will probably be shown by figures from the 1970 census.

The most appropriate response to increasing differences in educational attainment between generations is an expansion of adult education. Norwegian educational policies put great emphasis on this sector, as illustrated in chapter II. Both in range and in volume, adult education is rapidly expanding; the demand, however, being influenced by economic factors. Adults in full-time work, and raising a family, are in a very different situation from that of youngsters in pre-work education. Existing systems of grants and loans to students are not well-suited to solve the problems facing most adults in this context.

Conditions vary somewhat according to the type of employment. In many branches of public service, employees may get leave with full pay during further education. A per diem may even be offered if the training takes place away from home. Other groups of civil servants, such as teachers, often get partial coverage of income forgone. In all these cases, the assumption is that the training has relevance for the work functions undertaken by the individuals. In the private sector of the economy, arrangements range from leave without

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION ACCORDING TO EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT LEVEL, AND BIRTH YEAR

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	BIRTH YEAR							
	1890 AND EARLIER	1891-1900	1901-1910	1911-1920	1921-1930	1931-1935	1936-1940	1941-1945
Completed Primary (7 years)	92.5	89.0	85.7	84.7	77.5	74.0	72.3	86.7
Completed Lower Secondary (9 years)	5.4	7.6	9.4	9.3	12.5	15.3	16.0	11.8
Completed Upper Secondary (12 years)	1.2	2.0	3.1	4.1	7.5	8.6	11.5	1.5
Completed University	1.0	1.4	1.8	2.0	2.5	2.0	0.3	-
	100.1	100.0	100.0	100.1	100.0	99.9	100.1	

salary, leave with partial salary and leave with full salary. If salary is paid, the individual is often committed to continue in his firm for a certain period after the training.

Special financial support is offered through an educational fund established by the Trade Unions and the Employers Association. Each employee pays 0. 50 N. Kr. per week to this fund, and the employer pays 1. 00 N. Kr. per week per employee. The total is shared equally between the Trade Unions and the Employers Association for educational purposes.

Individuals who are not employees have less chance of financial support during education. The most important groups in this category are housewives without external jobs, and people in independent positions, e. g. farmers and some professional groups. Employees wanting education without specific relevance for their present job will also meet with difficulties in finding financial support for education.

Financing post-work education in a way that would equalize opportunities for adults and youngsters, assumes a more general solution to the problem of the financing of studies than we have been able to establish up till now. No decisions have been taken as to the future direction of policies in this field. As mentioned previously, the Royal Commission on Higher Education advocated financing of post-work education along the same lines as those developed for the general social security system, and pointed to the present system of financial support for the reschooling of individuals threatened by unemployment.

Publicly supported adult education is largely offered free to the participants. In addition, the Commission's proposals would involve an expansion of the scope of the social security system to include partial compensation of salaries during recurrent, adult education. The proportion of income forgone covered in this way would initially have to be rather modest, but should, according to the Commission, increase to about 50%, the rest either being paid by an employer, or sacrificed by the individual himself. Corresponding support should be given to non-employees. An income ceiling was assumed by the Commission, and also some limits to the duration of education financed in this way.

Such principles of financing of recurrent education may still lie somewhere in the future. In the meantime, established arrangements of grants, loans, employers' support and benefits agreed upon by the labour market partners are likely to be maintained and gradually expanded, in the same way as many other generalized social benefits have emerged from scattered and partial arrangements.

Religious Groups and Educational Equality

Norway has a state church, based on the Evangelic-Lutheran confession. About 95% of the population are members of the state church, the rest are either members of other church communities or

of none. The official religious doctrines, as interpreted by the state church, are also the basis for religious teaching in school. Previously, the church had a strong influence upon such teaching, the priests being automatically members of the school board with the right to supervise the teaching of religion. In church circles the view was also often held that Christian beliefs and values should penetrate all subjects in school, not only the subject of religion. Gradually, the strong church influence in school matters has been modified, in line with the more general secularization in society. Religious influence today is more indirect, and exerted more by "lay" religious organisations, than by the formal institutions of the state church.

It is a long time since the state church system caused major political conflicts in Norway. School reforms, on the other hand, have tended to raise debates about the position of religion as a subject, and thus implicitly also about the role of the church. The political conflicts have manifested themselves in discussions about the amount of time devoted to religious subjects in school, but also to the alleged "secularization" of the subject itself.

The meaning of "equality" in the context of religious teaching is in itself rather unclear. General tolerance and respect for different religions is obviously an important element. Furthermore, certain rights of various religious communities may have to be defined in legal terms. The most difficult problems concern the forms the teaching should take. Should we have one school reflecting a variety of religious views, or different schools with a different religious basis. More concretely, the political debate has centered around the three main questions: the first is whether the teaching of the subject religion should be tied to a specific confession or not, whether it should be preaching or orientation. In compulsory schools, the teaching is in principle tied to the Evangelic-Lutheran confession, and the subject is termed "Knowledge of the Christian religion". The Compulsory Education Act explicitly states that "Compulsory schools, in mutual understanding and collaboration with the families, shall contribute to a Christian and moral upbringing of the pupils . . . ". The official interpretation of this statement may have a bias towards the aspect of orientation, but there is scope for a variety of interpretations, and some such variety is certainly found in practice. In upper secondary education, the teaching of religion is not bound to any specific confession, and involves an introduction into different religions and value systems.

The second point of conflict is that of whether religion should be a compulsory subject. Today, parents who are not members of the state church have the right to keep their children away from school lessons on religion. Other church communities may organise their own teaching of religion. The point has been made, however, that in schools where the teaching of religion is not tied to any specific confession, there is no reason to permit the students to withdraw from the subject.

The third practical issue in this context has been the position of private schools. The relatively few private schools at the compulsory level in Norway are nearly all run by church communities outside the state church. At the upper secondary level, only a few schools are based on deviant religions, though this is the case for a number of folk high schools. It is essential for private religious schools that teachers and pupils share the religious beliefs held by the school as an institution. Religious influence is a key element in teaching, and not only within the subject of religion. As the private schools receive Government subsidies, however, they have to maintain certain general standards in terms of curriculum and teacher qualifications, and they cannot exclude qualified applicants. Private schools are eligible for Government support provided that they offer valuable additions to the public school system, in terms of pedagogical or specific religious ideas, or simply through the supply of additional school facilities. Such a formula is, of course, open to widely different interpretations, which to some extent reflect the political views of the Government in power. At the upper secondary level, the new legislation places the responsibility for judging the usefulness of private schools at the county level, a decision strongly contested by the opposition in Parliament. Private religious schools do not normally recruit children from high status groups in social terms. This part of the rather moderate Norwegian system of private schools thus scarcely affects social and economic equality within the educational system.

Finally, it may be mentioned that the religious affiliations of teachers have been an important issue. Previously, those who taught religion, and this would include the majority of primary school teachers, had to be members of the state church. This regulation was abolished in 1969, with the new legislation on compulsory education.

Ethnic Minorities and Educational Equality

In Norway, ethnic minorities mean primarily the Lapps but we have also a small group of Finnish-speaking immigrants in the Northern counties, a few Gypsies and an increasing, though still small, group of immigrants from Southern European, African and Asian countries.

Existing assimilation possibilities make an exact definition of the number of Lapps rather futile, but current estimates put the figure at around 30,000, of whom 90% live in Northern Norway. The county of Finnmark has about 15,000, the county of Tromsö about 9,000 and the county of Nordland about 3,000. In the inner parts of Finnmark and in certain coastal areas, the Lapps are in majority. About 10% of the Lapps live in the middle part of Norway, especially in the counties Nord-Tröndelag and Sör-Tröndelag. The Lapp minority culture has been neglected and subdued through generations. Special measures for the Lapp population, which might have delayed the assimulation process have often met with resistance. Far into this century,

development in Lapp districts was normally based on an implicit assumption of assimilation, also supported by many of the Lapps.

In recent years, an increasing number of young Lapps have engaged strongly in the problems of their minority group. They have pointed out how a one-sided assimilation policy has broken down community feeling and self-respect among the Lapps, and how educational deficiencies and language problems have complicated life for many Lapps. A greater understanding has emerged concerning the specific conditions required for the survival of the Lapp culture, including conditions relating to education.

Alternative policies to the traditional assimilation measures were developed during the 1960s. The use of both Lappish and Norwegian in schools and in the administration in Lapp districts was emphasized. The ensuing debate, e. g. in Parliament, emphasized, however, that measures aiming at equality for the Lapps should not lead to the establishment of a "reservation". The localization of the Lapp minority causes most of them to benefit from general measures aiming specifically at outlying and sparsely populated areas. In addition, a number of measures are specific for the Lapps. Teachers who want to study the Lapp language get leave with pay, there are special fellowships for Lapp youth, and special upper secondary schools for Lapps have been established. Among general measures of specific importance for the Lapps may be mentioned transportation allowances and additions to the salaries of teachers working in Northern Norway.

The new compulsory school legislation includes a number of proposals of special importance for the Lapps. In a school district where parents speak different languages, the parents of one language may claim a special school emphasizing their language. This has been a long-standing practice in at least one municipality, but the system is formally recognized in the legislation, and may spread to other areas. Individual parents have the right to claim that their children shall learn Lappish in the school. Both Lapp families using Norwegian as their everyday language and Norwegians living in Lapp districts may need better knowledge of Lappish. The schools are provided with additional resources for the teaching of two languages, so that neither of the languages should suffer.

The preparation of textbooks in Lappish is being intensified, both at the compulsory level and for upper secondary training. Incentives are provided for teachers wanting to engage in the preparation of Lappish textbooks and other material. Government support to adult education in Lapp districts is being increased, specifically in subjects of local economic importance such as small scale industry and crafts. Language courses in Norwegian and Lappish are also offered.

Preparations for the establishment of a regional college in Alta have started, and this institution is supposed gradually to develop courses related to the needs and wishes of the Lapp population. The regional college in Alta will be closely linked to the teachers college

recently established in the same place. The latter will develop a special department for Lapp teacher training, specifically emphasizing the following issues:

- Lappish and Lapp culture;
- general didactics and methodology for the teaching of ethnic minorities;
- the development of textbooks and other teaching material adapted to Lapp children and youth;
- field experiments and developmental work in practical pedagogical guidance, follow-up and in-service training;
- training of personnel for social pedagogical work in school dormitories and corresponding institutions;
- organisational experiments;
- adult education pedagogics.

The department for Lapp teacher training in Alta is also supposed to collaborate with the Nordic Lappic Institute, established in Kautokeino in 1973. Studies of Lappish matters have been taken up at the University of Tromsö. Research activities previously developed in this field at the University of Oslo will in all likelihood be moved to Tromsö to reinforce the research milieu there. The realization of such plans requires more teachers with a knowledge of Lappish than available at present. Dispensations from normal scientific qualifications are, therefore, given in certain cases, and fellowships for additional training offered. Secondary graduates with Lappish as their main language have often failed to satisfy criteria for access to studies with numerus clausus. Lapp applicants to medical faculties and certain other studies are, therefore, given extra credits in addition to their secondary graduation marks.

The adaptation of immigrants to Norwegian society depends on their knowledge of the language and the society in which they will function. Education, training, information and guidance for immigrants are necessary measures if serious adaptation problems are to be avoided. A special "White Paper" on these issues was presented to Parliament by Government in March this year. Up till now, the individual municipalities have had the responsibility for all teaching of immigrant children at the compulsory education level. The Government proposes the introduction of country-wide directions for such teaching, and assistance to the municipalities to implement such directions. Among the special measures adopted, are:

- Introductory education in special classes emphasizing specifically Norwegian and civics;
- remedial teaching in addition to regular education;
- teaching in and on the mother tongue of the pupils, in addition to regular education.

Children of immigrants will be received in specific introductory classes as soon as possible after their arrival in the country, provided

that there a certain number in the municipality. After three months' stay, school attendance is compulsory for the children of immigrants. Special courses in Norwegian will be offered both to the children and to the parents, possibly in the form of family teaching. The possibility of offering teaching in the language of the immigrants will be examined. The possibility of special additional training for teachers of immigrant children is also under consideration.

Adult education for immigrants has been offered for more than 20 years. Since 1970 the social security system has refunded expenditure for courses in Norwegian to foreigners at work in Norway. Special courses in Norwegian for foreign students are offered at the University of Oslo. The general policy proposed by the Ministry of Education is that basic training in Norwegian and civics shall be offered free of charge to immigrants and their families. The amount of education will have to be adapted to individual needs, with an upper limit of lessons. Financial and administrative responsibility within Government for the variety of educational measures for immigrants including those currently undertaken by the labour market authorities, will be fully taken over by the Ministry of Education.

Grants and loans to students are in principle reserved for Norwegian citizens. Exceptions can be made for non-Norwegians staying in Norway for a longer period, or to other non-Norwegians with specific association to Norway or planning to stay there after their training. Marriage to a Norwegian also counts in this context. Non-Norwegians staying in Norway solely with the purpose of studying, cannot receive grants or loans from the regular system of student support.

The number of Gypsies in Norway is only slightly above 100 persons, but they do represent a separate cultural minority, and their specific problems are not easily solved. For more than ten years the municipality of Oslo has had a separate school for Gypsy children, operating to the extent the Gypsies have stayed in Oslo. It appears that a separate school for Gypsy children based on small group teaching is better than a regular school.

When the Gypsy families left Oslo a couple of years ago, two teachers with equipment travelled with them and ran a peripatetic school, supported by the National Council for Innovation in Education. The Ministry plans to extend the amount of teaching offered to the Gypsies by adding a kindergarten to the primary school. Special adult education courses have been developed for Gypsies. They are very flexible and will be changed on the basis of experience. They are based on special regulations for Government support. The teaching of Gypsies is presently in Norwegian, but the Ministry recognizes the pedagogical and social reasons pointing towards teaching in Romany, and the possibilities for the development of such teaching will be examined.

A Final Comment

The fight against discrimination according to social or geographical origin, sex or minority group adherence has a long history in Norwegian education. Politically emerging groups, such as farmers and workers, have rejected what appeared as discriminatory policies towards them. Strong ideological currents have also defended the rights of those who remained weak in terms of political power.

There has thus long been an understanding of the complexity of factors behind inequality and, at least in principle, considerable agreement as to what factors were unacceptable as the basis for unequal treatment. Few would seriously defend ideas about the superiority of special social groups or geographical regions, and even traditional beliefs in male superiority have been profoundly shaken. Elements of nationalism may still be found in relation to minority groups deviating strongly in cultural terms, but such reactions are not predominant in current policies towards such groups.

An emerging issue of profound importance to educational policies is the increasing doubt about educational achievement as a legitimate basis for discrimination among individuals. The idea that those who have proved their abilities through educational achievement shall have privileges not shared by everyone is still accepted in wide circles. The opposing idea, that individuals holding such abilities will certainly do well in any case, and do not need extra premiums in terms of power positions and first choice of opportunities, clearly represents such a challenge to established privileges and interests that acceptance is slow at best. Evidence of this is found in widespread attitudes to the general policies for equality, and particularly in reactions to current attempts to reduce the social selection functions of the educational system.

There is no final answer to the question of legitimate or unacceptable criteria for unequal treatment of individuals. A policy for equality will be characterized by a certain "profile" in terms of emphasis upon specific criteria. Norway may at present be in the process of changing the "profile" of its policies for equality, adopting new and complex additional criteria. Judging from experience, this is a long and painful process, likely to involve a substantial amount of conflict and confusion.

Yet an even more profound change in egalitarian policies in recent years may be the increasing rejection of one single set of standards according to which the degree of equality should be measured. Traditionally, most claims for equality have been in terms of access to social privileges according to a fairly established scale of social privileges according to a fairly established scale of social position. The aim for underprivileged groups has roughly been to obtain reasonable opportunities for sharing such social privileges.

Elements of an alternative thinking on equality have, however, been present for a long time. The farmers' movement of the 19th

century not only claimed access to political power for its chosen representatives, it also claimed, and to some extent achieved, a general acceptance of its own cultural basis as a measure of performance in society. The labour movement, stressing the ideal of solidarity, and not only as a tactical means, has always put less emphasis upon the access of some of its representatives to high level positions than on the general improvement of conditions for the group as a whole. Some of the standards developed within this movement have certainly influenced general policies adopted by Norwegian society in recent years.

We may now be facing a more general acceptance of the need for a widened concept of equality: the right to equal treatment must also include the right to have an influence upon the standards according to which equality is being measured. "Quality of life", as defined by middle-class groups, is perhaps not what other groups in society are opting for. Maximal educational achievement, in a school dominated by traditional values, is perhaps not an acceptable measure of equality for many groups. Instead of more social mobility for a number of individuals within various groups, the quest for equality tends to focus on equality among the groups as a whole, rejecting the features distinguishing the groups as a basis for discrimination.

In practice, this means that various groups insist upon maintaining their identity as a group, without being punished in social terms. The "degree of equality" may have to be measured in a variety of scales, none of which is inherently better than the other. The idea that equality is a phenomenon which can be "objectively" measured, will have to be abandoned.

Thus, the current Norwegian situation is not one of conflict between traditional equality ideals on the one hand, and a desire for diversification and more decentralized decision-making on the other. Certainly, undermining of central political power may open up the way for the predominance of strong pressure groups, while ideals of equality have often been the excuse for central tyranny. Yet, at some stage along the road towards achievement of the two objectives in question, the objectives themselves tend to merge, in a way which makes them at least partly complementary, instead of alternative. Norway may have reached this stage in its social and political development, and may be facing an extremely complex challenge in terms of the working out of adequate policies for a more ambitious set of equality objectives.

V

INTEGRATION IN POST-COMPULSORY EDUCATION

Introduction

Many of the key issues in the recent debate on educational policy in Norway can be grouped under the common heading of "integration". It seems likely that general questions relating to integration on the one hand, division of labour, specialization and professionalization on the other, may stay with us as essential policy issues, in education as well as in other central fields of policy. It is also evident that in the general debate the term "integration" in itself, and its possible implications in various contexts, are far from clear. There are also growing doubts about the inherent value of integration, searching questions being raised as to the circumstances under which integration is desirable or not. A specification of cases in which the integration issue has arisen appears necessary.

Although, more recently, integration issues have been most acute in relation to post-compulsory education, it should be borne in mind that historically the question of integration has been a kind of keynote in our discussions about compulsory education. Initially, there was the question of integrating a general system of primary education for everyone with more specific forms of primary preparation for those aiming at the secondary level and beyond. To some extent this was also a question of integrating private educational institutions at this level into a general public school system, a task which was largely achieved in the first two decades of this century. After this struggle the task of integrating the teaching of different groups of pupils at higher and higher grade levels has continued up to this day. Organisational differentiation after the fourth grade was abandoned fifteen years ago, after the seventh grade about ten years ago and a further post-ponement of such differentiation till beyond the ninth and final grade of compulsory education is now decided in principle.

Parallel to this development, there has been the gradual integration of initially quite different primary school systems for urban and rural areas, the latter offering about half the usual number of weekly teaching hours as recently as twenty years ago. A deliberate building-up of resources in rural education permitted the formal establishment of one common primary school system about fifteen years ago, and by now this may be said to have become a reality.

Another integration trend relates to curriculum, where all through this century highly theoretical elements of instruction, derived from

the realm of academic disciplines, have merged with practical, problem-oriented elements of instruction related to the everyday life of children and adults. In primary education, this development has come a long way, in lower secondary education we still struggle with the predominant inheritance of the lower part of the traditional "academic" secondary school.

Finally, in organisational terms, the traditional separation of school units for theoretical and for practical training at the lower secondary level has been replaced by comprehensive school units, covering theoretical, aesthetic and practical subjects, although vocational training has no place in the compulsory part of the school system. At the same time, various forms of teacher training have been linked together so that one can reach the same status whether initially aiming at teaching in primary or upper secondary. Salary scales and working conditions have been harmonized and equalized, though teaching obligations are still lower and formal qualification requirements higher at upper educational levels.

The extension of compulsory education from seven to nine years, at a time when most youngsters stayed in school beyond seven years anyway, may also be regarded as an attempt at "vertical" integration of primary and lower secondary education, mainly in the form of an adaptation of the latter to far-reaching changes within the former. More recently, similar questions of vertical integration have arisen as regards pre-school and primary education. Again, the question arises which of the two levels should adapt most to the other, and possibly also whether full integration between these two levels of education is really desirable at this stage.

The integration theme has thus long traditions in Norwegian school history. As political pressure in education historically follows the main bulk of the pupils upwards through the system, it is not surprising that integration issues have recently become more prominent in the policy debate at higher levels. This is, in fact, where the main political conflicts on this point are to be found at present, and we shall devote the rest of this chapter to a description and an attempted analysis of such issues. We shall distinguish among the following sets of integration issues:

- integration among levels of education;
- integration among types of educational institutions;
- integration of subjects;
- integration between theory and practice;
- integration between schools and the local community.

Integration Among Educational Levels

Upper-secondary education has for a long time been caught between pressures for integration both from below and from above. Traditionally, general education at this level, provided by the

"gymnasium", was primarily regarded as preparation for university studies, and the curriculum was adapted to this main function. Over the last fifteen years, the function of the "gymnasia" has been broadened to include both terminal general education and the preparation for shorter types of vocational training. Only about half of the graduates from the "gymnasia" enter universities, and this proportion was even lower some twenty years ago. This has somewhat influenced the curriculum of the "gymnasia" towards more emphasis on "general" education, not necessarily preparing for specific university studies. Yet, the curriculum is still predominantly theoretical, and based on the traditional scientific disciplines.

Vocational training at this level is often oriented towards specific jobs and skills, but may also imply a more general preparation for a broader set of vocations. The tendency in recent years has been towards broadening the content of the training, so as to make it an appropriate background for a variety of work functions. There is, however, considerable uncertainty concerning the proper balance between formalized vocational training and training on the job. Furthermore, there are counter-pressures towards establishing vertical integration within a clearly defined "technical" segment of the school system.

Before becoming part of compulsory education, general education at the lower secondary level was primarily regarded as a preparation for the "gymnasia". It was highly theoretical and distinctly different from education provided by "continuation schools" of a more practical nature. The introduction of nine years compulsory education has brought lower secondary education as a whole in much closer contact with primary education, though it has still maintained some elements of the old theoretical school. Yet, as seen from the "gymnasia", the integration between the lower and upper secondary levels has been failing to an increasing extent in recent years, in terms of curriculum content as well as teaching aims and methods.

The reform of upper secondary education now under way clearly aims at closer integration between compulsory education as developed through the recent reforms and upper secondary education as a whole. In all likelihood, this will lead to increasing complaints within institutions of higher education about the growing failure of preceding stages in preparing students for university studies. The traditional integration between the general part of upper secondary education and the universities will, in other words, tend to be broken. It will hardly be a consolation to institutions of higher education that vocational and technical training at the upper secondary level may become somewhat better adapted to the possibility that their graduates also may go on to higher education.

The principles of educational selection play a major role in this context. As long as achievement in lower secondary, particularly in the more theoretical subjects, is decisive for entry to the most attractive

part of upper secondary education, the "gymnasia", this obviously influences both pupil attitudes and the teaching at the lower secondary level. Even vocational schools tend to use achievement at the end of compulsory education as a criterion for entry, competing with other types of vocational schools for the best entrants.

Such connections between the two levels have been gradually modified in recent years. Access to upper secondary education has been facilitated, thus reducing the need for high achievement at the end of compulsory education; the aim being to reach a stage where everyone wanting to continue in school beyond compulsory education may obtain access. At the same time, allocation among various types of vocational training where all applicants cannot be admitted is already to some extent determined by the use of a lottery system. Such methods may also be used in the future in specific fields where applications exceed the number of places available. Correspondingly, there is a tendency towards more emphasis upon criteria other than achievement at upper secondary graduation for entry to higher educational institutions. In spite of the declared political intent of doing away with the final gymnasium examination as the main selection criteria, it may still take a long time before achievement at this level loses its value as an asset for selection purposes, as a balance between the number of applications and places available will not be achieved for some time to come in many areas of study at the post-secondary level.

At both levels of transition, the reduced importance of achievement at the preceding level as a means of selecting entrants for the next, means a reduced influence of the higher level upon the preceding one. As a corollary, integration can then only be achieved by a gradual adaptation of education at the higher level to the actual output from the lower. Changing the traditional entry criteria implies a deliberate attempt to promote values represented by the lower stages in the educational system as the ones to predominate in the vertical integration process within the educational system as a whole, instead of the top level predominance which is an historical characteristic of the system.

Problems of vertical integration are also felt in the relationship between under-graduate and post-graduate education, especially when the latter is clearly the preparation for a research career. In a number of fields there are some complaints that their professional employers are, in fact, frustrated candidates for research positions, instead of being trained for their present employment. This argument has, for instance, been used in the context of teacher training for the gymnasia.

Most attempts to orient under-graduate studies at the universities more clearly towards professional functions have been met, however, by strong protests from both teachers and students. They do not want two levels of prestige among the students and among the teachers, and they fear a too narrowly oriented training at under-graduate level. Many teachers, at the same time, would like to see post-graduate

research training more strictly organised, instead of mainly being a form of in-service training as it has been up till now. Some students react against this tendency, seeing it as part of a traditional bias of the professors towards research and research training, at the expense of regular teaching tasks. The issue is further complicated by the recent interest in the use of research methods, often in the form of action research, as a pedagogical tool even in under-graduate teaching. In view of this, there is strong resistance to the tendencies towards clearer distinctions between under-graduate and post-graduate training, and also towards institutional specialization in one direction or the other.

Policy trends in this field are not easily discernible. On the one hand, we tend to hold on to the traditional idea of combined research and teaching at the universities, and at least in a pedagogical sense such a combination appears to emerge also in other post-secondary institutions. Institutional pressure aiming at the establishment of more formal research training at the post-graduate level has mainly been resisted by the political authorities, in spite of the example given by Swedish policies in this field, and of pressures towards "rationalization" of studies. At the same time, there is considerable emphasis on the "relevance" of studies, a concept normally not closely associated with research training.

A reasonable guess about the future may be that some integration of under-graduate and post-graduate training will take place, influencing perhaps more strongly the orientation of research training at the post-graduate level. There is, however, also the risk of a widening functional gap between universities and other institutions at the post-secondary level. In the latter case, under-graduate training at the universities may remain dominated by standards set by traditional academic research, and attempts may be made by the universities to rid themselves of the troublesome burden of under-graduate teaching.

Integration Among Types of Educational Institutions

This question has been in the focus of political discussion on educational matters more recently, constituting a key issue in the proposed common legislation for all upper secondary education. When the Government proposed comprehensive school units, covering a full range of educational options for 16-18 years old as the typical institutional pattern at this level, it met with opposition both from the right and the left. The conservative opposition went along more traditional lines in defending a binary school system with one part leading to the universities and the other to employment or possibly to more technical forms of higher education. The left-wing opposition emphasized the risk that vocational training would become a subordinate element within integrated school units, and that institutional integration offers no solution to the social issues involved, being just a reflection of basic features of the economy.

Parallel to this, a rather confused discussion took place about the implications of an integrated institutional system in terms of the geographical distribution of school units and the size of individual units. The Government maintained that only through the establishment of integrated units would it be possible to provide educational facilities in a variety of fields to a maximum of localities. School units would not have to be large, though this would sometimes mean a reduction in the range of options offered by individual schools. The opposition, on the other hand, underlined the virtues of small schools per se, even if they were rather specialized and could not serve a major part of local youth. Probably their fear of big school units owes something to the experience at lower secondary level, where the need for a variety of options leads to the establishment of a number of schools which today are recognized as being inconveniently large.

The decisions made by Parliament on the new legislation for upper secondary education imply that the individual counties will decide the institutional structure of their upper secondary schools, no general pattern being advocated by central Government. In practice, this will undoubtedly lead to the emergence of a number of integrated schools, though the movement in this direction may be somewhat slower than if this had been established central Government policy.

A somewhat similar discussion is going on concerning institutions at the post-secondary level. The Royal Commission on Higher Education were considering by the mid-1960s the possible development of "university centres", offering a comprehensive set of post-secondary courses of vocational, professional or general nature and of varying length. The reason for dropping this idea* was a fairly practical one; most of our universities are in a difficult expansion period, perhaps trying to cope with more than they can digest even in terms of their more traditional functions. The thought that those institutions should at the same time give proper attention to the development of a wide variety of shorter post-secondary courses appeared to the Royal Commission as rather unrealistic for a very long period ahead. In addition to this line of argument, the sheer geographical nature of Norway pointed towards a solution different from that chosen by other more densely populated countries.

The Commission thus ended up by recommending the establishment of regional colleges, which should integrate all forms of post-secondary education outside the universities. The latter were assumed to stick mostly to their traditional fields of study, though specialized university-type institutions in such fields as technology, dentistry, etc., were assumed to be integrated within general university institutions.

The policy suggested by the Royal Commission met with considerable opposition from established, specialized institutions for post-secondary education, such as teacher colleges and colleges for social

* Contrary to policies adopted by Denmark, for example.

work. The institutions, supported by their related professional associations, emphasized the professionalizing functions of institutions of this kind, fearing a dilution of the "professional profile" of the education offered if the institutions should become part of a larger regional college unit. This argument was supported by the general wave of enthusiasm for small institutions, even if in many cases this could mean less autonomy in relation to central authorities for each institution. Such arguments appear to have some support among the opposition on the left, possibly due to their strength among students within post-secondary education, who seem to favour small institutions and professional specialization.

The Government argument in this context has been partly of a practical nature, underlining the need for a broader discipline basis at individual institutions in order to achieve reasonable quality and effective utilization of scarce resources. Furthermore, the need for integrated policies is emphasized by Norwegian authorities in this field, such co-ordination being incompatible with a variety of independent specialized institutions, each with its main links to other specialized institutions of the same nature, and centrally co-ordinated. Finally, doubts are expressed about the virtues of "professionalization", in the form of strict isolation from students of other fields during training, and narrow orientation towards specific professions.

In their experimental period, the regional colleges have continually expanded their scope and variety of courses offered. Yet, existing institutions in the field have not been incorporated, and some friction arises if a regional college approaches fields traditionally the responsibility of such established institutions. The solution proposed by the former Government was a loose form of regional collaboration between fairly independent institutions at this level, the regional colleges being one type of such institutions. This proposal was withdrawn by the present Government before being discussed in Parliament, and new proposals by the present Government are expected shortly. The new proposals imply a more central co-ordinating role for a regional college board in relation to post-secondary education outside the universities. County authorities will be the key political bodies related to such institutions. Physical integration in single institutional units will not be emphasized, but administrative and curricular integration will be stronger than that proposed by the former Government. The reactions of Parliament to such proposals cannot be easily predicted.

A third major field where institutional integration has become a major policy issue relates to adult education within the broader context of lifelong learning. Traditionally, adult education in Norway has been the domain of popular organisations, mostly serving broad ideological purposes. * The activities of such organisations have not to any major extent become institutionalized, though one may see the

* Political, cultural, religious, social, etc.

activities of the folk high schools as a related phenomenon. More recently, professional organisations also have engaged extensively in adult education, in the form of retraining for their members. To some extent such organisations have also established collaboration with educational institutions in this context. This is perhaps most clearly seen in the medical field where the Association of Medical Doctors plays an essential role in the organisation of specialist training and certification, in close collaboration with the medical faculties at the universities and the Government's Central Health Board.

The Royal Commission on Post-secondary Education dealt extensively with the problems of recurrent education for higher education graduates, and foresaw a major shift of post-secondary education efforts towards training provided for professionals already at work. In the long run, the Commission foresaw an essential role for educational institutions in this form of adult education. In principle, this line of thinking has been fairly widely accepted; an example is the decision that regional colleges may spend up to a quarter of their resources on courses offered to adults already in the work force.

Correspondingly, there has been an increasing involvement of educational institutions at the secondary level in adult education courses aiming at the usual types of secondary certificates. The extensive reschooling activities forming part of labour market policies have their location for the most part in vocational schools, and tend to become a regular part of the programme of many of those schools.

On the whole, adult education in Norway is characterized by the fact that it is voluntary and that, usually, it has few external rewards to offer. As a consequence, the courses offered must be adapted to what the pupils themselves feel as their needs, and the same applies to the forms of teaching. Indirectly at least adult education is governed by its pupils to a greater extent than teaching within the regular educational system. Furthermore, adult education has shown remarkable ability and imagination in developing an extremely wide range of new courses, responding to expressed needs. Again, adult education differs strikingly from the rather rigid options provided by the regular school system. Finally, adult education has found means for reaching the most outlying areas in a country with extremely scattered population by teaching far beyond the institutional network established by the regular school system.

The principles of lifelong learning imply that some of those aspects of adult education should also penetrate the regular school system, right down to the primary level. If the assumption is true, that regular educational institutions have to be much more involved in the future dimensions of the task of adult education, there may indeed be a feedback effect from adult education to the regular school system which would contribute essentially to the internal transformation of the school system as such.

Yet the actual result of such an institutional integration of post-work and pre-work education facilities may be different. Adult education may be influenced by the disciplinary or bureaucratic rigidities inherent in regular educational institutions of today. Alternatively, an official major responsibility for adult education in regular educational institutions may simply mean that such educational functions are still at the bottom of the institutional priority list, coming after all the traditional functions of such institutions.

In view of this, the popular organisations traditionally dominating the field of adult education look with considerable suspicion on the possibility of sharing this task with the regular educational institutions. The long-term perspective of gradually changing such institutions in accordance with the principles of life-long learning, already present to a considerable extent in adult education practices, is not sufficiently reassuring to compensate for the risk that adult education may become a rather neglected and distorted part of the traditional programmes offered by such institutions.

Beyond this, there is also the question of governance in adult education. Contrary to the regular school system, adult education has till now shown an extremely varied picture in this respect. There is fairly general agreement that this situation should be maintained. On the other hand, there is considerable scepticism about a perspective in which work-oriented training for adults, initiated by enterprises, or by professional associations, should obtain a predominant role within post-work education. Regular educational institutions appear, after all, to represent a professional and financial framework less biased towards predominant social groups in society. If the responsibility for vastly expanded adult educational activities in the future cannot rest mainly with the popular organisations, maybe, after all, the educational institutions would be better companions than institutions of an economic or narrowly professional nature.

Seen from the point of view of the educational institutions, the development of relevant post-work education on a large scale is a new and somewhat frightening task. It clearly requires from such institutions an ability to confront essential current issues in practical life as they have never had to do previously. The new students would normally be in a much better position to judge the relevance of education offered than the traditional pre-work students of regular school institutions. The institutional skills and insights needed for a vast extension of educational tasks beyond pre-work training simply do not exist in many of the institutions in question. Their reluctance to move whole-heartedly into this new field is quite understandable, and their unwillingness to spread out more thinly-available resources on a wider set of tasks is even more so. The fear that such new tasks may eventually call for major reforms of traditional practices, may well be an additional reason for hesitation.

The long-term policy of Government relating to such issues is likely to point towards increasing integration between post-work and pre-work education, and to the breaking down of institutional barriers which prevent feed-back effects from penetrating the regular educational institutions. In the short run, however, it seems likely that extended adult education facilities within regular educational institutions will have to be based on separate, ear-marked budget allocations, and probably also on separate organisational arrangements within the institutions. Requirements for entry to courses in adult education will probably be kept less formal than in regular education at present. More than at any other level, real qualifications acquired informally should count as a basis for admission to adult education.

Traditionally the age range of students in regular educational institutions in Norway is rather wide. Typically, students in secondary vocational schools are frequently in their twenties, and often close to thirty. Long university studies makes students of this age more frequent in university courses, and students in their thirties or even forties are not unusual. Our general policy has been to encourage this somewhat heterogeneous age grouping in post-compulsory institutions. What is defined as adult education - courses specifically designed for people who have spent some time in the labour force - has quite naturally a similar age range. The avoidance of rigid age groupings as a distinguishing feature between pre-work and post-work education is another element of the expected policy in this field.

Integration of Subjects

With far-reaching structural changes within most of the educational system, it may seem surprising that Norway has not seen more developments towards inter-disciplinarity in education. There are, of course, the traditional groupings of subjects in the training for established professions; groupings which today have acquired many of the aspects of a discipline. Such formal professionalization processes still take place, establishing new subject groupings for emerging professions. On the whole, educational institutions adapt slowly to such processes, and genuine approaches to inter-disciplinarity in institutional work are rare.

In primary education, child-centred teaching has had some success in integrating traditional subjects; a development partly reflected in some of the teacher colleges. At the lower secondary level, subject integration is hampered by the difficulties facing subject-trained teachers in this respect. Both here and in the gymnasia there has been some progress towards integrated environmental studies and more general social studies. In some vocational schools, genuine problem orientation has succeeded in breaking down barriers between subjects. Yet, at these levels, the isolation of individual subjects is still the predominant feature.

In higher education, there has been an increasing understanding of the role of general subjects even within rather professionally oriented

studies. Also within the regional colleges general subjects have a fairly strong standing. Yet, such combinations of subjects rarely reach the stage of genuine subject integration, although this is frequently the stated aim.

A new departure is represented by the strong social orientation of the medical studies at the new University of Tromsö. Linked to an orientation towards external practical health service, these studies have integrated many elements of the relevant social sciences. There is also a growing understanding of the role of the social sciences within studies of engineering, agriculture, etc. Even other fields of study show scattered examples of "subject expansion", aiming at the inclusion of certain relevant elements from other traditional subjects.

The regional colleges have strongly emphasized the need for inter-disciplinarity, and their tendency towards problem-oriented studies, often combined with action research projects, has contributed to some genuine cases of subject integration. In the universities, the traditional discipline orientation is still predominant, in teaching as well as in research. To a considerable extent, research institutes aiming at inter-disciplinarity have not been able to find an appropriate location within the organisational framework of the universities. * The gradual integration of such institutes within a broader university framework, including their involvement in essential teaching tasks, is a major issue in Norwegian research policy. However, the new universities, and especially the University of Tromsö, develop organisational patterns at the institute level which, in principle, should at least facilitate the emergence of genuine inter-disciplinary collaboration in research, and possibly also in education at this level.

Adult education courses, with their emphasis on problem and client orientation, have always had elements of subject integration. Courses initiated by professional associations often aim at expanding the scope of professional competence by offering post-work courses in "auxiliary" subjects.

An interesting development is taking place within industry, as a consequence of widespread experiments in industrial democracy and workers' participation in industrial decision-making. One effect of industrial reorganisation, implying the establishment of semi-autonomous groups, etc., is a sharp rise in the demand for education among the workers. Such demands, however, are very specific to the situation of individual workers; they cannot usually be met by educational institutions or adult education organisations as they operate today. Nor are the regular training programmes run by the enterprises themselves an adequate response to this new demand.

The organisational answer, which is now being tried out experimentally, is to leave it to the local trade union to develop its own

* Examples are institutes for peace research, work research, applied social research, regional planning, etc.

educational programme, financed through regular Government subsidies for adult education. Such tailor-made courses are then taught by whatever personnel resources the local union can get hold of, from regular schools, adult education organisations, and other experts, within or outside the enterprises. Potentially, such developments may lead to a new institutional framework for adult education and for lifelong learning, engaging groups which up to now have rarely been reached by such initiatives. Organisationally, an alternative to regular educational institutions, adult education associations and internal training policies of firms may be developed. More than in any other context, the emphasis in this case is on educational approaches with no specific subject basis.

Integration Between Theory and Practice

In principle, specific preparations for vocational practice disappeared from lower secondary education with the introduction of the nine years compulsory school. At the completion of compulsory education therefore the 15- or 16-year-old leavers have no vocational training.

On the other hand, compulsory education has become somewhat more practical in its orientation over the years, emphasizing to some extent problem orientation, and accepting a number of practical activities as legitimate parts of the curriculum. Yet, especially at the lower secondary level, there are still complaints that the new school system is far too theoretical to maintain the interest of a significant proportion of the pupils. For some time a system of tentative "placement" in practical work for a few weeks has been compulsory for all eighth graders. More recently, various forms of combined schooling and work practice for a limited number of problem pupils have been developed. A very small number are active full-time in some work function. The school, however, is still responsible for the pupil until he is sixteen, and must recognize such placements and continuously control the situation of the pupil. Thus, in such cases, the main purpose of vocational activities for the pupil is clearly remedial.

The vocational part of upper secondary education has traditionally fairly close relationships with representatives of the economy. Representatives of various branches are members of advisory councils for different types of vocational schools. Individual schools may also established specific relationships with individual firms, and Government subsidies may be given to courses provided by enterprises, when such courses follow the main criteria laid down for similar courses within the schools.

In recent years, most vocational schools have had to adapt to a situation in which the general educational qualifications of their pupils have rapidly increased. This is not only the case with school recruiting

directly from compulsory education, where two extra years of general education have been added. Even other schools, traditionally requiring higher entry standards, have seen their pupils steadily improving their general qualifications. Some of these schools, such as technical colleges and colleges for social work, have gradually moved towards the post-secondary level, partly because an increasing proportion of their students have graduated from the "gymnasia".

Within the schools, the tendency in recent years has been towards more generalized subjects, and somewhat less emphasis on specific vocational skills, the objective being the preparation for a greater and rapidly changing variety of occupational opportunities. In addition, more general subjects have also been introduced in vocational training, the argument being that when the pupils enter the economy they should be in a position to master their own situation in organisational and political terms.

There has been a gradual movement away from the traditional practice requirements for entry to somewhat more advanced technical studies. On the other hand practice periods during the studies, and sometimes for a transition period between study and full work responsibility, have been developed in many fields. By and large, the desire to widen the scope and theoretical depth of vocational training has not led to less emphasis on close contacts with the realities of work life.

In a previous chapter we presented as an example the case of a vocational school actively engaging in the solution of practical problems in local industry. At present, this case represents a level of integration of subjects, of theory and practice, and of school and community, which is significantly above the average for vocational schools. Yet this experiment may point towards a role and modes of operation likely to be aimed at by many vocational schools in the future.

The gymnasium is still a predominantly theoretical school, though a few examples may be found of problem-oriented action projects in such fields as environment, local social affairs and local history. The emergence of a number of institutionally integrated comprehensive schools at this level should, in principle, offer new possibilities for integration of theory and practice within such units. A number of so-called "combined" two-year courses at the upper secondary level already represent a mixture of practical and theoretical education, which may be extended in both a vocational and a theoretical direction. For many pupils they may serve as an interesting alternative to a purely theoretical or a purely vocational form of training at the upper secondary level, keeping options open for the future.

At the post-secondary level, the regional colleges try to develop close relationships with the economy in their regions. They also strive to maintain a high level of awareness of economic social environmental and cultural problems facing their districts. A variety of research

projects, making extensive use of the students and frequently action-oriented, have already been launched by the regional colleges, as part of their pedagogical approach.

Other institutions at this level, such as teacher colleges and colleges of social work, maintain close relationships with professional activities in their fields, including periods of professional practice during the studies under supervision by practitioners. This is somewhat less usual in university studies, though exceptions are found in medical studies and certain other fields.

A general feature of the Norwegian system, as compared with many other countries, is the rather extensive role of the formal school system in practical work-related training. This is partly due to the size structure of Norwegian enterprises, which in many branches hampers the development of major programmes for on-the-job training. The general attitude of industry is often that their training programmes should primarily concentrate on skills specific to the enterprise, while more generally marketable skills should be provided by public institutions for vocational training. Correspondingly, Government policies may be influenced by a fear that training within industry tends to be too skill-specific and also too oriented towards objectives as seen by the managerial layer in industry. Government policy in this field aims at providing a basis for better economic performance, but not only in the terms defined by industrial leadership.

Correspondingly, in most forms of education in Norway one may find what appears to be an ambivalence on the issue of theory/practice. On the one hand, there is a rejection of the idea that education should primarily be seen as a training for economic roles, as defined by the temporary organisation of work life. On the other hand there is a strong feeling that education should be relevant, both from the point of view of the individual and from that of society, and in this context work performance is necessarily highly significant. Ideologically, the present Norwegian Government is highly committed to a policy of profound respect for practical work, an attitude found also far beyond the adherents of the party in power. However, it is not always easy to reconcile the notion of up-grading practical education, and that of working for fundamental changes in the conditions for which practical education is the preparation. The solution may perhaps be found in a statement by the present Minister of Education, which was roughly as follows: "We cannot train people solely for the kind of jobs offered by industry today. We must train them for jobs as we think they ought to be. Maybe that is the best way of changing jobs in the right direction."

Integration of Schools and the Local Community

The Norwegian school system is relatively centralized, in the sense that most lines of influence are vertical. Individual schools

normally pay more attention to instructions from superior administrative levels and the example of other similar schools, than to special needs and interests of the surrounding community. The reason for this is a firm belief in the justness of equal opportunities for all children. The assumed interests of the child are usually preferred to what the local community sees as its own interests.

Recent years have shown strong sentiments againsts such policies. It has been argued that schools should encourage children to stay in their local communities and to cherish the traditional occupations of such communities. Even the confrontation with ideas foreign to the local community, or with opportunities involving a temptation to migrate, has been opposed by certain groups.

Official educational policies have never gone to the extreme in such respects. There has been, however, an attempt to reverse the tendency towards centralization of compulsory education in relatively large school units, so as to let small localities have a chance to maintain their own schools. In practice, this has sometimes meant the intervention of central Government in decisions by municipalities concerning the localization of their schools.

At the upper secondary and post-secondary level the localization and distribution of school units is the subject of a heated and continuous debate, as indicated previously. Comprehensive upper secondary schools are said to be more suited to serve local needs than a scattered network of specialized school units. Correspondingly, regional colleges oriented towards a comprehensive response to regional needs for advanced education are regarded as a more appropriate arrangement for local involvement than small, professionally weak and isolated school units.

To some extent this debate is related to the wider conception of a local community. To some political parties, especially those in the middle of the traditional political spectrum, local communities are primarily quite small units within which individuals know each other and maintain a fairly stable structure of social relationships. Such units are also more conducive to the kind of primary and small scale secondary economic activities favoured by those political groupings. In general the social climate in such units may also be more suited to the maintenance of traditional values highly cherished by many.

Other groups, including the majority of the present Labour Party, have tended to emphasize what appear to be more viable local units in economic and social terms, accepting the need for the emergence of local centres serving a wider region, and emphasizing the need for strengthening such local centres in order to maintain the attraction of the region as a whole. The latter approach may, of course, be less suited for the maintenance of a large population in agriculture or in the fisheries for example, and it may reinforce societal features associated with urban milieus, even if on a rather small scale in a Norwegian context. The latter approach may also tend to rely more

on the cultural homogeneity of the Norwegian population, reacting against what is felt to be an exaggerated notion of regional differences.

Yet the general tendency in recent years has definitely been towards the building up of links between educational institutions and the local community. In primary education, this is partly a question of developing school-parent relationships, and partly one of increasing local autonomy within the school, and for the local school authorities.

At the higher educational levels, institutional involvement in local community affairs is highly advocated, and to some extent practised by a number of institutions. The complexities of such institutional practices, including sometimes rather hostile reactions by the local community, are only gradually coming to be realized. On the other hand, there is obviously much scope for the development of fruitful lines of communication between local institutions and the schools, and for a wider range of discretion by local and regional political bodies in relation to their local school systems. An inherent conflict in such a development is the apparent incompatibility of more autonomy for teachers and pupils within an institution on the one hand, and more autonomy for local political authorities on the other, since this may lead to even less institutional autonomy than at present. Institutional involvement in local affairs often has the flavour of advising the community on what serves its interests best, sometimes in forms not too readily appreciated by local opinion. Interference by local political authorities, on the other hand, is not too welcome by the school units, which usually prefer the long distance governance of central authorities to the much closer surveillance of local political bodies.

Norwegian policy in this field is rather tentative for the time being, trying to find a new balance among the various interest groups involved. Most probably, community involvement will be kept at a moderate level, maintaining some vertical features of a school system as a shelter for the practical performance at the local level, and accepting an increasing degree of institutional autonomy. Yet, these are projections of current policies, and development in other directions can certainly not be excluded in the future.

Aims of Integration Policies

The striving towards integration in various forms is an important feature of Norwegian educational policies. It has often been argued for as if integration had a value in itself. Yet, actual political efforts reflect a more sophisticated conception of integration as a political means, and more recently, many groups have openly rejected the value of integration.

In the political debate, integration issues have rarely been thrashed out in all their aspects, and discussions on such issues have often been rather confusing. Somewhat simplified, one might still identify the following issues underlying efforts towards integration:

Practical inter-dependencies among various activities are assumed to require efforts towards behavioural consistency, and integration is seen as a means of achieving this.

Among a variety of such inter-dependencies, one would like for political reasons to strengthen some and to weaken others, and various forms of integration are seen as appropriate means to this effect.

Keeping activities separate often means maintaining a difference in terms of quality, value, prestige, etc. Integration is often seen as a means of breaking down the barriers which maintain such distinctions.

Tendencies towards specialization and excessive division of labour and responsibility are not only preventing adequate solutions to important societal problems, but also contribute to an increasing alienation of individuals in relation to their jobs and their social environment. Integration may be seen as a means of correcting the trend towards excessive specialization.

The consistency issue is an old-timer in organisational discussions, revitalized by current fashions of systems analysis, management by objectives, programme budgeting and other stream-lining devices for organisational purposes. In education, the prime rationale for emphasis on system consistency is the fact that children move between various parts of the educational system. Such transfer should not cause too much trouble and confusion for individual children. Viewed in isolation, such consistency is certainly desirable, the question remaining, however, whether it can be best obtained by what we call integration.

Quite often, "integrated" activities tend to go on as before, the only difference being that a new link has been established in the vertical chain of command, in the form of a specific co-ordinating body integrating the activities. Transfers between vocational and theoretical courses may not necessarily be facilitated by the organisation of such courses within the same school unit. Values and performance standards adopted by each of the two forms of education may survive undisturbed, or even be reinforced, by their involuntary merger at the organisational level. Alternatively, the socially and intellectually most powerful of the two parties may come to dominate the other, imposing its own values and standards of performance upon the latter. The genuine integration thus achieved may not, therefore, correspond to the form of behavioural consistency wanted.

Generally, the value of consistency within a broader field of activity cannot be judged in isolation. It depends on the behavioural changes achieved, one possibility being that behaviour within the field can be judged as being consistently worse than before. "Consistency" as an objective is as meaningless as "productivity" when organisational objectives have not been defined. Genuine integration implies the acceptance of a common goal structure, governing behaviour in all

integrated parts. However, from a political point of view, the best solution will often be a variety of goal structures operating within a wider field of activity, certainly with a fair amount of common ground for the various parts, but also with a number of conflicting interests.

Usually, an institution or an activity is dependent upon interaction with a variety of other institutions and activities. Integration with one or a few of such external units may certainly facilitate interaction with them, but is also likely to complicate interactions with other external units. The value of integration in such a case is clearly dependent upon what interactions are thought to be most important. In many cases, the best solution may be seen as maintaining a semi-autonomous institution or activity, capable of balancing the variety of concerns involved in its interaction with other institutions and activities.

Thus, the traditional high degree of integration between universities and the gymnasia clearly favoured values and standards cherished by the former. At the same time, it prevented the gymnasia from serving all the needs of those graduating from lower levels, and of those interested in a combination of theoretical and practical education at the upper secondary level. The question in this case is clearly not more or less integration, but integration in what direction, and the answer must necessarily be based on political considerations.

In general conflict theory, integration is often said to require the strengthening of the weakest party involved. Otherwise, some forms of co-ordination may, in fact, lead to subordination to the strongest party. Such risks have obviously played a role in the Norwegian discussion about integration of educational institutions at the upper secondary and post-secondary level. What are normally thought of as the "weakest" parties in this context, have usually not been so in terms of economic resources. Vocational schools, for instance, often have as much as two to three times more funds available per pupil than theoretical schools, and special schools for handicapped children have up to ten times more resources per child than ordinary schools at the compulsory level. However, beyond the economic resources, formal teacher qualifications may play a role in this context, but value judgements external to the school system play the principal role. The underlying question may be to what extent organisational measures within the school system, such as integration efforts, can at all remedy distinctions created and maintained by society at large. The answer in our current debate is definitely that by themselves purely educational measures cannot remove such differences. Continuation of such efforts, however, is based on the assumption that they represent at least a necessary condition for reduced social discrimination, even if they have to be combined with a variety of measures in other fields of policy in order to constitute a "sufficient" condition.

This leads us to the more fundamental questions involved in the integration issue: is it just tilting against windmills to strive towards

educational integration as long as segregation and discrimination are predominant in society at large? Traditionally, "higher" and "lower" levels of education have very different prestige in society, a phenomenon closely related to the selection process taking place within the educational system. A major and long-standing feature of educational policy in Norway has been to counteract such distinctions. Resource-wise, "lower" levels have been built up, the qualifications and salaries of their teachers have been improved, relative to those of other teaching groups, and no part of the teaching profession has been permitted to become a "female" occupation. Values and attitudes held at the "lower" educational levels have gradually penetrated upwards within the system, replacing to some extent the traditional dominance of what mat be termed "the academic culture". Vertical integration within the system has tended to be oriented downwards, a feature reflecting predominant political strength in Norwegian society.

Gradually, the separation of various types of educational institutions from each other, reflecting the different social strata in the population, is disappearing in a common institutional framework, a process which still goes on. Such measures of educational policy to some extent parallel political measures in other fields such as social policy and general distribution policy. Yet, as long as class distinctions still exist in society at large, and remain reflected in our criteria for school performance, social discrimination within schools can hardly be fully remedied by measures of organisational integration. On the other hand, general discriminatory features in society may easily be reinforced by the maintenance of such distinctions within the school system.

Efforts to[illegible] the integration of subjects of theory and practice in education wi[illegible]rtainly continue, in spite of its incompatibility with the discipline structure built into the organisation of universities and the whole field of research. Efforts in this direction are indispensable if education is ever to become centred on pupils and on problems relevant to them, instead of submitting to the artificial structuring of problems established by the role of academic research. Questions related to the basic meaning of education hinge upon developments in this direction.

It is fairly obvious that such developments will also bring out more clearly the political nature of educational activities. The structure of academic disciplines and of professional expertise is at the same time a sheltering mechanism for undisputed scientific and professional authority, and a means by which scientific and educational institutions are denied an open partisan role in political conflicts in society at large. Modification of such traditional structures and their partial replacement by problem orientation and client relevance threatens the established balance in this field, calling for a new definition of institutional roles.

There is little support in Norway for the idea of legitimizing a more active political role for scientific and educational institutions. However, the political left is faced with the traditional dilemma of cherishing "grass roots" attitudes, and at the same time depending upon the support of intellectual groups favouring more elitist conceptions of political leadership roles for educational institutions. Only the future can decide what part of this political platform will prove to be more indispensable. Such conflicts also concern professional roles. The increasing acceptance of professional responsibility for the total consequences of one's professional activities clearly points towards a generalization of the preparation for professional work, a modification of specific "professional profiles" and the breakdown of rigid barriers between professions. It may be questioned whether this can be achieved solely by the integration of hitherto separate and specialized educational institutions. Yet, it can hardly be denied that the maintenance of such an institutional framework in professional education will work against the gradual achievement of more generalized professional roles and practices.

Correspondingly, widening the scope of vocational training will hardly in itself break the trend towards specialization of labour and alienation at work. Yet, the experimentation in recent years with organisational structures in industry, shipping and services involving a definite reversal of the specialization trend has clearly shown that educational experience may be a limiting factor in the further development of such efforts. The same applies to the gradual move towards general participation in and workers control of decision-making processes within industry. Again, both the extent and the form of educational experiences may prove a main bottle-neck.

Integration efforts in the field of education are thus deeply embedded in the general policy of social change characterizing Norway for several decades. Further clarification of the usefulness of various forms of integration for different policy aims is certainly needed, and will eventually facilitate more selective priorities in future efforts. More comprehensive strategies, involving policies far beyond education, are also likely to emerge. There can be no doubt about the complexities of such policies, and temporary set-backs may easily arise. Yet abandoning such policies would mean abandoning such fundamental issues as the fight for a more egalitarian society, both in terms of economic conditions and access to power. It would also mean abandoning the fight against contemporary trends towards technocracy and increasing alienation for the majority of the population, in relation to their jobs and their community, as well as to educational institutions.

VI

INNOVATION AND PLANNING

Introduction

Innovations imply changes in existing conditions, their impact depending upon how deep they go, their speed of implementation and how widely they are applied. Central to any innovation policy is the question who is influenced by such factors. Innovation may be compatible with interests and values held by all groups involved, and may then easily be accepted. More frequently, however, innovations are felt to threaten the values of at least some groups or individuals within an organisation, and are thus likely to meet resistance. Most innovations either stem from a shift in the organisational power structure, or lead to such a shift. The consequent problems must be solved by the decision-making structure of the organisational system.

In chapter II we have discussed three main types of policy measures: legal, financial and informative. In educational reforms, all these measures are used, and their functions are often complementary to each other. The combination of such measures, however, varies from field to field. Formal rights and obligations must be secured by legal means. Financial measures are essential in creating real possibilities for individuals. Informative means are useful in assisting individuals in making appropriate choices and identifying alternatives relevant to their needs.

The specific set of reform activities which may be grouped under the heading "innovation" is usually best served by informative measures, though legal and financial means may also be applied. In this chapter we will more specifically discuss the following approaches to innovation:

- the use of Royal Commissions;
- field experimentation;
- research;
- planning.

Finally, we will discuss whether there is a tendency towards a shift in the use of such measures.

Royal Commissions

Looking back at the major educational reforms in Norway over the last twenty years, the reform work tends to follow certain characteristic phases: the fairly obvious starting point is some manifest

discontent with existing conditions. Reforms are wanted, at least by some groups. But reforms within a complex system, in which many interests are involved, take time and comprehensive considerations. A favourite instrument for sorting out the issues, generating proposals and sometimes also for gaining time, is the Royal Commission.

The work of the Royal Commission may last for quite a long time, frequently from two to four years. It is partly a matter of problems being complex, but also a reflection of the fact that the key people one wants involved are mostly people who are also extremely busy in other fields. When a Royal Commission has completed its work, its report must be presented to interested parties for comments. It is then also accessible to the general public, and a major public debate may result. The formal handling of the report by interested parties will take some time, often as much as half a year in the case of an important report.

A Commission report may initiate a series of practical experiments in order to try out alternative solutions advocated by the Commission. In education there are many examples of this, which again imply rather time-consuming operations. Experiments need planning, implementation and evaluation in the process and after completion. If the experiments in question involve major structural changes, e. g. the trying out of new models of educational organisation, major experimental efforts and substantial resources are needed.

The report by a Royal Commission, comments by interested parties and the results of possible practical field experiments may eventually lead to the preparation by the Ministry of a white paper or a proposition to Parliament. The parliamentary phase usually takes six months to a year, but often more. If proposals are agreed to, there follows an implementation phase of varying length. If Parliament is presented with a white paper, the endorsement by Parliament of the general principles involved in the document may lead to formal proposals to Parliament; involving specific legal or financial decisions at a latter stage. It should be clear from the above that such reform procedures are rather time-consuming. A typical case would be the recent reforms of upper secondary education. A Royal Commission studying the structure and content of the gymnasia was appointed in 1962, and its report was completed in 1967. In the meantime, another Royal Commission, established in 1965, was asked to examine the educational needs for the whole age group 16-19 years. The latter Commission presented three main reports, the last one in 1970.

These Commission reports led to extensive field experiments. The first projects, mainly relating to new forms of teaching organisation and decision-making in the gymnasia, started in 1968. The following year other projects were launched for trying out a new general structure for the gymnasia and various forms of integration between theoretical and vocational training at this level. By June 1972 new legislation for all upper secondary education had been

proposed to Parliament by the Ministry. The unstable political situation delayed the approval by Parliament until June 1974. However, the new legislation will not be put into practice until a while paper on the content and curricula of upper secondary education has been discussed in Parliament.

There have also been Royal Commissions on pre-school education, compulsory education, post-secondary education and adult education. They have undertaken extensive studies and presented far-reaching proposals for change.

As regards compulsory education, the reform procedure was somewhat different. Following the work of a Royal Commission around 1950, field experiments were started by 1955. Temporary new legislation in 1959 opened up the possibility for local authorities to introduce a nine years compulsory school. The general legislation on this point was prepared by a Royal Commission of 1963, and the general legislation making the nine years comprehensive school compulsory for the whole country was passed by Parliament in 1969. However, at that time most of the municipalities had already introduced such a school system, acting on the basis of the 1959 legislation, and under the Special School Experimentation Act of 1954.

Royal Commissions are not only used when major structural changes are envisaged. More limited problems are often handled by Royal Commissions, or by the more modest "Ministerial Commissions". This "commission strategy for reform" has been subject to some criticism in recent years: it is said to take too much time, to be too expensive and to be too much of an ad hoc operation. The slogan of "rolling reforms" has been launched as an alternative. The latter would imply that existing administrative machinery would to a great extent be responsible for the preparatory work for a step-by-step reform process.

In recent years there has been a tendency for the Ministries to develop their own capacity for practical research work. This has meant that existing Royal Commissions have been able to draw upon background information provided through ministerial research efforts.

The extensive use of commissions in the preparation of reforms is not only because they are useful mechanisms for ad hoc research and evaluation. An essential function of the commissions is to bring the most important interested parties into the preparatory work at an early stage. Potential conflicts may thus often be reconciled during the preparatory phase, or at least identified and clarified. Furthermore, various interested parties go through a learning period, and gain the time needed for gradual adaptation to new conditions. A more recent feature is that some commissions present to the general public at an early stage a report setting out the main issues, in order to provoke general public debate, which may serve as feed-back to the commission in its further work. The pedagogical effects in this case may be similar to those found among organised interests represented within the commission.

These functions of Royal Commissions make it rather unlikely that they will be fully replaced by other reform procedures. Internal research within the Ministries does not offer special opportunities for problem solving, and does not have the pedagogical effects of Commission work. Ministerial in-house research, and perhaps even more affiliated practical experimentation, may play an increasing role in providing background information for reform activities. Yet the political function of finding operational compromises and defining clear-cut conflicts of interests needs other mechanisms.

Field Experiments

The organised use of field experiments has long existed in Norwegian administration in such areas as agriculture. There are, however, some pioneering aspects about the School Experimentation Act which was passed by Parliament in 1954. * This law makes it possible under certain circumstances to dispense with the regular school legislation, on condition that the experiments in question are well-founded and of general interest to the school.

The legislation also provides for a specific council to assist the Ministry in initiating and controlling experimental activities. The National Council for Innovation in Education has nine members. Its secretariat includes both permanent personnel and personnel called in from positions in the school system for a limited period. The total secretariat staff amounts to some 40 to 50 persons.

The field experiments have mostly focused on those parts of the school system where public authorities are most closely involved - compulsory and upper secondary education - though some experiments have also been launched in pre-school education and teacher training. Institutions at the post-secondary level are supposed to manage their own innovation activities, in line with the institutional autonomy granted them.

No institution can be directed to engage in experiments. Experiments are options offered: it is up to the individual teacher, school or local authority to take the initiative to undertake experiments. The theory behind this is that a basis of local interest is needed for experiments to succeed. If there is a Hawthorne effect, it is there to be used. Normally, there is no problem in interesting local groups in the initiation of practical experiments.

Experiments are often costly, requiring extra inputs of materials, teachers and organisational efforts. The approval of an experiment often involves the provision of such extra resources. This is not a strong incentive as the extra efforts of these locally responsible for experimentation are hardly fully-compensated. Yet, the incentive

* This year an Act has been passed instituting similar organisational mechanisms for social and health institutions.

is part of a deliberate policy to encourage experimental attitudes at the operational level within the school system. Eventually, it may become part of a teacher's professional self-expectation that he shall contribute somewhat to the development of his profession through experimental activities.

Such incentives, however, may have some unwanted effects. They may cause problems for the evaluation of experiments, and especially for their eventual generalization. Special incentives are reserved for pioneering efforts; if resulting innovations are applied generally, additional resources are not always provided. An example of this is provided by the new types of upper secondary institutions, which received significantly increased resources during the experimentation period. When the principles developed through these experiments are generally applied to the whole system of upper secondary education, the input of teacher resources especially will be more limited than in the experimental period. This raises problems both in terms of the range of optional courses being offered by individual institutions, and the extent to which social pedagogical measures can be developed.

Local educational authorities, individual schools and teachers may to some extent undertake experiments within the framework of existing regulations, without any specific permission. Such experimentation is partly institutionalized through the various arrangements for pedagogical guidance, social pedagogical measures and pedagogical development within individual schools. There are also other, more informal possibilities for institutions wishing to experiment with their teaching design, as long as it does not require additional expenditure for public authorities.

At present we are in a process of modifying existing legislation and regulations, leaving more discretion to local authorities and individual schools. This means that many types of experiments which previously would have needed the use of the School Experimentation Act, can in the future be undertaken within existing regulations. New pedagogical centres established regionally also have an important task in stimulating developmental work within individual schools. Such developments, together with the implementation of major structural reforms, are bound to influence the role of the National Council for Innovation in Education. Most of its work up till now has concerned the forms of the new nine years comprehensive school and the new structures in upper secondary education. When the latter is completed, other issues must come to the forefront in the work programme of the Council. In its report to Parliament on the Council's activities in 1973, the Ministry comments as follows:

> The Council has up to now played a leading role in providing professional and pedagogical substance to the new important school reforms; nine years compulsory education, the new upper secondary schools and the pedagogical colleges. This work is not yet completed. The new curriculum, teaching methods and forms

of collaboration implied by the new legislation have to be developed, within the framework of the annual educational budgets.

Yet, beyond this stage, the future functions of this key institutional mechanism in educational experimentation in Norway have not been defined. Other advisory councils to the Ministry on matters relating to the various parts of the school system have also been involved in experimental activities, mostly in close collaboration with the National Council for Innovation in Education. More flexible regulations for ordinary school activities may obscure the distinction between variations in everyday school work, and more formal field experiments.

In view of the total resources devoted to education in Norway, those spent on experimentation are rather limited. However, the meaning of such figures may be somewhat obscure. Just before the final legislation introducing the nine years comprehensive school as a compulsory system in 1969, most school units at this level were in fact run under the School Experimentation Act. Additional costs arising from the new features of the experiment amounted to substantial sums, which were never registered as funds for experiments. Formally, the budget appropriations for this year include 20.7 million N. Kr. for school experiments, 2.9 million N. Kr. to the administration of the National Council for Innovation in Education and 1.5 million N. Kr. for research purposes. In addition, funds are provided for experiments, research and development by local school authorities, by research councils and through the regular budgets of institutions for higher education and research.

The role of the National Council for Innovation in Education in educational reform activities has occasionally been the subject of heated debate, partly due to differences in underlying assumptions about the functions of experimentation. According to one view, experiments should prove or disprove that specific innovations are the "right" answer to pertinent problems. The experiments should decide what reforms are "good" and "bad". Reforms should therefore not be implemented until they have been justified by pilot experiments. This should apply, for instance, to the system of nine years comprehensive school units at the upper secondary level.

Another view is that experiments should primarily try out the practical feasibility of politically preferable solutions. Such experiments will also bring out the unexpected consequences of such solutions. The experiments should show whether such solutions function according to expectations, and possible unintended side effects should be brought out. Alternative solutions may well be tried and compared, but within pre-defined limits. The resulting material would not prove what solutions are "best", but would assist politicians and others in making their choice according to their own performances.

To some extent, attitudes towards experiments may also be determined by general attitudes towards the substance of suggested reforms.

Experiments may be conducted in a way which, to some extent, predetermines the outcome. However, they may also serve as an excuse for delaying the implementation of politically controversial ideas on a major scale. Yet, implicit in the discussion is also the assumption that essential educational questions have "professional" answers, according to some "objective" scale of evaluation. According to such views, professional authorities should have far-reaching powers of decision-making within education.

The dissemination of information on experiments and research is important in this context, and may have been somewhat neglected in our reform strategy, in spite of quite extensive publication activities by the National Council for Innovation in Education for example. When the results of experiments are not incorporated in some new legislation, there is the danger that even successful experiments may remain an episode in the life of an individual school. When the experiment is brought to an end and specific support withdrawn, the school may well fall back on previous practices. Reforms not only cost money; they are often very demanding in terms of motivation, stamina, fantasy, hard thinking and efforts to convince the sceptical. Reconciling conflicting interests within an institution disturbed by the introduction of an innovation may also require much effort and ingenuity. The maintenance at a sufficiently high level of such inputs is often more than can be expected from the individual school. Yet, there is no doubt that many Norwegian schools have reached a stage where such innovative activities have become an accepted part of everyday life, while many other institutions have occasionally at least been engaged in some innovative activities. Few Norwegian schools today have not in some way or another been touched by some effects of twenty years of institutionalized experimental activities.

Research

The use of research as a means in educational policy was examined by a special commission appointed by the Norwegian Research Council for Science and the Humanities in 1966. The commission suggested that, in addition to the more traditional channels, funds for educational research should be provided directly by the Ministry of Education. The total resources for educational research should gradually be increased to a level corresponding to 0.5% of the total societal costs of educational activities in Norway, corresponding roughly to 1% of the public budgets for education. As a response to this proposal, and to pressures from teachers' associations and scientific bodies, special appropriations for educational research were included in the budget of the Ministry of Education from 1970 onwards. The amount rose from 1 million N. Kr. the first year to 2 million N. Kr. in 1972 and 1973, then dropped to 1.5 million N. Kr. in 1974, totalling 8 million over a period of 5 years. During the same period, educational projects for slightly over 1 million N. Kr. have been financed through funds provided by the Ministry

of Finance. The research councils appropriated about 2. 5 million N. Kr. over the four-year period 1970-73, and in addition an unknown amount has been made available for educational research through the regular budgets of the universities and the teacher colleges.

Until now research supported by the Ministry of Education has primarily been used for the clarification of issues relating to intended reforms and follow-up for such reforms, the development of material/method systems in some central subjects and - to a smaller extent - action research related to new forms of teaching. The research is mostly conducted within institutes of pedagogy or sociology at the universities, by researchers trained in the corresponding fields. Outside the academic centres, the Work Research Institute in Oslo is involved in this field; partly in the form of action research.

The teacher colleges have previously had few research activities. Their current transformation into three year "pedagogical colleges" is giving new life to the question of research and its integration into the teaching programmes. The predominant idea is that research in such institutions should not be separated from teaching; it should be integrated into the teaching programme in a way that would provide the students with insight into scientific theory and method and some training in scientific work. The scale of projects would have to be small, leaving little room for research in the academic tradition, but emphasizing action orientation. It still remains to be seen how far the teacher colleges will be able to develop their own research image, rather than copy the established traditions of university institutes.

The use of research in the context of educational policy raises a number of problems, including that of the role to be played by public authorities. Special appropriations directly from the ministries can be justified in that they permit a ministry to support research of particular relevance to its policies. The question remains, however, as to how active a ministry should be in defining research tasks. Up till now the Ministry of Education has mainly left it to advisory experts to define priorities among projects initiated by the researchers themselves. This year, however, on the basis of an analysis involving most parts of the Ministry, a list of high priority areas has been publicized by the Ministry. Although researchers are still free to apply for research money even for projects outside the priority areas, the Ministry has declared its intention to give extra weight to projects within such areas. The areas are as follows:

a) Follow-up of the implementation of the curriculum plans for compulsory education.

b) Follow-up of measures for the integration of handicapped pupils in ordinary schools at the compulsory level.

c) Follow-up of the development of new structures in upper secondary education.

d) Relationships between the school and the local community.

e) Examination of the effects of decentralized decision-making within the educational system.

f) Analysis of costly teaching material.

g) Relationships between special education and the future opportunities of individuals with handicaps.

h) Sex differences in education.

i) Mapping of groups benefiting from voluntary adult education.

The extent to which competent researchers will follow the lead thus provided by the Ministry remains to be seen. It should be borne in mind that the Ministry is only one of several sources for the financing of educational research. This system of multiple financial sources has been deliberately constructed so as to allow for a variety of criteria for project evaluation in this field. The existence of other sources applying different sets of criteria is, in fact, a condition for the programmatic approach to the allocation of research money adopted by the Ministry.

Planning

As indicated above, in recent years the ministries have tended to increase their in-house research capacity, often in the form of the establishment of a planning department. The emergence of such departments reflects a commitment to reform policies and certain attitudes to the role of Government administration in this context. An active public reform policy calls for efforts by the administration which go beyond the mere management of political decisions. The administration must be capable of participating in and contributing to the process of developing long-term policies. Planning is not, however, easy to define as an administrative function. Nor is it a simple matter to define the role of "planning" in reform policies.

We would tend to emphasize that planning cannot be seen simply as a set of techniques, applied as a means to achieve given objectives. We cannot simply assume that the politicians set operational objectives in the first place and that the means for achieving them can be left to planners, experts and technocrats. A political process cannot meaningfully be split up into clearly defined phases, such as goal definitions, implementation, follow-up and feed-back. Neither can such phases be allocated among various specialized experts operating within their separate systems. As a consequence, planning cannot be seen as a function to be monopolized by specific bodies within an administrative system. All departments, all central and local elements of an administrative structure should in one form or another take part in planning. Within a ministry, operational departments must maintain responsibilities for planning within their fields, possibly assisted by a specialized planning unit.

The practices in this respect vary quite considerably among Norwegian ministries. The Ministry of Education, having had its planning

department for more than ten years, may be more advanced than many other ministries in defining the tasks of its specialized planning body as primarily a critical, pedagogical function. According to the philosophy adopted by this Ministry, a planning unit should not develop de facto control functions in relation to operational units, on behalf of the political leadership or in terms of assumed expert qualifications. It should exert no formal authority over other units, but offer services to them and contribute to a strengthening of their own planning capabilities.

Such ideas are related to a conception of planning as not primarily concerned with the achievement of maximum consistency and predictability in organisational behaviour. The concept of innovation implies in itself something unpredictable. Furthermore, a policy aiming at genuine participation implies that decisions should not rest with a few at the top of an organisational pyramid. As a consequence, local units must be permitted to pursue their own objectives within reasonable limits. A certain amount of inconsistency and lack of predictability thus become an objective in itself, forming part of the general policy aims at the central level.

In terms of practical consequences for planning activities, such ideas about the planning function lead to strong emphasis upon effective communication, and limited interest in formal techniques with their exclusive and mystifying effects. Active search for alternatives to present policies becomes essential, while too strong involvement in advocating specific policies must be avoided. Forecasts and predictions are used to a limited extent only, analysis of possible consequences of alternative actions much more. Research and experimentation are seen as essential elements in planning, to the extent that they bring out new relevant information and increase understanding of the factors involved in educational processes.

In terms of substance, the specific planning activities of the Department of Research and Planning have gradually moved from concern for pupil numbers and physical facilities, via cost analysis and studies of options and substitution policies, towards a focus on institutional structures, decision-making processes and forms of participation, etc. Parallel to this, an expansion in scope has taken place, gradually bringing general issues of social policy, regional policies, research and cultural policies, etc., into the realm of our planning activities.

Administratively, horizontal collaboration with operational units is the main mode of operation, implying that most "products" of activities by the planning department constitute inputs into an administrative process under the responsibility of the operational departments. Promoting collaboration among departments is an important element of this, as well as providing bridges to activities of other ministries, research institutes, other countries, and international organisations, etc.

Changes in the Use of Innovative Measures

In the general chapter on decision-making processes, we have indicated that we may be facing a shift from legal to financial and particularly informative policy measures. How far this shift goes, in real terms, is not easy to assess, but there can be no doubt that views and attitudes in this field are in the process of changing. One consequence of this is to view legislation as more of a general framework within which institutions at various levels can operate with a significant amount of discretion. Correspondingly, rules and regulations may change in character, taking on an indicative form or may simply serve as guidance, subject to local adjustments or even rejection. Correspondingly, decisions on resource allocation tend to be pushed downwards, maintaining only general lump sum control at the central level. Plans for changes in the system of central Government subsidies for educational activities at the county and municipal level point in this direction.

Even more drastic changes have been proposed by a Royal Commission on reforms in local administration. The Commission suggest a merger of all forms of central Government transfer to the counties and the municipalities into lump sum equalization grants. In principle, this would increase the discretion of local authorities in terms of resource allocation even more. Yet, in the field of education, it may make local educational standards too dependent upon local financial resources to be acceptable to Parliament. The consequence may thus be a reinforcement of legal commitments for the municipality, substituting rigid legal measures for more flexible financial ones. However, the outcome of this discussion is not yet foreseeable.

It should be mentioned, however, that even Norway has been hit by current international fashions of introducing the age-old principles of "scientific management" in public administration. Whether they go by the name of "management by objectives", "programme budgeting" or "accountability", such principles clearly point towards further centralization, and more dominance by specific technocratic groups, especially those legitimized to provide "professional" definitions of effectivity and productivity. If such slogans catch on in political circles, it may mean that the tendencies towards broader participation in decision-making, decentralization and local democracy will be reversed. There is no way of predicting, at present, the final outcome of such controversies.

In education, however, there is a close connection between the forms of organisation and administration and the substance of activities concerned. It appears that the kind of education we want to be offered by our educational institutions can only be developed within a system with extensive local decision-making and participation by all those concerned, and not least by the pupils and students themselves. This inevitably means that legal and financial frames for such activities

must be wide, and that central efforts must be increasingly concentrated on experimentation, research, developmental activities, guidance and indicative supervision.

Essential in this context is the reconciliation of the objective of equality with that of diversification. Individual student institutions and local authorities must have the option to choose to be different. Yet it is an obligation for central Government policy to make sure that such differences do not imply discrimination. Putting the formula "different but equivalent" into practice is no easy political task, but in terms of Norwegian political commitments, it just has to be done.

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