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## **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

### **R. H. Tawney and the reform of English education**

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R. H. TAWNEY AND THE REFORM OF  
ENGLISH EDUCATION.

Thesis submitted for the degree of Ph.D. in  
the University of Wales

J. R. BROOKS

PREFACE

I should like to thank the librarians and staff of the following institutions for their assistance:

Balliol College Library

The British Library of Political and Economic Science

Coleg Harlech Library, North Wales

The Labour Party Library

Lambeth Palace Library

The National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth

The Public Records Office

√ <sup>W</sup> Rewley House Library, Oxford

Rhodes House Library, Oxford

Rugby School Library

St. Mary's College Library, Bangor

University College of North Wales, Bangor

The Library of the Workers' Educational Association,  
Temple House

For permission to consult and quote from unpublished sources I am indebted to the following: The Librarian of the British Library of Political and Economic Science for Tawney's private papers on education; Mr. Michael Vyvyan, Trinity College Cambridge for Tawney's Commonplace Book; Mrs. Creech-Jones, for the Creech-Jones Papers; Balliol College for the Brakenbury Society minutes and a letter from Tawney to A.L. Smith; Lambeth Palace Library for Tawney's letter to Bishop Bell; Miss Claudia Clarke for Tawney's letters to Sir Fred Clarke; the Manchester Guardian for editorial matter; Professor S.G. Raybould for a letter to him by Tawney; and Miss T. Jackson of Temple House for material too voluminous to specify.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the involvement of R.H. Tawney in educational reform during the first half of the twentieth century. It has three main objectives, to demonstrate the broad range of his educational interests, to show the development in his political strategies to achieve progress in education, and to explain the consistency evident in his writings and activities in terms of a theory of equality which absorbed and transcended a Victorian tradition of thinking. The opening chapters show how this theory was tempered by a number of early experiences, including his elitist education, his social and economic investigations, and his involvement in the university tutorial class movement. Later chapters show how it was embodied in his concept of secondary education for all.

The broad outlines of Tawney's educational interests are seen to be fixed during the First World War. He became involved in the campaigns to establish nursery schools and to reform elementary education. The controversy over the continued education clauses of the Fisher Bill led him to give a priority to adolescent education which was in keeping with his earlier interests, and which later found expression in 'Secondary Education For All', in his work for the Consultative Committee, and in the educational campaigns, which reached a climax during the Second World War. His earliest interest, that of university reform, was reflected in his work on the Adult Education Committee of the Ministry of Reconstruction, and later in his evidence for the Royal Commission on Oxford and Cambridge and in his service on the University Grants Committee.

The First World War is also seen to mark an important stage in the development of Tawney's political strategies. This study reveals how his earlier unfruitful condemnation of compromise and political manoeuvring gave way to closer co-operation with the Labour Party, and developed into the adroit use of committees, conferences, the press, deputations and informal discussions to achieve advances in education.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

C.P.B.	Commonplace Book
L.P. - A.C.E.	Labour Party's Advisory Committee on Education
L.P. - A.R.	Labour Party's Annual Report
L.P. - N.E.C.	Labour Party's National Executive Committee
L.S.E.	Papers housed at the British Library of Political and Economic Science
M.G.	The Manchester Guardian
Te. H.P.	Temple House Papers
T.E.S.	Times Education Supplement
W.E.A. - A.R.	Workers' Educational Association Annual Reports
W.E.A. - E.C.	Workers' Educational Association Executive Committee
W.E.A. - F.G.P.C.	Workers' Educational Association Finance and General Purposes Committee
W.E.A. - C.C.	Workers' Educational Association Central Council

CHAPTER ONE

AN ELITIST EDUCATION

Richard Henry Tawney was born in 1880, when a national system of education was still struggling into existence. The Education Act of 1870 had scarcely been implemented and Mundella's Act establishing compulsory education had just reached the statute book. Such advances, however, meant little to the class into which he was born and whose sons enjoyed an education of greater duration and quality than either of the Acts could offer. Accident of birth had destined him to enjoy an elitist education at Rugby and Balliol, far removed from the elementary working class education with whose reform he became so closely associated.

Tawney was born into an upper middle class family, which had established its social position long before the dawn of the industrial revolution. For over two centuries, the Tawney family had used its social privileges to assist the less fortunate. In the age of imperialism, this concern was expressed by Tawney's father, Charles Tawney, who had entered the Indian Educational Service, formed to found schools and universities.<sup>1</sup> In more distant times,<sup>2</sup> several generations of Richard Tawneys had practised their philanthropy, either as mayors or aldermen of Oxford, through the provision of almshouses in the city, and by other 'charitable works'. R.H. Tawney was never drawn towards the idea of imperial service, as was his close friend and later brother-in-law, William Beveridge.

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1. C.H. Tawney. b.1837 the son of Richard Tawney, Vicar of Willoughby, married Catherine Constance 1867. Educated at Rugby and Trinity College, Cambridge. Bell University Scholar 1857. Davies University Scholar 1858. Scholar of Trinity (1858) and Fellow of Trinity 1860. Appointed Asst. Prof. in Presidential College (1864) and was three times Director of Public Instruction, Bengal, translated from Sanskrit. d.1922.
  2. A Monumental Inscription in Binsey Church, Oxford, records the burial between 1717 and 1800 of five members of the Tawney family, all of whom have the Christian name Richard and were noted for their 'charitable benefactions'. In fairly recent times, another member of the Tawney family became lady mayor of Oxford.

He shared the love of Oxford of his more distant forebears but for him it had a meaning which far outshone their isolated acts of philanthropy. It became his spiritual home, the source of his inspiration, and was at the centre of his vision of a culture which transcended all differences of class, and which united the industrial north to the south. Its university had a service to perform for the nation, undreamt of by the earlier generations of Tawneys who had made their wealth in the sordid world of banking.<sup>1</sup> If Tawney never glanced back into the history of the Oxfordshire Tawneys it was because no radicalism stirred among them. The Tawneys who allegedly<sup>2</sup> fought at Naseby and Marston Moor were more of his ilke.

Tawney's was not a discontented boyhood. There was no sign in his early years of the radicalism which was to jar with the family tradition. He was neither close nor hostile to his father, who was an 'ironical, taciturn scholar'.<sup>3</sup> His greatest companions were his younger sister and his mother, and it was they who were affected most deeply by his departure from 'Southlands', Weybridge,

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1. Tawney had little respect for those who spent their lives in Finance such as the Richard Tawney, Civil Engineer, who in 1819 bought a major share with his brother in a Banbury Bank. L.S. Pressnell in 'Country Banking in the Industrial Revolution' (p.34-36,56) refers to the financial activities of the Tawney Family.
  2. Tawney preferred to think of his ancestors as humble people fighting for ideals. He was scornful of social position and title. When an American geneologist presented him with evidence that he was heir to an extinct Medieval barony, Tawney was neither interested nor impressed. (Vyvyan to author 21st May 1974). It is likely that his connection with the people of substance in Oxford goes further back than Ashton supposes in his obituary to Tawney. (Proc. Brit. Acad. 1962, p.492). Tawney's spiritual roots were in Oxford and in his last letters, he often comments on the fact that he is no longer able to make as many visits to the city as he once did (e.g. Tawney to Mrs. Lindsay, January 31st 1961).
  3. M. Vyvyan to author May 21st 1974.

where the family had settled after its return from India,<sup>1</sup> for Rugby in 1894. There was no rebelliousness. He was a reticent youth who found his greatest satisfaction in his classical studies and in whom an interest in social problems was just being awakened, especially under the influence of J.L. Paton, the tutor of the Lower Bench.

Tawney entered Rugby when it was experiencing 'some sort of golden age in the bright evening of the Victorian era'.<sup>2</sup> Thomas Arnold was long since dead but the glory which was Rugby's at the end of the nineteenth century was essentially his. Tawney excelled in the classical subjects which Arnold had made central to the Rugby curriculum. The school magazine, 'Meteor', records the impressive list of Tawney's successes. In 1896, he won the school prize for Latin verse; in 1897 he took the Lower Bench Latin prose prize and in the following year added further prizes in Latin lyrics and Upper Bench Latin prose. His crowning achievements came in 1899 when he won the headmaster's prize for Greek iambics, the prize for Latin hexameters and shared the honour with another pupil of establishing a school record for classical scholarships to Balliol. Such a fine achievement led Frank Fletcher, his tutor in the Upper Bench, to conclude that Tawney was one of the ablest scholars of his time.<sup>3</sup>

It was not a whim that had led Arnold to attach such importance to the classics. He considered their value in the light of what he perceived to be the needs of the age. 'First, religion

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1. Tawney was born in Calcutta. His father on his return became a Librarian at the Indian Office.
  2. Hope-Simpson 'Rugby since Arnold', p.94.
  3. Frank Fletcher 'After Many Days' p.69 and p.89.

and moral principle; secondly gentlemanly conduct; thirdly, intellectual ability'.<sup>1</sup> Successive headmasters, including James and Percival under whom Tawney gained great self-confidence, accepted Arnold's priorities. There was a general recognition by both staff and pupils alike that Arnold's achievement lay not in introducing new forms or structures but in redirecting old systems and traditions to serve a new and moral purpose. Arnold was a moral reformer following Christian ideals, who intended to establish at Rugby a truly Christian society in microcosm.<sup>2</sup> Thus Tawney grew up in a society in which religion and education, godliness and learning were regarded as two sides of the same coin. Virtue was to be found in altruistic principles, loyalty, reverence, humility, service and self discipline. Sin was present in all egotistical impulses. The study of Latin and Greek was regarded as the best means of inculcating such virtues.

William Temple, Tawney's closest friend at Rugby, summed up this ideal in the following words

'Before all comes the (Rugby's) influence on other Schools. Here it far surpasses any. First there is Arnold who clearly put character before brains as the aim of education and made the senior boys his colleagues for securing it .... Etonians say that Rugby forces boys' moral development so that they cease growth later'.<sup>3</sup>

Frank Fletcher believed that there was insufficient 'spontaneity about the Rugby virtue'.<sup>4</sup> However there was no arid moral climate.

1. A.P. Stanley 'The Life and Correspondence of Thomas Arnold' Vol.1. p.100.
2. An excellent study of Arnold's aims is to be found in D. Newsome's 'Godliness and Learning'.
3. Iremonger 'William Temple' p.13. Tawney was said to have met Temple on his first day at Rugby, on Rugby railway station.
4. Fletcher, Op.Cit. p.79.

The Arnoldian emphasis on moral tone impressed itself on Tawney because of the way in which it was translated by such people as Paton, Fletcher, Whitelaw and Bradby.

J.L. Paton had a great influence upon Tawney. Mansbridge has recalled how 'they (Tawney and Temple) both came under the influence of J.L. Paton, a great natural Christian who was a Rugby teacher and whose father, Dr. Paton, gave the first £50 to the W.E.A.'<sup>1</sup> Paton left Rugby for University College School and later Manchester Grammar School in 1898, when Tawney had just completed a year in Paton's Lower Bench. So struck was Tawney with his unusual gifts and qualities that later, when Lloyd George feared that Fisher would decline the post of President of the Board of Education in 1916, Tawney recommended Paton for the position.<sup>2</sup> Paton<sup>3</sup> cared little for convention, was intolerant of insincerity and slackness of standards and emphasised the dignity of manual work and the importance of community service. He was 'deeply interested in what used to be called the lower classes'.<sup>4</sup> If at this time thoughts about social reform were stirring in Tawney's mind it was the result of Paton's influence. Paton could be seen parading the streets of Rugby in charge of a troop of the Boy's Brigade, cycling off to take charge of a meeting of local non-conformists, organising educational courses for working men, and generally concerning himself with the under-privileged sections of society.

Paton encouraged the idea of school settlements and social work. In Tawney's day,<sup>5</sup> the most important social work supported

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1. A Mansbridge in a review of Iremonger's 'William Temple' 'The Highway' January 1949, p.77.
  2. Thomas Jones, 'Whitehall Diary' Volume 1. p.12.
  3. H.C. Barnard's 'A Great Headmaster: John Lewis Paton (1863-1946)' (British Journal of Educational Studies Vol. XI 1962) gives a full and intimate picture of Paton.
  4. Ibid. p.6.
  5. The material for this paragraph comes from 'Meteor' 1894-1899



by Rugby was the Home Mission. This raised money for two boys' clubs, one in Notting Hill and the other in Birmingham. Each summer about 90 to 100 boys from each of these clubs were taken to a country camp, which was attended also by Rugby boys. Thus Tawney had experience of summer camps organised for working class children long before he became secretary to the Children's Country Holiday Fund.<sup>1</sup> Members of the Notting Hill Club visited the school each summer for an afternoon of games versus the School, and to give a display, such as a parade of the bugle band at the Home Mission's annual general meeting. There is no record of Tawney having taken part in the games or having lodged in London at Rugby House in order to help staff the Notting Hill Club, but long before he followed Caird's advice to work at Toynbee Hall, he was accustomed to thinking of service to the less fortunate members of the community, in terms of assisting in the work of settlements.

However Paton's influence on Tawney was less immediate than that of Fletcher and Whitelaw, his housemaster. Fletcher had recently sat at the feet of Caird at Balliol, and gave Tawney a foretaste of Balliol's Greats course.<sup>2</sup> He communicated his intense interest in English verse and in the classics so that Tawney came to look upon Balliol rather than his father's college at Cambridge, as the next step in his educational career. Whitelaw also encouraged Tawney's interest in the classics and urged him to sit a Balliol scholarship. In 1899, he gained a scholarship and left Rugby for Oxford. Rugby had left its mark upon him even though he was later to condemn the class-basis of the public school system.

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1. See p. p.16-17

2. See footnote p. 9

Though the public schools reflected and perpetuated social divisions, Tawney did not advocate their reform until they had become a subject for national debate during the Second World War, nearly fifty years after he had left Rugby. For half a century they remained one of very few institutions which escaped his criticism. This was not because his years at Rugby had left him with a respect for such a class-based educational system but because he saw no major role for them in social reconstruction. The older universities were a different matter. Within three years of leaving Balliol in 1903, he was demanding university reform in order that the older universities could be leaders of social reform in alliance with the Church. By 1914, he was convinced that Oxford had a central role to play in the creation of a new social synthesis, an idea which many other socialists rejected as 'a sort of capitalist conspiracy'.<sup>1</sup> This conviction which he held throughout his life was formed during his years at Balliol from 1899 to 1903.

The slender youth of eighteen who went to Balliol in 1899 seemed anything but a future socialist visionary. His main accomplishments were in the Classics and he had shown no great interest in the social questions of the day. Oxford, where socialism was still in its infancy, appeared unlikely, at first sight, to stimulate such an interest. Its Fabian Society, founded in 1895, was already in decline when Tawney entered Balliol;<sup>2</sup> its Marx Club and Socialist League had disappeared. The decline in the more recognisable socialist societies was, however, more than compensated for by the keen interest in social questions shown by leading Oxford reformers

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1. Tawney to Lansbury Dec. 9th 1910. See p. 36 of this study.

2. The early history of 'Oxford University socialism' is found in 'Red Oxford', a booklet published in 1933.

and the many individual College societies. In Balliol, the cause of social reform was in the safe hands of its Master, Caird, and the Arnold and Brankenbury Societies.

Tawney appears to have taken little part in the two leading societies of Balliol. He was not a member of the Arnold Society and rarely attended the meetings of the Brankenbury Society. Whilst his close friends, Hobhouse, Simon and Temple took an active part in debating such issues as 'the chief educational advantages of Oxford find no place in the official curricula' within the Arnold Society, Tawney remained in his study. His only recorded contribution to the proceedings of the Brankenbury Society was to move the motion that 'This House views with disapproval the Medieval Pomp now so prevalent'.<sup>1</sup> He did not attend many debates on political or social issues. Even such motions as 'This House welcomes a Liberal Administration';<sup>2</sup> 'This House would disapprove of further enterprise in the direction of municipal socialism';<sup>3</sup> 'There is one law for the poor and another for the rich';<sup>4</sup> and 'the Trade Unions are injurious to National Industry and Commerce';<sup>5</sup> failed to arouse his interest. Only on two occasions in his four years at Balliol, did he attend the debates of the society; on the first occasion he proposed a motion of medieval pomp, and on the second, he listened to a debate on conscription as a panacea for national evils.<sup>6</sup> To

1. Brankenbury Society Minutes (B.S.M.) June 16th 1902. He was seconded by Temple but the motion was lost eight to one.
2. B.S.M. October 20th 1902.
3. B.S.M. November 4th 1902.
4. B.S.M. November 20th 1902.
5. B.S.M. February 2nd 1903.
6. B.S.M. March 9th 1903.

those who knew him in later life, it will not come as a surprise to learn that he showed no interest in a debate entitled, 'the art of clothing is a lost one'.<sup>1</sup> Despite the fact that he was still listed as a member in May 1903, he did not attend the much publicised five hundredth meeting of the society.

Tawney gave less of his time than most of his contemporaries to activities which took him away from his studies. His secretaryship of the College Hockey and Tennis teams took up a large part of the time which he allowed for recreation; however, he was more a person of the study than the games field. The Balliol College Register<sup>2</sup> lists his principal tutors as de Paravicini, J.A. Smith and H.W.C. Davis<sup>3</sup> but those who influenced him most were A.L. Smith and the Master, Edward Caird. The Greats course which Tawney pursued gave great opportunity for the fellows of Balliol to influence the thinking of the students who passed through their hands. Caird and Smith used the opportunity to great effect.

The Students Handbook, which Tawney received in 1899, described The Greats School as 'the premier School in dignity and importance'. Instituted in 1800, it had provided a training ground for generations of Balliol scholars who had entered public service, the Church or the legal profession. Its main aim was 'not to be found in the production of men of learning or teachers'.<sup>4</sup> The Greats course<sup>5</sup> was divided into two, the first part of which, examined in the second term of the second year, was devoted to the study of Greek and

1. B.S.M. June 18th 1902
2. The Balliol College Register for 1833-1933 records also that he played rugby on occasions (p.253)
3. Davis published a history on Balliol in 1963.
4. The Year Book of Education 1938, 'The Examination for the Final Honour School of Literae Humaniores ('Greats') in the University of Oxford, p.303.
5. Fletcher gained a first in 'Greats' in 1893 and had taken up a mastership at Rugby immediately after graduating (Fletcher Op.Cit. p. 73-103). He was later to influence Tawney's thinking on the reform of the public schools. (See p.375 of this study).

Latin. Having gained a scholarship in these languages, Tawney had little difficulty in gaining a first and securing his access to the second part of the course.<sup>1</sup>

He began the second part in 1901. An underlying assumption of the course was that the student would bring, in addition to a knowledge of the classical tongues, some precision of thought. The emphasis was placed upon accuracy in thought, 'upon exercising powers of reasoning on materials supplied by the evidence for ancient history and by philosophy'.<sup>2</sup> Students were encouraged to use original authorities and to evaluate the whole evidence in achieving a synthesis. Lectures played a subordinate part in the 'Greats' school. The tutorial system, whereby students spent an hour a week with their tutors in philosophy discussing an essay written beforehand by an undergraduate, was the principal means of securing the aims of the course, which were 'Firstly to continue to the limit the training of its students' minds in accuracy, power and independence and secondly to direct their thoughts to subjects on which reflection will give them some firmly established and coherent view of life, together with an insight into the nature of man's relation to his fellows, and the methods by which progress in human affairs has been achieved'.<sup>3</sup> These aims and the tutorial system by which they were largely realised became the basis of Tawney's thinking about the development of the Workers' Educational Association in the years before the First World War. The intention of the 'Greats' course and the university tutorial classes, which the W.E.A. later organised, was not to confer any technical accomplishments. Each could boast, 'Of technical qualifications, it confers none'.

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1. The Balliol Register reads 'Sch. 1st Cl. Mods and Prox Access to Craven Sch. 1901'.
  2. The Year Book of Education 1938 p.303
  3. p. 304.

The Students Handbook believed the course to confer a fine mental discipline and 'to favour a catholic and genuine culture. No one has claimed for it the manufacture of specialists'.<sup>1</sup>

From the last term of his second year to the end of his fourth year, Tawney prepared for the twelve papers which formed the final examination. The six most important were those in Greek Philosophy, Logic, Moral and Political Philosophy, Ancient History (General) and Greek and Roman History. In 1901, he was studying Plato's 'Republic' and Aristotle's 'Ethics' and other works. In the summer of 1902, besides holidaying in Scotland with a fellow student,<sup>2</sup> he was reading the works of Spinoza. He commented to Beveridge<sup>3</sup> that 'the first book of Spinoza .... is so fascinating because it's apparently so absolutely complete but I don't think one can judge the metaphysical part without reading the Ethical part which comes in the later books.' A little later he claimed to be 'reading logic like mad (I) .... have shut eyes and ears and buried my head in a sandheap of philosophy'.<sup>4</sup> However, Tawney did not gain a first.

Tawney never claimed that the study of the Classics and later European philosophers was the only kind of a liberal education. The subject matter was for him less important than the manner in which the studies were undertaken. A liberal education implied intensive study under the guidance of an inspiring tutor who aimed

1. p.7.
2. 'Picker the son of a bishop'. Tawney was unimpressed by his discourses on 'the evils of drinking and boating on the Sabbath'. Presumably 'Picker' was W.A. Pickard-Cambridge (c.f. Iremonger's 'William Temple' p.41)
3. Tawney to Beveridge August 12th 1902
4. Tawney to Beveridge September 8th 1902.

not at imparting any technical accomplishments but at developing the mental powers of his students. He took as his model that kind of education which he had received under Caird and Smith.

Caird was a remote and Olympian figure to the undergraduates. His great head with its domed forehead and wide beard added to his Zeus-like appearance. Though he was apt to be ponderous and humourless, his lectures were thronged and many of those who attended them could claim, like Temple, 'I was brought up by Caird and I can never get out of that habit'.<sup>1</sup> By the time that Tawney went to Balliol, the influence of T.H. Green was waning and Caird's Hegelian idealism was gaining support. Caird laid great stress upon the need to seek in 'all partial views and systems, however apparently antagonistic some fragment that might continue to an ultimate synthesis.' This kind of thinking as opposed to that of Jowett whose 'treatment of great questions never took the form of an attempt to think them out consecutively'<sup>2</sup> had a great influence upon Tawney. The comments of J.A. Smith about Caird could equally apply to Tawney. 'As he read .... he analysed and annotated, he compared passage with passage, and where others would have lost the wood for the trees, he condensed the several contributions of the world's great thinkers into forms easily portable and yet capable of re-expanding at need into the wealth of original detail. His own thinking showed its originality not so much in any novelty of substance as in the illuminating insight which arose from the settling of all that came to hand in due order and organic connection'.

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1. Temple to Iremonger February 1944. Iremonger Op.Cit. p.37.
  2. H.W.C. Davis 'A History of Balliol College' p.222.
  3. Ibid. p.223.

Caird took a keen personal interest in his students and gave them advice which often counted for much in their lives. His influence upon Tawney was more than academic. Beveridge has recalled how Caird advised a group of undergraduates including Tawney, that 'your first duty is self-culture, not politics or philanthropy. And when you have learned that duty, and learned all that Oxford can teach you, then one thing that needs doing .... is to go and discover, why with so much wealth in Britain, there continues to be so much poverty and how poverty can be cured'.<sup>1</sup> Before becoming Master of Balliol, Caird had worked in the Gorbals whilst he was Professor of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow. It was a vital interest which he passed on to his students, and under the impact of Charles Booth's revelations of Life and Labour in London, he directed Tawney to Toynbee Hall in East London. But Caird was not interested solely in recording the material deprivations of a large section of the community or in advocating piecemeal reform. His philosophical convictions and his constant search for a comprehensive critique of society placed him in the mainstream of Victorian social criticism. The main task was not simply to indicate the material consequences of poverty, it was to reveal the body of beliefs or ideology which sanctioned such conditions. It was a response to the social questions of the age which made him at once a radical in politics, philosophy and religion. It was a response which Tawney inherited. Following his advice, Tawney first went to East London to undertake social work and then to Glasgow where he worked with Professor Smart who regarded himself as 'one of Caird's men'.<sup>2</sup>

1. Quoted by Davis p.223

2. Letter of condolence from Smart to Mrs. Caird on the death of her husband in 1908. The letter is dated 2.11.08.



The influence of A.L. Smith upon Tawney was of a less specific nature but of equal importance. For 'A.L.' the significance of the past lay in great moral truths.<sup>1</sup> His lectures and tutorials on historical subjects left a deep impression on undergraduates. He could draw the attention in a few sentences to some aspect or interpretation of facts or developments which had not occurred to an undergraduate before. 'A.L.' and H.W.C. Davis encouraged Tawney's interest in history but the influence of ~~for~~ the former also went beyond the academic. He lectured on contemporary political and social issues and discussed them in small gatherings at his home. He was greatly interested in people of all classes, which led him to give active support to the tutorial class movement. He was not an outward radical but his interest in social reform was communicated to students such as Tawney in a lively and illuminating manner.

Tawney used to speak particularly affectionately of F.F. Urquhart (the famous Sligger) who was a junior Fellow in his time and assistant to A.L.<sup>2</sup> Sligger's 'Chalet' became a meeting place for many who later achieved fame, Tawney among them. He continued the tradition of A.L. and was 'a civilising influence'<sup>3</sup> in Tawney's life.

In 1903 Tawney graduated. He failed to get a first, 'having preferred the decorous obscurity of an unostentatious second to the meriticious brilliance of a spectacular first'.<sup>4</sup> Caird commented to Frank Fletcher, 'I grant you his mind was chaotic:

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1. The fullest account of the influence of 'A.L.' on Balliol is given in Davis p.236-246.
  2. M. Vyvyan to author 21st May 1974.
  3. Ibid.
  4. L.S.E. Papers 'Various Speeches' Address to L.S.E. Socialist Society.

but his examiners ought to have seen that it was the chaos of a great mind'.<sup>1</sup> His father was less sympathetic and demanded to know how he was going to 'wipe out this disgrace'.<sup>2</sup> Others drew hope from his apparent 'failure'. Writing to Tawney in 1913,<sup>3</sup> a close friend, Urwick, asked for 'forgiveness at a certain sensation of relief at the news that you also secured a second in schools. At all events it proves that such a failure is not incompatible with good work in the world of economics'.

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1. Fletcher Op.Cit. p.71

2. Tawney to Beveridge Aug. 1903.

3. Urwick to Tawney 24th August 1913.

CHAPTER TWO

LONDON, SCOTLAND AND THE INDUSTRIAL  
NORTH (1903 - 1914)

1. East London
2. Scotland
3. The Founding of the University Tutorial  
Class Movement.
4. Manchester
5. The Eve of War.

1. East London

In the Autumn of 1903, Tawney's immediate task was to choose a profession. The only later recollection he had of this important decision was the advice given to him by a friend of his father. 'Remember .... your first duty is to consider before all things, the future of your widow.'<sup>1</sup> However the future financial security of dependants was not the most important consideration to one who had no thoughts of marriage. For the next decade and more, he held a series of temporary appointments which ran contrary to the sage advice which was offered. In September 1903, he told Beveridge that he was shortly going to Liverpool 'to see a man about an education post'. He did not take up this post though it is not recorded whether this was because he found it unsuitable or whether he was regarded as unsuited to the post. Instead, he followed Caird's advice which was, 'when we had done with Oxford studies, some of us should go to Poplar to discover why with so much wealth there was also so much poverty'.<sup>3</sup> For Tawney this meant either joining the Charity Organisation Society or acting as Secretary to the Children's Country Holiday Fund, one of the benevolent organisations run by Canon Barnett, the warden of Toynbee Hall.

It was not a choice which he made immediately for most of the Autumn of 1903 was taken up with a holiday in Germany where he admired the 'religious woodcarvings, especially of the crucifixion'<sup>4</sup>. Neither was the choice decided simply by his revulsion against the 'inquisitorial methods' of the C.O.S., as has been alleged.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Undated address to the L.S.E. Socialist Society (L.S.E. Papers)
  2. From a speech given at the 'Presentation of a Portrait' to him (Ta.P.)
  3. Tawney to Beveridge September 13th, 1903.
  4. Tawney to Beveridge October 15th, 1903.
  5. T.S. Ashton in his obituary notice (British Academy Proc. Brit. Acad. VIII (1962) p.462 and by J.M. Winter 'R.H. Tawney's Early Political Thought' Past and Present May 1970 p.73.

Writing to Beveridge in October 190<sup>1</sup>, he underlined the two major factors upon which his decision to join the C.C.H.F. was based. He was attracted by the higher salary which the latter offered, and he also realised that 'to get anything worth learning out of the C.O.S.' he would have to 'stick to it' longer than he was prepared to. He regarded such work for charity as temporary; his eyes were still set on a career in education. Three years later, he was still of the same mind; his 'ultimate ambition' of 'teaching in an industrial town'<sup>2</sup> remained unchanged.

The three years which Tawney spent in East London before moving to Glasgow in 1906 to take up a temporary university post were, by no means, uneventful. It was there that he met his future wife, Jeanette Beveridge, the sister of his close friend William Beveridge. This was also the time during which he first turned his attention to public education. A momentous step was his nomination, whilst at Toynbee Hall, as a member of the Executive Committee of the Workers Educational Association in October 1905.<sup>3</sup> The Association had been in existence for only two years when he joined and thus he was able to take an active part in the formation of its policies from its early years. He soon became a member of several of its sub committees, the first of which on 'Secretarial Work' made use of his experience as Secretary for the C.C.H.F.<sup>4</sup> A resolution on compulsory evening classes brought before the Executive Committee in October 1905 gave him his first opportunity

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1. Tawney to Beveridge October 20th, 1903.
  2. Tawney to Beveridge September 20th, 1906. It is likely that his general sympathy for the children for and amongst whom he worked played a part in causing him to postpone taking up a career in teaching. The work was also made more genial by the presence of Jeanette Beveridge and by his new found interest in the W.E.A.
  3. W.E.A. - E.C. October 14th, 1905.
  4. W.E.A. - E.C. December 2nd 1905.

to sit on a subcommittee dealing with adolescent education.

Speaking from the chair,<sup>1</sup> Tawney read out the strong condemnation by the Reading Branch of the principle of compulsory evening classes and its demand for the implementation of the Trades Union educational programme for a 'National System of Education, free and secular, from the primary school to the Universities and such maintenance scholarships as will place the highest educational advantage within the reach of all'. The motion arose out of the contemporary controversy over the principle of compulsory evening schooling, occasioned by clause 35 of Morant's Education Bill. To clarify its attitude, the Association set up a subcommittee. Its terms of reference were confined to an examination of the value of evening schools, and the compulsory principle. An opportunity to consider the broader outlines of educational policy was missed. The subcommittee, often under Tawney's chairmanship, was to prepare a report for the Annual Conference held at Oxford in August 1906.

The subcommittee achieved very little. In February 1906,<sup>2</sup> its members, Tawney, Argyle, Mansbridge and Collier, met to draw up a scheme of enquiry. They made two suggestions. They believed 'the subject was so vast and important as to render it necessary for a special qualified voluntary helper to devote himself to this alone.' In addition, they recommended that 'a series of different experiments should be set afoot by the Central Executive and Branches, to extend over two years.' In June 1906, Clause 35 of the Education Bill was withdrawn, so that no action was needed. In July,<sup>3</sup> the Association's Executive Committee endorsed the subcommittee's decision to drop the matter. The way now seemed clear for a consideration of

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1. Ibid.

2. W.E.A. - Ed. Sub. February 22nd 1906.

3. W.E.A. - E.C. July 14th 1906.

the second part of the Reading resolution, which would have brought Tawney to examine the broader issues of educational reform for the first time.

This was not to be. The tradition of piecemeal investigation persisted, and in the place of a comprehensive statement of educational policy which the Reading resolution demanded, the Association produced two isolated statements, one on exemptions from school attendance, the other on university reform. There was general agreement that 'exception be taken to the provisions (of the Educational Acts Amendment Bill) allowing Local Authorities to lower the minimum age of total exemption from attendance at a public elementary school',<sup>1</sup> though no decision was made as to the form of protest. However, Tawney was unlikely to play any leading part in a protest campaign for he was soon to take up yet another temporary appointment. In July 1906, he was absent from a meeting of the Association's Executive Committee on 'unexpected urgent business',<sup>2</sup> possibly as a result of a summons from Professor Smart of Glasgow University to attend an interview for a temporary lectureship in economics. Before he left for Glasgow in the autumn of 1906 and whilst he was still secretary of the C.C.H.F. he made his views known on the other matter which was of more immediate importance to the W.E.A., that of university reform.

In November 1906 Spooner wrote to Tawney asking his opinion regarding 'scholarships'.<sup>3</sup> Spooner had presumably not realised that Tawney had written eight articles in the 'Westminster Gazette' on the subject of university reform and 'scholarships'

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1. W.E.A. Ed. Sub. June 28th 1905.

2. W.E.A. E.C. July 14th 1906.

3. L.S.E. Papers. Box entitled, 'The Reform of Oxford and Cambridge'.

under the pen name of Lambda in the Spring of that year. In the first article in February 1906,<sup>1</sup> Tawney referred to the 'educational ferment of the past few years' from which Oxford had remained aloof. Whilst this ferment had 'vastly increased the number of persons who can profit by university education', it had neither produced any institution giving the same kind of humanistic culture as was given at Oxford, nor brought Oxford itself any nearer to the rapidly growing population in the secondary schools. Oxford had stood virtually unchanged over the previous quarter of a century on two fundamental matters, 'in the type of culture which she offers and in the social clientele which she serves'. The changes which Tawney advocated concerned the latter.

Oxford should preserve the unique quality of the education which it offered. Whilst it should avoid the temptation of 'assimilation to the professional instruction' which he believed was in process in other universities, it should offer its education 'to all who are likely to use and to none who are likely to misuse this distinctive gift'. The older universities had not found their place in the national system of education, despite advances in secondary education. The Act of 1902 was an attempt 'to ensure that to all those who have brains for higher education, a higher education shall be given' yet the cost of living at Oxford and the wastage of prizes and fellowships on people of ample means led to the exclusion of many who could have benefited from an education at Oxford. Tawney ended his first article in the series by outlining the steps which should be taken immediately to make 'Oxford a National University'. To ensure that Oxford 'struck its roots into the subsoil of society', he advocated the remodelling of the scholarship

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1. 'The University and the Nation' February 15th 1907.



system and the provision of some cheaper alternative 'to the life of an ordinary College' but the detail of such reforms needed to be worked out by a commission of enquiry.

In his second article,<sup>1</sup> he gave more positive guidance to such a commission by analysing the great concentration of wealth in the hands of a few Oxford Colleges which reduced the effectiveness of the University itself. Such Colleges, he argued, should be made to contribute a larger proportion of their revenues to the University and to this demand he added another, which was equally unacceptable to many dons, that the governing bodies of the Colleges and the University should include 'people who have seen the actual working of our young educational system' and who could redirect and reapply College wealth 'to link Oxford more closely to the secondary education of the country'. By such measures, Tawney hoped to make a life in one of the Oxford Colleges more accessible to people of ability in every social class, thus enabling the poor to 'complete in our greatest English University the Humanistic education for which they have proved their aptitude in the secondary schools'. For most of the nation the educational system represents not 'the ladder to which it is so often compared but the rope which an Indian juggler throws into vacancy'.

In the remaining articles in the series, Tawney looked more closely at the subject of scholarships. He examined the process of selection for higher education which was operated in the United States and concluded that the preference of the United States for 'a careful enquiry into the needs and character of candidates' was by far superior to the system of competitive scholarships for places at Oxford which did not result 'in a corresponding fruitful crop of ability'. The system of selection for Oxford did not require

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1. 'Westminster Gazette' February 16th 1906.

evidence of general culture but was based upon the examination of a knowledge of 'the weakest subjects, the Classics'. The emphasis upon the Classics resulted in the exclusion of other subjects and 'the disaster of closing Oxford to that rapidly growing class which is prepared to receive some kind of humanistic culture but is certainly not prepared to approach it through the study of two classical languages'.<sup>1</sup> Oxford thus did not 'hold before the nation a standard of culture at once attainable and worth attaining'.

The system of selection was based upon a belief in two separate cultures, 'a humane education for those who are to live, and technical instruction for those who are to work'.<sup>2</sup> To Tawney, such a belief was unacceptable; there was a need for a single humanistic culture which transcended class. 'Man does not live by pistons and test tubes alone. There is a need for missionaries to proclaim that the growth of specialisation renders a general humanistic education more or less indispensable'. In essence, the ideal of an Oxford education was democratic though its organisation had made it socially exclusive. Any system which 'locks up the culture of our older Universities within the four walls of expensive Colleges is in danger of becoming a very mischievous anachronism'. Hence he concluded<sup>3</sup> in the words of Matthew Arnold, 'increased sympathy increased spiritual activity is an idea which the new democracy wants far more than the idea of the franchise'.

In the period from 1903 to 1906 when he was at Toynbee Hall, Tawney first turned to the subject of educational reform.

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1. Westminster Gazette February 24th 1906 'The Oxford Entrance Examination'.
  2. Ibid. March 2nd 1906 'The Limitations of the College System'
  3. Ibid. March 10th 1906 'What a New Commission might do'.

His approach was essentially piecemeal, a response to the particular aspects of educational reform which were brought to the centre of discussion either because of proposed parliamentary legislation or, in the case of university reform, through the activities of such people as Gore, Temple and A.L. Smith. It was an approach which remained with him until after the First World War, and was found in a more extreme form in the years 1906-1909.

## 2. Scotland

Tawney was absent from meetings of the Association's Executive Committee from December 1906 until April 1908. At the last meeting of the Executive in 1906,<sup>1</sup> a major decision was taken towards the wider diffusion of the humanistic ideal through the creation of W.E.A. Districts. It was a step with which Tawney agreed. However, his appointment to a temporary lectureship at Glasgow University at a salary of fifty pounds per annum prevented him from speaking in support of the decision. His duties at Glasgow were to assist Tom Jones, later Assistant Secretary of the Cabinet under Lloyd George and Baldwin, in the teaching of economics whilst Professor Smart 'was busy with the Poor Law Commission'. Curiously, the few months which he spent at Glasgow had more impact upon his attitude towards the issues of compulsory evening schools and exemptions, which first confronted him as a member of the W.E.A. Executive, than upon his thinking about university reform.

Tawney was following in Caird's footsteps, for he now engaged in social investigations in those areas of Glasgow which were the Master's training ground when he was Professor of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow. He was thus led to examine, not the problem of university

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1. W.E.A. - E.C. December 8th 1906.

reform, which seemed scarcely relevant to the social and economic conditions of the Gorbals, but those forms of education which could affect the majority of working class children and which could alleviate their desperate plight. At first, he chose the press as the medium through which to publicise his views but it was not long before the editors of the 'Glasgow Herald' 'held up their hands in horror at (his) depravity'.<sup>1</sup> His main conclusions and recommendations found a more permanent form in the evidence which he presented to the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws and the Relief of Distress, presided over by Professor Smart.

The evidence was the result of social investigations 'during three years' residence in Whitechapel and six months in Glasgow'.<sup>2</sup> With the help of Kennedy, one of his students, he had examined 'the aspect of the problem which is believed to be generally neglected, namely its connection with the employment of boys between fourteen and twenty'. It was through an examination of adolescent unemployment and casual labour that he was led to consider the merits of extensions to the national system of education.

Tawney's approach to educational reform was narrowly economic; reforms were judged neither on their educational nor social merits but on the degree to which they assisted in alleviating adolescent unemployment. As this was a problem of a particular class and a particular age group, he advocated distinctive forms of educational provision, without questioning whether on social grounds separate provision for different classes was desirable and without

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1. W.E.A. - E.C. December 8th 1906.
  2. Tawney to Beveridge 29th April 1907.
  3. 'Statement of Evidence as to Unemployment and Boy Labour in Glasgow' p.3. (Ta. H.P.)

considering whether the existing framework of education could support further piecemeal additions. He rejected the idea of compulsory evening schooling as he had done two years earlier, but for a more precise reason; compulsory attendance at evening schools would do little to ease the problem of unemployment. Daytime continuation education, on the other hand, in taking from the labour market for up to half a week those who were between the ages of fourteen and sixteen, could make a positive contribution.<sup>1</sup> He thus gave his support to a form of education which was increasing in popularity among educational reformers. He accepted a position which he later condemned, that of basing educational provision upon class lines but faced with overwhelming evidence of the demoralising effects of a life on the streets and of casual labour such matters smacked of theoretical distinctions.

In his evidence Tawney approached the issues of the raising of the school leaving age and exemptions in a similar manner. He had begun to consider the problem of exemptions as a member of the W.E.A. Executive shortly before he left for Glasgow but it was not until he toured the slum areas of Glasgow that he formed definite opinions, somewhat different from those of later years. His opposition to a system of exemption from school attendance was not based on the objection that it made the provision of courses and facilities in school difficult. Exemptions released on to an uncertain labour market a number of young people who could best be kept at school. He coupled his demand for the abolition of exemptions with that of raising the leaving age. It was a sensible measure when a reservoir was full, to block up some of the streams that

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1. 'Statement of Evidence' p.5.

fed it. Thus if the school leaving age was raised to fourteen and ultimately to fifteen, without exemptions, pressure on the labour market would be relieved.<sup>1</sup> He did not pursue the analogy any further and consider the problems which would arise if the reservoir became low and demands arose for the removal of restrictions on flow. What was granted on economic grounds could be withdrawn on economic grounds.

The immediacy of the problem of juvenile and adolescent unemployment left him little time to consider whether the system of elementary education could support the weight of reform which he proposed. These were matters for the administrator, though had Tawney examined developments within the English educational system in 1907,<sup>2</sup> the year he presented his evidence to the Poor Law Commission, he would have realised the impossibility of implementing his proposals if they implied the extension of opportunities within the elementary school. However in the period before 1914, the structure of adolescent education was not of great interest to him.

The nature of adolescent education was given more attention. In his evidence to the Poor Law Commission, Tawney spoke of 'the demoralising nature of much adolescent employment'. On the basis of his investigations, he argued that much of the work done by juveniles and adolescents was 'mentally and physically stunting'. Though he was aware of the value of education as a means of counter-acting the harmful effects of premature involvement of children in industry, he had not clarified his thinking on the matter. Nor was he to do so until twelve months after he had made his first major contact with working-class education as lecturer to the first W.E.A.

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1. p.7.

2. E. Barker 'Education and Politics 1900-1951' p.22.

tutorial classes at Rochdale and Longton. Addressing an audience at Rochdale, eighteen months after his return from Scotland, he turned to the subject of the nature of continued education.<sup>1</sup>

Rochdale, for Tawney 'was not merely a market place but a meeting place for minds, not merely a centre for industry but also a centre for culture'.<sup>2</sup> As such, he argued, it had a natural interest in such matters as the nature of continued education, a subject 'ripe for attention in view of Professor Smart's Commission on the Relief of Distress and the investigations of the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education. The structure of industry had created among young persons, evils which only a prolonged period of education could remove'. He outlined the forms which 'a prolonged period of education could take', including the development of secondary education and the broadening of the ladder to the universities. It was, however the lengthening of the school life in the elementary school and provision for continuation schools which occupied most of his attention.

He developed the argument for the raising of the school leaving age to fourteen and for continued education in terms which were acceptable to the economic interest and to those who urged such reforms on educational grounds alone. For the former, he underlined 'the appalling financial waste in any system of education which ends at the age of 13 or 14, when of the 2,100,000 children aged 14 to 17, 1,754,000 or 75 per cent received no education during weekdays'. The waste of money spent on elementary education because it was not followed up by further expenditure on part time education was self-

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1. Address at a prize giving ceremony at Rochdale Technical School, reported in the 'Rochdale Observer' September 22nd, 1909.
  2. Ibid.

evident. Further investment in education in terms of greater financial provision for a lengthened school life and for continued education would yield a return to the nation far greater than the amounts invested. To those in his audience who were more interested in 'the educational arguments' for such reforms, he outlined the value of 'a sound general education which developed at once the physique, the character and the mind of those who received it'. Conscious that he was speaking to an audience in a technical school, he condemned the tendency in English education 'to regard technical education as merely preparing youths for specialised occupations' and demanded that it should offer both 'adequate physical training' as part of 'a broad general education'. He condemned also that kind of elementary education which failed to interest a child 'in wider things' and which was scarcely long enough to impart the skills necessary to pursue wider interests later in life. What the nation required were not just measures to prolong the school life. What was needed was a fundamental change in attitude towards the nature of technical, continued and elementary education, in order to provide for the many different needs of children.

Tawney summed up the evidence which he presented to the Poor Law Commission and his views on the nature of working-class education expressed in his Rochdale speech in two articles in 1909, 'The Economics of Boy Labour', printed in the *Economic Journal*<sup>1</sup> and later as a W.E.A. pamphlet, and 'A Review of the Consultative Committee's Report on Continuation Schools', published in the W.E.A.'s

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1. *Economic Journal* (December 1909). W.E.A. Pamphlet No.14 (Collection No.37). This article was also published by the Women's Industrial Council as part of a pamphlet entitled 'Boy and Girl Labour' (by N. Adler and R.H. Tawney).



journal 'The Highway'.<sup>1</sup> In neither did he demand the total reorganisation of the nation's educational system in order to abolish social and educational inequalities. He merely urged extensions to the existing system to make it work more effectively. He had, however, at this early date singled out as his chief interest 'the critical years of adolescence from fourteen to sixteen', rejected the idea of compulsory evening classes as 'nothing but an affliction to teacher and taught',<sup>2</sup> and gone some way to changing his thinking on educational reforms. The legislative reforms which were needed to deal with the problems of the working class adolescent were the abolition of the half-time system and the introduction of full time attendance at school to the age of fourteen and later fifteen. The school leaving age should be raised to fourteen on January 1st 1910 and to fifteen on January 1st 1912. In addition the working hours of persons under eighteen should be limited to thirty per week with compulsory attendance at continuation schools for 'not less than thirty hours a week for those not receiving education in some other way'.<sup>3</sup>

### 3. The Founding of the University Tutorial Class Movement (1907-1909)

Tawney's social investigation in Glasgow had impressed upon him the need for social reform. However, he found little there to indicate how this was to be accomplished. He was not satisfied with the view that reform could be imposed from above without the active involvement of the working class. Despite the vigorous policies of Lloyd George, the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the

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1. October 1909 Vol. 2 No.13.

2. Ibid. p.26.

3. P.14.

Liberal Government, effective and radical reform could only be achieved by the co-operation of those classes for whose benefit the Liberals were legislating. Yet if the attitude of the working people of Glasgow reflected that of the working classes as a whole there was little interest in reform. Writing to Beveridge in 1907 he concluded gloomily, 'Personally when I survey the class of men who applies here (that is to Glasgow's Labour Exchanges) I am rather hopeless about doing anything with them now that they have grown up.'<sup>1</sup> His three years in East London had made him no less pessimistic. East Londoners were a 'subservient lot' with a 'loathesome and beastly respect for wealth'.<sup>2</sup> However, whilst he was at Glasgow University, he travelled to Rochdale and the Potteries most week ends during 1908 and 1909 to conduct university tutorial classes. It was from there that Tawney's vision of a strong working class movement for the transformation of society originated; it was there that the so-called 'Tawney legend'<sup>3</sup> was born.

As early as 1906 Tawney had demanded university reform but at that time he but dimly perceived the role of the universities in social reform. His concern was to lower the barriers of privilege in order to allow working class people of exceptional ability to enjoy at Oxford and Cambridge the kind of education which he had himself received. At that time, he had not clarified his thinking on the broader role which the universities had to play in leading the cause of social reform through establishing their outposts in the industrial North. It was part of his general belief that privilege carried with it

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1. Tawney to Beveridge April 13th 1907.

2. M.G. 26th November 1960.

3. This 'legend' has recently been re-examined by Linden R. West of. 'The Tawney Legend Re-examined' Studies in Adult Education Volume 4, Number 2, October 1972.

social responsibility but the nature of the responsibility was, as yet, unclarified, except in so far as he recognised that it was a duty of the universities to concern themselves with investigating social problems. He also held that if the universities were to exercise a broader social responsibility it must be in response to a demand from the working-classes that they should do so. Education could be an emancipating force for the working-class in the twentieth century, as for the middle class in the nineteenth century, only if it was actively sought. In East London and Glasgow there were few signs of this and hence Tawney spoke of education only as a palliative for certain economic problems in these areas.<sup>1</sup> In Rochdale and Longton<sup>2</sup> where there was a long tradition of interest in adult education, the demand for university education on a part time basis was strong. In 1907, a year after he had written his articles on university reform in the 'Westminster Gazette', Tawney began to realise the importance of education as an instrument of social transformation.

The university extension lectures delivered by such eminent speakers as Hudson-Shaw, James Stuart and Michael Sadler had helped to create a demand 'for more solid study than the popular lecture'.<sup>3</sup> Hudson-Shaw, 'a short stocky figure with firm dark head

1. See the preceding section.
2. Several studies have traced the precedents to Tawney's tutorial classes in these areas but the principal research has been undertaken by R.A. Lowe. His conclusions are to be found in 'The Development of Adult Education in the Potteries with special reference to the Founding of a University in the Area'. Unpublished M.A. thesis. Keele 1966. See also R.A. Lowe 'Some Forerunners of R.H. Tawney's Longton Tutorial Class' History of Education, January 1972.
3. The following account of the first Rochdale class is taken from a description by one of Tawney's students, who signed himself 'a student who works in the bleaching works'. (E.B.W.) For a full description of the negotiations which led to the setting up of the Rochdale class see A. Mansbridge 'University Tutorial Classes' (London 1913) pp. 15-30.

and penetrating eyes'<sup>1</sup> informed his Longton class of the scheme proposed at Rochdale for a Tutorial Class.<sup>2</sup> The scheme had been outlined at a meeting of those interested in university tutorial work in Rochdale in July 1907. The meeting expressed its desire to pursue 'one subject for forty eight or more weekly lectures in a class of about thirty students'<sup>3</sup> in the place of a frequently varied programme of university extension lectures to mass audiences. It resolved that 'a class in some liberal subject shall be held during two sessions under a fully qualified university tutor'. After further discussion it was agreed that the 'liberal subject' was to be the 'Social and Industrial History of England', an area of study 'nearer to the lives and everyday interests of the students than the ornamental subjects'.<sup>4</sup> The members of the Longton group, 'prominent among them being Mr. E.S. Cartwright, decided to attempt to duplicate the Rochdale experiment'.<sup>5</sup>

At this time, Tawney was still in Glasgow. He played no part in organising the local demands of these two centres. However, through Mansbridge he kept in touch with events. He realised that if the demand was to be heeded then it must be voiced in the appropriate quarters by the right people in terms which were acceptable to the older universities. It was in transmitting the demands of the people in the Potteries and Cotton industry to the

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1. A. Mansbridge 'A Tribute to Hudson Shaw' *The Highway* October 1945, p.14.
  2. J. Mack 'The History of Tunstall II Tutorial Class: 1913-34 (Stoke-on-Trent, 1935) p.16.
  3. E.B.W. p.3.
  4. Ibid.
  5. A. Mansbridge 'An Adventure in Working-Class Education' P.37.

authorities at Oxford that Tawney made his main contribution in 1907 to the founding of the university tutorial class movement. Though he was absent from the meetings of the Executive Committee of the W.E.A. for most of 1907, he was in frequent correspondence with its members, and other interested parties about the proposed summer conference at Oxford in which Ball and Nield were to put the main case for a system of university tutorial classes. In March 1907, Ball wrote to Canon Barnett, requesting 'facts and arguments to include in (his) speech at the Oxford and Working Class Education Conference'.<sup>1</sup> Barnett forwarded the letter to Tawney, in Glasgow, who supplied what was requested. Tawney explained in a footnote added to the letter in 1914, that, "I wrote suggestions for Ball and Nield. Both used them at the conference from which the tutorial movement sprang, Ball not knowing the source of his and Nield's papers. They commented with surprise and gratification on the similarity of their tone. The views were published in the papers submitted to the National Conference in August 1907; 'What Work People Want Oxford to do' and 'What Oxford can do for Work People'."

What was needed, the two papers argued, was not 'bread and butter education' but that kind of education 'that is not so much a means of livelihood as a means of life'. The aim of education was to 'realise the fuller life' through providing courses which were based upon a fuller knowledge of what the needs and interests of the working people really are'. Seven years later,<sup>2</sup> Tawney was to develop upon the basic arguments of Ball's and Nield's papers,

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1. Ball to Barnett, March 21st 1907 (Te.H.P.)

2. 'An Experiment in Democratic Education' (Political Quarterly 1914 - Reprinted in 'The Radical Tradition').

and explain what he believed 'the needs and interests' of the working class were. Whilst people who undertook different kinds of work required specialised kinds of professional preparation, it was also true that all people, irrespective of class and occupation, should enjoy a liberal or humane education for from such an education all persons were 'equally capable, as human beings, of deriving spiritual sustenance'. The lawyer in his chambers and the miner in the pit had common needs which could be met only by a humane education which gave all people contact with the 'common heritage of civilisation'. Hitherto a 'humane education' had been regarded as the privilege of the few. What 'the differentiation of humane education according to class' had meant in the past was that there was 'a class of masters whose right it was to enter at manhood on the knowledge which is the inheritance of the race and a class of servants whose hands should be taught to labour but whose eyes should be on the furrow which was watered with their sweat, whose virtue is contentment and whose ignorance is the safety of the gay powers by whom their iron world is ruled'.<sup>1</sup>

Tawney did not intend that the tutorial class movement should aim at a distinct kind of working class culture. It should enable the working class adult to have access to that kind of education from which, by accident of birth, he had been debarred. It was intended that the working class should be given access to that kind of education which Tawney, because of his parents' social position, had enjoyed at Rugby and Oxford. To use the words of Nield's paper, which was presented at the National Conference in August 1907, the tutorial class students would then 'return to

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1. 'An Experiment in Democratic Education' (Political Quarterly 1914 - Reprinted in 'The Radical Tradition') p. 72.

their own people as missionaries and teachers'<sup>1</sup> having been imbued with the 'humane' values which stemmed from what had been an elitist education. The known gold would be spread more widely. Hence Ball could state 'we must realise the inseparability of education and social reform'. A common culture would emerge on the basis of which society could be transformed. Thus concluded Ball, 'We are often told that the social problem is an educational problem but the converse is equally true and for our present purposes more true.'<sup>2</sup> The function of the **Tutorial Class Movement** was to help break down the barriers to a 'humane education' and so to foster social transformation.

Tawney's anonymous contribution to the papers read by Ball and Nield at the National Conference, which was presided over by Bishop Gore and attended by Morant, was probably of greater value than his signed articles on university reform in the 'Westminster Gazette'. It helped to ensure that the resolution which Ball put forward,<sup>3</sup> that a committee should be set up to investigate and report on ways in which Oxford could assist workpeople, was carried. One of Tawney's students belonging to his Rochdale class reported,<sup>4</sup> 'In pursuance of a resolution passed by that conference and approved by the Vice Chancellor, a committee of fourteen is being appointed - seven members of the university and seven by the Workers' Educational Association - to devise a scheme whereby the university may be brought into closer contact with the working classes of the country'.<sup>5</sup> Mansbridge advised Sir Herbert Warren on the choice of

1. Nield, p.3.

2. Ball, p.4.

3. Smith Op.Cit p.22.

4. p.24

5. Temple House Collection 'Correspondence 1907-1908'.

university representatives with the result that 'the Committee was so chosen that a unanimous report appeared, largely the work of Harry Tawney and of Alfred Zimmern.'<sup>1</sup> The report gave official sanction to the tutorial class movement.

The movement was not without its opponents. A letter written to Lansbury by Tawney<sup>2</sup> shows that Tawney was well aware that 'many well-known but unnamed socialists regarded it as a sort of capitalist conspiracy'. An alliance between Oxford, looked on by many socialists as a principal part of the Establishment, and a working-class movement was bound to have its opponents on both sides. Tawney was anxious to refute the charge that the movement 'betrayed the working class'. He argued that 'the backbone of the movement consists of men who are also working on the political side of the labour and socialist movement. Socialists predominate in all classes I teach and I believe that this is so everywhere because it is they who best know what education can do for labour'. The movement had 'real work to do in helping working people to prepare for coming struggles, and we want to enrol those who care for educational and social progress'.

Even before the Committee of fourteen<sup>3</sup> set up by the August conference began its work, the first moves had been made to appoint

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1. Temple's account of the Committee and Report given during a Public Luncheon in honour of Mansbridge was reported in 'The Highway' November 1942, p.9.
  2. Lansbury Collection (Vol. V. letters 1910) Tawney to Lansbury December 9th 1910.
  3. The University of Oxford was represented by Strong, Turner, A.L. Smith, Ball, Marriott, Lees Smith and Zimmern. The W.E.A. nominated Berry, Bowerman, Campbell, Mactavish, Mansbridge, Shackleton and Wilkinson. The Committee sat five times between Christmas 1907 and October 1908.



a tutor to the Rochdale and Longton tutorial classes. Gore believed that Tawney was the right person to take these pioneering classes upon whose success the effectiveness of the Committee's report depended. He later remarked, 'When unknown people come to me wanting something new and important started, I always say get someone like Harry Tawney'.<sup>1</sup> In November 1907,<sup>2</sup> Marriott, the Secretary of the Extension Delegacy at Oxford, and one of the university representatives on the committee, invited Tawney to take the Rochdale Class, and so begin the new venture in working-class education. Mansbridge urged Tawney to think carefully before making his decision. In particular, he was concerned about the inadequacy of the fee. 'The fee of twenty pounds and the fare from Manchester would scarcely cover expenses'<sup>3</sup> He sent several letters to Tawney without any reply and finally sent two telegrams. Tawney's answer was sharp and swift. Mansbridge complained, 'What on earth <sup>did</sup> you turn your ink into sulphuric acid for because you get two telegrams expended on you .... I don't know!'<sup>4</sup> On the threshold of realising his ambition 'of teaching in an industrial town', financial considerations were of minor importance to Tawney.<sup>5</sup> However, 'a generous grant from New College'<sup>6</sup> gave the necessary financial support to the venture in 1908 before the Oxford Tutorial Classes Committee made regular financial provision.

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1. Quoted by A.D. Lindsay in 'An appreciation of R.H. Tawney' 'The Highway' January 1945.
  2. Marriott to Tawney November 18th 1907.
  3. Mansbridge to Tawney November 26th and 29th 1907.
  4. Mansbridge to Tawney January 10th 1908
  5. In 1909 Tawney was made All Souls Teacher in Political Science which enabled him to continue his classes.
  6. Mack, op.cit., p.12.

Tawney's chief concern in the week intervening between Marriott's offer of a lectureship with the Rochdale class and Tawney's acceptance of the offer was his ability to master the subject which the Rochdale class had chosen to study. Mansbridge urged him not to 'worry about Rochdale .... It does matter that you make common cause with your class (but) do not unduly exaggerate the academic side'.<sup>1</sup> However, Tawney believed that a 'common cause' could be achieved only when he had a full understanding of his subject. He thus set to work on a fuller study of subjects upon which hitherto he had scarcely touched. Part one of the syllabus dealt with history in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, out of which sprang his book 'The Agrarian Problem in the Sixteenth Century'. It was dedicated to Temple and Mansbridge and admitted a great debt to 'the friendly smittings of weavers, potters, miners and engineers (who) have taught me much about problems of political and economic science which can not easily be learned from books'.<sup>2</sup> Part two of the course dealt with the industrial revolution. Only Tawney doubted his ability to master the content of the course. Mansbridge, Scott of the 'Manchester Guardian',<sup>3</sup> and those who attended his lectures at Oxford in 1909<sup>4</sup> had no doubts on this score. Mansbridge was anxious that Tawney's health would suffer because of his intensive periods of study. He complained,<sup>5</sup> 'I sometimes suspect that you are trying to kill yourself by work, and you think

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1. Mansbridge to Tawney November 29th 1907.

2. Preface P.IX

3. Mentioned in a letter from Temple to Tawney dated January 28th 1908.

4. Tawney was appointed 'All Souls Teacher in Political Science in October 1909' and delivered a course of lectures in All Souls College during the Easter and Trinity Terms on 'The English Poor Law in the Nineteenth Century'.

5. Mansbridge to Tawney November 26th 1907.

that everyone else must be the same'. However with the vision of a socialist society in microcosm before him, what he later termed, 'the new Jerusalem',<sup>1</sup> he was primarily concerned that the experiment should not fail through inadequacies on his part. On December 2nd 1907<sup>2</sup> Tawney accepted Marriott's offer to run the Rochdale Class and eighteen days later,<sup>3</sup> he was invited to take a class at Longton in Staffordshire, which he also accepted.

Though Oxford played a leading part in the alliance between labour and learning, Tawney doubted 'whether the men at Oxford who acquire their culture in pleasant places can ever realise quite what it means to working class men and women to pledge their scanty hours for two years in order to achieve a common culture with the universities. Price,<sup>4</sup> the Secretary of the Rochdale Class and a worker in the bleaching industry, was in no doubt about the aim of the tutorial class which first met in the Rochdale Technical College on the afternoon of Saturday January 25th 1908. Its aim 'was to lift our educational activities out of an aggregation of classes into some sort of a corporate body of student feeling or atmosphere like that of a college, thus forming a kind of outpost to the University'.<sup>5</sup> Price, in an essay for Tawney<sup>6</sup> developed this theme. 'When education has merely made a man into a better workman it has not done all that it can do for him .... The time has come for the working class man to demand a share in that education which is called 'liberal'

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1. M.G. 12th December 1960

2. Tawney to Marriott December 2nd 1907 (Te H.P.)

3. Marriott to Tawney December 20th 1907 (Te H.P.)

4. Te. H.P. Undated note by Tawney

5. Price to Mansbridge February 16th 1908 - For an appreciation of Price's contribution to the W.E.A. movement see 'The Highway' December 1945, p.47.

6. Te H.P. 'Essays of Students: Various Publications'

because it concerns life not livelihood and is to be desired for its own sake .... By the avenues of Art, Literature and History, it gives access to the thoughts and ideas of the ages .... it stands for culture in the highest and truest sense'. University education could act as a melting pot for social differences. The class and its tutor were at one in their aims.

The composition of Tawney's first tutorial classes has been the subject of recent research.<sup>1</sup> In the first report of the Oxford Tutorial Classes Committee, Temple described the classes as being 'recruited almost entirely from .... the manual working classes'.<sup>2</sup> The myth that the Tutorial Classes consisted primarily of industrial workers and was representative of that group was born. An analysis of the first register<sup>3</sup> of the Longton Class reveals that of the forty occupations listed, thirty-one could be regarded as non-manual.<sup>4</sup> The Oxford Report which the committee of fourteen produced described the Longton Class as 'being representative of all sections of what are known as the middle and working classes'.<sup>5</sup> However of the manual occupations listed in the register it is doubtful if there was a cross section of this group. Most were skilled artisans. The Rochdale class was said to consist 'almost

1. Lowe Op.Cit. p.114-115. West Op.Cit. P.109-110

2. Smith Op.Cit. p.25, 71-2. Also quoted by Simon p.310.

3. Rowley House Papers (Box labelled TCC Papers).

4. Gardner Invoice Agents (2) Blanket maker  
 Student Elementary School teachers (17) Miner  
 Railway Agent Office worker Miller's Agent  
 Stationer Accounts Clerk Librarian  
 Clothier Pottery thrower Baker  
 Plumber Articled clerk Grocer  
 Clerk Collier clerk Clergyman  
 Housewife Pottery decorator

5. Oxford Report p.105.

exclusively of artisans'.<sup>1</sup>

Tawney rightly argued that there was no sharp class divisions within his classes, though his statement that 'the Longton Class consisted of a mixture of teachers and work-people in about equal proportions'<sup>2</sup> is open to doubt. He stressed that 'there is no social gulf separating the two groups. Teachers, elementary and secondary, are often the children of work-people and marry them, while their salaries are so low as to place them, at any rate at first, in a financial position inferior to that of many of the artisans'. He regarded it as unhelpful to divide the class on the basis of manual and non-manual occupations. What mattered was the common attitude towards education which bound together in a common cause people of different occupations. Yet it must be recognised that 'industrial worker' nature of the first tutorial class in Langton has been greatly exaggerated. One may also add that those who organised the classes and made the early branches 'going concerns' were very rarely the horny handed sons of toil.<sup>3</sup>

Tawney's intention was to link the cultural subjects to the experience and interests of those who attended his tutorial classes. The essay titles which he set are revealing. He invited the students to 'Compare the objects and organisation of the Craft-Guilds with those of modern Trade Unions,' to 'Discuss the provision and motives of the Old Colonial System and Compare them with Modern Schemes of Imperial Federation', and to 'Describe the development of the Elizabethan Poor Law and Contrast its Principles with the

1. Ibid. 106.

2. Oxford University Extension Lecturers Reports. April 1908.

3. L.V. Gill, one of the first members of the Rochdale Class underlined this point in 1949 in his comments on Raybould's 'The W.E.A. - The Next Phase'. See 'The Highway' October 1949, p.255-259.

Modern System'.<sup>1</sup> Though each lecture meeting was scheduled to last two hours, in Rochdale from 2.30 to 4.30,<sup>2</sup> they lasted much longer, with a lively debate on these and other issues. The discussion and questions which followed the first hour's lecture were perhaps the most rewarding for Tawney and were often continued in the students' homes and on the railway station.<sup>3</sup>

It has been said with some justification that Tawney's 'most important work for adult education and the W.E.A. was to set and maintain genuinely high standards of teaching and study'.<sup>4</sup> This he did from the beginning but not in any austere manner. He recognised differences between his two classes. After only a term's work, he congratulated the Longton Education Committee upon the success of a 'very interesting experiment' but he added 'public opinion on the matter of education is not nearly so advanced in Longton as in Rochdale'.<sup>5</sup> The students, too were 'new to the subject of the lecture and had little practice in composition'. Thus he did not press them too hard to write essays. However the response was impressive. In the first term the members of the Longton class produced six essays each and 22 in all produced some written work.<sup>6</sup> Twenty six sat for the examinations in May, and five including Cartwright, gained distinctions.<sup>7</sup>

Tawney was sympathetic towards the difficulties which the students faced. Price informed Mansbridge that 'Tawney was one of us .... there was none of the academic manner about him'.<sup>8</sup>

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1. 'Essays of Students' Temple House Papers.
  2. The Oxford Report concluded surprisingly (p.106) 'that two hours is slightly too long for the period of meeting'.
  3. Ibid. p.106.
  4. S.G. Raybould to author 4.5.74.
  5. Oxford University Extension Lecturers' Reports. April 1908  
Tawney's comments on the Langton Class.
  6. Ibid.
  7. Unsigned Report on the Langton Class, April 1908. (Oxford University Extension Lecturers' Reports)
  8. Price to Mansbridge February 2nd 1908.

The 'young man wearing a gown' gained 'the confidence of the members in the first five minutes'. Others,<sup>1</sup> impressed by the 'sweet affable charm of his presence' concluded that he was 'not a teacher but a man with a soul' who was well suited to lead 'the great awakening'. His lectures were usually read. 'He seldom spoke off the cuff for he believed that nobody should impose their words on others without careful preparation'.<sup>2</sup> To his tutorial class his lectures were 'brilliant, illuminating, simple, lucid and eloquent - just the very thing something between a lesson and a lecture'.<sup>3</sup> The official reports were equally complimentary. Later in life, he recalled his 'first official inspection by the Board'.<sup>4</sup> 'My first introduction to Professor Hobhouse took place thirty years ago this autumn, when as a young, timid and inefficient teacher, I was inspected by him on behalf of the Board with a humanity which, today, no doubt is usual'. Hobhouse regarded him as 'eminently fair minded and tolerant though justly critical when occasion needs ,... no trouble was too much for him'.<sup>5</sup>

However, what mattered to Tawney was not the attitude of officialdom, which did not always understand the mission of the movement, but the inspiration which the movement gave to its students. Students such as A.P. Wadsworth<sup>6</sup> and A.W. Wilkinson believed that 'If you can get a dog like him, we can turn England upside down in

1. Henigan to Mansbridge February 2nd 1908.
2. Lena Leger 'R.H. Tawney: Socialist Thinker' Tribune 26th January 1962.
3. Gill to Mansbridge February 2nd 1908.
4. Hobhouse Memorial Trust Lecture (1938 'Some Thoughts on the Economics of Public Education' (O.U.P.) p.3.
5. Second Report of the Tutorial Classes Committee (O.U.E.D.)
6. Wadsworth was later, editor of the 'Manchester Guardian'. He and the other members of the Rochdale Class are to be found on an early photograph reproduced in Mansbridge 'An Adventure in Working Class Education' and in B. Simon 'Education and the Working Class Movement' (Opp. p.336).

a few years time'. Whilst Zimmern's picture of Erasmus coming to Rochdale and North Staffordshire to spread the 'new learning' is somewhat exaggerated,<sup>1</sup> it conveys the fervour of the missionary spirit of the early tutorial class movement. Inspired by Tawney, the students organised weekly discussion classes; in Longton in October 1909 a preparatory class was set up and conducted by Tawney's pupils to study for a period of twenty four weeks the Industrial History of England.<sup>2</sup> Another class was set up to help new students who found difficulty in writing essays.<sup>3</sup> Many students spent much time gathering information 'particularly concerning their local industry'.<sup>4</sup> The Summer schools held at Oxford provided an additional stimulus for many students.<sup>5</sup> If the object of the tutorial classes was to accustom students to the 'ideal of work at a university' this was achieved in a considerable number of cases through the zeal of the students.<sup>6</sup> A.L. Smith commented upon the high quality of many of the essays, and even in cases where 'essays were of a very elementary character' they often revealed 'more maturity of mind and more grip of reality' than could be expected from university undergraduates.

Equally significant is the effect which tutorial work had upon Tawney. Probably the clearest indication of its influence upon his thinking is to be found in his 'Commonplace Book' kept between 1912 and 1914 whilst he was resident in Manchester. However even in the first year of the tutorial classes, he was noting

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1. A.E. Zimmern 'Education and the Working Class' Round Table 14 March 1914 255-279.
  2. A. Mansbridge 'University Tutorial Classes' p.69
  3. Ibid.
  4. Longton Tutorial Class Report on Session 1908-1909
  5. R.A. Lowe Op.Cit. p.130-132.
  6. Board of Education 'Special Report on Certain Tutorial Classes' (1910).



carefully the attitude of the people of the Potteries and Rochdale to education and to social and industrial problems. He was later to confide that it was these people who 'made him a socialist'.<sup>1</sup> In 1908, he collected 'various comments by simple people on subjects which learned people call the social problem - heard on railway trains, in trams, at social and educational gatherings'. These comments illustrate contemporary attitudes to 'the social problem' and underline the feeling of fellowship which he believed existed among those who lived in the industrial north. They point to working-class pride, fellowship and belief in the value of education. The contrast between wealth and poverty was obvious. He recorded a part of a conversation at 'a reception at a place of learning. 'Look at the wealth here .... and think of all the misery on which it was based'.<sup>2</sup> Yet despite material deprivations, the adult working class population of the tutorial class areas were markedly different from the 'servile East Londoners' and Glaswegians. They had an underlying dignity which had not been crushed by their material surroundings, and which was shown in such recorded stray comments as 'What we want the State to provide is not bread but the opportunity to win it'<sup>3</sup> and 'Mill life might be pleasant given good conditions of work. There is some good fellowship in it; people like working together and some would rather be in the mill than at home'.<sup>4</sup> Many of the recorded comments stress the desire of the people of Rochdale to share in the education of the upper classes, which became for Tawney, the solution to the change in values which was necessary for social transformation,

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1. M.G. 26th November 1960.
  2. 'Various Comments' p.3.
  3. Ibid. p.9.
  4. p. 4.

and reinforced his belief in the social role of a common education. He recalled a conversation in which a mill girl stated, 'I like the literature class very well. But it seems trivial to think of such things when the workers live as they do .... To study Shakespeare is all right for the chapel and England's Glory women but when one thinks of the condition of the workers it seems as though one had no right to spend time on such things'.<sup>1</sup> A reform of industrial and economic conditions became for Tawney a vital step in the realisation of a common culture. The dignity of the Rochdale people and their interest in education led him to the belief that the working class could, if given an opportunity through economic reform, share in 'the heritage of the ages'.

Tawney believed that the tutorial class movement was the principal means by which the working class could 'gain the educational rights' and lead the working class to the realisation of the 'goodly heritage from which they have been shut out'.<sup>2</sup> The universities had 'instead of exerting a broadening, humanising influence, merely put a polish upon class prejudice and an intellectual veneer upon narrow ignorance'. Whilst he welcomed the removal of social and economic barriers to working-class access to universities he recognised that this, in itself, would not be sufficient to disseminate 'the humanising influence of a liberal education'. The working-class was 'a disinherited class and the national universities which are the natural fountain heads of a national culture have been for long regarded as the legitimate preserves of the leisured class' but the creation of a cultural synthesis was likely to come chiefly

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1. P.6.

2. Te. H.P. Notes by Tawney March-April 1914 p.3.

not from increased access to the universities but from the extension of the tutorial class movement which offered 'a university education though under difficult conditions'. Tawney was anxious that the tutorial classes did not become primarily a ladder to the universities, for this would introduce 'a competitive spirit alien to their character' and so undermine the spirit of the movement'.<sup>1</sup> There was a danger, in Tawney's view, that the tutorial classes would produce a new educational elite if they became principally a route to the universities. What he was anxious about was the education of the ordinary men and women whose conversations he had carefully recorded, not the personal advancement of the few. The tutorial class was the workers' university not a route to the universities. Culture was not to be reserved for those who could climb. To anyone who doubted the 'university standards' of the tutorial classes, as well as the quality of the university education that was offered, Tawney recommended the reading of the reports by Hobhouse and Headlam.

In the period before the First World War Tawney conducted classes in several areas. To the first classes at Longton and Rochdale, the former coming into being some eighteen hours before the latter,<sup>2</sup> were added those at Wrexham and Littleborough.<sup>3</sup> Through the wider diffusion of humane studies Tawney hoped to create the common culture through which society would be transformed. This notion affected his thinking on all educational matters, and resulted especially from the early powerful influences of the Rochdale and

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1. p.6.

2. L.V. Gill in a letter to 'The Highway' December 1950 settled the debate over the matter.

3. There were, of course, many classes in other areas.

Longton classes during the formative years from 1907 to 1909.<sup>1</sup>

#### 4. Manchester

In June 1909 Tawney married Jeanette Beveridge, and shortly afterwards settled in Manchester. His temporary appointment in Glasgow having come to an end, he successfully applied for a lectureship under George Unwin at Manchester. It was a post which he held until his enlistment in the armed forces in 1914, and which enabled him to continue his historical researches, whilst at the same time keeping him within easy reach of Rochdale, Longton, Littleborough and Wrexham. In many ways his years at Manchester were the most important in the development of his thought on social and educational matters. With the assistance of his wife, who had long interested herself in social reform and who had contributed articles on social matters to the newly found journal of the W.E.A., 'The Highway', he re-examined his previous attitudes. He came to look more closely at the causes of social unrest and to attribute to education a key role in social reconstruction. Education became for him the main protector of spiritual values in a materialist world and the most hopeful approach to social reform.

Edwardian Britain was a battleground for Capital and Labour. Around the time of King Edward's death in 1910 the conflict was made more bitter by a series of strikes. The monopolisation of wealth and opportunity by the ruling class left the 'dispossessed'

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1. Tawney gave up his Rochdale class in 1912. His Saturday afternoons thereafter were devoted to individual tuition for members of the Longton class. R.A. Lowe Op.Cit. p.122.

with a greater feeling of animosity. Perhaps such a feeling tended to give an exaggerated importance to education and its utility. Education was seen by Tawney and many of his tutorial-class students as a vital weapon in working-class emancipation.

In his last two years at Manchester, from 1912-1914 Tawney kept a Commonplace Book<sup>1</sup> in which he recorded, along the lines of his earlier personal jottings of 1908, his attitude to contemporary affairs and opinions. The diary reveals the mainsprings of his thought and its principal characteristics. From the outset, Tawney distinguished his views from a wide range of contemporary socialist opinion, from the beliefs of the Fabians, the Parliamentary Labour Party<sup>2</sup> and from the Marxian Socialists,<sup>3</sup> who because of their preoccupation with economic issues and social institutions failed to discern the true cause of contemporary social disorder and as a consequence prescribed ineffective remedies. His early involvement in the tutorial class movement had impressed upon him the importance of discerning the fundamental principles upon which institutions rested. Applying this approach to contemporary social institutions, he concluded that 'society suffers when its objective institutions outrage the best ideals of the age'.<sup>4</sup> Modern society was 'sick through the absence of a moral ideal' by which it could order its conduct and institutions. The failure to recognise the moral roots

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1. 'R.H. Tawney's Commonplace Book' Edited by J.M. Winter and D.M. Joslin. (This reference to the C.P.B. in this chapter were originally based on a photocopy of Tawney's manuscript kindly loaned to me by Professor Coleman. They have since been amended). J.M. Winter's article 'R.H. Tawney's Early Political Thought' (Past and Present May 1970) provides a valuable introduction to this personal diary.

2. Commonplace Book (C.P.B. P.46, 61, 70)

3. C.P.B. P. 77, p.80

4. C.P.B. P.69.

of contemporary social conflict led to remedies as inappropriate as 'surgical experiment on a man who is dying of starvation or who is poisoned by foul air'.<sup>1</sup>

The strikes, industrial unrest and political agitation immediately before the Great War were, for Tawney, something more than protests against low wages, <sup>and</sup> long hours. He argued that such discontent was a protest against the existing system of human relationships and a demand that 'there shall be a radical reconstruction of (such) relationships'.<sup>2</sup> The working class, or at least some sections of it, was awakening to the contradiction between the existing pattern of social and economic organisation and 'what men felt to be morally right'.<sup>3</sup> Incorrect diagnosis of the causes of contemporary unrest by the British Labour Party and Labour Movement had resulted in inappropriate remedies being prescribed.

'The working class and the English Labour Movement have made one tragic mistake. They have aimed at comfort instead of aiming at getting their rights including the right to do their duty. The contest is therefore being fought out on a low plane and the attack can be bought off by instalments of social reform. It has become not a question of right and wrong but a question of more and less'.<sup>4</sup> Radical social reform was necessary but this was impossible without a change in the underlying attitudes and assumptions within society. Hence of the Fabians Tawney complained, 'They seem to think that you can trick statesmen into a good course of action without changing their principles and that by taking sufficient thought

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1. C.P.B. P.9

2. Ibid.

3. 'An Experiment in Democratic Education' p.3.

4. C.P.B. p.80.

can add several cubits to its stature. It can't so long as it lives on the same spiritual diet'.<sup>1</sup>

In Tawney's view, the supreme evil of modern industrial society was the absence 'of the opportunity for self direction'.<sup>2</sup> Class-ethics deny to the vast majority the opportunity to develop 'the riches that lie within everyone of us'.<sup>3</sup> It was not regarded as wrong to 'use other people not as human personalities, but as tools, not as ends but as means'. Such attitudes needed to be changed before society could be transformed by the application of strict moral standards which require 'that each man should count as one and no more than one'.<sup>4</sup> The attitude of individuals to each other was wrong. Tawney illustrated this with examples from education. At the beginning of his diary he pointed to the inferior provision for the education of working class children,<sup>5</sup> and underlined how 'the slightest extravagance' of the working man is condemned.

"The slightest extravagance in him is condemned by the very people, who even though far from wealthy according to modern standards, never dream of denying themselves small pleasures and luxuries. What does 'a workman' want with theatres or books, or time to himself. The education of his children is treated in the same fashion."

Tawney called for equality of opportunity. Translating this concept into terms familiar to his tutorial class student, he urged that whilst 'it may not be possible to raise wages very much .... there is no reason why the community, by public provision, should not make the life of the ordinary workman as rich and

1. C.P.B. p.46.

2. C.P.B. p. 34.

3. C.P.B. p.19.

4. C.P.B. p.13

5. C.P.B. p.5.

interesting as that of the fellow of an Oxford college: put the heritage of all ages in his hands'.<sup>1</sup> Such was the way to develop the personality of man, which is 'the most divine thing we know ....., to encroach upon it is to efface the very title deeds of humanity'.<sup>2</sup> Any society which did not seek to develop man's personality though communal provision was perpetrating 'an outrage of what is sacred in man'.<sup>3</sup> Throughout his diary, Tawney held that 'the personality of man is the most divine thing we know',<sup>4</sup> and that to debase human personality in order to produce wealth was to 'sell the things of God for gold'.

Tawney attacked the social philosophers who held that the vital thing in the wellbeing of society was its material environment, and the sociologists who were mainly concerned with the causes of poverty. If poverty were removed and material goods produced in abundance, there would still be 'a very unhappy and discontented society' for the springs of happiness and contentment lay not in man's power to satisfy wants but 'in the power of man to regard his position in society and that of his fellows with moral approval'.<sup>5</sup> The envy and greed which often accompanied the production of wealth was alien to 'the development of every human character which ought everyday to be entering on a new world of treasures'.<sup>6</sup> Thus by refusing to treat men as ends and to respect their personalities, industry was creating poverty.<sup>7</sup> Hence Tawney could denounce Marxism as 'a barbarous inhuman, sordid doctrine that would weigh immortal souls and scale them down because they are not economically useful'.<sup>8</sup>

1. C.P.B. p.24.

2. C.P.B. p.16

3. C.P.B. p.13

4. C.P.B. p.18

5. C.P.B. p.65

6. C.P.B. p.19

7. C.P.B. p.20

8. C.P.B. p.68



When Tawney looked for an example to illustrate his belief that 'men live in peace in the harmony which springs from the possession of a common moral ideal'<sup>1</sup> it was perhaps natural that he should draw upon his tutorial class experiences, and the relationship between godliness and learning. He saw the pursuit of knowledge as the basis for such an ideal for it was best to 'think of knowledge, like religion, as transcending all difference of class and wealth .... (for) in the eye of learning, as is the eye of God, all men are equal'.<sup>2</sup> It was a common ideal which could be destroyed by the application of commercial criteria. 'To sell education for money is the next thing to selling the gifts of God for money'. He found in his W.E.A. classes a microcosm of the type of community which he envisaged in his later writings. The problem confronting Tawney was how to secure the wider diffusion of those values which lay at the heart of the tutorial class movement and which alone could bring about social transformation. The current industrial unrest was a protest against the negation of human personality, yet the forces of protest needed focusing and strengthening. The popular awakening with its demand for a common moral ideal could only gather momentum if its energies were wisely directed. Tawney looked towards the universities and the Church to give this guidance.

Winter points out that 'the only institutional foci for his programme of moral revival were the university and the disestablished Church',<sup>3</sup> and adds, 'But why educated men or the educated society

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1. C.P.B. p.69

2. C.P.B. p.17.

3. 'R.H. Tawney's Early Political Thought' p.94.

should be more aware of moral claims or more willing to submit to them was never explained'. Tawney believed the answer to Winter's question to be self evident. The Church, identified in Tawney's mind with such ecclesiastical radicals as Gore, Temple and Barnett, and the Universities, identified with persons sympathetic to the interests of the working class such as A.L. Smith, Sidney Ball and Marriott, had through their co-operation brought into existence the Worker's Educational Association and the tutorial class movement. What better institutions were there for the wider propagation of those values which underlay the new society in microcosm than the Church and the Universities. Thus Tawney called upon those institutions which many Socialists regarded as ultra conservative to play a leading role in changing 'the false and universal assumptions'<sup>1</sup> upon which capitalist society was based. Once the underlying ideas were changed then social institutions could be reformed.

The entry in his Commonplace Book for 30th October 1912 expressed clearly his opinion that the Universities should exercise in society at large the moral influence which they exerted over the tutorial class movement. He raised the question,<sup>2</sup> 'What may a modern community expect from its Universities?' and answered it boldly 'Firstly that it should uphold exact and arduous standards of knowledge. Second, that it should make those standards operative in the world at large by teaching. Third, that it should so organise itself as to make intellect and character the sole passport to its advantages. To put the matter in another way, the business of a University is twofold; to uphold an intellectual standard, and uphold a moral standard'. By opening their doors to all of those who are fitted to university education, the universities could become 'a centre of moral authority, and it is precisely such

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1. C.P.B. p.43.

2. C.P.B. p.42.

moral authority which Englishmen need more than anything else at the present time'.<sup>1</sup>

That Tawney saw the universities and university education as playing a leading role in social reform was apparent also from a speech delivered earlier in 1912 at the Co-operative Congress at Portsmouth. His opening remarks emphasised the moral value of education. Education, in his opinion 'has always meant not simply the accumulation of knowledge or the perfecting of the individual through intellectual discipline - both great ends - but the uplifting of society through the inspiration of a common ideal'. His concern was thus the contribution which education could make to the society of the future. Education had a vital role in social reconstruction because 'it is not a varnish upon life, but an expression of man's profoundest thought as to what is a right way of living.' Assuming the cloak of Matthew Arnold, he argued that 'to produce a new type of society you must bring new motives and aspirations into play'. In this connection education was a vital instrument in bringing the new society into existence. Education was thus 'not simply a road to personal success but a means of uplifting the whole community'.

Using the terminology of his personal diary, he saw education as emphasising 'the sacredness of personality'.<sup>3</sup> He denounced that kind of education which provided merely 'technical or professional training' and which aimed at making workers 'better machines'. What was wanted was the humane education provided in the universities. Its wider diffusion would make people 'better human beings, free men and women'. The universities should be

1. p.43.

2. 'Education and Social Progress - An Address delivered at the Educational Meeting, held on Tuesday, May 28th 1912, in connection with the Co-operative Congress held at Portsmouth' p.3. (Here after referred to as ESP).

3. p.5.

thrown open which meant the abolition of privilege in education. The aim should be to democratise the institutions by which knowledge is created, ideas are diffused and the tone which public opinion is to follow and by so doing to lead the moral and social transformation of the nation.

Tawney linked his tutorial class work with this wider objective in a passage which expressed also his mastery of the English language, 'Once a year it is my duty to leave Manchester to spend two or three months in Oxford, and as one walks among the lilacs and laburnums of that beautiful city, .... one's mind naturally travels North, from Oxford to the furnaces of the Black Country, and beyond the Black Country to the pot banks of Staffordshire, and beyond Staffordshire to the humming cotton mills of Lancashire to where men hew coal in the pits of Northumberland, and beyond Northumberland to where they hammer rivets on the Clyde'.<sup>1</sup> There can be no better expression of Tawney's concept of a common culture emanating from Oxford and diffusing its influence throughout the country. Thus for Tawney education was not simply one among many activities; it had a special importance in bringing 'into existence that great Co-operative Society of which existing societies are only miniatures'.

In his Portsmouth address of May 28th 1912, Tawney had nothing to say directly upon the role of the Church in the transformation of society, although he pointed out that religion was 'the force which ploughs deeper than any other'.<sup>2</sup> It is clear, however, from the Victorian origins of his thinking that his educational theory assumed a large body of religious doctrine and that religion and education were never separated. In his *Commonplace Book*, he

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1. ESP p.11

2. C.P.B. p.71 11th December 1913.

allied the Church<sup>1</sup> with the Universities in the struggle against materialism. 'Man's spiritual nature', he declared needs an outward organisation as well as his material one. Therefore there must be a Church as well as a State'. Whereas Tawney had a great deal to say about reform of the Universities to make them a more effective instrument for the wider diffusion of 'humane values', he had little to say on the subject of Church reform. He made no plea for more working class clergymen to lead the moral revival of the nation. On the contrary, in answer to a question by Barnett, Tawney maintained that it would not be 'wise to train young workmen for the clergy'.<sup>2</sup> It would appear that in the partnership between Church and University, the former was to exercise its moral influence largely through the latter. Godliness and learning were indissolubly linked. In Tawney's scheme of thinking there was no place for other agencies of moral redemption. Other socialists could pin their hopes for the future upon the Labour Party but in Tawney's view it had abdicated its moral authority by embracing capitalism.

'The rise of the capitalist = the poodle in Faust turning into the devil. The Parliamentary Labour Movement = the devil turning into the poodle'. In the year immediately before the Great War, Tawney did not consider how the Labour Party could reform itself to lead the moral awakening of the working class. Its spirit seemed so alien to godliness and learning that it was beyond redemption. Immediately after the Great War he was to take a different attitude and to help formulate the Party's educational policies and programmes so that it could take its place alongside the Universities and the Church in striving for a common culture.

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1. C.P.B. p.8.

2. C.P.B. p.7-8.

In his Portsmouth speech, Tawney had spoken of education as 'a means of uplifting the whole community'. His work with the tutorial classes whilst he was living at Manchester in the period 1908 to 1914, had so strongly impressed upon him the value of 'a humane education' that he began to consider its importance in the life not only of working class adults and young persons of university age but also of working class children and adolescents. Up to 1908, his thinking had been restricted to the importance of extending the period of elementary schooling to deal with the problems of juvenile unemployment and casual labour, without much concern for the nature of education or its social divisions. In his Commonplace Book he turned his attention to inequalities in educational provision and in his Portsmouth speech he looked at the nature of elementary education.

It was characteristic of Tawney's thinking that he gave priority to the different ideas which underlay the educational institutions within the parallel systems. In his Commonplace Book he used the Board of Education's regulations to illustrate the different concepts of education which lay behind working class education and that of their social superiors.

"L.E.A.'s economise on elementary schools in order to spend money on secondary education. The Board's regulations say that in secondary schools the air space per child must be 17 ft., in elementary schools 11 ft., and the Lancashire C.C. has many schools where it is only 8 sq.ft. Every secondary school must have a playground of at least 4 acres.  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre is thought enough for many elementary schools".<sup>1</sup>

The different standards of provision were not accidental but based upon the belief that working class education was meant to

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1. C.P.B. p.5-6.

fit the child for a factory life, to make him a better worker. As such it did not require the standards of provision which were necessary for those who were to receive a humane education. In his Portsmouth speech,<sup>1</sup> he spoke of the elementary school as a 'Factory' in the sense that it was overcrowded and of a utilitarian nature. Such a debased conception of education ought to be eradicated. Education was concerned with the development of a child's personality .... That personality can be developed only by personality and that if we want to have an educational system worthy of the name, we must give the teacher a fair chance by seeing that the number of children in a class is sufficiently small to allow of every child being treated as an individual'.<sup>2</sup> He recognised that the type of humane education of the tutorial class was inappropriate in the elementary school but had little to say on more appropriate forms. 'Psychology has taught us that there are many avenues into a child's mind besides books, and that in future we must adapt our curriculum far more closely to meet the needs of individual children than we had done hitherto.'

These years also saw Tawney's first statements on environmental equality; without such equality he believed that it was empty to speak of equality of opportunity to enjoy a humane education.

"We have learned from medical science that the mind and the body of a child are not two separate entities which happen to be connected, but that they are two aspects of a single personality. What nature has joined Education Committees put asunder at their peril. To develop a child's intellect we must attend to the physical needs which stunt its development'.<sup>3</sup> In his first editorial for

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1. ESP

2. ESP p.5.

3. Ibid.

the Manchester Guardian in May 1912,<sup>1</sup> and in his Portsmouth speech, he spoke of the need to diagnose and correct some of the more urgent medical problems which arise from the disparity in standards of living between the classes.

Tawney's educational interests had broadened for a variety of reasons. His desire for the wider diffusion of a humane education, his social investigations in Manchester and his general sympathy with working class problems, many of which were brought to his notice by his tutorial class students, had all played a part. Of equal importance was his appointment on October 1st 1912, to the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education,<sup>2</sup> all of the meetings of which he attended until he went to the trenches as a private soldier in 1914. Tawney joined the Committee after it had reported on continuation schools (1909) and on practical work in secondary schools (1910-1911) and when its next reference was undecided. In January 1913 Acland, the Committee's Chairman, was discussing a possible investigation into 'the provision made for enabling pupils from Public Elementary Schools to proceed to Secondary Schools'.<sup>3</sup> An examination of the free place system and Local Education Authority Scholarship systems was of interest to Tawney but there is no record of the views which he expressed. Other references under discussion were 'Educational preparation for commercial occupations' and 'the differentiation between the education of girls and boys in Secondary Schools'. However the reference which was approved in March 1913 by Bruce, Charles Trevelyan and Acland on the grounds that it would be 'most useful and least embarrassing' was 'the provision of scholarships from Secondary Schools to Universities'.<sup>4</sup> A draft

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1. M.G. 1st May 1912. Headed Article 'School Clinics'
  2. P.R.O. ED 24 12 25 (Paper No. A-16)
  3. P.R.O. ED 24/1226
  4. Letter from L.W.B. (Bruce) and seen by Charles Trevelyan, dated March 6th 1913.



reference was drawn up, 'to report on the adequacy of provision both in extent and distribution' of scholarships to universities. The Committee sat for ten days before the Great War broke out. Tawney made no recorded contribution to its discussions before its sittings were suspended in August 1914. The only reference to him in the minutes of the Committee is that he joined His Majesty's Forces in November 1914. When the Committee resumed its investigations during the war, presenting a draft report of its findings on 26th May 1916, Tawney was in the trenches at the Somme.

Tawney's reaction to the various suggested references was published in May 1914 in the 'Political Quarterly'.<sup>1</sup> In his article 'An Experiment in Democratic Education' he spoke of the rungs which were being constructed to connect secondary education with the elementary schools at one end and with the universities at the other'.

'How meagre these facilities are at the present time in proportion to the need for them, how illusory is the idea that more than a tiny fraction of the children qualified to make the best use of higher education receive it, what infinite misapplication of human capacity results from the fact that of the children leaving elementary schools less than five per cent pass each year to secondary schools'.<sup>2</sup>

Standing against 'the dogma of selection through competitive examinations' he urged that a system of post elementary or 'higher' education should be created for all. At the same time, however, he believed that this should be created 'side by side with the selective system created by means of scholarships'. At one

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1. Reprinted in 'The Radical Tradition'.

2. p. 72-73.

and the same time he wanted to give all adolescents access to a humane post elementary education and retain the selective secondary school. Without further consideration of the problems inherent in such a structure he turned to the issue of the kind of education which should be offered.

He had strong convictions that whatever system was created, there should be adequate provision to compensate the family for loss of income and that the education should be 'liberal'. His attitude towards the suggested reference on 'Educational preparation for commercial occupations' was clear. The object of education was 'to enable all to develop the faculties which, because they are the attributes of man, are not the attributes of any particular class or profession of men'. The specialisation in subjects of specific relevance to commercial occupations should not take place until a good general education had been given. The tenor of his pre-war thinking was against premature specialisation which treated man primarily as a worker and not as a human being with individual capacities to be developed.

Tawney was well aware that it was empty to speak of all children enjoying a humane education whilst the grosser material forms of poverty remained. In October 1913, he examined 'what thoughtful rich people call the problem of poverty but which thoughtful poor people with equal justice could call the problem of riches' in his inaugural lecture as Director of the Ratan Tata Foundation.<sup>1</sup> Though the social study was to 'start with the framework of industrial organisation' it 'was not to end there'. A

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1. The endowment for this investigation was given by a wealthy Indian, Ratan Tata, and gave Tawney his first opportunity to savour of the academic life of the L.S.E.

second principal task was to examine the results of different types of administrative intervention aimed at the relief of poverty.<sup>1</sup> In particular, the feeding of school children and medical treatment was a fruitful line of investigation in view of the Education Acts of 1906 and 1907 and the work of such persons as Greenwood and Miss Bulkeley.<sup>2</sup> Tawney had already taken the subject of school clinics as the first of a series of articles in the Manchester Guardian stretching over nearly half a century.<sup>3</sup>

#### 5. The Eve of War

Unlike many of his social class Tawney enlisted as a private shortly after the First World War broke out. He sought no commission. Even during the war when he was summoned to the Headquarters of Sir Douglas Haig to meet Arthur Henderson, the Minister of Labour, and given the opportunity of leaving the trenches to help settle the industrial unrest on Clydeside, or even of possible promotion,<sup>4</sup> he preferred to return to the comradeship and hardship of trench life, leaving Lloyd George 'to do his own dirty work'. Despite Tawney's obvious sympathy with those of equally lowly army rank, he was not one of them in background, bearing or beliefs. The entries in his Commonplace Book on the eve of war and shortly after its outbreak reveal his own admission of a difference in personal belief, and sum up his debt to a tradition of thinking of which those who fought alongside him were largely unaware.

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1. Inaugural Lecture p.19.

2. Ibid.

3. M.G. May 1, 1912. 'School Clinics'

4. 'The Tawney Tradition' by J.D. Chambers. The Economic History Review Vol. XXIV. No.3 1971 p.359.

In his last entries in his diary from August to December 1914, Tawney exalted Christian principles, condemned the working class for its materialistic outlook<sup>1</sup> and vilified Germany as the most extreme form of the materialism of the age.<sup>2</sup> He arraigned the working class and Prussian militarism from the standpoint of a nineteenth century moralist steeped in the tradition of Arnold and Ruskin. He had left Oxford, like Arnold, with the apparent 'disgrace' of a second class degree and like him had never doubted the academic value of the liberal education which he had enjoyed and from which most were excluded, nor the moral insight which such an education gave into the forces at work in society. 'The existing social order is Macchiavellian in the sense of rewarding successful, and unscrupulous cunning. It is inhuman in the sense of using men as means - 'hands' - not as ends. It is pagan in its exaltation of strength, its contemptuous crushing of the weak, its disbelief in the value of human beings qua human beings'.<sup>3</sup> Prussian militarism, with its claim to determine the future of smaller nations, was the most extreme form of the materialist impulses to be found within the societies of Western Europe. The working class had succumbed to the materialism of the age and 'had aimed at comfort, instead of aiming at getting their rights'. The immediate aim was the defeat of Germany; the ultimate goal was the transformation of society through changing its underlying values.

Tawney's beliefs, which isolated him from the average

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1. C.P.B. July 12th 1914.
  2. C.P.B. November 1914.
  3. C.P.B. December 28th 1914.

soldier alongside whom he fought, place him in the mainstream of a tradition of thinking which stretches back through Ruskin and Arnold to such writers as Newman and Coleridge. The years from 1903 to 1908 had not shaken his belief in the values underlying the nineteenth century tradition; his criticism of Prussianism and Industrialism was essentially that of writers such as Matthew Arnold; Prussianism was the most extreme form of the narrowing of human ideals to a single end. It was the negation of what Arnold termed 'the general harmonious expansion of those gifts which make the peculiar dignity wealth and happiness of human nature'<sup>1</sup> and the embodiment of 'animality' in its elevation of one human activity to an overriding end. Yet before 1908, Tawney had little idea how society could be changed to enable the wider dissemination of Arnold's idea of culture. His *Commonplace Book* is significant in this respect. Between 1908 and 1914 Tawney came to accept the Arnoldian notion of 'aliens'.

'Within each of these classes; wrote Arnold speaking of the aristocracy (Barbarians), middle classes (Philistines) and working classes (Populace), 'there are a certain number of aliens, if we may so call them - persons who are mainly led, not by their class spirit but by a general humane spirit, by the love of human perfection and that this number is capable of being diminished or augmented. I mean the number of those who will succeed in developing this happy instinct will be greater or smaller in proportion both to the force of the original instinct within them and to the hindrance or encouragement which it meets with from without'.<sup>2</sup>

Tawney's acceptance of this idea of the 'aliens' explains several puzzling features of his *Commonplace Book*, especially why he

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1. 'Culture and Anarchy' p.94.

2. p.146.

assumed that the Church and Universities would be the foci of a popular awakening and why the working class which stood condemned for its materialism came to be regarded by him as the main agency for the moral transformation of society. The Gores, Temples, A.L. Smiths were, in his diary, the 'aliens' of the upper classes who had rejected their class ethic to lead a moral crusade, thus making the Church and Universities the natural leaders, in his mind, to foster social transformation. The unnamed 'weavers, potters, miners and engineers' of his tutorial classes, to whom he recognised a debt in his preface to 'The Agrarian Problem in the Sixteenth Century' (1912) and the named tutorial class students in his Commonplace Book,<sup>1</sup> had rejected the materialism of the working class and gave him the hope, which was not present in his writings in his pre-tutorial class days at Toynbee Hall, London and Glasgow, that the working class would demand social reform nor merely to increase material comfort but to enable each person to express his individual personality. In 1912 and 1913 he found evidence of an increasing number of working class 'aliens' in the contemporary industrial unrest and strikes. In 1914, when Europe was thrown into the anarchy and darkness of war, Tawney believed that good would emerge in the realisation by the working class of the evils of the materialist forces which it was fighting. Out of the cataclysm of war could spring a new society.

Tawney, like Arnold, held up as his ideal the life of an Oxford don.<sup>2</sup> In Arnold's view, 'The beauty and sweetness .... essential characteristics of a complete human perfection is seen at

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1. Hobson (p.3), Price (p.67)
  2. C.P.B. July 31st to 1st August 1912 (p.24).

its best in Oxford'.<sup>1</sup> Tawney believed that he had found, in his W.E.A. classes, the way of extending these qualities to the nation at large. One aspect of this ideal found at Oxford was 'an inward spiritual activity, having for its character increased sweetness, increased light, increased life, increased sympathy'.<sup>2</sup> Arnold's concept of culture, 'the study and pursuit of perfection',<sup>3</sup> was firstly 'an internal condition'. 'Religion says the Kingdom of God is within you and culture, in the like manner, places human perfection, in growth and in the predominance of our humanity proper, .... It places it in the ever increasing efficacy and in the general harmonious experience of those gifts which make the peculiar dignity, wealth and happiness of human nature.'<sup>4</sup> Yet it was not simply Arnold's conception of 'an inner perfection' which underlay Tawney's thinking about his tutorial classes. Arnold's concept of perfection as a process 'a growing and becoming' was also a social idea. He fully accepted the Arnoldian notion that, 'Perfection, as culture conceives it, is not possible while the individual remains isolated. The individual is required upon pain of being stunted and enfeebled in his own development if he disobeys to carry others along with him in his march towards perfection, to be continually doing all that he can to enlarge and increase the volume of the human stream sweeping thitherward'.<sup>5</sup> The tutorial class, the new society in microcosm, was, for Tawney, the embodiment of Arnold's 'social idea'. When he had stated in his Commonplace Book that the community 'by public provision' should 'make the life of the ordinary workman as rich and interesting as that of the fellow of an Oxford College'<sup>6</sup> he summed up, in terms which Arnold would

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1. Culture and Anarchy p.107
  2. ESP p.11
  3. Culture and Anarchy p.107
  4. P.94
  5. Culture and Anarchy p.94
  6. C.P.B. 1st August 1912 p.24.

have instantly recognised and applauded, the goal towards which society should be moving. It was a goal in which he translated to society at large the humanising influence of the cultivation of personality in association with others, through 'contact with what is excellent in human achievement'. In short, it was the creation of a common culture.

Tawney's tutorial class experience acted as a spur to his thinking on other educational matters. Up to 1908 he had scarcely applied his concept of the humane education to the sphere of adolescent education. His approach had been that of the economist interested in the extension of adolescent education as a palliative for economic problems. His tutorial class experience from 1908 onwards led him to approach the subject of adolescent education from another viewpoint, namely the educational and social value of extending to working class adolescents a humane education. Adolescent education, if generously conceived, could assist 'the bringing into one harmonious and truly humane life, of the whole body of English society'.<sup>1</sup> By 1914 he had not proceeded very far in clarifying his views on the nature of such education.

The vagueness of his terminology and his refusal to deal at length with matters 'internal' to education, which he regarded as the 'barren pedantry of the gloomy educationalist' makes it difficult to discuss his ideas upon adolescent education. Whilst his close friend, William Temple, maintained<sup>2</sup> that 'Education should remain .... primarily spiritual (that is effective through influence and through an appeal to sympathy and imagination) rather than intellectual (that is effective through an appeal to intelligence and memory' Tawney,

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1. ESP p.6.

2. Iremonger Op.cit. p.83.



like Arnold, did not even reach the stage of making such a distinction. Though he seemed to hold the Arnoldian belief that the idea of the all round development of human powers was 'not consistent with the overdevelopment of any one at the expense of the rest',<sup>1</sup> it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Tawney's prime concern was knowledge and the development of the intellect. In his *Commonplace Book*, he spoke of the need to 'think of knowledge, like religion, as transcending all differences of class and wealth' and of the fact that 'in the eye of learning, as in the eye of God, all men are equal'. At Rochdale in 1909 he seemed to express an intellectualised concept of education when he condemned the economic system for its 'sacrifice of human intelligence to the immediate exigencies of productivity' though the term 'human intelligence' was not defined.

Arising out of this is the related problem of the extent to which Tawney accepted the notion of a liberal education defined by R.S. Peters in the sense 'that education should not be confined to specialist training.' The individual, it is argued, should be trained in more than one form of knowledge.<sup>2</sup> Tawney was consistent in his demand for 'a sound general education',<sup>3</sup> but his concern was to oppose such an education to the narrowing influence of the materialist forces of the age than to define its content. When speaking of adolescents he seemed to accept the Arnoldian notion of the 'entire circle of knowledge' being relevant to the development of mind, though he had nothing to say about the place of the sciences in a general education. Whilst he spoke of knowledge as being 'like religion (in) transcending all differences of class and wealth' and thus tended to imply an

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1. C.P.B. 30th October 1912, p.43.

2. 'Education and Initiation' p.135

3. e.g. Rochdale Observer, September 22nd 1909.

'equal dignity' for all forms of knowledge, he opposed those forms of knowledge which are 'not put for us into relation with our sense of conduct'. The writers 'who pile up facts and statistics' and never 'get to the heart of the problem' share 'the immoral philosophy which underlies much of modern industry'.<sup>1</sup> It would appear that even within 'a sound general education' there were certain forms of knowledge which dealt with 'the question of moral relationships' which should be given precedence. Into this category Tawney refused to place those which reflected 'the present tendency of all writing on social and economic subjects' which was 'to collect vast accumulations of facts .... No amount of conjuring will turn a fact into a principle'.<sup>2</sup> Men of science he regarded as 'like children gathering pebbles on the beach'. By implication he seemed to deny a prominent place for the sciences in 'a sound general education'. The subjects whose currency was moral values were given pride of place. Like Arnold, he was 'rationalising in an elaborate way his own personal interests and preferences'.<sup>3</sup>

It is likely that Tawney saw himself, as Arnold did, as the defender of 'what seemed to him to be the least adequately defended side in the contemporary debate. Science was largely supported on the grounds of its utilitarian value, the humanities attacked because of their apparent uselessness in fitting a man for life'.<sup>4</sup> Tawney's argument was that the humanities were of relevance to modern society in emphasising moral values, and as such were upholding 'civilising influences and forces against the encroachment of materialism and utilitarianism. Since Arnold's day the struggle had grown more

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1. C.P.B. 18th September 1912, p.31

2. C.P.B. November 1914, p.79

3. Gribble, Op.Cit. p.22.

4. Ibid. p.18.

acute and the defence of 'the humane subjects' had become of greater importance. To this extent, Tawney's over-reaction to the sciences is understandable, especially in the light of his own education and the growing threat of a world war. Science had provided the nations with instruments of mass destruction; what Europe needed was to put scientific discoveries to the benefit of humanity. Such a change could only be accomplished by the acceptance of a scale of moral values which could be found in the study of 'the humane subjects'.

But the war had first to be won. 'Prussian militarism' had to be defeated. Unlike many within the Labour Movement, Tawney was not a pacifist. The 'enemy of civilisation', materialism, which was found in its most extreme form in the military might of Prussia, had not changed since Arnold's<sup>day</sup>/it had merely grown stronger. This was the substance of his introductory lecture on 'The Deeper Causes of the War' to the Longton Tutorial Class on October 2nd 1914, though he gave no hint to his audience of his intention to enlist. A letter dated September 23rd 1914 to Jenkins in N. Staffordshire outlined his course for the following year 'My subject is English Political and Economic History to 1850 before Christmas, after 1850 after Christmas'.<sup>1</sup> A subsequent letter of October 12th<sup>2</sup> made no mention of possible enlistment. It was thus something of a surprise to Jenkins, the tutorial class organiser in the Potteries, to read in a letter from Oxford, 'Mr. Tawney Has Enlisted! He will therefore not be able to take the Class again this Session'.<sup>3</sup> It was equally a surprise to Tawney's sister to learn that he had enlisted as a private.

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1. Tawney to Jenkins September 23rd 1914.
  2. Tawney to Jenkins October 12th 1914 (with a cheque from a benefactor).
  3. Morris to Jenkins December 2nd 1914.

His enlistment raises two important questions which it is the purpose of the following chapter to answer. Did his experiences in the trenches change his attitude towards the working-class which he had condemned in his *Commonplace Book* for its materialism? Did his wartime experiences alter his thinking on the importance of education as part of social reconstruction?

## CHAPTER THREE

### SOLDIER AND WARTIME CIVILIAN

1. The Reflections of a Soldier (1914-1916)
2. Education and Reconstruction
3. At the Ministry of Reconstruction (1917-1918)
4. Educational Reform and the Fisher Act.
5. Labour's Advisory Committee on Education - the first six months (April - November 1918)
6. Summary: Continuity and Change

1. The Reflections of a Soldier (1914-1916)

'Whenever I have to make decisions, I instinctively refer to the standards of conduct of two groups of people - the men of the platoon in which I served in the war and yourselves' - Tawney at a reunion of the Rochdale Tutorial Class in 1939 (Quoted in the Jubilee Issue of 'The Highway', 1953).

Exactly six months after the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria, the event which triggered off the First World War, Tawney made his last entry in his Commonplace Book. His last statement as a civilian, one month or so after he had volunteered for active service as a private in the Manchester Regiment but before he had reported for duty, was in all respects characteristic of his prewar thinking. His concern on 28th December 1914 was 'the ideals and standards which govern Western Europe' and from which war ultimately sprang. The whole tendency of the age was to 'exalt the combative qualities and to undervalue those of the humble and weak'. Whilst such qualities were regarded as the foundation of the normal order of society then war was merely the extension of such thinking. Hence Tawney's argument was that, 'if we are to end the horrors of war, we must first end the horror of peace' and seek to make a society, when the war ended, in which 'ruthlessness (and) ambition can not override the merciful and gentle'<sup>1</sup>.

Writing to his brother-in-law, William Beveridge, on Christmas Eve 1915, after nearly a year in the trenches, he saw little chance of new ideas emerging upon which a new society could be based. Military discipline was against it. 'What is called discipline is mainly, after a few elementary matters, a code of rules

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1. C.P.B. December 28th 1914, p.83.

for preventing any sort of new idea struggling into the august presence of the higher command'. The outlook of the British soldier gave no grounds for optimism. "A year (in the trenches) has taught me a good deal - amongst other things that his (that is the British soldier's) philosophy is much the same as that of his master. It is 'Get as much and give as little as you can'. He has been brought up in that creed - though, of course, very many rise above it"<sup>1</sup>. Thus he concluded that the problem of making British people 'public spirited and less totally selfish, can't I fancy, be handled under a generation or two'.

In France things were different. The outlook of the French peasant proprietor was not that of the British industrial worker. 'The economic conditions of peasant propriety' did not, produce quite the same commercial outlook on all human affairs. Furthermore, the French Revolution had affected the outlook of Frenchmen. 'Less than a century and a half ago there was a brief moment when the masses of Frenchmen were really disinterested enthusiasts' and this gave French people 'a kind of potentiality of idealism which we haven't got'. He was thus consoled by the fact that if he had to die he would be fighting 'for this country rather than for England'. If he were to survive he would 'like to settle down in France a bit (for) they have not made a bargain with fate to the same extent as we have'.

Tawney came near to death in July 1916. 'The Times' reported on July 14th that 'Sergeant R.H. Tawney is in hospital at Tréport with machine gun wounds in the chest and abdomen'. His

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1. Tawney to Beveridge December 24th 1915. He ended his letter with the remark 'I am the only sober sergeant in my Company tonight'.

own account of the incident appeared in the Westminster Gazette, the following month. He described how in the Somme campaign he had been hit as if by 'a tremendous iron hammer swing by a giant of inconceivable strength'<sup>1</sup> but made no reference to any change in the outlook of the British soldier which may have resulted from the war in which men acted as 'merry mischievous apes tearing up the image of God'.<sup>2</sup> However, the period of convalescence following upon the injuries which he received at the Somme, gave him time for further reflection.<sup>3</sup> In October 1916, he published in the 'Nation'<sup>4</sup> a short article entitled, 'Some Reflections of a Soldier', which presented the average soldier in a very different light from that in his letter to Beveridge in the preceding December.

In his 'Reflections', he attributed to the civilians in England the materialist outlook for which he had formerly condemned the British soldier. The British soldier was now set apart as sharing in the fellowship of 'a moral ideal or purpose'. The consequences of this reversal in attitude by Tawney are significant. Hitherto because he believed that soldier and civilian, employer and employee were infected by the same materialist outlook he had concluded that there was little chance of a transformation of society

1. The account entitled 'The Attack' appears also in Guy Chapman's 'Vain Glory' (1937) and 'The Attack and Other Papers' (1953).
2. Ibid. p.16.
3. In September 1916, The General Secretary of the W.E.A. visited Tawney in hospital and reported to the Executive Committee that he was making satisfactory progress. One of the many stories about Tawney relates to his period of convalescence. As he was just an N.C.O. the matron of the hospital treated him as an ordinary soldier, until he was visited by Bishop Gore, after which he was sternly reprimanded by her. 'You might have told us you were a gentleman' she is said to have exclaimed. This and other stories about Tawney is to be found in 'R.H. Tawney: A Portrait by Several Hands'.
4. Reprinted in 'The Attack and Other Papers' pp. 20-25.



'within a generation or two'. Social reform could take place only after a change in 'underlying attitudes and assumptions'. A change in his opinion of the British soldier produced a new conclusion. The British soldier, like 'the prewar industrial striker' of the *Commonplace Book*, was now the leader of a moral awakening. As <sup>1</sup> 'the contagion of their spirit' was 'deadly', the change of social values and consequent reform of social institutions was imminent. Educational reform was seen by Tawney as part of the broader programme of social reform. It was also singled out as the most appropriate memorial to the fallen and reward for those who had survived, for it embodied the moral ideals for which the soldier in the trenches had fought.

The wartime civilian thus now received the odium hitherto reserved for the 'Tommy'. Forced to return to England because of his injuries, Tawney now saw himself as 'a visitor among strangers whose intentions are kindly but whose modes of thought I neither altogether understand nor altogether approve'.<sup>2</sup> He still regarded himself as a soldier who found 'it difficult to separate opinions that I've formed for myself from those formed for me by the men with whom I lived, the chance conversations snatched during a slack time in the trenches'.<sup>3</sup> Above all Tawney attacked civilians for their 'commercial attitude' towards the war, and for exalting the combative qualities and 'the spectacle' of war.<sup>4</sup> The resulting false image which was created was an insult to the soldier and bode ill for the future. 'They are an index of the temper in which you

1. *Ibid.* p.28. These views were referred to in the debate within the House of Commons on the Fisher Bill (*Hansard 5th Series Vol. 97 Col. 850*).

2. 'Some Reflections of a Soldier', p.24.

3. *Ibid.* p.23.

4. *Ibid.* p.27.

will approach the problems of peace'.<sup>1</sup>

A 'moral veil' was interposed between soldier and civilian. The unfamiliar duties and dangers imposed on the former had created 'a ferment, nonetheless powerful because only half-conscious, in all but the least reflective minds'.<sup>2</sup> In the presence of death men were not satisfied with 'conventional justifications of a sacrifice', soldiers were not guided by a fierce hatred or patriotism. 'In suffering, as in knowledge, there is something that transcends personal emotion and unites the soul to the suffering and wisdom of God'.<sup>3</sup> In an article in 'The Welsh Outlook' in 1916, he argued that the emotions of 'hatred and patriotism' lasted little more than a few weeks in the trenches. 'What the facts of war impress upon soldiers is not their national distinctiveness, but their common humanity with men who, fifty yards away, freeze and starve and sweat in the same mud and rain and heat as themselves, who look out on the same shattered villages and unploughed fields, and hunger with the same passion for the return of peace'.

Tawney hoped that the 'whole social life' of post war Britain would be infused with the idea of common humanity and that the nation would devote itself to discovering 'new methods by which that principle may be applied .... in the whole illimitable field of semi-private relationships, which a war of modern magnitude necessarily transforms'.<sup>4</sup> It was necessary to turn patriotism 'into the voice of principles which .... (were) the expression of

1. 'Democracy or Defeat' p.8.

2. Ibid. p.9.

3. Tom Jones, Lloyd George's Private Secretary, sent 'a typed copy of Tawney's article for the next 'Outlook' on Democracy of Defeat' to the Prime Minister 'on the chance of L.G. reading it. For I think in his heart L.G. agrees with our own position it is democracy that is at stake'. (Whitehall Diaries p.16).

4. Ibid. p.12.

the nature of humanity itself'. There was need for 'something new in the temper of the nation' yet only the soldier was fully aware of this. He recognised in opposing German imperialism that he was struggling against 'the temper of modern industrialism with its belief in power as an end in itself, its coarse material standards, its worship of elaborate and soul-destroying organisation'<sup>1</sup>. Among soldiers there was 'a general feeling that their country was fighting for what was kindly and humane and akin to the common sympathies of men'.<sup>2</sup>

But what could be done to foster a new 'temper' within the nation? At a time of national crisis it was little use waiting for signs of a new spirit among the civilian working class population. Writing to A.L. Smith in 1917,<sup>3</sup> he doubted 'if one could get a hearing at a working-class meeting if one spoke on the principles at stake. One would be laughed down'. The government must take the initiative. On November 28th 1916, Tawney, Mallon, Zimmern, David Davies and Hichens of Cammell Laird and Company had breakfast with Lloyd George during which the Prime Minister requested that those present draw up a memorandum on 'the need for a new spirit in government and the conduct of war'.<sup>4</sup> The memorandum was ready before the day was out. It argued the need to find 'a form of national concentration at once consistent with our highest traditions and compatible with the ideals which led us into this struggle'.<sup>5</sup> Progress towards a military victory was hampered 'by the surviving poison of social prejudice and class interests'. The Government hesitated to take the action necessary to end the import of luxuries

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1. Tawney to Beveridge October 27th 1916.
  2. The closing paragraph of 'Democracy or Defeat'.
  3. Tawney to A.L. Smith December 27th 1917.
  4. Thomas Jones Whitehall Diary Volume 1, p.2.
  5. Ibid. p.3.

for the wealthy and to take under state control land belonging to the rich. High profits were still being made 'literally at the price of blood'. The soldiers in the trenches expected from the civilian population and the Government 'a sense of obedience and duty and an enforcement of discipline as severe and exacting as that to which he is himself accustomed'.<sup>1</sup> The Government thus needed to take a stronger lead than hitherto in controlling foodstuffs and prohibiting the importation of non-essential commodities, in restricting profits and in making the fullest opportunities of advancement within the army to those of humble birth.<sup>2</sup>

A year later, Tawney believed that the proposals were still largely unrealised. He was still demanding 'an authoritative statement' from the Government.<sup>3</sup> The issues were still 'being constantly evaded'. He suggested that one way of instilling 'a new confidence' and bringing about a new sense of unity' was to increase the number of Labour members in the Government, though 'one does not want to use the occasion to grind the Labour or any other axe'. The mass of working people would thus be more likely to feel that 'the war was their war (and) not an enterprise for which their rulers want their arms but not their minds or hearts'. The war had caught the country halfway in a transition to democracy and thus in a weakened position which lacked the determination found in the German war effort. Increased Labour representation in Government was one way of overcoming the problem though he concluded pessimistically, 'I fear there is little practical help in all this'.

1. Ibid.

2. The full details of the proposals are given in 'Whitehall Diaries' p.4-5.

3. Tawney to A.L. Smith December 27th 1917.

Towards the end of 1916, having recovered from his war wounds, Tawney had to make an important personal decision. How could he best serve the nation as a civilian? In October 1916,<sup>1</sup> he reported to Beveridge that he had been quite unexpectedly .... returned to duty' to serve with the 'Home service for some months'. He had been undecided as to whether he should undertake 'industrial' or 'educational' work. His article in 'The Welsh Outlook'<sup>2</sup> had suggested that he would choose the former. However in October 1916 he was anxiously awaiting news from the War Office about whether he would be released from the forces to undertake 'the education work that (he) contemplated'. The reasons for his choice are interesting: 'Both the industrial and educational work are nearer my heart; only I feel less of a bungler at the latter or perhaps it is only that there are more bunglers in educational work and that the standard is less exacting'.

In fact Tawney never really made the choice. He continued all of his pre war interests. He contributed to discussions on industrial reforms in several articles including that, entitled 'The Conditions of Economic Liberty',<sup>3</sup> and sat on the Sankey Coal Commission. He resumed his historical research.<sup>4</sup> However, educational reconstruction occupied most of his time in the period up to 1919; therein lay the greatest hope for a far-reaching and permanent reconstruction of society.<sup>5</sup>

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1. Tawney to Beveridge October 27th 1916.
  2. The closing pages of 'Democracy or Defeat', dealt mainly with future industrial reorganisation.
  3. A chapter in 'Labour and Capital after the War'.
  4. In December 1916 and March 1916 he wrote to the Reverend Claude Jenkins, Librarian at Lambeth Palace for 'evidence as to administration of the Common Law about usury'.
  5. Social reconstruction was the subject of an article by him in the Hibbert Journal in 1918. This article was later extended into a book 'The Acquisitive Society'.

## 2. Education and Reconstruction

Tawney never regarded himself as a wartime civilian. Whilst convalescing at Bishop Gore's house in Oxford, and also for many years after, he continued to wear his sergeant's jacket.<sup>1</sup> In April 1917,<sup>2</sup> he requested that a pamphlet he was writing for the Workers' Educational Association be retitled 'An Address from a Soldier to Soldiers'. These were not simply eccentricities. In his writings of 1916 he had carefully distinguished the materialistic outlook of the civilian from the high moral ideals of the soldier. His sergeant's tunic and the title of his pamphlet clearly identified him with the latter. His demobilisation in December 1916 did not mean the rejection of the ideals which he had cherished in the trenches and before; it meant simply a greater opportunity to foster them in national life, especially through what he had termed in his letter to Beveridge, 'educational work'.

What he saw as the goal of 'educational work' was defined by him, immediately after demobilisation in an article written for<sup>3</sup> 'The Times Educational Supplement'. At that time he was living at Wheatley, near Oxford. Writing in February 1917 when talk of educational reconstruction was in the air, he maintained that 'we ought to perpetuate in peace the idealism of war, because that alone

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1. Many have commented with amazement on this. Hugh Gaitskell in his tribute at 'the Memorial Service for R.H. Tawney' in 1962 mentioned how he went to see him in 1926 during the General Strike. He found Tawney in his home in Mecklenburgh Square seated in the middle of a jumble of books, papers and spent matches; Tawney was wearing his sergeant's jacket. 'Somehow it was surprising that a member of the London School of Economics and the greatest socialist philosopher of his generation should not only have a sergeant's jacket but actually be wearing it'. ('The Radical Tradition' p.212).
  2. W.E.A. - E.C. April 4th 1917.
  3. 'A National College of All Souls' Reprinted in 'The Attack' p.29-34.

can deliver us from the selfish appetites that lie in wait for us in both'. Few people, in 1917, would have argued with such a sentiment or with his belief that the best way to begin was by founding on such idealism an 'educational system to whose influence generation after generation is submitted'.<sup>1</sup> The reconstruction of education 'in a generous, humane and liberal spirit' as a noble memorial to the fallen was regarded by most people as a worthy ideal. But to what extent was it an attainable ideal? In answer to this question Tawney was accused of being unduly pessimistic.

In Tawney's view it was impossible to reform the system of education whilst the prevailing attitude of the civilian population remained unchanged. In keeping with the thinking of his previous *Commonplace Book* and Portsmouth address, he argued that<sup>2</sup> 'The fundamental obstacle in the way of education in England is simple. It is that education is a spiritual activity, much of which is not commercially profitable, and that the prevailing temper of Englishmen is to regard as most important that which is commercially profitable, and as of only inferior importance that which is not'. Educational reform was not simply a matter of the stroke of a parliamentary pen. Before legislation could be enacted it was necessary to induce the nation to believe that 'spiritual activity is of primary importance and worth any sacrifice of material goods, and that in fostering such activity education, if not the most powerful is at least the most readily available agency.' Such a task was difficult in view of the deep roots which the materialist outlook had in contemporary society. The first step in any educational reform was to recognise that 'our mood itself, our attitude to education, was wrong'. Whilst educational

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1. Ibid p.30

2. Ibid.

progress could be urged on the grounds of its effect on the nation's wealth, this economic argument reflected the commercial outlook and as such was an 'insecure foundation for educational reform'. What was granted for commercial motives could be withdrawn for commercial reasons. Tawney had himself ignored this fact in the prewar years when he had urged the extension of working class education on economic grounds, and was to do so again within the space of a year.

But what of the prospects of a change in the prevailing temper of the English nation without which educational advance was impossible? On this issue Tawney was not as pessimistic as many of his critics at the time made out. He called upon his experiences in the trenches which had impressed upon him the belief that the British soldier rejected 'the cult of power as an end itself, its coarse material standards, the subordination of personality to mechanism, the worship of an elaborate and soul destroying organisation,<sup>1</sup> and recognised the forms which they took whether commercial greed or military violence. This recognition of 'absolute claims of personality' by the soldier in the field was 'contagious' and hence it was possible that the war itself 'has been an education' in the sense of the wider propagation of new values throughout the nation. As such, the reform of education was made more possible for 'the sphere where the claims of personality are not clearly involved .... is the sphere of education'.<sup>2</sup> This meant changing an educational system that had been constructed in 'the image of our plutocratic, class-conscious selves'. On the subject of the precise lines of change Tawney had nothing to say. In essence educational advance, for Tawney, meant providing

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1. Ibid p.33.

2. Ibid p.34.



'not merely, as hitherto, for a small minority, but for all the nation's sons and daughters, an education generous, inspiring and humane'.<sup>1</sup>

Still at the fore front of his mind was an ideal which he had not clarified during his two years with the Manchester Regiment. In his 'Address from A Soldier to Soldiers' in March 1917 he reiterated his belief that education should not primarily aim at imparting technical or professional skills, for 'a man is a human being before he is a workman. As a human being he has certain interests which he requires for his own happiness, to satisfy certain capacities which unless he is to be only half himself he needs to develop'.<sup>2</sup> But a humanistic education should not be pursued in isolation. He reaffirmed his belief in the corporate nature and value of education. 'He is not merely an individual. He is a citizen in a democratic community. He cannot exercise his rights or discharge his responsibilities as a citizen unless he develops his own mind in conjunction with his fellows'. His debt to the nineteenth century tradition, and especially that of Arnold which emphasised 'the social idea' is evident.

The years immediately following were to test the strength of his belief in the arguments which he had put forward for educational reform and in his concept of education. In particular, two questions became of prime importance, to what extent was he willing to allow educational reform on grounds other than those which he had advocated in the years 1916 and 1917? What were to be the lines of educational advance to achieve the goal which he urged?

### 3. The Ministry of Reconstruction (1917-1918)

Tawney did not explain the nature of the 'educational work' he proposed to undertake upon demobilisation but it is clear from his

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1. Ibid. p.3.

2. Ibid p.7.

writings of 1916 and 1917 that he did not plan to return immediately to university lecturing despite the opportunity of a Readership in Economic History at the London School of Economics and a Fellowship at Balliol. He thought of himself as a soldier in civilian clothing at the service of the nation, striving for the realisation on the Home Front of those values for which his comrades were fighting in France. Thus he would not consider any post other than that which would involve him in the task of national reconstruction. He readily accepted a post at the Ministry of Reconstruction and early in 1917 took up residence in London, for the first time since 1906, in Highgate Road.

At the Ministry of Reconstruction Tawney involved himself in those aspects of reform with which he had been connected in the prewar years. In June 1917,<sup>1</sup> he joined a subcommittee of the Ministry which was 'to consider the provision for and possibilities of adult education (other than technical or vocational) in Great Britain and to make recommendations'.<sup>2</sup> In 1918, acknowledged by Addison as a 'known authority on matters affecting juvenile employment',<sup>3</sup> he produced a report entitled 'Juvenile Employment during the War and After'.

In July 1917,<sup>4</sup> Greenwood reported to the Executive Committee of the W.E.A. that 'a subcommittee of the Education Reconstruction Committee to deal with adult education' had been appointed. By that time Greenwood acting as one of the subcommittee's secretaries' had

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1. Recon.1. Box 42. Ministry of Reconstruction Adult Education Committee File No.1. (P.R.O.)
  2. Item R.C. No.112.
  3. Preface to the Report by Addison
  4. W.E.A.-E.C. July 31, 1917

received<sup>1</sup> Tawney's acceptance of membership, together with that of others, such as A.L. Smith, who had a record of distinguished service in the sphere of adult education. In the first month of the subcommittee's existence, Tawney attended the inaugural meeting at Balliol College, Oxford, on July 11th 1917 when a preliminary memorandum on the subdivision of the reference and the methods of procedure was discussed, contributed to the provisional bibliography for the guidance of the subcommittee, and advised on the subcommittee's size and structure. In connection with the latter he had expressed concern<sup>2</sup> that 'the Committee is already too large and there must be a strong case for additions to it'. Despite his protests against the admission of George Adam Smith of Aberdeen University to the subcommittee, Heseltine, Secretary to the Ministry, invited him to join.

When the subcommittee first met in July 1917 there was no hint of the future disagreement with Addison, the President of the Ministry of Reconstruction. Several questions were framed for investigation, including those relating 'to the present extent and character of adult education', the methods of adult education and its organisation and administration, university organisation and adult education, methods of finance, the future demands for non-vocational education and its connection with industrial and social reconstruction, and the lines of future development as indicated by past experience.<sup>3</sup> On these issues the subcommittee was to

1. Unlike other members Tawney does not appear to have sent an official letter of acceptance. Greenwood merely included a slip of paper with the words 'R.H. Tawney accepted 25/6' written on it, in the file of acceptances. Greenwood's account of the work of the Reconstruction Committee is given in an article entitled 'During the First World War' printed in the Jubilee issue of 'The Highway' (p.263-266) April 1953.

2. Ibid. Ref. 60(i)

3. Ibid.

be provided with evidence from various organisations and institutions. A week after the subcommittee's first meeting, Tawney, as Secretary of the Central Joint Advisory Committee on Tutorial Classes, a post which he held from 1917 to 1928, forwarded a letter<sup>1</sup> to Greenwood in which the necessity of future 'interchanges between students of Great Britain and Overseas' was urged as one of the lines of future advance of adult education. This suggestion was regarded by the subcommittee as 'impractical' and it turned its attention to the evidence of other bodies.

In all, the subcommittee produced three interim reports, the last of which on Libraries and Museums was signed by the members, including Tawney, in May 1919. It was, however, the first and most controversial of the Interim Reports, on the 'Industrial and Social Conditions in relation to Adult Education', with which he was most closely associated. The choice of the subject for the first Report reflected the attitude of the members of the subcommittee such as A.L. Smith, Greenwood<sup>2</sup> and Tawney who had been actively engaged in adult education for many years and who had come to gain first hand experience of the factors limiting the expansion of adult education. Addison disapproved of the manner of approach by the subcommittee and informed them, 'Had the matters dealt with in the Interim Report been formally submitted to me I would have found it difficult to hold that a Committee appointed to consider the possibilities of adult education were not travelling beyond their province in the first place to the limitation of these possibilities imposed by industrial

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1. A.E.69. 'Letter received from the Secretary of the Central Joint Advisory Committee on Tutorial Classes'.
  2. The other secretary of the subcommittee was E.S. Cartwright, who had stayed with the Tawneys at Manchester and was involved in the organisation of tutorial classes in the Potteries.

conditions under which large numbers of adult working class members live'.<sup>1</sup> Tawney's experience at Rochdale, Longton and elsewhere had led him to believe that the study of adult education could not be divorced from an examination of the prevailing industrial and social conditions. In January 1917,<sup>2</sup> Tawney had been engaged in an investigation into 'adult education in urban England' and this had no doubt reinforced his belief in the appropriateness of the subject of the first Report.

The First Interim Report,<sup>3</sup> signed on 14th March 1918, drew attention to the 'grave educational disability under which so large a proportion of the working population live owing to the conditions and circumstances of industrial life'. The long hours of labour, the disruptive effect of the shift system, and nightwork thwarted 'the desire for self expression and public service'. Before adult education could be truly effective, working hours needed to be curtailed, overtime reduced, the working week shortened and shift and night work carefully regulated. To deal with the deadening intellectual effects of monotonous work there should be a system of alternating forms of employment to combat 'the problem of heavy and exhausting work when the workers are all too sunk into the torpor of excessive exhaustion to be alive to intellectual and other interests',<sup>4</sup>

1. Letter to the subcommittee dated August 8th 1918, from Vaughan Nash (Under Secretary).
2. Among the fragmentary documents of the Ministry of Reconstruction is one headed 'Proceedings of the First Meeting January 11th and 12th 1917' (Recon 1 86/87) which shows that he served on subcommittee number 7 which examined Adult Education in Urban England. It appears to be a forerunner of the larger subcommittee under A.L. Smith set up in July 1917. It is also probably the 'educational work' which Tawney mentioned in his letter to Beveridge of October 27th, 1916.
3. Recon 1 Box 42.
4. P. 13.

the Report recommended the closer control and reduction of the hours of labour. 'A harmonious environment' was essential to the realisation of the objectives of adult education which were interpreted in terms 'of intellectual accomplishments, power of aesthetic appreciation and moral character'. Education was seen as an essential part of social reform. 'Nor is the environment likely to be substantially modified except in response to the higher ideals of social life, stimulated by a more prolonged and widely diffused education'. Yet the problem at the heart of the Report is that found at the heart of Tawney's own writings. Education is seen as a principal agency for social reform in the sense of diffusing 'higher values' and creating a common culture yet education itself must be reformed to undertake such a role and this is not possible until 'the higher values' have become widely accepted. There is, however, in the Report a strong emphasis upon 'environmental equality', upon communal provision to improve living and housing standards, and upon legislation to curb industrialism, themes which found their fullest expressions in Tawney's later works 'The Acquisitive Society' and 'Equality'. He had already destroyed the myth inherent in his distinction between 'educational work' and 'industrial' in his letter to Beveridge of October 1916.

The Second Interim Report on Education in the Army was also a subject of great interest to Tawney, who had already outlined his attitude in his pamphlet 'From a Soldier to Soldiers' (March 1917). The plea in the Report for the extension of facilities within the army for a humane education was one which had a personal meaning for Tawney. No group of people deserved more the opportunities for expressing their personalities and ideals through coming 'into contact with 'the heritage of the ages'. The Third Interim Report,

concerned with 'Libraries and Museums' examined the provision of the basic materials of a humane education and drew attention to the need for special facilities in rural areas and for more comprehensive provision by County Education Authorities.

In the Final Report the subcommittee examined the twin motives which led working class men and women to seek education. It was in part an urge for 'fuller personal development which arises from the desire for knowledge, for self expression, for the satisfaction of intellectual, aesthetic and spiritual needs and for a fuller life. It is based upon a claim for the recognition of human personality'.<sup>1</sup> Equally, the motive was 'social .... to understand and help in the solution of the common problems of human society' through the creation of a common humanity. In his covering letter to the Final Report, A.L. Smith pointed out that 'such needs' were permanent and, therefore, education should not be regarded as a luxury for the few. It implied that 'the opportunity for adult education should be spread widely, uniformly and systematically over the community'.<sup>2</sup>

It was clear from the broad definition which the Committee gave to the term education<sup>3</sup> that the agencies for such education were bound to be numerous, though pride of place was given in the listing of such institutions to the University Tutorial Class. Yet whether it was the wide range of agencies or subjects which were under review it was clear that the effectiveness of any constructive proposals turned in part upon the quality of the teaching staff who were to

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1. Final Report p.3.

2. Preface to the Final Report, p.i.

3. 'By education we mean all the deliberate efforts by which men and women attempt to satisfy their thirst for knowledge, to equip themselves for their responsibilities as citizens and members of society, or to find opportunities for self expression'. (p.34.)

implement any changes and this depended in part upon the organisation and financing of adult education. A.L. Smith pointed out that as in all branches of education, 'making the right noises' was of little value without financial provision.

In its financial recommendations, the Report proposed that the Board of Education grant should be paid in two parts,<sup>1</sup> in respect of university tutorial classes, one part being a grant amounting to 50 per cent of the tutor's salary and 'an additional block grant amounting to 25 per cent of the total cost of the salaries of the tutors employed by the University'.<sup>2</sup> Financial provisions of a maximum grant per course amounting to 25 per cent of the lecturer's fee and a maximum block grant amounting to 20 per cent of the total cost of lecturers' fees were urged by the Committee for extension lectures.<sup>3</sup> Grants were also advocated for Summer Schools, and non-university education including one year classes, collegiate institutions and rural education.

While Greenwood prepared a summary of the Final Report<sup>4</sup> for distribution to the Branches of the W.E.A., Tawney gave its recommendations publicity in the press. In his reviews<sup>5</sup> of two books on adult education, he argued that universities should regard extra mural work 'as of equal importance with the education of undergraduates', and as such make adequate financial provision. The cost of providing 'an adequate system of adult education was no more than that of a battleship'. But to spend on education rather than armaments required a reappraisal of the nation's priorities and values. Returning to his earlier theme that a fundamental change in the nation's

1. Ibid. p.160.

2. Ibid. p.160.

3. Ibid. p.161.

4. W.E.A.- E.C. Minute Jan. 23rd 1920. This summary was published under the title 'The Education of the Citizens'.

5. A review of 'A Pioneer in Working Class Education by Albert Mansbridge (M.G.17th Aug.1920). A review of 'Cambridge Essays on Adult Education' (M.G. October 7th 1920).



outlook was necessary before significant educational advance could be achieved, he drew some hope from the fact that 'the notion of adult education as cheap culture for the masses, has, any rate, outwardly been abandoned'. The war had brought a growing realisation of the value and importance of adult education. Whether this feeling was sufficiently strong to give priority to expenditure on adult education in order to make the report's recommendations a reality remained to be seen. The whole future of the report's proposals hinged upon whether the government would make the necessary finance available. It was to the subject of the financing of adult education that Tawney turned in the twenties.

His first major part in the work of educational reconstruction had thus concerned a sphere of education with which he had been familiar in the prewar years. His second contribution to Addison's Ministry did little to broaden Tawney's educational horizons. He willingly agreed to Addison's request that he compile a report on the problems of juvenile employment; he was given the task of sifting through evidence supplied by the Ministry. He 'laboured long and alone' leaving no record other than his report 'Juvenile Employment During and After the War'. It is evident from his personal papers that apart from having at his disposal some three thousand pieces of evidence he also drew heavily upon an earlier 'Memorandum of the Reconstruction Committee on the Final Report of the Departmental Committee on Juvenile Education in relation to Employment after the War'. The Memorandum made several points which were echoed in his report, although, in general, the former was largely concerned with long term programmes of reform. The Departmental Committee's recommendations for 'raising the school-leaving age, the abolition

of the existing half-time system, the establishment of compulsory continuation schools in the day time up to the age of eighteen. The adoption of fixed terms during the year for entering and leaving school, the importance of the provision of establishment of classes for unemployed juveniles and the provision of skilled guidance in the choice of employment'<sup>1</sup> were in keeping with the proposals put forward by Tawney though he gave greater emphasis to the latter two.

His Report is interesting from two points of view; firstly in the light it throws upon juvenile and adolescent education during the war and secondly in the practical proposals which it suggests to meet the likelihood of heavy juvenile unemployment after the war.

The 'dark side of the picture' of juvenile education during the war was that of 'partial exemptions granted at 11 for agriculture, and 12 for the textile industries to full time employment at 13 in some districts and 14 in others'<sup>2</sup>, of closure of schools for part of the day, and of non-educative work for many engaged in such tasks as making ammunition boxes and cartridge making. Deprived of the opportunity for 'learnership' and of an all round training, many young people were forced to undertake repetitive work. Though he emphasised that too much stress ought not be placed upon 'the dark picture of demoralisation' he added that even 'when every allowance has been made for the inclination of each generation to despair of the next we can see that a strain has been put upon the character of young persons .... which might have corrupted the integrity of Washington and have undermined the energy of Samuel Smiles'.<sup>3</sup>

Though he did not give as full an emphasis to the positive

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1. Ibid. p.1.

2. Ibid p.5.

3. Ibid. p.31.

side, which is to be found in the writings of modern commentators on the period,<sup>1</sup> he nevertheless, pointed to certain positive achievements, especially the increase in the number of pupils in secondary education and their longer stay at school.<sup>2</sup> Whilst he did not draw the conclusion of the authors of the 'Memorandum' that this increase was a sign that public opinion would welcome a 'universal prolongation of full time education beyond the age of fourteen' he nevertheless regarded this fact as one of the few brighter aspects of the war.

In his proposals for a policy to combat the likely juvenile unemployment at the end of the war he gave priority to the abolition of exemption below the age of 14, to the implementation of clauses 8, 10 and 13 of 'The new Education Act' especially its provisions for continued education, and to the raising of the school leaving age to 15. In the case of the latter he argued that even 'granted the validity of the objections made to its introduction as a permanent feature of the national system of education, the fact remains that no other policy would be so effective as a security against juvenile unemployment'.<sup>3</sup> In view of the crisis likely to be caused by demobilisation, at the end of the war, the raising of the school leaving age as a means of stemming the flood on to the market of juvenile labour was a measure which had not been given the attention which it deserved.

His argument for the abolition of exemptions from school attendance which had been granted to half of the thirteen to fourteen age group was also urged on economic rather than educational grounds

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1. Barker Op.Cit. pp.35-37

2. 180507 in October 1914; 216504 in October 1917.

3. Ibid. p.58

4. Ibid. p.57.

though he did indicate briefly the value of retaining young persons in contact with 'educational influences'. To enable parents to keep their children in contact with such influences, he urged a generous system of maintenance allowances under clause 24 of the Education Act.

Though his booklet gave greatest weight and detail to what he termed 'temporary educational arrangements' he nevertheless found space within it to consider briefly the need 'to provide for larger opportunities for specially capable children for continuing their studies for a longer period at Secondary Schools, trade schools and other places of higher education',<sup>1</sup> through a 'generous system of scholarships'. It was this subject which he came to consider at length on the Labour Party's Advisory Committee on Education at the same time that he was producing his Report for Addison.

The main concern in his Report was, however, the provision of temporary centres immediately after the war in order to keep young people together in periods of unemployment. This idea, based upon experiments already carried out in London and Birmingham, had the advantages of providing some opportunity for further education with the emphasis upon physical training, organised games and industrial training, of enabling some classification of young people according to their educational attainment and of providing a system of registration as in an employment exchange with the advertising of posts as they became available. To induce parents to send their sons and daughters to such centres a system of maintenance allowances was to be provided. Such centres could be linked to residential camps in the country to which young people could go for two months and could engage in a healthy outdoor life with the benefits of a

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1. Ibid. p.67.

communal life and 'physical, moral and intellectual training'.<sup>1</sup>

Such arrangements were in Tawney's view, of little educational value. They were first and foremost a 'new departure, improvised to meet an exceptional crisis' but the education provided should not be of a 'narrow nature'. Whilst they could help to strengthen physique and intellect, and encourage the formation of the 'habits of industry and application' they should be judged against the evils of idleness, casual labour and demoralisation which would result if such arrangements were not put into operation. If, however, such centres were to be instituted in towns of a population of more than 20,000, it was not sufficient to rely upon the energy of Local Authorities. The impulse must come from a central body with representatives from Juvenile Advisory Committees of the trade unions, of employers, of voluntary organisations, of the Board of Education, of the Ministry of Labour and of the welfare section of the Ministry of Munitions. Schemes for combatting juvenile unemployment should be organised on a national scale. 'All merely local schemes for dealing with unemployment' were 'doomed to failure'.

The short period which Tawney spent at the Ministry of Reconstruction from 1917 to 1918, before he took up a Readership at the London School of Economics and a Fellowship at Balliol College, was one of intense activity in the spheres of adult education and the education of the juvenile and adolescent. In the case of the latter he had given little thought to the future pattern of educational advance. He had been concerned with the economic benefits of isolated measures of educational reform. He had not arrived at any comprehensive programme of educational reform based on educational and social grounds. A further three years were to pass before he related

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1. Ibid. p.69.

educational reform to an overall plan for educational advance rather than to the exigencies of the employment situation. It was, however, as a member of the Labour Party's Advisory Committee on Education, rather than as a member of the Ministry of Reconstruction that he was to turn to the educational arguments for reforming the national system of education.

#### 4. Reform and The Fisher Act

Tawney's interest in the Education Act of 1907 had been slight and largely the result of his being elected to the educational subcommittee of the W.E.A. At that time he had scarcely begun to consider areas of reform outside that of the universities. By 1918, however, after his social investigations in Glasgow and the industrial north, he had interested himself in all matters of reform concerning the working class juvenile and adolescent. He was thus interested in the schemes of educational reconstruction which led ultimately to the Fisher Act of 1918. As in the case of the earlier Act it was the W.E.A. which drew his attention to the discussions on educational reform. In September 1916,<sup>1</sup> while Tawney was recovering from his war wounds, he was visited by MacTavish, the Association's General Secretary, and invited to comment on a circular letter on educational reconstruction drawn up by Greenwood, Dallas, George, Brentnall, Furniss and Ogde.<sup>2</sup> His views were incorporated in a memorandum which Mac Tavish presented to the September meeting of the Association's Executive Committee. After redrafting and minor amendments proposed by the Districts, the memorandum was published in November 1916, under

1. W.E.A. - E.C. September 29th 1916.

2. Ibid. August 12th 1916.

the title 'Educational Reconstruction'. This was the first major statement on education by the Association and formed the basis of its and Tawney's attitude to schemes for reform.

Tawney was invited to write a preface to this document.<sup>1</sup> In it he saw its main function as that of 'uniting .... opinion upon the subject of educational reconstruction'. The memorandum was presented to the Secretary of the Reconstruction Committee.<sup>2</sup> It stressed that 'the ideal underlying educational reform, in whatever direction it is taken, must be essentially humane and, in the broadest sense of the word spiritual, and no improvements in legislation or administrative machinery can hope to achieve success unless those who are responsible for their working bear this fact constantly in mind'.<sup>3</sup> These words in Tawney's preface<sup>4</sup> illustrate the manner in which he faced the problems of educational reconstruction. As the recommendations were 'largely adopted'<sup>5</sup> by the important conference of May 3rd of the following year, and also reflect much of Tawney's thinking about practical reform they are worth considering at length. The broad ideal put forward was that of free education through all its stages, including that of university. In relation to young children the pamphlet urged that the age for compulsory attendance should be raised to six with the provision of sufficient nursery schools for children in the two to six age group. Regarding the latter it demanded in line with the thinking of the Labour Party's

1. Ibid. 17th November 1916.

2. W.E.A. Annual Report 1917 p.5. (W.E.A./A.R.)

3. 'Educational Reconstruction' p.4.

4. The preface was actually signed by Mac Tavish as the resolutions were those of the Executive Committee of which he was secretary, and presented in the form of a letter from the Committee to the Secretary of the Reconstruction Committee.

5. WEA/A.R. 1917, p.5.

Advisory Committee on Education, established in 1918, that attendance be free, that a School Medical Officer should be the overall supervisor, that special attention should be directed 'to the cultivation in the children of good physical habits, and healthy bodily development (with) play and rest whenever possible in the open air forming an important part in the curriculum'.<sup>1</sup> Nursery schools should accommodate small groups of children, should be distributed near the homes of the children and should be under a head teacher with 'special qualifications'. The influence of the ideas of Margaret Mac Millan was obvious.

In the sphere of adolescent education it urged 'universal full time education' to the age of 14 without exemptions, that Local Education Authorities should raise the leaving age to 15 within five years and be granted powers to make bye-laws to raise it to sixteen and to provide maintenance allowances to children over 14 where necessary. However, the Committee accepted a division between the majority of children who would be educated in schools other than 'secondary' and who would undergo compulsory part time education for 'not less than 20 hours per week' up to the age of 18, and those who were admitted to a secondary school after having reached 'an approved standard in education'. As was common to the recommendation of other educational bodies there was no demand for 'secondary education for all'. Whilst it was urged that secondary schools should be 'of varying types and the curriculum made more variable to meet the interests of individual scholars', it was made clear that 'the requirements of a liberal education should be regarded as vital in the organisation of every type of secondary school' and that the chief function of the school was 'to promote equality of access to

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1. Educational Reconstruction p.5.



University education of the highest type for students in every local area'. Whilst a distinction was made in educational institutions, the Committee was anxious that continued education should be free, like secondary education, from a vocational bias. "The education in such schools (continued) should be directed solely towards the full development of the bodies minds and characters of the pupils". It was equally insistent that 'the necessary foundation for any specialised course of technical or professional training' was 'a sound general education in childhood and adolescence'.<sup>1</sup>

It is perhaps surprising in view of the contemporary concern for continued education, and its combination of 'earning with learning' which should have made it a particular concern to the W.E.A., that continued education received such little attention in comparison with full time secondary and university education. In its overriding concern for the 'educational ladder' to university, and the freeing of its rungs from the barriers of income, the Association reflected much contemporary thinking in which Tawney shared. The dominant concern was that secondary schooling should be free to those of ability and that those who showed themselves of exceptional ability should by means of scholarships be able to attend university.

It was to be expected that the Association, with its close dependence upon the universities should give emphasis to university reform. It urged not only special provision for mature students to enter university 'without an entrance examination' but also that a condition of payment of State grants to universities should be that they make adequate provision for University Tutorial Classes and allow the representation of 'work people' upon their governing bodies.<sup>2</sup>

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1. Ibid. p.7.

2. Ibid. p.7.

The memorandum did not ignore the problem of the reform of the elementary school. It stressed the importance of the 'corporate life' of schools, and it was with this in mind that emphasis was placed upon adequate playgrounds and playing fields, a 'flexible' timetable, school meals and the reduction in the size of classes. Emphasis was placed upon the provision of School Medical Services and the supply of good teachers.

To achieve these ends the memorandum demanded that local education authorities be required to submit to the Board of Education complete schemes of educational reconstruction for their areas with 75 per cent of the total cost of such schemes being met by the National Exchequer and being withheld where arrangements were unsatisfactory.<sup>1</sup> Forshadowing its later campaigns, the Association also urged the better distribution and closer control of all educational endowments, and better state provision for the university tutorial class movement. Whilst these lines of thinking were not new they serve to show the common stock of thinking in which Tawney shared and the direction of his activities in the period after November 1916. The immediate problem confronting the Association was how to implement its proposals.

The appointment of H.A.L. Fisher, a friend and fellow historian of Tawney, to the Presidency of the Board of Education on 'a chill wet December morning' in 1916<sup>2</sup> was welcomed by Tawney<sup>3</sup> and the W.E.A. Their 'old friend' had not only 'the peculiar personal qualifications for that office' but was 'symbolical of the new temper' of the age. Lloyd George, aware of 'the new temper' believed that 'we

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1. Ibid. p.10.

2. H.A.L. Fisher 'An Unfinished Autobiography' p.91

3. W.E.A. - A.R. 1917.

had now reached a point in our history when the country would take more educational reform from an educationalist than a politician'.<sup>1</sup> Devoid of practical experience in that area of education he had been called upon to reform, he drew upon that common fund of ideas, to which others, including Tawney, were so heavily indebted for initial inspiration.

'Nevertheless' Fisher wrote,<sup>2</sup> 'no one could have had so long an experience of academic life as I, without acquiring some familiarity with the best educational thought of the time and some general knowledge of the way in which education was being carried on in the country. My sympathies were democratic. I believed in the open career for talent and was ambitious of the honour of widening the highway from the elementary school to the university. The thought of young ambition starving for knowledge and stunted in opportunities was very present to my mind'. The members of the Association's Executive Committee were impressed by his apparent sympathy with the ideas underlying their proposals for reform and Tawney took part in the decision to invite Fisher to address the Association's Annual Conference<sup>3</sup>

The Association's immediate task was to gain publicity for its November recommendations. The idea of a deputation to the new President was put forward<sup>4</sup> but this met with little response from the Board.<sup>5</sup> It was decided to reissue the recommendations in

1. Lloyd George believed that Fisher appeared 'frightened' at the prospect of becoming President. He therefore canvassed the opinion of Tom Jones and Tawney on the matter, in case Fisher should decline the position. Lloyd George favored Hadow; Tom Jones argued in favour of Miers; Tawney 'had urged Paton of Manchester Grammar School but I felt this to be not a suitable name to put forward for various reasons'. (Tom Jones. 'Whitehall Diary Vol. 1. p.12). The issue was resolved when Fisher accepted. Clearly Paton, Tawney's tutor at Rugby (see p.p.5,6) had left a marked impression on Tawney.
2. Fisher Op.Cit. p.97.
3. W.E.A. - E.C. May 9th 1917.
4. W.E.A. - E.C. March 14 1917.
5. The W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. Minute for April 18th 1917 described Fisher's reply to the idea of a deputation as 'non-committal'.

pamphlet form,<sup>1</sup> to arrange a national conference to publicise them and to promote a meeting 'with Members of Parliament on the subject of the forthcoming legislation on education'.<sup>2</sup> The meeting with Labour Party representatives bore little fruit. The members of the small committee of W.E.A. representatives, which included Tawney, concluded<sup>3</sup>, 'There seemed to be little enthusiasm (in the Labour Party) with regard to education'. Fisher arrived at much the same conclusion. He contrasted the 'Far reaching and ambitious resolutions (which) were passed at Labour Conferences many, I imagine, at the instigation of my friend, R.H. Tawney' with 'the lack of precipitancy in the House of Commons in supporting a measure for the extension of education'.<sup>4</sup> The major hope which was left was the National Conference called for May 3rd 1917.

Before the meeting, however, Tawney in an anonymous capacity as a Manchester Guardian leader writer, gave publicity to the W.E.A. proposals<sup>5</sup> and related to them his philosophical ideas. That which had retarded educational advance, hitherto, he argued was 'a temper which regarded education as of second-rate importance because it valued material riches more than the development of personality which is the meaning and object of education'. The war was, however, paving the way for reconstruction in that it taught that 'no material comfort or security is worth the price of spiritual enslavement'. His concern was the opportunity 'for personal endeavour and development' and the point at which 'education touches most closely the mass of ordinary boys and girls nonetheless because they are not likely to be exceptionally brilliant'.

1. W.E.A. - E.C. March 14 1917.
2. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. March 21 1917.
3. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. April 30 1917.
4. Fisher Op.Cit. p.97. For a full discussion of Labour's attitude c.f. Barker.
5. 'An Educational Programme' M.G. March 10th 1917.

The resolutions which he chose to publicise were not those with which the November recommendations dealt at length. The nation's attention was becoming more closely focused on elementary and continued education, and it was these aspects of reconstruction to which he turned. The demands for the reduction in the size of elementary school class to 40 and 'in time to 30', for the abolition of all exemptions from school attendance below the age of fourteen, and for the raising of the status of the teaching profession were reiterated but most of the leader was given over to continued education and its defence against the industrial interest.

His argument was simple. 'If we desire to reap the full fruits of our expenditure on elementary education we must find some way of perpetuating the influence of education during the critical years of adolescence'.<sup>1</sup> Having considered the merits of continued education in the prewar era,<sup>2</sup> he believed the way was not difficult to find. It was 'compulsory continued education for all young persons between the age when they leave the elementary schools and the age of 18'. He thus turned to resolution 4 of the November recommendations, which urged the establishment of a new half time system with twenty to twenty five hours per week spent on education up to the age of 18 and attacked the opposition of the industrial interest to such a proposal. His point that 'it is not by economic considerations that such questions ought to be decided' was one which could be made by an editorial writer but to Fisher it was an unrealistic statement of idealistic intention. However, Tawney was anticipating the opposition which was to come the following year. It was typical of his thinking

1. Ibid.

2. Highway 1909. Article on 'Continued Education' see also p.p.24-29.

that he should have ended his leader on a note similar to that found in his 'Times Educational Supplement' article of a fortnight earlier.<sup>1</sup>

'The principle should be that no barrier of income or class should deprive any child, however humble its circumstances of the opportunities of education which the full development of its personality demands. There could be no nobler memorial to fallen sons than a system of education embodying this ideal'.

His article in 'The Times Educational Supplement' had made no reference to the W.E.A. proposals and the forthcoming May conference but it had clearly indicated the inspiration for his involvement in the W.E.A. schemes for reform. The W.E.A. proposals he accepted uncritically as the best way of realising his educational objectives.

There was little that was new in this article; the emphasis lay upon the obstacle which, in the past, had hindered educational advance. The chief barrier to progress lay in the attitude of the nation to education. 'Education is a spiritual activity much of which is not commercially profitable and the prevailing temper of Englishmen is to regard as most important that which is commercially profitable and as of only inferior importance that which is not'.<sup>2</sup> Reform could only begin with the recognition that such an attitude was wrong, and the acceptance of the idea that 'education is to be practised, like other spiritual activities, for itself, 'for the glory of God and the relief of man's estate'. He had not departed from his view that the war had created the atmosphere in which the acceptance of the latter was possible, and that the recognition of 'the absolute claims of personality, the preservation and development of spiritual freedom' which the concept of a humane

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1. 'A National College of All Souls' February 22nd 1917. This article is reproduced in 'The Attack' pp. 29-34.

2. Ibid. p.30.

education embodied was the best possible memorial to the fallen.

The May meeting, which the W.E.A. convened, was attended by 719 delegates representing the trade unions, the Co-operative Society, the W.E.A. branches and Tutorial Classes, the Ministry of Labour, Teachers Associations, the Universities and the University Colleges, the University Joint Committee for Tutorial Classes, Extension Delegacies, Local Education Authorities and other educational bodies.<sup>1</sup> At the end of the meeting it was claimed that 'the Conference has won an educational policy for the Labour Movement',<sup>2</sup> a policy which to a great extent was based on the November recommendations which reflected the thinking of many educational associations of the period. Tawney's comments upon the meeting have not survived but, in view of his support for the November recommendations, he would have been satisfied with its outcome, though no doubt he would have emphasised that the conference was but a beginning, and that the details of Fisher's Bill, when issued, required careful scrutiny.

The first meeting in July of the Association's Executive Committee<sup>3</sup> proposed that a special meeting should be called when Fisher's Bill was published. In August the details of the Bill were made known. On September 27th the Central Council of the W.E.A. which included Tawney, evaluated the Bill in the light of its own proposals and brought out its amendments. Though the meeting

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1. 'An Educational Policy for after the War'. W.E.A. publication p.1.
  2. Ibid. p.2.
  3. W.E.A./E.C. Minute July 3rd 1917.

demanded that the Bill should be improved<sup>1</sup> and suggested a separate bill to concern itself with children abnormally employed during the war,<sup>2</sup> it was against calling a conference on the lines of the May conference to publicise the suggested amendments. Tawney was in agreement with this decision.<sup>3</sup> By November, however, he was engaged, not in pushing forward amendments, but in a campaign to prevent the withdrawal of the Bill.

Tawney was requested to approach the Workers War Emergency Committee,<sup>4</sup> and the Parliamentary Committee of the T.U.C. to ask whether either of these bodies would arrange a deputation to the Prime Minister to include representatives from the W.E.A., the Standing Joint Committee on Women's Industrial Organisation, the Co-operative Union and the Parliamentary Committee of the Co-operative Union.<sup>5</sup> He had learnt from Webb<sup>6</sup> of the Labour Party's own decision to send a deputation and of its sympathy with the W.E.A. proposals but he believed that a separate deputation was necessary<sup>7</sup> and with Greenwood and Philipps, he was given the task of drafting the letter and resolutions which were to be sent to the interested parties. The object of the letter was to emphasise 'the necessity

1. 'The Proposals in our Educational Reconstruction Pamphlet, the resolutions of the Central Council 27th September 1917, the proposals of the Educational Bill and our amendments thereto'. A document contained in the Temple House collection headed (1918 Education Act). The main amendments suggested were the increased provision of nursery schools, the limitation of the hours of labour and extension of the hours of continued education of juvenile workers, the non-recognition of works schools, the prohibition of exemptions from continued education, the provision of a liberal education in technical schools and, the limitation of the size of classes, and the increase of the cost borne by the Exchequer to 75 per cent from the Bill's 50 per cent.
2. Ibid. p.6.
3. W.E.A.- G.P.C. Minute October 19th 1917.
4. W.E.A.- G.P.C. Minute 2 November 1917.
5. also W.E.A.- G.P.C. Minute October 19th 1917.
6. Letter dated October 19 1917.
7. W.E.A.- G.P.C. Minute October 25th 1917.



of protesting against the withdrawal of the Bill quite apart from any desirability of amending it'.<sup>1</sup> Charles Trevelyan, the Labour Party's future President of the Board of Education, shared Tawney's concern<sup>2</sup> about the withdrawal of the Bill, though other correspondents of the time, including Whitley,<sup>3</sup> believed that the Bill was introduced 'for the purpose of making public the proposals' - a line of argument similar to that stated later by Fisher,<sup>4</sup> that his first bill was a 'balloon d'essai' - a means of testing opinion rather than one which was intended to be pushed through parliament. The matter of the deputation upon which Tawney had worked so hard was resolved in a letter from Lloyd George suggesting that the idea of a deputation be waived 'in view of the reply given to the deputation of M.P.'s.<sup>5</sup> In December Fisher's first Bill was withdrawn.<sup>6</sup>

With the introduction of the second bill, however, Tawney came to play a greater part in the W.E.A.'s attempts to secure its amendments. In January 1918, the Executive Committee 'resolved to recommend to the Council that they adhere to the original policy of the Association and that they entrust to Mr. Tawney and Mr. Ellery the task of securing the best possible terms in the amendments of the Bill'.<sup>7</sup> Tawney engaged in a threefold plan of campaign, to clarify and

1. Ibid.
2. Letter dated 20 November 1917.
3. Letter dated 19th November 1917.
4. Fisher Op.Cit. p.97.
5. W.E.A. - G.P.C. Minute November 30th 1917.
6. In a letter from Rowntree of York to Thompson of the W.E.A. it was reported 'Mr. Fisher tells me that he is hopeful with regard to the prospect of the Education Bill next session' (19th Nov.1917). Other correspondents spoke of 'the genuine difficulties in the way and there could be no hope of passing the Bill before Xmas. To try might wreck it' (Lansbury to Thompson November 21st 1917).
7. W.E.A. - E.C. Minute January 25th 1918.

publicise the W.E.A. amendments, to organise conferences and to urge support for the Bill in the press.

The task of examining the new Bill was undertaken by a small sub-Committee of the Executive at the end of January. This sub-committee, Mac Tavish, Tawney and Ellery, drew up the draft amendments to the Education Bill which Tawney was to forward as a statement to the Labour Party.<sup>1</sup> With a copy of the November 1916 recommendations before them they produced a series of amendments similar to those in relation to the first Bill. Emphasis was given to the provision of free nursery schooling, bye laws for L.E.A.'s to raise the school leaving age to 15 without exemptions and with the option to raise it to 16, ~~maintenance~~ allowances for children over 14 where necessary, limitation of the hours of work of juveniles, non recognition of works schools, no exemptions from continued education, the provision for physical training 'non military in bias or  
<sup>2</sup>attention' a campaign within the House of Commons to secure the amendments.<sup>3</sup>

However the task before Tawney was not a simple one. It was not merely to secure the acceptance of the W.E.A. amendments. An important concern was to prevent the Bill suffering amendments from other quarters which would dilute its proposals. It was this latter issue which became the gravest concern from February 1918 onwards. He saw the chief threat to the Bill, as the attempt by the industrial interest to weaken the provisions for continued education. Resistance to the demands of industry to curtail the hours of continued education

1. Unconfirmed Minutes of the Meeting of the Sub-Committee of the Executive 31st January 1918.
2. Ibid. p.2.
3. These amendments were produced in an abridged form in 'How to Amend the Education Bill' and in a fuller form in 'The Choice before the Nation'. (W.E.A.- G.P.C. Minute 22nd February 1918).

was a matter of urgency. Tawney was not in sympathy with the policy of delay suggested by Professor Muirhead,<sup>1</sup> who, disappointed by the apparent exclusion of higher education from the Bill and dissatisfied with 'the class bias inherent in the division between elementary education for the poor and secondary education for the rich',<sup>2</sup> urged that the Labour movement should ensure that the Bill was dropped and 'a really good bill' introduced in the following session when there would be 'a big increase in the Labour and progressive forces'. Such a tactical move had little appeal to Tawney who may have suspected that Labour would show little enthusiasm for education in any ensuing session but certainly realised that retreat when the enemy, 'the industrial interest, was mustering its forces would lead to a rout and that attack when the temper of the times gave the cause an additional weapon would be the best policy.

One of the first members of his tutorial classes, A.P. Wadsworth<sup>3</sup> who served under Scott on the Manchester Guardian, had already warned him that 'the cotton trade is stirring once more'.<sup>4</sup> The cotton interest had, in the first weeks of February, begun a campaign against the Bill by issuing two pamphlets, the last of which in 'a most elaborate juggling performance' produced 'figures to show how many millions Lancashire will lose and how the dividends will be lowered if a system of continued education was introduced. The 'fearfully timid' trade union officials were in agreement that the

1. Letter to Tawney from Price, Feb. 12th 1918.
2. Ibid.
3. Tawney had reported upon Wadsworth's trip to Germany as a member of the Rochdale Education Guild in the 'Highway' (1909). Wadsworth was the youngest member of the Rochdale class and special permission had to be obtained before he could attend.
4. Wadsworth to Tawney 6th February 1918.
5. Ibid.

eight hours a week to 18 'is unworkable'. Wadsworth believed that they were willing to give consideration to the idea of 'half time to 16' but 'the only thing' they regarded favourably was the raising of the school leaving age to 14. The proposal for eight hours continued education per week was in jeopardy and even Wadsworth looked more favourably upon the idea of half-time to 16 rather than 'the eight hour system'. However, at that time, the 'Manchester Guardian's' attitude was not settled. 'Scott at present seems wedded to Fisher's bill and can't understand why eighteen year olds should not go to school'.<sup>1</sup> Scott was wavering in his support by February 20th when it was reported to Tawney that he was 'anxious to know how eight hours can be worked, especially in the cotton trade'.<sup>2</sup> It was the opposition to the Bill by 'the cotton trade' which came to be Tawney's utmost concern.

Tawney's response in February 1918, to the threat to the Bill's proposals for continued education was to try to muster working class support, to organise a national conference on the issue and to campaign in the press in defence of the Fisher Bill. He drew some consolation from a letter from Thompson,<sup>3</sup> which pointed out that although the Yorkshire woollen and worsted industry was not so well paid as the Lancashire cotton industry and was 'as deep rooted in child labour' nevertheless 'at no time has there been any fear of the Bill being wrecked by its opposition'.<sup>4</sup> Tawney gave encouragement to attempts to focus working class opinion on the subject of continued education in such areas as Birmingham and the Midlands,<sup>5</sup> and drew

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1. Ibid.

2. Hookway to Tawney February 20th 1918.

3. Thompson to Tawney 19th November 1917.

4. Ibid.

5. Letter from Price to Tawney February 12th 1918.

encouragement from the response of persons such as Hookway who reported branch meetings in favour of the Bill.<sup>1</sup> However he must also have been aware of the views of those correspondents who denounced 'reformers like friend Hookway' as a 'wild talker'<sup>2</sup> who being a 'railwayman' was out of touch with realistic opinion which regarded the new half-time system from 14 to 16 as 'both more preferable and desirable' in place of the 'eight hours business' of continued education to the age of 18. Tawney shared Hookway's concern about the opposition of the cotton interest, including the Lancashire M.P.'s, to clause 10 of the Bill.

'The possibility of Clause 10 going through the House appears to be less probable day by day' he complained.<sup>3</sup>

Tawney's arguments at the Conference held at the Albert Hall Manchester, on February 16th 1918 were not likely to provide the immediate answer to the problem. He took up the points raised in the pamphlet issued by the Federation of Master Cotton Spinners, to which Wadsworth had drawn his attention a few days earlier, but his answer to the problem of the loss of part of the family income if continued education was implemented was not likely to be met with great enthusiasm. 'If the wages were too low to enable the parents to give their children the education the community thought necessary, the remedy was, not that they should be supplemented by children's earnings but that adult wages should be raised'.<sup>4</sup> Such an argument was scarcely likely to allay parental fears. Such a long term solution

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1. Letter from Hookway to Tawney February 27th 1918.

2. Ibid.

3. Letter from Darbyshire to Tawney February 16th 1918.

4. The Education Bill and The Cotton Trade and Other Industries. Report on a Conference held at the Albert Hall, Peter Street, Manchester, on Saturday afternoon, February 16th 1918 (Temple House Collection. Box labelled '1918 Education Act').

did not seem to meet the needs of the immediate situation. Even the measures suggested in the second resolution of the conference 'to take all possible means of enlightening the public in general, and the organised workers in particular, of the value and possibilities of the system now proposed'<sup>1</sup> seemed inadequate in the face of the powerful and the systematic opposition in Parliament.

Before the end of February, Tawney had produced two articles in defence of the Fisher proposals, the first was one entitled 'Will Continued Education Ruin the Cotton Industry?'<sup>2</sup> The second appeared in the 'Daily News' and was headed 'Keep the Workers' Children in their place', but originally bore the title reminiscent of his wartime experience 'Prussianism in Education'. Both developed the argument put forward at the Manchester Conference, and were an attack upon the views of the Federation of British Industries, which held that 'a period of 8 hours a week taken out of working hours would impose a burden upon many industries which they would be quite unable to bear', and of the Master Cotton Spinners who was concerned with the loss of wages which the workers will suffer if the Bill became law.

In the first article<sup>3</sup> Tawney distinguished two main questions, 'whether the proposal to establish a system of universal continued education is good in itself' and 'the effect of such a system upon industry and economic conditions'. Upon the first of these issues he spent little time, arguing that 'there is no doubt whatever that in stopping education altogether at 14 we inflict grave damage upon the

1. Ibid. p.3. The Committee set up to enlighten public opinion produced a pamphlet 'The Education Bill and the Cotton Industry'.
2. Temple House Collection. Box labelled '1918 Education Act'. there is no indication where this was published. It appears in unrevised proof form.
3. Daily News 14.2.1918. Reprinted in 'The Radical Tradition' pp. 47-51. The manuscript copy is to be found in the Temple House collection. Box labelled '1918 Education Act'.

physical, moral and intellectual wellbeing of our children'. The years from 14 to 18 were regarded as 'the most critical years in the life of a human being' yet were the most neglected. Without elaborating upon the argument he turned to meet the economic arguments of the industrial interest.

The Master Spinners Case, he argued, was based on three fears, a shortage of labour, an increase in the employers' wage bill and a reduction in the wages of the workers.<sup>1</sup> The former two fears were, Tawney asserted, at the heart of most opposition to educational reform over the past century, and ignored such points as the return of the labour force from the war, and the fact that during the war, industry was run on far less juvenile labour. If labour is short the answer was not to employ juveniles but to make conditions so attractive, including raising wages, that more adult labour will be forthcoming. To the Master Spinners argument about the reduction in wages, Tawney pointed out<sup>2</sup> that it was difficult to reconcile this claim with that of the increased wage bill of the employers; if indeed there was a drastic reduction in income then the right course was to urge an increase of wages for adult workers and not to perpetuate the system of subsidising parental wages by the labour of children.<sup>3</sup>

The second of the two articles presented the arguments in more emotive terms. 'To suggest that British industry is suspended over an abyss by a slender thread of juvenile labour, which eight hours continued education will snap, that after a century of scientific discovery and economic progress it is still upon the bent backs of

1. 'Will Continued Education Ruin the Cotton Industry'. p.1.
2. Ibid. p.2.
3. Ibid. p.6.

children of fourteen that our industrial organisation and national prosperity, and that rare birth of time, the Federation of British Industries itself, repose - is not all this, after all, a little pitiful?'<sup>1</sup>

However behind the economic argument Tawney saw lurking a class prejudice, and he turned to the use of a metaphor, which appeared in his later writings, to reveal it. "Behind the objection based on the convenience of industry lies another objection based on the theory that all except a small minority of children are incapable of benefiting by education beyond the age of fourteen. It is not actually stated, indeed that working class children, like anthropoid apes have fewer convolutions in their brains than the children of captains of industry. But the authors of the Memorandum are evidently sceptical as to either the possibility or the desirability of offering higher education to more than a small proportion of them".

Tawney pursued a rather different line of argument from that of his prewar writings, one which revealed more clearly his educational concerns. He was not merely opposed to the division between 'a full time secondary education' for a small minority and an elementary education for the majority up to 14 but he saw behind the suggestion that the last two years of elementary schooling 'might be directly vocational and intended to fit the child for the particular industry which he will enter at fourteen' a grave threat to his concept of education as a 'humane, liberalising' force. Such a class theory of education produced, in Tawney's view, a 'new form of slavery' in that, 'stripped of its decent draperies of convention what it meant

1. 'Keep the Workers' Children in Their Place' p.49.

2. Ibid. p.51.



is that education is to be used, not to enable human beings to become themselves through the development of their personalities, nor to strengthen the spirit of social solidarity, nor to prepare men for the better service of their fellows, nor to raise the general level of society; but to create a new commercial aristocracy based on the selection for higher education of the more promising children of working class parents from among the vulgar mass, who are fit only to serve as the cannon-fodder of capitalist industry'.<sup>1</sup> The strength and appeal of Tawney's arguments did little to allay the fears about the future of those clauses of the Bill concerned with continued education, which the 'Manchester Guardian' believed to be 'the chief subject of controversy'.<sup>2</sup> Neither did the publication in extended form<sup>3</sup> of the proposed W.E.A. amendments alter the situation.

Early in February, Mac Tavish, the General Secretary of the W.E.A. had<sup>4</sup> stated his belief to Tawney that the best way of helping to overcome the opposition and of securing the amendments was 'first to meet the Party' and so avoid becoming 'entangled with private members of the House in such a way as may create difficulties',<sup>5</sup> Lindsay having already 'promised co-operation of a Committee of the Labour Party and the W.E.A.'.<sup>6</sup> Though Mac Tavish did not put this idea before the Executive Committee, partly because it did not meet in March or April, Tawney's thoughts were already moving in this direction. In his opposition to the industrial interest and to promote the W.E.A. amendments, Tawney found a new platform in his

1. Ibid. p.51.

2. M.G. 9 February 1918.

3. 'The Choice Before the Nation' W.E.A.- G.P.C. Minute 22nd Feb.1918

4. Letter to Tawney February 5th 1918.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

chairmanship of the Education Advisory Committee of the Labour Party set up in March 1918.<sup>1</sup> One of the first actions of this body was to submit to the Party's National Executive Committee<sup>2</sup> a series of proposed amendments to the Education Bill which accommodated the W.E.A.'s demands.<sup>3</sup>

By May 1918, Tawney's thoughts were also turning to the question of the implementation of the clauses of the Bill once it passed through Parliament. During that month he argued that the best way of facilitating the implementation of the Act was to press an amendment within Parliament 'by which the 'appointed day' should be fixed in the Bill, the Board of Education retaining the power to vary the date in special circumstances'.<sup>4</sup> He was given the task of consulting Goldstone, a strong supporter of the N.U.T. and chairman for education on the Labour Party's National Executive Committee, 'with regard to the matter'. In its July annual meeting,<sup>5</sup> the members of the Association's Executive gave themselves a pat on the back.

'For the strong public opinion which gave its support to the President of the Board of Education, the Association may it is perhaps not presumptuous to say claim some credit'.<sup>6</sup>

The Report went on to point to an immediate need, a need of which Tawney was fully aware and about which he was to produce memoranda for the Labour Party's Advisory Committee on Education.

'In the meantime the immediate duty of the Association is

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1. For a full discussion of Tawney's role in relationship to this body see Section five of this present chapter.
  2. Labour Party National Executive Committee (L.P. - N.E.C.) Minute 17th April 1918.
  3. A copy of the E.A.C.'s amendments was forwarded to the W.E.A. It is interesting that Mac Tavish forwarded a copy of these amendments to Tawney (letter May 9th 1918) possibly without realising that it was he who had drawn them up or helped to do so.
  4. W.E.A. - G.P.C. Minute 3rd May 1918.
  5. W.E.A. - A.R. 1918
  6. Ibid. p.5.

clear. It is to put forth every effort to ensure that the wisest use is made of the measure .... to induce the L.E.A.'s to exercise to the full their powers and to create a vigorous public opinion' against apathetic authorities.<sup>1</sup>

No mention was made in the Association's annual report of the contrast which Fisher was to draw between the 'ambitious resolutions' of the Labour Party 'many I imagine at the instigation of my friend R.H. Tawney'<sup>2</sup> and the 'lack of precipitancy' of Labour M.P.'s in their support for the Bill. On the vital issue of compulsory continued education, many Labour M.P.'s including Snowden joined with Lancashire Conservatives to press concessions from the government,<sup>3</sup> concessions which Tawney had vehemently opposed in his February articles. Neither did the W.E.A. Annual Report comment upon Fisher's response to the so-called Lancashire Amendment moved by Hibbert.<sup>4</sup> Goldstone and Mac Donald believed Fisher had capitulated too easily<sup>5</sup> and given far greater concessions than were necessary in allowing continuation schooling only up to 16 years for within the period of 7 years of the 'appointed day' (a date not fixed), and allowing L.E.A.'s to reduce the hours from 320 to 280. Unfortunately Tawney's comments upon the fact that the Bill did not specify 'the appointed day' and upon Fisher's concessions have not survived. Whether on the latter he believed like Fisher that 'no great harm will result' from this concession,<sup>6</sup> or like the Times Educational Supplement that it would take a while to get adequate buildings and teachers and

1. Ibid. p.5.

2. Fisher Op.Cit.

3. Barker Op.Cit. p.78-88. For a full discussion. Also Schofield Op.Cit. p.487.

4. Doherty Op.Cit. p.67-68, for a full discussion.

5. 106 H.C. Deb. 52 1643-5 and 1650

6. 106 H.C. deb. 52 1643-5.

therefore 'Fisher has given nothing away and had at the same time committed the House of Commons to the principle of compulsory education extending through the period of adolescence'<sup>1</sup> is not known. One can, however, say that it was unlikely that he shared such beliefs. His opposition to concessions on such a vital issue was strong though he was aware of the pressing need to legislate before the war ended. His attitude in general was much closer to that of Goldstone and the professional organisations who believed, like Mac Donald, that the concessions struck at the roots of the bill and were to be deeply regretted. Perhaps, however, the controversy over continued education had clouded over the fact that despite this concession, the Bill was still a comprehensive measure.

Certainly Tawney could find consolation in the further amendment which met some of his fears about works schools. It was stated that L.E.A.'s should not require, 'without the young persons consent, to allow such persons to attend works schools'. Whilst Fisher held that the fear of vocational education which people such as Tawney shared, was not found among most working class parents<sup>2</sup> he nevertheless did not stand in the way of this amendment.

Tawney's response to the Act, we may assume, was characterised more by a concern that Labour should secure the implementation of its terms as soon as possible, than by the delay inherent in merely bemoaning the concessions which were granted. For several months before the Bill was passed he had been working upon a report for the Ministry of Reconstruction of the state of juvenile employment

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1. T.E.S. 13th June 1918, p.247.

2. Fisher Op; Cit. p. 91.

during the war, and the problems which were likely to arise when the war was over.<sup>1</sup> His work had impressed upon him the urgent need for action to deal with the likely juvenile unemployment after the war; continued education for adolescents was part of the solution. Thus Tawney rejected Professor Muirhead's suggestion for dropping the second Fisher Bill, and whilst regretting the Fisher concessions, he realised the urgency for placing upon the statute book some form of continued education. It would, of course, be a judgment from hindsight to suggest that Tawney was giving priority to a kind of education which was to be short-lived. His thoughts were clearly reflected in the title of a short pamphlet he drew up for the W.E.A.<sup>2</sup> 'Continued Education - the urgency of the problem'. It was this sense of urgency which led him to conclude,

'It is in its recognition of the urgent need of creating a universal system of continued education that the Education Bill now before Parliament makes its most novel and important departures'.<sup>3</sup>

His concern for the speedy implementation of the Fisher Act was reflected in the demand stated in the W.E.A. Annual report,<sup>4</sup> that the L.E.A.'s should be pressed to fully implement their new duties as soon as possible. In his memoranda for the Advisory Committee on Education for the Labour Party he concentrated upon the provision of continued schools, and 'points which should be carefully watched' by local Labour representatives. When helping to draw up the W.E.A. recommendations on the preparation of schemes as provided for under

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1. See section 3 of this chapter.

2. Temple House Collection. Box labelled 'The 1918 Education Act'

3. Ibid. p.2.

4. W.E.A. - A.R. 1918 p.5.

the Education Act<sup>1</sup> he was ever aware that a decline in wartime enthusiasm or an unfavourable economic climate could make the Act a deadletter. In 1920 he was given good grounds for fearing that attempts to implement it would be suspended when the postwar economic boom collapsed.

5. The Labour Party's Advisory Committee on Education -  
The First Six Months (April to November 1918)

In the prewar period Tawney had become a member of the Fabian Society and the Independent Labour Party, two of the societies which had combined to form the Labour Representation Committee in 1900. His membership of these societies was passive and his isolation from the L.R.C. or Parliamentary Labour Party as it became in 1906, was total. The materialism of the latter<sup>2</sup> and the superficiality of the social thinking of the former<sup>3</sup> left them without a moral claim to the leadership of the movement for working class advancement. During the war, however, he reversed his decision not to co-operate with the Labour Party, and came to believe that a reconstructed party could take its place alongside the reformed Church<sup>4</sup> and Universities<sup>5</sup> as a principal instrument of social reconstruction. He moved from Wheatley near Oxford to Highgate Road, London, at a time when the Labour Party was drawing up its plans for converting itself into a national party,<sup>6</sup> and was drawn into the deliberations of its central

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1. The recommendations were published in a pamphlet entitled 'How to Get the Best Out of the Education Act'.
  2. C.P.B. 16th June 1914 (p. 76-77)
  3. C.P.B. 22nd July 1913 (p.61)
  4. In the wartime years, Tawney took part in the movement for Church Reform. See pp.
  5. For University Reform see Chapter 10.
  6. Mowat Op.Cit. p.15.

central committees. One of his main contributions was to the organisation and effective functioning of the Party's Advisory Committee on Education.

Writing in 1924,<sup>1</sup> Tawney recalled the reasons why a series of advisory committees were set up in the Spring of 1918. If social changes were to be durable they should be effected in the light of all relevant factors. This meant as full an understanding as could be achieved of 'the nature of the evils to be remedied and the technique involved in remedying them'. As a consequence the Party decided to set up a system of advisory committees 'where students and administrators (could) meet to discuss problems, draft reports and prepare materials which can be used by the Party's representatives in Parliament.' Beatrice Webb's diary gives details of the creation of these committees; the minutes and memoranda of the first meeting of the Advisory Committee on Education elucidate its function: Webb explains in an entry in her diary for March 20th 1918 how 'the circle of rebellious spirits and idealist intellectuals' including Tawney, Cole, Mallon, Burns, Greenwood, Toynbee, Gillespie and her husband, met in the Fabian Common Room to devise 'a series of Advisory Committees to the Labour Party on some half a dozen subjects'<sup>2</sup>. Shortly afterwards Tawney drew up a memorandum on 'The Method and Scope of the Work of the Advisory Committee on Education' for the attention of its first meeting on April 8th 1918.

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1. 'The British Labour Movement' p. 42-43.
  2. Diary p.116-117. It is clear from other diaries, that preliminary discussions had taken place before March 1918. Tom Jones recalled 'an interesting private gathering to discuss the programme of the new Labour Party at which Tawney, Matton, Webb, Henderson, Cole and Greenwood were present on 30th October 1917 (Whitehall Diaries p.38).

The Advisory Committee on Education came into existence when the Fisher Bill was under discussion in Parliament;<sup>1</sup> it was to be expected that Tawney's thinking on the functions of the Committee should reflect the contemporary debate. However, his thinking was not solely confined to the immediate controversy. Behind the statement of the function of the Committee lay the realisation that the Fisher Bill, despite the wide variety of its proposals, would not meet all the future educational needs of the country, that many of 'the larger questions of policy' had not been decided. The immediate concern was 'to keep in touch with current events in education with a view to criticism, amendment and questions in Parliament'; the Advisory Committee was to meet usually once a month; 'at present while the Bill is in Committee it should meet more regularly'.<sup>2</sup> Of pressing importance, were matters such as the close scrutiny of schemes for physical training which smacked of militarism, and schemes dealing with those who were 'prematurely exempted from school attendance during the war' and for continued education'. So urgent did Tawney regard such issues that within ten days of its meeting, he had forwarded a series of suggested amendments to the Bill to the Party's National Executive Committee.<sup>3</sup>

Looking to the post war era, the Committee included in its terms of reference 'the power to prepare reports on the larger questions of policy'. Technical education, scholarships and maintenance allowances, free secondary education, the reduction of the size of classes in elementary schools, the training of teachers, the reform of the universities, and the curricula of the new continuation

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x 1. See p.p. 109-121.

x 2. See note 3 p. 126.

3. L.P. - N.E.C. April 1918.



schools were to be subject to investigation by the Committee in association with the professional organisations and educationalists of all ranks. Reports and pamphlets were to be published to help create an informed public opinion as well as to provide the Party's members of Parliament with up to date knowledge of educational matters.

It might be objected that the narrowness of Tawney's educational experience made him unsuited to play a principal part in a Committee whose functions were so diverse. In an age which could produce such <sup>an</sup> outstanding chairman of limited educational background as Hadow, narrowness of educational experience was never regarded as a serious handicap. What mattered more was a genuine and general sympathy with educational reform and a recognition of its role in social transformation, and the ability to make a committee function effectively, to guide, direct and inspire. Like Hadow, Tawney possessed the former in great measure. Tawney's chairmanship and general contribution to committee work were, however, different from those of Hadow.<sup>1</sup> Tawney's 'personal charm, quiet wisdom and rapier-like intellect' gained him the respect of the Advisory Committee; his manner of interviewing witnesses who appeared before the Committee was more gracious than that of Hadow, and impressed itself upon all who came before him. Tawney combined the skill of a chairman with that of the writer; many of the reports of the Committee in the early months were written by him and owe their effectiveness to the way in which the arguments are marshalled and presented. He shared with Hadow a concern for the stylistic quality and effective presentation of argument in all reports.

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1. T.E.S. December 25th 1959 'William Henry Hadow: A Centenary Appreciation'.

Yet Tawney's contribution to Labour's Advisory Committee was bound to be different in many ways from that of Hadow to the Board's Consultative Committee. The former was in general smaller, with less resources and its members were less individualistic. On such a committee, Tawney could never have acted as Hadow was later to do within the Consultative Committee. Tawney could scarcely have avoided taking an active part in discussions and assisting in drafting recommendations. His responsibility for the recommendations of the Advisory Committee was great, especially in the first few months of the Committee's existence. The Committee was equally an important training ground for him. The personal contacts which were established with the professional organisations and other bodies enabled him to acquire a first hand knowledge of contemporary thinking and problems within the educational world. In addition the permanent members of the Committee, such as Margaret Macmillan,<sup>1</sup> who was with the Committee from its inception, and Percy Nunn, who joined it in June 1918, contributed a great deal to his understanding of areas of educational reform with which hitherto he had little or no contact. Tawney found very little difficulty in reconciling the views of progressive educationalists with his own ideas upon education.

In the Advisory Committee's first meeting on April 8<sup>th</sup> 1918 it was agreed that Tawney would lead a subcommittee on 'secondary education', which included his W.E.A. friends, Greenwood, Mac Tavish and Margaret Macmillan,<sup>2</sup> a regular contributor to the Association's

1. In a later undated speech (probably in the years 1943 to 1946) Tawney expressed his debt to her. "I was converted to nursery schools many years ago by an old and valued friend". (L.S.E. Papers Box entitled 'Various Speeches')
2. At this time she was preparing her major writing on nursery education entitled 'The Nursery School' (1919)

journal 'The Highway'. Later Percy Nunn, who had served on the Educational Reform Council, and was Professor at the London Day Training College at Southampton Row and Leach, of 'Bradford Charter' fame<sup>1</sup> were invited to join. Of most immediate importance to the April Committee was the Fisher Bill. The first memorandum which the Committee produced, and in which Tawney played an important part dealt with amendments to the Educational Bill.<sup>2</sup>

The memorandum forwarded to the Party's National Executive Committee on 17th April 1918<sup>3</sup> reflected the views of the W.E.A. towards the Fisher Bill,<sup>4</sup> expressed in the Association's pamphlet 'The Choice Before the Nation'. It suggested that 'new courses of practical and advanced instruction' should be made 'available to those who choose to remain at a public elementary school until the age of sixteen'. Such instruction should not be 'of a purely vocational character' and any physical training in the elementary school should 'not be of a military bias or intention'. On the subject of exemption from school attendance of elementary school children the memorandum urged that 'within not more than five years from the appointed day, no exemptions from attendance at school should be granted to any child between the age of five and fifteen years'.<sup>5</sup> It was, however, the continuation school clauses which received most attention. The number of hours of attendance at continuation school

1. Simon Op.Cit. p.349

2. Ibid. p.348.

3. No copy of the suggested amendments is to be found among the A.C.E. or N.E.C. minutes of the Labour Party. One has been preserved, however, at Temple House.

4. N.E.C. Minutes Volume 12 17th April 1918.

5. See p. 109.

should be increased from 320 hours to 800 hours; attendance at a works school 'shall not be deemed to be attendance at a continuation school for the purpose of completing the number of hours spent at a continuation school<sup>1</sup> unless the majority of managers of a works school shall be chosen by and from the members of a local education authority'.<sup>2</sup> The period of attendance at a continuation school, together with the period of employment, should not exceed forty eight hours per week.

The memorandum had very little to say about secondary education, except in suggesting amendments to Clause 22 of the Bill so that it would read 'to abolish all fees in state aided secondary schools, or alternatively, to abolish fees in state aided secondary schools during the period of compulsory attendance at school'. In May 1918, Tawney produced a lengthy memorandum on a closely related aspect of secondary education, that of maintenance scholarships. He began by stating his belief that education was the 'most readily accessible instrument for increasing the intellectual energy of society' and by expressing its two-fold aim.

"Its object, speaking broadly is two-fold (i) to raise the general level of intelligence (ii) to secure that special capacity receives special opportunities for development"<sup>3</sup>

His memorandum of 'Maintenance Scholarships was concerned with the latter. He aimed to show that except in the small class of children of well-to-do parents, 'ability has no opportunity for educational development, of being discovered' and that 'opportunity can be offered, at a cost which, compared with the magnitude of the object is trifling'<sup>4</sup>.

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1. Memorandum 'Amendments to the Education Bill' p.1.
  2. Ibid. p.2.
  3. Ibid. p.3.
  4. Memorandum on Maintenance Scholarships (A.C.E. Mem. 1.)

Tawney's immediate concern was not 'the generous humane and inspiring education for all', outlined in his article 'A National College for All Souls' and justified on the grounds of the need to develop individual personality. Faced with the problem of justifying increased expenditure on maintenance scholarships for the able working class child he could scarcely appeal to intrinsic ends. He thus referred to the need for the nation 'to draw its leadership in government, and administration, science and other intellectual work' from as wide a circle as possible. The 'commercial outlook', which he had condemned in his writings of 1916 and 1917, was used to express the merits of educational reform. Tawney realised that if educational advance was to be achieved it had to be justified and expressed in terms which were acceptable to the nation. Thus he saw the chief question as 'How can we make the best use of human material, which is at once itself the chief part of the capital wealth of the community and the condition without whose careful cultivation other agencies of industrial and social progress can not be effectively used?'

It does not follow that Tawney had rejected the concept of a 'generous, humane and inspiring education for all'; this remained his ultimate goal as it had in the prewar era. What had changed was his tactical approach. He recognised that the mood of the nation would not allow educational advance along a broad front. The advance would have to be akin to the spearhead attack against the enemy's least defensible position, followed later by a more general advance. He thus chose to support the demand for increased maintenance scholarships to enable the able working class child to have a secondary and university education. This line of educational advance could not be justified on grounds of the development of individual personality for there was no reason why the able working class child

should take precedence over others if this were the underlying reason; furthermore it was not an argument which would make an impact upon the governing classes. He thus had to justify this line of educational advance on the extrinsic grounds of its contribution to the nation's economic and political well-being. Once the case had been granted and provision made for greater access to secondary education then the time would come to consider the far greater broadening of the apex of the educational pyramid. Thus the tenor of his argument in the Memorandum of May 1918 was different from that of his writings in 1916 and 1917.

The Memorandum was put together within the space of five weeks, that is between the Advisory Committee's first meeting on April 8th 1918 and its second on May 15th. It involved a statistical examination of three questions. "What proportion of the children educated in the elementary school, do, in fact enter secondary schools? How long do they remain in them? What proportion of them pass on into Universities?"<sup>1</sup> Tawney produced evidence from several authoritative reports to show, in answer to the first question, that, 'only about 1 in 23, under 5 per cent, ever enter a Secondary School'.<sup>2</sup> Only a small percentage stayed at school long enough to prepare for University education. Of the 30,722 in the 14-15 age group in 1913, only 20,628 stayed on to the end of the fifteenth year, 11,522 to the end of the sixteenth year, and 4,905 in the seventeenth-eighteenth year'.<sup>3</sup> The proportion of elementary school children who went on to a university education was less than one per cent, despite the fact that

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1. Ibid. p.2.

2. Ibid. p.3.

3. Ibid. p.3-4.

ninety per cent of the nation's children were educated in elementary schools.<sup>1</sup>

The Government should 'remove some of the barriers which, at present, prevent working class children from entering secondary schools, from remaining in secondary schools when they have entered them, and from passing to Universities.' As the chief barrier was financial, that is the problem of dispensing with children's earnings to enable them to stay on at school, then 'the English system of scholarships and maintenance grants, .... a medley of things very old and very new, national and local, rational and ridiculous' should be revised to meet the nation's needs. If a real 'educational ladder' was to be created in the place of the 'greasy pole' then there should be a great increase in public expenditure on scholarships and maintenance allowances. This was essential to enable children to enter secondary schools; Tawney suggested a figure of 10,000 maintenance scholarships tenable at approved secondary schools, to be increased as accommodation grew to 15,000 and 20,000.<sup>2</sup> To encourage pupils to stay on at school from 15 to 18 additional grants amounting to £450,000 should be given. To encourage pupils to enter universities an initial 2,000 scholarships should be provided at a total cost to the state of £600,000.

Tawney considered the counterarguments to his proposals. In answer<sup>3</sup> to the possible objection that they would 'lower the standard of secondary and university education', he pointed out that such an argument rested on the assumption that all the talent worth special cultivation already entered secondary schools and universities.

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1. Ibid p.5.

2. p.5.

3. p.11.

Such an assumption was unfounded and even if it were true it would be more desirable 'to lower the standard of education'<sup>1</sup> than to exclude the working class. He also examined the argument that there would be no careers to absorb the additional children educated in secondary schools and universities; this argument, he believed, rested on a mistaken view that such jobs were limited in number and incapable of increase. The teaching profession starved of highly educated people demonstrated the fallacy of the argument.

In the summer of 1918 Tawney's interest in educational matters was broadened and deepened. He took part in drafting a series of memoranda, circulars and pamphlets in the summer months, all of which were discussed at the meetings of the Advisory Committee in the Fabian Society Headquarters the following autumn. Of these, the first was an outline of the major educational problems to be investigated. The following three were published in pamphlet form under the titles 'Nursery Schools', 'Continuation Education Under the New Act' and 'The Juvenile Worker at the End of the War'. They made an impressive record of the first half year's work of the Committee.

The document dealing with the broad outlines of policy<sup>2</sup> was probably the work of the whole committee. Matters relating to Elementary Education which appeared 'to be of special importance and most urgent in character' were the raising of the school leaving age, the abolition of partial exemption, reduction in the size of classes, the appointment of fully qualified teaching staff, the removal of restrictions on the curricula, the extension of L.E.A.

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1. p.12.

2. L.P.- A.C.E. Mem. No.2 'Elementary Education, Continued and Secondary Education, University Education'. October 1918. The memorandum is incomplete.



powers to regulate the employment of children, and the development of medical services. In relation to continued education, the Committee singled out for attention the instituting of compulsory half time attendance after the age of full time attendance and the consequent reduction in working hours. The main aspects of secondary education which the Committee were to examine were the lack of scholarships and free places. The latter were, in the Committee's view, best extended gradually 'until they are entirely free and maintenance grants made available'. The universities were to be investigated, especially their constitutions, their accommodation costs, and their non-collegiate functions.

For the first time in his career, Tawney was drawn into a consideration of nursery schooling. The fact that nursery education was given such a high priority by the Committee was due to the presence of Margaret McMillan who promised at the first meeting<sup>1</sup> 'to prepare and circulate a memorandum on Nursery Schools.' In all, four memoranda<sup>2</sup> were devoted to the subject. Margaret McMillan presented her memorandum to the May meeting over which Tawney presided.<sup>3</sup> Tawney agreed that the leaving age should be seven, that it would be impractical to make attendance compulsory and that wherever possible nursery schools should be in part 'open air' with adequate playgrounds, lighting, heating and hot water. It was accepted that 'well educated girls of every class' should be recruited as teachers but special allowance should be made for 'the poorest girl of good type and promise'. However the person in charge of a nursery school should have a university qualification.

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1. L.P. - A.C.E. Min. April 8th 1918.

2. L.P. - A.C.E. Mem. 3,4,5a, 5b.

3. L.P. - A.C.E. Min. May 21st 1918.

Tawney's chief objection was to Margaret McMillan's arguments against free nursery education. She stood out against 'the fetish of free education for all so favoured by congresses in the past and (which) has been a great blind and very retrogressive .... It appears to be democratic but it cuts at the root of every vital impulse towards progress in the poor. These too have a right to choose to make sacrifices'.<sup>1</sup> To Tawney such an argument was dangerous and cut across his stress upon state finance for education. Not surprisingly when he drew up a memorandum<sup>2</sup> upon nursery schooling for the proposed deputation to the Board of Education, this statement was omitted. In his 'brief' of October 18th 1918 he underlined the importance of Clause 19 of the Education Act which empowered Local Education Authorities to supply or aid the supply of Nursery Schools, and urged the Labour Party to induce L.E.A.'s to make provisions on the lines of Margaret McMillan's suggestions. The training of nursery teachers should be given high priority as should the provision of 'the right kind of school'. Nursery Schools could also be used 'to reduce the number of preventable defects now observed in entrants to Public Elementary Schools.

The draft suggestions which Tawney forwarded to the proposed deputation to the Board of Education included the demands that nursery education should be regarded as an integral part of the national system of education, that provision of such schools should be made compulsory in each area, that such schools should be small and near children's homes, and that they be open air schools. The second section dealt with matters of teacher training for nursery

1. L.P. - A.C.E. Mem. 4 'Nursery Schools' p.3.

2. L.P. - A.C.E. Min. October 18th 1918.

schools, and urged the setting up of special courses of training, the provision of grants and the issuing of a special nursery teachers' certificate. Entry to such a course should depend 'not so much on an examination as on the physical, mental and moral fitness of the candidates'.

Perhaps the most important memoranda produced by Tawney during the first six months of the Advisory Committee's existence were those concerning Continuation Education. They represent the climax to a campaign which Tawney had waged largely through the W.E.A. On October 25th 1918, the Advisory Committee agreed that part of its 'future business' should be to publish a pamphlet on the Continuation Schools to be established under the Education Act of 1918. It was regarded as a matter of great urgency. Nunn was to provide a section on curriculum;<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Mackenzie was to deal with teacher training;<sup>2</sup> Tawney's was to be by far the largest contribution with sections on administrative issues;<sup>3</sup> 'points to be watched'<sup>4</sup> and 'Advice to Labour Organisations.'<sup>5</sup> The pamphlet also marks the beginning of a long-lasting friendship between Tawney and Nunn.<sup>6</sup>

Fisher's major concession to the 'Lancashire members' and the industrial interest lay in section 10 1(b) of the Act<sup>7</sup> which provided that

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1. L.P. - A.C.E. (Min.) October 25th 1918.
  2. L.P. - A.C.E. (Min.) November 14th 1918. Tawney had the task of 'amplifying' Mrs. Mackenzie's section.
  3. L.P. - A.C.E. (Mem.)6b.
  4. L.P. - A.C.E. (Mem.)6a.
  5. L.P. - A.C.E. (Mem.)6c.
  6. I am grateful to Miss Elsa Nunn, Sir Percy's daughter, for an insight into the nature and extent of this friendship.

x 7. See p.p. 112-116.

'within a period of seven years from the appointed day .... if the L.E.A. so resolved,<sup>1</sup> the number of hours which a young person .... may be required to attend continuation schools in any year shall be 280 hours, instead of 320'.

In his memorandum on 'Certain Administrative Issues' he drew attention to the danger inherent in this and other concessions. The value of the continuation schooling was dependent upon a series of 'well thought out proposals'. It was imperative, in Tawney's view, that the Labour Party should draw up carefully a list of suggestions concerning continuation education to guide local authorities which would be under pressure from the industrial interest to make the system of continuation schools operate without interference with their interest.

Tawney was particularly concerned 'with the reduction of one hour, (which) may not seem a grave matter,'<sup>2</sup> from the eight hours continued education which Fisher's bill had granted a concession to local education authorities. They could reduce the hours of continuation schooling from eight to seven hours if they passed a special resolution to that effect. This was a matter of concern for Tawney.

'The hour which is taken from education will be added to work in the factory and will reduce more than in proportion the benefits of the education given in the remaining hours. Eight hours per week is quite short enough time for boys and girls between fourteen and sixteen to give to education. It should, on no account, be reduced still further'.<sup>3</sup>

But the matter was not simply one of the number of hours. His earlier social investigations and work on the education sub-committee of the W.E.A. had impressed upon him the need for fixing

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1. Underlined in memorandum 6b.  
 2. L.P. - A.C.E. (Mem.) 6b p.1.  
 3. Ibid.

the times in the day between which continuation schools could operate. Continuation education must take place in the day time. In 1909 he had concluded, that 'for the majority of thousands of boys and girls who are engaged as doffers or who have spent the day in the foundry it is impossible to expect them to interest themselves in the evening in Art or Literature unless the way is made easy for them in the first place'.<sup>1</sup> With this in mind, he examined section 10(7) of the Act which said, in effect, that except in the special case of young persons employed at night, attendance at continuation school must take place before 7 p.m. and in what would otherwise be working hours, subject to the provision that the L.E.A. may fix the actual hours when it pleases. For Tawney 'the time which the L.E.A. fixed .... (was) a matter of some importance'.<sup>2</sup> In rural areas he recognised that it could be desirable to concentrate the hours into those months when the principal industry was slack; his main concern was the more normal arrangement under which young persons were required to attend on two mornings or two afternoons in the week during forty weeks in each year. "When this arrangement is adopted there is some danger lest L.E.A.'s should be tempted in order to avoid inconveniencing industry to place the hours of attendance as near the end of the day as possible for example from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. or from 3.30 p.m. to 6.30 p.m."<sup>3</sup> Such an arrangement, Tawney argued, should be resisted, since if it was carried out it would result in part of the hours of continued education being added to the working day 'and in children attending

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1. 'The Economics of Boy Labour', p.4.

2. Ibid p.2.

3. Ibid

school when they are already exhausted by employment. The time of attendance should be in all cases fixed so as to end before the close of the working day and whenever possible attendance at school should take place in the morning'.<sup>1</sup> Referring also to section 10(b) of the Act, Tawney urged the value to continued education of a rest period between 'factory' and 'school'.

The other clauses of the Act which Tawney scrutinised closely concerned works school. On this matter Fisher believed that 'the educational attitude of the Labour party did not represent the real sentiments of the working-class home'. There were two clauses of the Act that alarmed Tawney, Section 10 (3ii) which made the provision that the obligation to attend continuation schools shall not apply to any young person 'who is shown to the satisfaction of the L.E.A. to be under suitable and efficient part-time instruction in some other manner' and Section 10(8) which provided that 'an L.E.A. shall not without the consent of a young person, require him to attend any continuation school held at or in connection with his place of employment'. He pointed to the difficulty of an employee applying his rights under section 10(8) of the Act but the chief objection which 'has never been answered' was the kind of education given in works schools. On this matter Fisher believed<sup>2</sup> such people as Tawney to be out of step with general working class opinion; Fisher, believed that working-class parents 'preferred a more

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1. Ibid p.3.

2. Fisher Op Cit p.111. Tawney believed that industrial schools would provide vocational training rather than a 'humane education'. His ingrained opposition seemed to overlook the achievements of such industrialists as Robert Owen. In 1953 he seemed to have a more balanced view when he reviewed Cole's biography of 'Robert Owen' (The Radical Tradition, p.32-39).

definite bias to bread-and-butter studies'.<sup>1</sup> Tawney's views, derived from his earlier educational thought, were strongly against 'bread-and-butter studies', 'It is only too likely that many employers will aim at using their control over the schools to turn continued education into a narrowed and specialised training for the branch of industry in which they are interested or to give a bias to such general studies as appear in the curriculum'.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore working class people could be prejudiced against the education given in the works' school for such a school associated with the employer, would be regarded with suspicion in times of industrial unrest.

His particular concern in the latter instance was not only the prejudice against education which could arise but also the 'almost insoluble problems (which) are likely to arise when boys and girls are compelled under legal penalties to attend a school on the premises of a firm from which their parents have been locked out'.<sup>3</sup>

Time and again, however, he returned to the theme which saw the type of education in the works school, as a denial of the 'true' aims of education which, included in his view, that of 'a training in citizenship', based on 'the communal spirit' involved in corporate education, a spirit which was the antithesis of the 'commercial interest' involved in works schools. It was largely on these grounds that he had drawn up a special memorandum<sup>4</sup> to urge

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1. Ibid.

2. Memorandum 6b p.3.

3. Ibid.

4. November 14 1918 (A.C.E. Minutes) "Memorandum on Works Schools. Tawney's memorandum was considered and adopted. Webb suggested that the memorandum be sent to the Labour representatives on the L.E.A.'s and Tawney agreed". This memorandum was incorporated in minute 6b which in turn was part of a larger pamphlet on Continued Education.

the Labour Movement and especially the Labour representatives on Local Authorities to oppose this 'kind of private education authority .... (which) once established will not be easy to eradicate'.<sup>1</sup> His firm conclusion was that Labour representatives 'should insist that continued education shall not be delegated to private firms but shall be directly controlled by L.E.A.'s.<sup>2</sup>

There was nothing in these proposals which contradicted either the Committee's earlier memorandum that envisaged continued education as 'necessary for the vast majority who do not pass to secondary schools'<sup>3</sup> or Nunn's statements which together with Tawney's made up the Advisory Committee's publication 'Continued Education under the New Act. Points to be Watched'.<sup>4</sup> Nunn's contribution to the pamphlet, 'the notes on the curriculum for continuation schools'<sup>5</sup> had spoken in the same conservative tone but had developed the theoretical side of Tawney's argument. His starting point was that of Tawney, namely, 'to resist any attempts to convert Continued Education into a system of specialised training',<sup>6</sup> but whereas Tawney's emphasis had been upon 'the intellectual quality .... of the rising generation'<sup>7</sup> Nunn had stressed that the aim of education was 'not to impart detailed knowledge .... but to enable children at least in anticipation and imagination to become sharers in those phases of human development which have most significance for civilisation as a

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1. Memorandum 6b p.4.
  2. Ibid. p.5.
  3. Memorandum relating to elementary, continued and secondary education and university education (probably April/May 1918)
  4. B.A. Yecklee, in his study of continuation schools, relied heavily upon the memoranda of the Advisory Committee. He declared that 'the pages of the memoranda may be commended as amongst the finest to be found in literature dealing with continued education and the influence of the memoranda is traceable in a number of L.E.A.schemes'. ('Working Out the Fisher Act: The Human Prospect of the Continuation Schools' p.34).
  5. A.C.E. Minutes October 18th and November 14th 1918. This part, part III of the Memorandum (6d) is dated November 1918.
  6. Section (a) of the Memorandum - 'Education for Citizenship'
  7. Memorandum 6b p.3.



whole. Thus history and geography should look towards politics in the wider sense of the word. Science should make them fellow workers with the chemist and physicist .... Literature should open to them, the best thought of, at least, their own countrymen'.<sup>1</sup>

Whilst Tawney had in the past, considered such an aim he had never supported in such a categorical manner as Nunn a concept of education which gave such a low priority to the imparting of exact information, yet both agreed in the importance of education for citizenship which Nunn believed to lie at the core of his theory.

The co-operation of Tawney and Nunn on the Committee was not without significance for <sup>the</sup> former's thinking. In his early writings Tawney had recognised Nunn's point that 'in order to be liberal an education need not be bookish'<sup>2</sup> but the emphasis which he had laid upon the need to acquire 'knowledge' had left him with no great insight into any other kind of education which did not place emphasis upon intellectual discussion and intensive reading. Nevertheless the essays that he had set his tutorial class students and the discussions he had with them in the last half of the meeting, had emphasised the value of their practical experience;<sup>3</sup> he had never, as Nunn was to do in his memorandum, emphasised the value of practical experience and activity in adolescent education. This may have been because he had never given sufficient thought to the content of adolescent education or because he confused that which later, under Nunn's influence he was to distinguish namely 'practical activity' and 'vocational instruction'. His concern for works schools and the fear of 'specialised technical instruction' may have led him to the belief that the environment of the adolescent scarcely offered itself as the starting point for a liberal education.

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1. Ibid.

2. Ibid. p.2. Section headed 'Vocational Interests'.

3. For example, his essays asked for comparisons between the causes of Tudor and modern poverty, the guilds and modern trade unions.

Nunn's argument that 'the new Continuation Schools should appeal to the interests of boys and girls in practical work'<sup>1</sup> helped to turn Tawney away from a highly intellectualised concept of education, though he never entirely forsook such a concept. Nunn emphasised that education should be linked to 'the practical work in which they are engaged' that 'maths had an obvious connection with workshop arithmetic, that History and Geography show the development of local life and industries, of social and political change, of the interdependence of industries, transport etc.', that the 'environment with which he is familiar should be used as a starting point from which to lead him to a wider outlook, i.e. practical education without being narrowly utilitarian'.<sup>2</sup> In his later writings, including his Manchester Guardian editorials, he was to publicise such ideas,<sup>3</sup> which had in part been derived from Nunn's Central School experiences.

Tawney shared with Nunn a belief in the corporate value of education; his W.E.A. tutorial classes had been based on this notion. However, whilst they shared a general belief, the meaning which Tawney had given to it was neither as broad nor as fitting to adolescent education as that given by Nunn. Nunn's idea of the continuation schools: as 'centres of associated effort, to which boys and girls turn naturally for recreation and social intercourse, and which maintains a connection with former pupils when they have passed the age of compulsory attendance' as centres for 'games

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1. Ibid p.2.

2. Ibid.

3. It is interesting that his study of the medieval economy had not led him to emphasise the value of 'practical activity' as seen in the activities of the medieval craftsmen. Perhaps however he saw 'practical activity' within the context of a rural economy in a different light from that of 'practical activity' within modern industrial society.

recreation and educational work of an informal nature, such as dramatic, musical and debating societies',<sup>1</sup> where 'teachers are partners in a common enterprise',<sup>2</sup> where 'music and drama are the most democratic of the arts though the taste for them has often been crushed by industrialism',<sup>3</sup> was broader than that of Tawney's and was to influence the latter's thinking on adolescent education. The pamphlet was perhaps to exercise a greater influence upon Tawney's own thinking than it was to exercise on the nation's.

The section of the pamphlet which dealt with teaching staff<sup>4</sup> demanded that continuation school staff should not be given an inferior salary to that of secondary school teachers. The demand was for parity with secondary schools in terms of staff remuneration; the schools were however regarded as superior to secondary schools in that 'wisely directed, continued education may become the greatest training ground for democracy which the world has seen'. Yet underlying these points was an acceptance of the class-based systems of education. There was no radical challenge to the existing structure of education. The piecemeal addition of continuation schools to the elementary school system was accepted. The object of the pamphlet was to ensure that the system of continuation schools worked effectively and not to question the presuppositions upon which it was based. Tawney was thus open to the criticism that in attempting to ensure that continuation schools functioned effectively he was prolonging the life of a class-based system of education.

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1. Ibid

2. Ibid

3. Ibid

4. The Minute of the meeting of November 14th 1918 reads 'Mrs. Mackenzie's Memorandum on Continuation School Teachers' was considered. Tawney was to amplify the Memorandum

Tawney's final contribution to the Advisory Committee's list of publications in its first six months was a pamphlet called 'The Juvenile Worker at the End of the War'. It was a summary of the booklet entitled 'Juvenile Employment During the War and After' which he was preparing, at Addison's request, for the Ministry of Reconstruction.<sup>1</sup> Tawney had promised the Advisory Committee a memorandum on the subject as soon as he had embarked on the sifting of evidence for the Ministry.<sup>2</sup> By October 1918 it was ready. Webb's remarks on the memorandum reflected the views of the Advisory Committee in general. 'This is excellent .... I hope it is going forward to the Executive Committee at once. If not I urge that this be done at once'.<sup>3</sup> The memorandum was forwarded to the Party's National Executive Committee which gave permission for its publication. The pamphlet repeated the views expressed in the Ministry of Reconstruction's publication and gave the Party a policy for dealing with the problem of unemployed juveniles. Such a policy involved support for the setting up of local juvenile unemployment centres, raising the school leaving age and continuation schooling.

In its first six months, the Advisory Committee had largely been guided in its work by Tawney. Tawney in turn had been brought into contact with areas of education with which he had previously little concern. His attention had been turned to the spheres of nursery and elementary education, which, in the following decades, were to occupy his time still further. His understanding of the problems of adolescent education has been deepened by investigations into scholarships for the secondary school, and into continued

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1. See p.p. 93-96.

2. L.P. - A.C.E. (Min.) May 21st 1918.

3. L.P. - A.C.E. (Min.) October 26th 1918.

education. In November 1918 Tawney was redirecting his energies to a sphere with which he was more familiar, that of university reform.

#### 6. Summary - Continuity and Change

Tawney's basic beliefs upon social and educational reform, which had been formed largely during his years at Rugby and Oxford (Chapter 1, pl-15) and which had been strengthened during his early involvement in the University Tutorial Class Movement (Chapter 2, p.29-48) withstood the test of war. After some initial doubts about the fitness of the working class to lead the nation's moral revival (Chapter 3 p.73-80) he found in the spiritual unity, generated in the trenches, an instrument powerful enough to overcome the individualistic materialism of the civilian population and to provide the necessary precondition for institutional reform, (p.80-84). His demobilisation as the result of war injuries (p.75) provided him with the opportunity to play an active part in national reconstruction. As education, however imperfect, represented for him the main survival of spiritual values, he saw educational reconstruction as the most hopeful approach to reform.

Late in 1916 he spoke of his 'educational work' (p. 80), and in 1917 he joined Addison's Ministry of Reconstruction to assist in the reform of adult education (p.84+) and to prepare a report on the problems of juvenile employment (p.93+). Even during the early weeks of convalescence he was drawn into the W.E.A. campaign for educational advance. On his recovery he came to lead the Association's demand for reform and to formulate its attitude towards the Fisher Bill (p.97+). Such co-operation with government bodies and participation in W.E.A. affairs was no new departure for him; co-operation with the Labour Party was. The Advisory Committee on

Education, set up by the Labour Party, was his child and in the first few months of its existence, from April to November 1918, he presided over its meetings, guided its deliberations and played a major part in drafting its publications (p.121+).

During the years from 1916 to 1918 Tawney's involvement in the work of these educational bodies widened and deepened his interests without altering the fundamental views which he held upon education. He was brought into contact with areas of educational reform which, hitherto he had scarcely considered, especially the spheres of nursery and elementary education. (p.132+). His understanding of the problems of continued education (p.134+), secondary education (p.130+), and university and adult education (p. 85+) was deepened. The influence of leading educationalists, especially that of Percy Nunn and Margaret MacMillan, is evident in the specific proposals for educational reform which he put forward. On the broader issue of the importance of educational reform as part of any scheme of social reconstruction he owed a debt to a tradition of thinking which stretched back into the nineteenth century. In 1919<sup>1</sup> he acknowledged his debt to one representative of that tradition, John Ruskin.

The essence of Ruskin's thought about art, industry or education was that they were not specialisms at all 'but the expression in different forms of the faith which rules in men's minds, and which, therefore, finds its visible embodiment in their labours and social organisations. As that faith is, so will their institutions and their activities be'.<sup>2</sup> For Tawney 'it was this synthesis and not the occasional practical illustration of it which was his message.'<sup>3</sup> Hence Tawney concluded the reformer must take pains not only to act

1. 'John Ruskin', An article in 'The Observer' 19.2.1919.  
Reproduced in 'The Radical Tradition' p.40-44.

2. 'The Radical Tradition' p.40.

3. Ibid. p.41.

but to reflect or he will accomplish nothing. The nature of the 'social disorder' is 'at once more fundamental and more incorrigible'; the cry of 'increased productivity' which many regard as the panacea for all social and economic problems provides the best example of a lack of thought about the fundamental problems confronting society. To give more opportunity for private gain, to demand an increase in the nation's wealth without considering to what ends it should be put is a peculiar kind of blindness which afflicts many reformers. Only by stressing the importance of service to the community as a whole through the removal of all forms of social division can progress be achieved. Chief among these were educational divisions.

CHAPTER FOUR

'THE OUTSKIRTS OF WESTMINSTER'

(1918 - 1922)

1. 'Uniformly unsuccessful .... Parliamentary Candidature'
2. Secondary Education By The Back Door.
3. Secondary Education
4. Education Under Attack
5. 'Secondary Education for All'



1. 'Uniformly unsuccessful .... Parliamentary Candidature'

Shortly after his thirty-eighth birthday Tawney made the first of his four unsuccessful attempts to enter Parliament. In the 'Coupon Election' of December 1918, he contested the Rochdale seat. Like many of the principal figures in the Labour Movement,<sup>1</sup> he suffered a decisive defeat by a Coalition member.<sup>2</sup> However, his belief in an ultimate Labour victory was unshaken. The writing was on the wall. The Party had increased its representation in Parliament from 42 to 59, and had displaced the Liberals as the Official Opposition with the increase in its popular vote from 400,000 to 2,374,000. Only the final hurdle from Opposition to Government remained to be surmounted. In 1924 Labour formed its first minority government. Tawney did not share in Labour's qualified electoral success. Twice defeated at Tottenham in 1922,<sup>3</sup> he was again defeated at Swindon in 1924. Denied the opportunity of exerting his influence upon educational policy from within the House, he devoted his attention to refining the methods by which pressure could be exerted from without.

Tawney found success in other directions. After completing his work for the Ministry of Reconstruction, he finally anchored at the London School of Economics, where he was fortunate to escape a rebuke by Beveridge, its Director, who frowned upon political involvement by its staff.<sup>4</sup> Despite Beveridge's repressive attitude, he found the intellectual atmosphere of the L.S.E. 'exciting', and 'its freedom from formality' congenial.<sup>5</sup> He continued to press for

1. For details of the election result see Mowat p.7.
2. A.J. Law (Coalition Unionist) 14,299, H.V. Phillips (Liberal) 6,452, R.H. Tawney (Labour) 4,956, J. Terrett (British Workers' League) 2,358.
3. The first of these defeats was at a bye-election, the second at the General Election (Laski-Holmes Papers, p.450).
4. Laski was less fortunate. See Beveridge's 'History of the London School of Economics'.
5. Speech at the Presentation of a Portrait (1949).

social and economic reconstruction. His flat in Mecklenburgh Square and his room in the L.S.E. became a Mecca for those who shared these interests. He served on the Sankey Coal Commission which attempted to settle the problems of the coal industry in the aftermath of war. Beatrice Webb regarded him as the Commission's 'great success' and was impressed by 'his personal charm, his quiet wisdom and his rapier-like intellect'.<sup>1</sup> He was said to have 'raised the whole discussions to the highest planes of moral rectitude and sweet reasonableness', even though in the end the Commission proved to be a ploy by Lloyd George to postpone the coal strike rather than to reconstruct the coal industry.<sup>2</sup>

Tawney's greatest achievements on the fringes of Westminster, in the years immediately following the war, were in education. In July 1920, the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education was reconstituted. Tawney was reappointed and served on it during the period of its greatest reports in the twenties. In 1922 he edited 'Secondary Education For All' and gave a blaze of publicity to its recommendations in the 'Manchester Guardian'. He pressed for reform within the Labour Party and the W.E.A. In general, he kept to the same channels when urging the need for educational advance. His most constant platform was that of the W.E.A. It was in preparing its statements of policy and its evidence for official commissions of enquiry, that he undertook his most sustained examination of governmental policy.

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1. Diaries p.161 Entry for June 23, 1919.

2. Mowat Op.Cit. p.30 - 36.

## 2. Secondary Education By the Back Door

In 'Secondary Education For All' (1922) Tawney saw the continuation school as 'a temporary expedient' to give the working-class adolescent some contact with the liberal curriculum of the secondary school. However, part time secondary education 'by the backdoor' was no substitute for full time secondary education for all. This attitude was the result of a shift in emphasis in his thinking on continued education, which took place in the years from 1918 to 1922. The more closely he came to consider the need for a system of secondary education for all up to 15 and ultimately 16, the greater became his emphasis upon the transitory nature of continued education as envisaged in the Fisher Act.

At the end of the Great War, the notion of universal secondary education was still in its infancy. Tawney had done little more than to demand the provision of free and universal secondary education. He had not considered its implications. He had examined the problems neither of the types of provision nor organisational framework. Nor was he to do so until the problems of implementing the continuation clauses of the Fisher Act gave rise to second thoughts about their value among the local authorities. Ever sensitive to the change of attitude of the leading educationalists, Tawney began to reconsider his own presuppositions about continuation schools.

In the year following his failure to secure the Rochdale seat, Tawney kept strictly to the views on continued education expressed in the memorandum, 'Continued Education Under the New Act', which he and Nunn drew up in the month of the Armistice.<sup>1</sup> These views were in accord with the prevailing attitude among those who

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1. See p.p. 134-137 Chapter 3

were interested in education.<sup>1</sup> He accepted continued education as a desirable permanent feature of the educational system and regretted that it did not stretch across the whole of adolescence, and campaigned to ensure that the place, number of hours and times of attendance were such that the benefits of this form of education were maximised. Yet, although his view of continued education was in agreement with contemporary opinion, it raised certain questions of principle. Support for a system of continuation schools implied the acceptance of the notion of the parallel systems. Continuation schooling was an extension of elementary education, a class-based form of education. As such it ran contrary to Tawney's belief in the Arnoldian concept of education as a social cement.

The period from the Armistice to June 1919, when Germany finally accepted peace terms, gave Tawney little time to resolve this difficulty. His immediate concern was not the social injustice inherent in separate forms of educational provision, based upon class, but the injustice of exposing working class adolescents to the vicious economic pressures which the children of no other class faced. Continuation Schooling was seen as a check on the exploitation of juvenile labour and as a partial alternative to the 'life of the streets'. Whilst 'Prussian militarism' had been defeated, materialism had other more invincible forms. His involvement in the work of the Ministry of Reconstruction and the Sankey Coal Commission reinforced his prewar attitude towards continued education.

Yet his thoughts were not entirely upon the economic merits of the continuation school. In the years before the First World War Tawney had begun to consider the value of continued education as a countermeasure to the deadening effect upon the adolescent mind of

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1. Barker Op Cit pp.87-89; Doherty Op Cit p.82; Schofield Op Cit p.389; Dean Op Cit p.12.

many 'non-educative' jobs involved in the industrial process. He reflected further upon this in 1919, in an address to the Workers' Educational Association. He returned to the principal theme of his *Commonplace Book*. What mattered most was not institutions per se but the ideas and assumptions upon which they rested. As attitudes towards continuation schools had not hardened, the Association, as one of the few bodies which had successfully combined 'earning with learning', had an unprecedented opportunity to influence public opinion. The chief consideration was the nature of continued education. Was the continuation school to be seen in the light of the elementary school as 'indispensable as a pillar box',<sup>1</sup> providing a debased, narrow, utilitarian form of education or was it to be seen as a new venture in working class adolescent education, providing a broad humane education?

Tawney's answer was coloured by his view of the ultimate purposes of the Association. Firstly, he argued, the fact that such a form of education was class-based was an advantage. If wisely conceived it could be used for the specific cause of 'The improvement of that class'.<sup>2</sup> Its second great asset was that it combined 'the twin pillars of earning and learning'. On the basis of his tutorial class experience he came to believe that the wage-earner had a greater insight into the importance and value of humane studies than the cloistered academic. Thirdly, it offered to the working-class adolescent the immediate opportunity of coming into contact with 'the moral ideal' which the Association offered to the working class adult.

What was the nature of 'the moral ideal' or the culture to which the working class adolescent was being offered partial and backdoor access? Tawney's answer was that of his contemporaries and bound up

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1. 'The Educational Needs of Democracy' (W.E.A. Pamphlet Collection Item 30).

2. p.5.

with his notion of the 'common culture'. It was that from which the working class adolescent had been hitherto excluded, that which embodied 'liberal and humane values'; the exclusion of the bulk of working class children from secondary education had meant their exclusion from 'the heritage of the ages'. Tawney was emphatic that 'continued education was simply part time secondary education'.<sup>1</sup> Whilst the Fisher Act had not provided universal secondary education, it had provided the means whereby the majority of working class adolescents could gain access to the type of education from which the working class had been hitherto excluded. It was the beginning of 'common culture'. This is what Tawney had meant by 'the improvement of the working class'. The prime evil of the dual system had not been the provision of separate educational institutions on a class basis but the difference in the underlying concepts of education which these systems had embodied.

In 1919, Tawney did not proceed further with his argument. His main objective was to gain a general acceptance for the view that 'a liberal and humane education' was as much the right of the working class child as that of the children of other classes. Once this had been achieved, institutional changes would follow. He did not consider, in detail, the changes in the structure of education which were necessary but there was an implicit recognition that once the distinction between a utilitarian education for the working class and a humane education for other classes had been eradicated then the separate forms of educational provision based on this distinction would disappear. In 1919 he was far too engrossed with the possibilities of making continued education 'the training ground for

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1. 'Continued Education Under the New Act' p.8.

the democracy of the future'<sup>1</sup> to consider in any detail the future reorganisation of the nation's educational system.

Tawney was aware that the immediate danger was not that continued education would be debased to serve the industrial interest but that the continuation clauses of the Fisher Act were likely to become a dead letter. Even to the most zealous local authorities the problem of the provision of teachers and accommodation meant delay. There was also the danger of the loss of enthusiasm in peacetime for a measure of reconstruction passed in time of war. Above all, there was the problem of the tolerance which the Act allowed. It left educational reformers including Tawney, 'with the piecemeal task of maintaining continuous pressure on the L.E.A.'s to ensure the widest possible use of their new and very considerable permissive powers'. He had already laid down lines of action in his Memorandum of November 1918. The Memorandum has been commended by Lady Stocks<sup>2</sup> as 'amongst the finest to be found in the literature dealing with continued education', 'with an influence upon a number of (L.E.A.) schemes'.<sup>3</sup> As Chairman of the Labour Party's Advisory Committee on Education, as a journalist and as a key member of the W.E.A.'s Executive and Finance and General Purposes Committee, he was in a strong position to urge the need for constant pressure upon laggardly education authorities. In this, he had the support of the educational press which endorsed the view of the Journal of Education that 'the views of the Party's responsible leaders deserve the careful

1. p.7.

2. Stocks Op Cit p.77.

3. B.A. Yeaxlee "Working Out the Fisher Act: The Human Aspect of Continuation Schools" p.34.

attention of all students of education. All believers in education will sympathise sincerely with .... (their) demands'.<sup>1</sup>

By the time that Tawney's campaign in support of continuation schools merged into the protest against economies in educational expenditure from the Autumn of 1920 onwards, there was a shift of emphasis in attitudes to continued education. In July 1920 Tawney had chaired a meeting of Labour's Advisory Committee on Education when the representatives of the Association of Assistant Masters had underlined the inadequacies of continued education and had pointed out that unqualified support for it would nullify 'the fuller demand for secondary education for all'.<sup>2</sup> By October, he had come to accept continued education only as a temporary step on the road to universal full time secondary education, and added his voice to the growing number which opposed the suggestion that it should be viewed as an alternative to secondary education for all. The numerous discussions within the Advisory Committee on Local Education Authority schemes, in the few months before he began to write 'Secondary Education For All', clarified his mind on the issue. The line of policy in which 'these schools' were seen 'as a temporary expedient only' was recommended to the Party's National Executive Council in a draft of a memorandum on 'Local Education Schemes' drawn up in October 1920.<sup>3</sup> In February 1921 Tawney made his dissatisfaction with the Fisher Act clear<sup>4</sup> in his last public statement before the publication of 'Secondary Education For All'. 'What is wanted is

1. Journal of Education and the School World, p.436 July 1919.
2. L.P. - A.C.E. (Min.) 16th July 1920.
3. The original draft was submitted to the N.E.C. on 15th October 1920. The third and final draft for submission to the Board of Education was accepted by the N.E.C. on 16th February 1921.
4. 'Make The Children Pay For The War', "The Highway", February 1921.



free secondary education .... What it gave us was part time continued education'. The vision of continued education as 'the training ground for the democracy of the future' was fading. Secondary education by the back door was no longer worthy of unqualified support. 'The Education Act' was no longer of the 'kind to command whole hearted enthusiasm'.<sup>1</sup>

'Secondary Education For All' indicates his revised attitude towards continuation schools. He was prepared to give wholehearted support to continued education as a continuation of secondary education for those who leave school at sixteen but in its existing form it 'can not be accepted as a substitute for the development of a system of secondary education'.<sup>2</sup> It was acceptable only as a 'transitional measure' as a check to the exploitation of juvenile labour. It was, in essence, a 'cheap substitute' for secondary education and as such could not be regarded as a permanent feature of the educational system.

Tawney reflected the general attitude of leading educational opinion to continuation education. The true protagonist of this form of education was Fisher, who could still claim enthusiastically that the cost of one battleship would provide seven years' continuation schooling for the nation's children for seven years.<sup>3</sup> He made efforts to persuade Birmingham to retain its continuation schools but with the ending in 1922 of London's system of compulsory day continuation schools the future of this form of education looked bleak even before the Geddes economy drive. The debates within Parliament showed no evidence of a concern for compulsory day continuation education. The emphasis was on secondary education, especially for those of high academic abilities.

1. Ibid. p.79

2. 'Secondary Education For All' p.12-13.

3. In a speech delivered at Northampton (T.E.S. 24th March 1921).

### 3. Secondary Education

The change in Tawney's attitude to continued education was neither sudden nor radical. It was rather a shift of emphasis in response to a complex series of developments in the years from 1920 to 1922. He had never seen the extension of part time education as an alternative to lengthening the period of full time attendance at school, but whilst the former had occupied the attention of the nation he had given priority to securing as effective a system of continuation schools as possible. When the difficulties of implementing the continuation clauses of the Fisher Act became apparent and progressive authorities presented alternative schemes for educational advance to the Executive Committee of the W.E.A., and the Advisory Committee on Education of the Labour Party, Tawney began to reconsider his attitude to continued education.

One of his first memoranda for the Advisory Committee on Education in 1918 had examined the means by which 'some of the barriers, which .... prevent working class children from entering secondary schools, from remaining in secondary schools when they have entered them, and from passing to universities' could be removed.<sup>1</sup> The desirability of extending the opportunities for working class children to attend secondary schools was further impressed upon him, in 1920, by his own experiences on the reconstituted Consultative Committee of the Board of Education, by the Report of the Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places, and by such ambitious schemes for educational advance as those put forward by authorities such as Gloucester, Darlington and ~~Westham~~<sup>estham</sup>. The problems which greater equality of educational opportunity brought in terms of selection,

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\* 1. See Chapter 3, Section 5 p.p.129-131.

curricula and the relative importance of existing secondary schools in a new structure for secondary education required close examination.

Tawney had joined the Consultative Committee in 1912, a few months before Hadow. In July 1920, he was reappointed to serve under Hadow.<sup>1</sup> He was thus brought into contact with not only a host of witnesses with a deep understanding of the nation's educational system but also 'a team of veritable giants'.<sup>2</sup> Few chairmen have been asked to lead a team more formidable in character and intellect. Hadow, by nature reserved and aloof and not always patient, had, as chairman, the task of making into 'a good thinking body' a team of eminent individualists such as Tawney, Sir Ernest Barker, W.A. Brockington, Albert Mansbridge, Lord Gorell, 'the strong personality Miss Conway of the N.U.T.', Lynda Grier, Emmeline Turner and others of comparable calibre.

In the case of the first two references given to the Committee in 1920 concerning curriculum differentiation and the value of psychological tests, Tawney, like Hadow had not 'any intimate knowledge .... of the topics referred to the Committee ....., did not attempt to put over policies of his own, did not take a very active part in the Committee's discussions, and was not responsible for much of the recommendations'.<sup>3</sup> The fact that Tawney had knowledge of only one of the six areas of education with which the Committee was ultimately to deal, was no great drawback. He had learnt enough about Government methods to appreciate that the Committee was not

1. T.E.S. December 25th 1959. William Henry Hadow - A Centenary Appreciation.
2. By a ballot of February 17th 1921, Tawney was to be one of the first seven of the Committee's twenty one members to retire in July 1924. However 'periods of extension by special consideration' meant that he retired in 1930, four years before Hadow, its chairman.
3. T.E.S. 25th December 1959

asked to propound original ideas. Its purpose was to act as a clearing house and crystallisation plant.<sup>1</sup> Tawney was well suited to carrying out this task. His main contribution in the first year or so was in laying down the procedure by which this function could be effectively executed. In 1920, he introduced a resolution dealing with procedural arrangements.<sup>2</sup> 'On the reference to the Consultative Committee of any new subject of inquiry, the first task of the Committee shall be to define provisionally the procedure to be adopted including the main lines of investigation to be followed, the division of the subject into suitable parts, the determination of the principal witnesses to be called and the order in which they shall be heard due regard being had to the desirability of hearing witnesses on the same part of the subject as far as possible in close succession.' The resolution was carried.

When Fisher submitted his first reference to the Committee on the subject of 'whether greater differentiation is desirable in the curriculum for boys and girls respectively in Secondary Schools,' it was<sup>a</sup> clear indication that the President was not in favour of radical change, that he regarded the traditional Secondary School as a permanent feature of the educational system. Any new developments were to take place outside of the existing secondary school. This was a basic premise which Tawney, together with the rest of the Committee and the bulk of contemporary opinion accepted. Though he acknowledged that minor changes or shifts of emphasis could take place within the secondary school curriculum, the occasion of the first reference was for Tawney in 1920 the opportunity to reaffirm his belief in 'the

1. That Tawney was well aware of this is pointed out in a letter to the author by the late Professor A.V. Judges dated 5th January, 1969.

2. E.D. 24 1226

good general education' directed towards 'the proper development of the individual' and 'the development of personality'. More free time and greater attention to aesthetic subjects could enhance this type of education. The secondary school was to remain the principal path to the universities though it was agreed that 'the Matriculation requirements of certain Universities which at present determine with undue rigidity the curriculum of the upper forms, both in boys' schools and in girls' schools should in the interests of freedom, be relaxed'.<sup>1</sup>

The Report of the Committee gave emphasis to another aspect of the subject which was central to Tawney's thinking and which was to underlie his attitude towards all future lines of educational advance. The late Professor Judges<sup>2</sup> has pointed out<sup>3</sup> that Tawney upheld as his ideal 'the small neighbourhood school, keyed to local interests and with a vocational bent'. The section of the Report on 'vocational bias', which followed closely the ideas which the A.M.A. presented to the Committee, explained in terms which were perfectly acceptable to Tawney, the meaning of 'vocational'.

"We are of the opinion, from the evidence submitted that there are methods of approaching certain subjects which, while leaning towards the industries of particular localities - thus partaking of the nature of vocational bias - are in themselves educationally sound. It is obvious, for example, that scientific subjects such as Mathematics and Physics will make a stronger appeal in an engineering centre such as Sheffield, and Chemistry in such places as Widnes, St. Helens and Stoke-on-Trent. Moreover, in such a study as History

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1. 'Differentiation in the Curriculum for Boys and Girls respectively in Secondary Schools' p.p. 138-139
  2. The late Professor Judges was a reader in Economic History at the London School of Economics from 1926 to 1940 and from 1945 to 1948.
  3. In a letter to the author dated 5th January 1969.

the subject gains in educational value when approached from or illustrated by the occupations and industries of the district. It is largely a question of point of view. If the vocational bias is introduced with a view to illuminating the whole of which it forms a part then it is obviously playing the role of an important educational instrument. We agree, therefore that it may often happen that a vocational bias may be of great service in assisting the general development of the child, and it follows that, if this view is sound it may have a considerable bearing on differentiation of the curriculum for boys and girls".<sup>1</sup> There could scarcely be a finer statement of the method of teaching History which he adopted in his tutorial classes.

Granted that the secondary school should be retained with the possibility of minor adjustments in its curriculum, there was the closely related matter of selection for entry to it. Tawney first began to consider this issue in detail from 1920 onwards as the result of the second reference given to the Committee on the use which could be 'made in the public system of education of psychological tests of educable capacity'. As in the case of the first reference Tawney attended all of the Committee meetings but made no recorded contribution to the discussions which were guided largely by Dr. Adami and a small subcommittee. Hitherto he had concerned himself with the extension of scholarships and free places and had left the vexed question of the manner of selection to those who knew more about the subject.

He had sufficient knowledge of the subject to agree with the Committee's finding that the Free Place examination has become

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1. Ibid. p.131 para. 100.

'often a competitive examination of an extremely stringent and exacting kind since a large proportion of the candidates cannot possibly whatever their ability, be successful in winning a free place'.<sup>1</sup> He fully endorsed one witness's description of the handicaps suffered by working class children in terms of 'unfavourable home environment including not infrequently insufficient nutrition and unsuitable clothing' and 'absence of stimulus and special preparation'<sup>2</sup> for the examination. Whilst he could agree in principle with the finding that 'any system of selection for higher education at so early an age of 11 is unsatisfactory' he was to pay more heed to the practical argument that to be effective a secondary education course had to be of at least four years duration and that selection, of necessity, should take place about the age of eleven.

The only significant comment he was later<sup>3</sup> to make upon the Committee's findings was to point to the limitations of psychological tests. The notion of 'educable capacity' was bound up with that of the 'educational ladder'. Whilst such tests could be of assistance as a supplementary means of assessing intelligence, they could not measure 'the qualities of character' 'temperamental characteristics' and 'processes of emotion' whose cultivation through adolescent education he came to believe to be of equal importance.

The Consultative Committee worked within a prescribed context and it was not from this body that a radical advance in educational thinking could be expected. Its references were carefully selected and certainly those of 1920 were not meant to challenge in

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1. 'Report of the Consultative Committee on Psychological Tests of Educable Capacity and their possible use in the Public System of Education' p.108
  2. Ibid. p.116-117.
  3. 'Equality' p. 282.

any way the paramount importance of the existing secondary school in the nation's education system. The Committee did not provide the stimulus for Tawney to proceed beyond the position which he already held, though it did enable him to reaffirm and clarify his beliefs. The prime stimulus to his thinking which was to lead him to consider the development of secondary education, including provision from those who would not enter existing secondary schools, came somewhat unexpectedly from another Committee set up by the Board of Education, a departmental committee which enquired into Scholarships and Free Places and which reported in October 1920.

Tawney had no official contact with the Departmental Committee when it began its task in October 1919. His Memorandum on Maintenance Scholarships, which he had drawn up in May 1918 for Labour's Advisory Committee on Education for submission to its National Executive of which he became a full chairman in 1920,<sup>1</sup> formed, however, part of Labour's evidence put before the Departmental Committee. He also assisted MacTavish, the W.E.A.'s General Secretary, to prepare the Association's evidence in his newly appointed role of vice chairman of the Association.<sup>2</sup> Many of the Departmental Committee's recommendations were in advance of the proposals which he had helped to put forward. He recognised the advanced nature of the Departmental Committee's recommendations concerning secondary education, in a pamphlet which he drafted for the Labour Party's Advisory Committee on Education<sup>3</sup> and in a 'Manchester Guardian'<sup>4</sup> leader. The Report provided a chief source of inspiration for 'Secondary Education

1. A.C.E. Min. Ap. 20/1920

2. W.E.A. - Exec. Min. 21st July 1920.

3. A.C.E. Min. 11th January 1921. Tawney had not been present for the Advisory Committee's discussion of the subject on March 20th 1920, he attended only four out of a possible fourteen meetings.

4. M.G. 16th November 1920.



For All', which he began to write a few months<sup>1</sup> after the publication of the Departmental Committee's recommendations.

The Report was well in advance of contemporary opinion.<sup>2</sup> The Times Educational Supplement hailed the Report 'as carrying the idea of universal secondary education to a point hitherto unknown in any national system of education'.<sup>3</sup> Tawney, in more moderate tones, claimed that its 'proposals are eminently reasonable' and added with unfounded optimism that they 'are the most that, at the moment, public opinion is prepared for'.<sup>4</sup> The Report provided him with up to date statistics of the educational inequalities suffered by the working class. Such inequalities, he argued, by reference to a figure of speech which was to reoccur in his writings throughout the twenties, 'were only tenable on the hypothesis that working class children, like anthropoid apes, have fewer convolutions in their brains than the children of the richer classes'. 20,000 applicants had been excluded from admission to secondary schools in 1919-1920 because there was no accommodation and only 8.7 per 1,000 population were in grant-aided secondary and junior technical schools.

He commented with approval on the Committee's proposals for immediate reform, the increasing of the number of free places from twenty five to forty per cent. On the subject of school fees he found room for disagreement with the Committee's conclusions. He endorsed its support for a system of free secondary education with 'a liberal scale of grants administered in a generous educational spirit' but found unacceptable the view that 'in the present state of

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1. He agreed to write the 'booklet' on February 8th 1921.
  2. Doherty Op.Cit. p.p. 112-116; Schofield Op.Cit. p.499-500.
  3. T.E.S. 28th October 1920.
  4. Manchester Guardian 16th November 1920.

the national budget' school fees could not be abolished. His reply was simply that 'the financial cost would be small compared with the advantages it offers'. Measured against the recommendations of the Committee he found that London, in particular, was 'disposed to treat secondary education in quite an inadequate manner' regarding 'ten secondary school places per thousand' as sufficient 'with an elaborate system of central schools .... for children excluded from secondary education'.<sup>1</sup>

In the Committee's long-term proposals for reform Tawney found the means of overcoming the educational inequalities which existed. 'The gravest vice of English education is that its historical development upon lines of class has caused this educational division (between primary and secondary education) to be obscured by social division .... so that in common speech elementary education has come to mean not preparatory education but that kind and quality of education which is thought sufficient for the majority of working class children'.<sup>2</sup> The Young Committee had pointed the way to the eradication of this evil. 'The process of a good education is now generally regarded as one and indivisible throughout its successive stages'.<sup>3</sup> It went on to urge that 'every child admitted to a post elementary school must be fitted to profit by the course it offers, but that all normal children must be provided with the form of further education best suited to their ability'.<sup>4</sup> Tawney welcomed in the place of 'cheap educational makeshifts' the provision of various kinds of secondary school, not just for 'special groups of children' but also for 'those who by natural capacity (were) interested more in things than in thoughts or best developed by dealing with things

1. Report (Young Committee) p.34 para. 101.

2. Manchester Guardian 20th November 1920.

3. Report p.13, para. 43.

4. Ibid. p.37 para. 110.

rather than books, or on account of circumstances determining leaving age, or, again on account of the character of future occupation'. He supported the idea of 'secondary education as the normal thing up to sixteen .... with maintenance allowances for all who clearly need them'. As yet he was only on the verge of considering the forms which secondary education should take. The years 1921 and 1922 were to see an advance in his thinking in this direction.

By the end of 1920, Tawney had begun to consider, as a member of the Consultative Committee, the value of the existing secondary schools and the problems of selection, and in response to the Report of the Departmental Committee he had come to examine in greater depth the variety of education provision for the adolescent. Yet despite the obvious achievements of the Board's Consultative and Departmental Committees he was still acutely aware that the Board was not carrying out to the full its function of the 'formation of intelligent public opinion on educational matters by the regular dissemination of full and accurate information'.<sup>1</sup> He urged that the Board should create an Intelligence Department, increase its number of publications, establish an Educational Gazette, encourage educational research and give increased representation to the L.E.A.'s and professional organisations on the Consultative Committee and facilitate better relations between the Board, the L.E.A.'s and Teachers Organisations. It was precisely in the role of giving publicity to educational ideas that Tawney made his greatest contribution. Though he did not himself make any new or startling recommendations for educational policy he seized upon the ideas and reforms of

1. Memorandum entitled 'The Board of Education' (L.S.E. Papers). He later expressed the views contained in the memorandum to Labour's Advisory Committee (L.P. - A.C.E. Minute February 22 1922) and in a motion presented to the Workers' Educational Association's Executive Committee on March 25th 1922.

educationalists and L.E.A.'s and gave them highly effective publicity.<sup>1</sup> He urged that the Board perform on a larger scale the function which he had taken upon himself.

Yet it would be wrong to assume that the influences which came to temper Tawney's thought in 1920 were derived solely from the central bodies connected with the Government or political parties. A recent study<sup>2</sup> has revealed that much of the thinking on educational matters found in Government reports, and amongst educational opinion in general was the result of a complex process of interaction of the ideas of various bodies and individuals, not least of which were the L.E.A.'s and their Directors of Education. It was these which had the responsibility for implementing the Fisher Act, for extending secondary education, as well as improving elementary schools and developing central schools, and which had to bear in mind the cost involved in raising the school leaving age to 14. By 1920 their plans for adolescent education gave less emphasis to continuation schools and more attention to schemes for full time education.<sup>3</sup> Few who have read 'Secondary Education For All' would deny that Tawney's thinking on current problems like that of many of his contemporaries was greatly affected by the schemes for educational advance put forward by the progressive authorities and their directors. He read reports of local schemes reported in the Times Educational Supplement, discussed memoranda on them put forward before Labour's Advisory Committee,<sup>4</sup> and noted the reports on them sent in by the districts of the W.E.A.<sup>5</sup> Schemes such as those produced by Gloucester,

1. Barker Op.Cit. p.95

2. B. Doherty 'The Organisation of the Education of the Adolescent 1918-1928. Policy and Opinion' (Unpublished M.Ed thesis Manchester 1968)

3. Ibid. p. 83-94

4. e.g. A.C.E. Minutes October 27th 1920 and November 15th 1920.

5. e.g. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. Min. September 14th 1920.

Darlington and Westham emphasised a preference for the development of full time secondary education to 15 or 16 and singled out particular obstacles in the part of advance in this direction.

#### 4. Education Under Attack

The outlook for the recommendations put forward in the reports of Government Committees, for the demands of educationalists and for the schemes drawn up by the progressive local authorities, to which Tawney lent support, was not very promising in 1921 and was even less so the following year. The collapse of the postwar economic boom was bound to have its repercussions on education. 'In April 1920 all was right with the world. In April 1921 all was wrong'.<sup>1</sup> The press and local, national and professional bodies took their sides on the issue of educational economies.

On the one side were the professional organisations such as the Association of Technical Institutions and national bodies such as the Association of Education Committees who opposed cuts.<sup>2</sup> On the other, were groups such as the bulk of the national press, led by the 'Daily Mail', and the business interest, urging stringent economy and the end of 'squanderomania'.<sup>3</sup> To the timid L.E.A.'s which had lagged behind in submitting their schemes, the threat of cuts in expenditure offered relief; even the progressive authorities were growing increasingly anxious about the cost of their proposed schemes and welcomed the breathing space afforded by the threatened economies.<sup>4</sup>

Tawney's stand on the issue was predictable. He ranged the

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1. R.H. Tawney 'Abolition of Economic Controls 1918-21', Economic History Review XIII. (1943) 15. Quoted by Mowat p.26.
  2. Doherty Op. Cit. p.142-147. Schofield Op.Cit. p.502-504.
  3. Mowat Op.Cit. p.130
  4. Adam Op. Cit. p.195-196.

'Manchester Guardian' against the popular press<sup>1</sup> and against 'The Times', which argued 'we had embarked on schemes without which we had got on very well. There was the Education Act .... and various other schemes. We should like to send a strong message to Mr. Lloyd George that these schemes should be dropped and dropped at once'.<sup>2</sup> In his leading articles,<sup>3</sup> Tawney criticised cuts in expenditure as 'false economies' and expressed deep regret at the calling to a halt of the system of day continuation schools and the closing of a great many voluntary continuation schools at a time of growing unemployment. He used his full powers of irony to attack those who urged cuts and his outspoken and exaggerated comments drew from Sir John Adams the retort that 'the Act is not nearly so close to death as newspaper writers suggest and that the more convenient season may not be so very remote after all. In any case, it is clear that the Board does not contemplate such drastic retrenchment as shall interfere with the efficiency of the present system'.<sup>4</sup>

Tawney thought otherwise. He saw in the 'Seventh Report From the Select Committee on National Expenditure' published in December 1920 a grave threat to progress in the nation's educational system. In the month prior to the publication of the Report he had submitted letters to Labour's Advisory Committee on Education<sup>5</sup> and to the W.E.A.'s Executive<sup>6</sup> and Finance and General Purposes Committees<sup>7</sup> urging action against 'the possibility of delay in putting into full operation the provisions of the 1918 Act'. The W.E.A. decided to

1. Examples of the attitude of the popular press are to be seen in the issues of the 'Daily Dispatch' for 22 February, 23rd March, 23rd August and 28th November and in the 'Daily Mail' for 1st February, 16th March and 10th June 1921.
2. December 19th 1920. Quoted by Tawney in 'Secondary Education For All' p.130-131.
3. Manchester Guardian 18th January, 21st January and 7th March.
4. 'The Present Educational Position'. The Contemporary Review February 1921, p.198-199.
5. L.P. - A.C.E. Minute November 30th 1920.
6. W.E.A. - E.C. Minute November 23rd 1920.
7. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. Minute (49) November 23rd 1920.

take immediate action to draw public attention to the danger; the Advisory Committee decided to put the matter before the new committee which was to meet in January 1921; in the meantime they would approach Myers, a Labour M.P. about putting a question in the House, arrange 'a deputation to the Minister of Education to press that the Education Act of 1918 should be put into force', and have the General Secretary report on any steps taken to stimulate protest. The Labour Party's deputation was to include a representative from the W.E.A.<sup>1</sup> an invitation which the latter body accepted with the choice of Tawney.

When the Report on National Expenditure was published it confirmed Tawney's fears. The W.E.A. whose mood was 'something akin to despair'<sup>2</sup> was the first to act under pressure from Tawney, its vice president and chairman of its Finance and General Purposes Committee. It had already decided on its immediate steps which included taking part in Labour's deputation, waging a campaign in the press, and holding a public conference. A conference with Tawney present was held at Toynbee Hall on December 18th 1920 with representatives of the Districts. Before the New Year MacTavish had visited Selby-Bigge and had received a favourable reply about grants for one year classes held by the W.E.A., and the assurance that the Board 'would favourably consider the question of recognising the Association as a body competent to receive advance block grants'.<sup>3</sup>

In the early months of 1921 Tawney was conducting a vigorous campaign in the press, through the W.E.A. and Labour's Advisory Committee. His action took two characteristic forms, the production of pamphlets and articles and the encouragement of meetings, private and public, to draw attention to the proposed cuts. In the first

1. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. Minute (63) December 20th 1920.

2. Doherty Op.Cit. p.144.

3. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. Minute (49) 23rd November 1920.

meeting of Labour's Advisory Committee in January, he agreed 'to consider and report on the Report of the Select Committee on National Expenditure which deals with educational finance.'<sup>1</sup> The resulting memorandum entitled 'Facts Regarding the Cost of Education'<sup>2</sup> provided the material of a deputation to the Prime Minister, the main arguments in Tawney's long leading articles in the 'Manchester Guardian' and the substance of an article entitled 'Make the Children Pay For the War' in the W.E.A.'s official journal 'The Highway'<sup>3</sup>.

The memorandum and articles show firstly the priorities in his thinking at the time when he was about to embark<sup>4</sup> upon writing 'Secondary Education For All'. He firstly pointed to the defects of the Fisher Act:

"The Education Act was not of a kind to command whole hearted enthusiasm. What is wanted is free secondary education, accompanied by a system of progressive maintenance allowances, up to 16, and beginning with the urgent task of increasing secondary school places from 300,000 to 2,000,000. What it gave us was part time continued education from 14 to 16. But the meanness of the policy of 'making the children pay for the war' overshadows the defects of the Act".<sup>5</sup>

The deficiencies of the Act were to be dealt with elsewhere. The immediate campaign was not to press for educational changes which needed further legislation but for the full implementation of educational provisions already on the statute book. He intended to show that 'the alleged increased costs of education exist only in the

1. L.P. - A.C.E. Min. January 25th 1921.
2. It was presented before the Advisory Committee's meeting on February 22nd 1921.
3. The February Issue.
4. Tawney first agreed to write 'Secondary Education for All' on February 8th 1921 (L.P. - A.C.E. Min. Feb. 8th 1921).
5. 'The Highway' February 1921, p.79.



mind's of the Select Committee .... and that their proposals are even more fatuous'.<sup>1</sup>

As the arguments for the suspension of the Education Act were financial Tawney hoped that by putting forward convincing financial counterarguments the way would then be made open for the implementation of the Act. In answer to the Select Committee's point that there had been 'an enormous increase in educational expenditure' he argued that taking into account devaluation of money, expenditure had actually decreased since 1913. Furthermore, in terms of the percentage of the national income spent on education there was an obvious decrease from 5 per cent in 1914 to less than 3 per cent in 1921. Whilst the salaries of teachers, 'the largest single item in the increased expenditure' had increased by 138 per cent this was less than the rise in the cost of living since 1913. The same was true of the amount spent upon the elementary education of each child.<sup>2</sup>

He underlined the absurdity of not providing the additional 16,000 teachers and capital expenditure for buildings for the continuation schools at a time of rising unemployment. 'How imbecile it is on public grounds to flood industry with children when men are unemployed needs no emphasis'.<sup>3</sup> He attacked the raising of school fees<sup>4</sup> as 'directly contrary to Labour's policy of free secondary education'. The course of action was simple, to bring into operation the Education Act, and to carry out the Burnham Committee's recommendations on teachers salaries and those of the Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places. To achieve this the W.E.A. were urged to demonstrate and send resolutions of protest to the Prime Minister, the President of the Board of Education, and the Labour

1. 'Facts Regarding the Cost of Education' L.P. - A.C.E. Memorandum No.46 24th February 1921, p.1.

2. In 1920 the cost per child was £10.11.4. a rise of 119 per cent since 1913.

3. 'The Highway' February 1921, p.80.

4. 'Secondary Education For All' p.6 and p.85; 'The Highway' p.80.

Party was urged to arrange a deputation to the Prime Minister.

Tawney sent his memorandum to Henderson and its contents were made public in a press interview.<sup>1</sup> He did not let the matter rest there. He promised to clarify Labour's attitude further in 'a pamphlet to deal with secondary education',<sup>2</sup> and to prepare a further short-term memorandum on 'Education and Unemployment'. The latter was ready by March.<sup>3</sup> With the meetings of the Advisory Committee taking place at the House of Commons, the arrangements for a deputation to the Prime Minister were made easier. Tawney was to deal with 'the true position of educational finances',<sup>4</sup> and others such as G.M. Ellis were to examine such matters as the supply of teachers and secondary school accommodation. By the time the Advisory Committee met in March the deputation had taken place and Tawney's memoranda on 'Educational Finances' and 'Education and Unemployment' had appeared in pamphlet form. In July, a subcommittee of the Advisory Committee on Education was set up to deal with the matter of 'educational finance' but Tawney, having failed to attend many of the Committee's meetings and by his own request, was not on it.<sup>5</sup>

His attendance at the meetings of the W.E.A.'s Central Council, Executive Committee and Finance and General Purposes Committee was more regular. He was present when arrangements were made for a protest meeting on February 5th 1921. At this protest meeting, arranged by the London District<sup>6</sup>, he moved a resolution

1. L.P. - A.C.E. (Min.) 8th February 1921.
2. This 'pamphlet' was later entitled 'Secondary Education for All'.
3. L.P. - A.C.E. Min. March 22nd 1921.
4. L.P. - A.C.E. Min. February 22nd 1921.
5. L.P. - A.C.E. Min. July 15th 1921.
6. Reported in 'Highway' Vol. 13, 1920/21 March issue

against the cuts in expenditure and urged that 'a copy of the resolution be sent to the Prime Minister, Chancellor of the Exchequer, the President and Secretary of the Board of Education, the Education Officer of the London Borough Council and the London M.P.'s and that the delegates present should pledge themselves to send a copy of it to their Parliamentary Representative'. He had already made arrangements for the 'circulation of the various resolutions in connection with the Education Act'.<sup>1</sup> In April his memorandum for the Advisory Committee of the Labour Party on 'Facts Regarding the Cost of Education' appeared as the W.E.A. manifesto on the educational economies.<sup>2</sup> The cuts were roundly condemned as 'the betrayal of the highest interests of the future of the country' and 'the forfeiture of the full development' of the rising generation.

More significant for the future was an invitation by the National Union of Teachers to the Association to 'attend a private conference on July 14th to consult together to decide on the steps which may be taken to counteract pressure being brought on the Government and the L.E.A.'s to restrict expenditure on the educational system of the country'.<sup>3</sup> Out of this meeting, which the Association's General Secretary attended, came the creation of a national committee, on which Tawney served 'with the N.U.T. and the W.E.A. in equal numbers'; the committee which was to 'be regarded as an integral part of the W.E.A.' had the function of preparing questions which 'were to be submitted to the House of Commons and to Parliament and to Municipal candidates', of collecting information and of assisting 'the

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1. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. Min. February 9th 1921.
  2. Entitled 'Economy and the Education Act 1918'. ('The Highway' Volume 17, April 1921, p.111)
  3. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. Min. (127) July 4th 1921.

W.E.A. Districts and Branches' in the preparation of effective propaganda in their respective areas.<sup>1</sup> Tawney was later to take the major part in developing this official N.U.T.- W.E.A. link into a 'Public Information Bureau' on educational matters. The immediate object was to arrange a national protest meeting for October 1st in which Tawney was to speak on the parts of the Act which could be put into operation despite the economy decisions of the Cabinet.<sup>2</sup> Greenwood, a vice president with Tawney, had indicated that one particular issue which could be raised would be the legality of the London County Council's action in deciding not to arrange for the attendance at Continuation School of persons of fifteen and sixteen.

The vigorous protests made little impact upon the Government's plans for economy. In fact, the future of the Education Act looked gloomier at the end of 1921 than it did at the beginning; in August the Government appointed the Geddes Committee to examine the following year's provisional estimates and to recommend further economies. A committee 'of high business leaders' were unlikely in Tawney's view to treat education leniently. He thus had every reason to believe, at the end of 1921, that the Geddes Report, due to be published in February 1922, would put the nation's educational system in even greater danger than that in which it had been placed by the Select Committee's Report on National Expenditure of a year earlier.

His fears were proved correct. 1922 was a year of crisis for the nation; the effects of the slump with the intensified drive for economy could scarcely leave education unscathed; It was also a year of crisis for the Coalition Government and for Tawney himself. After Lloyd George's offer to resign the premiership in February, the

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1. W.E.A. - E.C. Min. (1430) July 23rd 1921.

2. He had already promised to show these parts in an article in 'The Highway' W.E.A. - E.C. (Min.) 19th March, 1921.

Coalition 'staggered on'<sup>1</sup> to its final collapse in the November election. In the middle of the campaign against the economy measures in education and to oust the Coalition Government Tawney fell seriously ill. In September, Laski wrote to a friend about Tawney's illness:

'A delightful letter from you has gladdened some sad days. My friend Tawney, whose books you well know, is, I fear, dying'.<sup>2</sup>

An entry in 'The Highway'<sup>3</sup> gave details of the seriousness of his condition.

"Mr. Tawney lies seriously ill. He underwent an operation on Thursday September 21st under conditions made more difficult by the legacy of wounds received in 1916. Mr. Tawney's condition gave rise to anxiety on Thursday afternoon September 28th when the medical bulletin announced that pneumonia had supervened". By the time that 'a substantial improvement in Mr. Tawney's condition' was announced together with his decision 'to nevertheless stand for South Tottenham as arranged',<sup>4</sup> his chances of success in the election were substantially reduced because of his absence from the election campaign. His other campaign against the proposed cuts in expenditure on education, begun before the Geddes Report was published in February 1922, continued unabated after his recovery.

Labour's Advisory Committee on Education took little direct action to protest against the proposals of the Geddes Committee. The W.E.A., however, repeated the pattern of protest of the preceding year and had already resolved to hold a

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1. Mowat Op. Cit. p.137.

2. Holmes - Laski Letters p.450. Letter dated 26th September 1922.

3. October 1922.

4. The Highway, November 1922.

'National Protest Demonstration' in March.<sup>1</sup> It was agreed to invite Sadler, Henderson and Miss Bondfield to address the meeting.<sup>2</sup> Later Dr. Ernest Barker, one of Tawney's colleagues on the Consultative Committee, received an invitation to take part. Tawney's main duties were to draft two resolutions to put before the demonstration meeting<sup>3</sup> and to ensure good press coverage.<sup>4</sup> To give extra publicity he was to write two articles for 'Manchester Guardian'. These articles appeared on February 21st and 22nd, and were also reprinted in pamphlet form. He had already prepared a preliminary resolution which was placed before the Association's Central Council in January.<sup>5</sup> It stated that, 'The Central Council of the W.E.A. protests against any proposals which by restricting educational expenditure from national funds will impair the efficiency of education and as any such restrictions must postpone the full operation of the Education Act of 1918 - which was generally welcomed as a step towards the development of a democratic system of education - must inevitably degrade education below the inadequate standards prevailing before the war.

It drew attention to the extensive cuts which had already been made in the education services by the virtual suspension of the Education Act of 1918 and to the fact that provision of necessary new school buildings and equipment had not been made, that overdue renewals and repairs postponed during the war had not yet been fully carried out and that education had already suffered seriously in consequence.

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1. W.E.A. - C.C. (Min.) 28th January 1922; W.E.A. - E.C. (Min.) 27th January 1922; W.E.A. - F.G.P.C.(Min.) 12th January 1922.
  2. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. Min. January 28th 1922.
  3. The first resolution was to be moved by Henderson and seconded by Lord Henry Bentinck, the second resolution was to be moved by Kenneth Lee and seconded by Miss Margaret Bondfield.
  4. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. (Mins.) February 9th and 23rd.
  5. W.E.A. - C.C. Min. January 28th.

It believed that the so called economy in education would be disastrous in its effects upon the nation and it therefore declared that the Association would bring every possible influence to bear to prevent any further degradation of existing educational standards and would continue to press for an education system in accordance with modern needs.'

Copies of Tawney's resolution were to be sent to the Prime Minister, the Leader of the House of Commons, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the leaders of all political parties, the members of the Geddes Committee and the President of the Board of Education.

The Geddes Report appeared in February. It claimed that the cost of elementary and secondary education had increased unreasonably.<sup>1</sup> It recommended a cut in expenditure of £18 millions but did not call for 'any serious reductions in free secondary education'. Secondary education was to be confined to those whose 'mental calibre' justified it and those whose parents could afford to pay for it. In regard to the expenditure on higher education and scholarships, the Geddes Committee attacked the principle of percentage grants as a 'money spending device'. Even the government was aghast at its proposals, and reduced the savings on education to £6½ millions. Thus education did not fare too badly.<sup>2</sup>

Tawney's condemnation of the Geddes Report was swift.<sup>3</sup> He singled out for comment the statements in the Report that 'children whose mental capabilities do not justify this higher and much more

1. Doherty Op.Cit. pp. 148-149; Schofield Op.Cit. pp.503-504; Mowat Op. Cit. pp.130-181.
2. The L.E.A.'s in the next two years cut back expenditure from £73 millions to £67 millions (Ministry of Education 'Education 1900-1950,' p.27). This did not entirely represent a cut in real terms but the result of falling prices.
3. Headed Articles in the Manchester Guardian on 21st and 22nd February 1921, 'Geddes Report on Education 1' and 'Geddes Report on Education 11'.

costly education (that is what common people call secondary education) are receiving it' and that 'the cost of elementary and secondary education for pupils has increased unreasonably'. The Report, he argued, did not produce 'a scrap of evidence' in support of these claims which 'are contradicted by almost every educational administrator, teacher and student of any reputation. In any case to show that expenditure has increased is not to show that it has been wasted.' No reference had been made in the Report to the effect of education 'in increasing the economic resources of the nation'. It had showed 'no obligation either to the present generation of children or to posterity'. The arguments of the Geddes Committee appealed only to the wealthy businessman.

Tawney condemned the proposed reductions in teachers' salaries 'for only recently had the teaching profession been rescued from the realms of a decaying trade'. The schools which, in the 1870's were a kind of factory were on the way to becoming places in which 'natural and many-sided growth' could take place; but the 'movement with its infinite possibilities for the body and spirit for the individual and society is to stop'. Secondary education was once again to become 'the privilege of the rich'; all free places about twenty-five per cent were to be swept away and the organisation of education on lines of class, the tragedy of the English educational system hitherto was to be perpetuated. The Geddes Committee, he argued, had taken into account in its calculations neither the change in the value of money nor the economic effects of educational expenditure. It had only considered the economic cost.

A protest demonstration took place in March and another was arranged for October.<sup>1</sup> A short list of speakers for the latter was

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1. W.E.A. - E.C. (Min.) May 27th 1922.



drawn up. Tawney, Bevin, Goslin, Ramsay MacDonald and Walkden were invited to address the October meeting. By June, only Bevin had declined the invitation. The protest was to include reference to the effects of the Geddes proposals on grants to tutorial and one year classes. Fisher had, however, given an 'entirely sympathetic and non-committal reply on the matter. He believed that it need not be necessary to reduce the number of classes but the Board would not allow an increase'.<sup>1</sup>

Just as in 1921, the threats of reductions in expenditure brought the National Union of Teachers and the W.E.A. closer together, so in 1922, a closer liaison with the T.U.C. was developed. It was reported in July that Tawney and Greenwood had met the T.U.C. Education Sub Committee which was preparing a report on the educational needs of trade unionists. Tawney was also anxious to develop closer relationships with other national bodies and was the prime mover of a recommendation from the Finance and General Purposes Committee to the Association's Executive Committee that the constitution of the latter should be modified 'to allow it to co-opt one representative each from such national bodies as was deemed fit'.<sup>2</sup> The Association of Education Committees<sup>3</sup> was the first to respond to the idea.

The spate of economy circulars 'which created an atmosphere inimical to educational expansion'<sup>4</sup> were also attacked by Tawney. Circular 1245 informing the L.E.A.'s that 'they may have to restrict expenditure on blind, deaf, defective and epileptic children' came in for stinging comment as did Circular 1256 stating that there was to be no new award of state scholarships in 1922/1923, Circular 1236 which

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1. Ibid.

2. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. (Min.) June 22nd.

3. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. (Min.) July 15th 1922.

4. Doherty Op. Cit. p.149.

stated that expenditure on maintenance allowances for children at 'elementary, central and ordinary schools' would not be recognised for grants and Circular 1243 which said that there was to be no fresh commitments for maintenance allowances for higher education. It was only because of his illness in September that he gave up temporarily the campaign of protest.

Illness prevented Tawney from attending the national protest demonstration arranged for October. In December, whilst he was still recovering, he sent a letter to the Association<sup>1</sup> suggesting that 'a general letter should be sent to the press dealing with the effects of economy on the education system and that a W.E.A. deputation should be sent to the new Minister at an early date'. The drafting of the general letter was left to J.L. Hammond.

Tawney had played a leading part in opposing the proposals of the Geddes Committee but it was not entirely or largely due to this opposition that 'education weathered the storm better than could be expected'. It was but one factor. The 'staunch opposition, the slowly improving economic situation, the advantage of a falling price level and not least the resistance of the Board saved the fabric of a national system of education'.<sup>2</sup> What is surprising is that his book 'Secondary Education For All' drafted whilst the protests against the cuts in educational expenditure were being conducted, contained little reference to the struggle.

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1. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. (Min.) December 28th 1922.

2. Doherty Op. Cit. p.151.

5. Secondary Education for All

On January 25th 1921 Tawney offered to write 'a brief pamphlet' discussing the Report of the Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places, published a few months earlier, and setting out 'the Labour point of view'. At the following meeting of the Labour Party's Advisory Committee on Education in February, it was decided that the Committee would fulfill its newly appointed task of serving 'as a research group and secretariat on behalf of the Parliamentary Labour Party' by preparing a series of pamphlets on education which would act as 'the basis for a Labour Education Policy'.<sup>1</sup> Tawney's 'brief pamphlet' was to be expanded into an authoritative statement of Labour policy to be published in time for the next General Election.

In September 1921, Tawney submitted 'a summary of his brochure', which was incomplete. Committee members were asked to suggest additions and modification.<sup>2</sup> At the October meeting, the Committee 'resolved to notify the Executive Committee that Mr. Tawney's memorandum is nearly complete and that the Committee regarded its publication as a matter of the first importance, to be undertaken as soon as possible and certainly before the General Election'. To speed up the process of revising Tawney's draft, a subcommittee, consisting of Tawney, Lucas, Ellis and Mrs. Harrison was appointed. The only major contribution of the subcommittee to the book was 'the chapter on the position of the secondary school teacher'.<sup>3</sup> By

1. L.P. - A.C.E. (Min.) February 8th 1921.

2. L.P. - A.C.E. (Min.) September 20th 1921.

3. Tawney did not feel sufficiently qualified to deal with this subject. This was also seen in June 1923 when he was asked by the W.E.A. to present the Association's evidence to the Board's Departmental Committee on Teacher Training. He agreed to do this 'but suggested that it would be advisable to ask some person more acquainted with the subject than he was' (W.E.A.- F.G.P.C. (Min.) June 14th 1923). When the Labour Party's Joint Research and Information Committee asked Tawney to give their evidence to the Departmental Committee it met with a similar response (L.P.- A.C.E. (Min.) June 19th 1923).

November 1921, the book was complete and ready to be sent to the Executive Committee with a view to publication. In March 1922 it was published under the title of 'Secondary Education For All', well in time for the Autumn election.

Critics of Tawney's book have not always been aware of its origins, which are closely bound up with its intentions. 'Secondary Education For All' was edited by Tawney for the Labour Party's Advisory Committee on Education and in many ways was a typical publication of that body. Firstly its emphasis was upon practical proposals, upon the 'material scaffolding of policy, administrative organisation and finance'.<sup>1</sup> Its proposals were meant to serve as the basis for Labour policy and for the inspiration for local action, especially by Labour members, against 'laggard or eccentric' Local Education Authorities. It was primarily from 'local initiative' that Tawney believed the improvement of the nation's educational system must come. The ideas concerning the nature of education and the place of the nation's reformed education system in the transformation of society remained largely unclarified and assumed. Secondly the book was characteristic of the Advisory Committee's publications in that whilst its proposals were undoubtedly new to many Labour Party members,<sup>2</sup> they were not novel to the leading educational reformers of the day.<sup>3</sup> By its nature the Committee tended to reflect and crystallise ideas rather than to generate them. Thirdly, the book was meant to serve as political propaganda especially at election time. It was produced in time for the Autumn election of 1922 in which Tawney was a candidate. To

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1. 'Secondary Education For All', p.17.

2. Barker Op. Cit.; Schofield Op. Cit.

3. 'Secondary Education For All' p.17.

this extent it tended to conceal differences in outlook within the Party and to concentrate its attack on Conservative policy, and especially the Geddes proposals.

'Secondary Education For All' was concerned with 'practical proposals'. The ideas which gave rise to them were outlined in a memorandum entitled 'The Case For Secondary Education',<sup>1</sup> which was not incorporated in his book. In it he argued that whilst 'it is more desirable to convert your enemy, including your political enemy, than to defeat him, it is just as well to know that you can defeat him in the first place'. To ensure this, it was necessary to clarify the principles upon which action is based. This led him to examine 'the best description of a good system of education'. As education was for him 'not a matter of a few years of childhood or even adolescence but of the whole life of men and women' then the best system of education was 'that which gives every child's soul its chance' for once 'that soul has really had its chance it will never stop growing'.<sup>2</sup> As he was concerned with 'every child's soul' he was not satisfied with any system of education directed 'to giving the best brains their opportunity'. Whilst it was necessary 'to cultivate intelligence', it was 'even more necessary to get out of our heads once and for all the notion that any child is not worth education'.<sup>3</sup> The 'educational ladder' must be replaced by the 'broad highway'. Translated into terms of organisation, this meant that every 'normal human being ought to receive a secondary education' in a system of education which 'assures to every normal human being during that stage, the best possible chance for the development of the best

1. Tawney Papers. Box labelled 'Memoranda on Education and Educational Policy' Document F. (L.S.E.)

2. Ibid. p.2.

3. Ibid. p.3. See also 'Secondary Education For All' p.66.

that is in him'. Such education ought to be 'disinterested' and based on 'the interests of the pupil as a growing person'.

'Secondary Education For All' clarified this goal but threw the weight of emphasis upon the reforms of the period of transition. It began by defining the objective as 'the development of public secondary education to such a point that all normal children, irrespective of the income, class or occupation of their parents, may be transferred at the age of eleven plus from the primary or preparatory school to one type or another of secondary school and remain in the latter till sixteen'.<sup>1</sup> Such a concept of secondary education involved the rejection of the idea that secondary education was only for the exceptionally fortunate or exceptionally able<sup>2</sup> and implied a new educational synthesis. The need was for a reclassification or regrading of education in accordance with 'the natural facts of child development', and the abolition of the parallel systems which had existed hitherto. Harking back to a theme of his wartime writings, he argued that this was an important part of the 'reconstruction and better world which have been promised to the nation as a reward for the losses and tireless labours of the Great War'.<sup>3</sup> Every normal child should attend one of a variety of secondary schools until at least the age of 16. Continued education was not an acceptable substitute but should be a continuation of secondary education after the age of 16.

Though Tawney did not lay down any hard and fast lines by which this could be accomplished, he was emphatic that whatever type of school emerged it must accord with certain 'general characteristics (which) distinguish the work of the secondary school from other types

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1. Ibid. p.7.

2. Ibid. p.19.

3. Ibid. p.32.

of education and determine its essential quality'.<sup>1</sup> The education given must span the period of adolescence, go beyond 'the simpler processes of thought and expression', introduce pupils to the subjects which will interest them as adults, and aim not to impart the specialist technique of any particular trade or profession but 'to develop the faculties'. The curricula of the secondary schools should be comprehensive in range and varied in character 'to arouse latent interests and dormant capacities'. Though there was to be equality of provision, there was not to be identity of provision,<sup>2</sup> nor any 'pedantic passion for uniformity'.<sup>3</sup> Certain schools, without sacrificing the main object of providing a good general education, 'will properly develop a rural or an industrial bias' making generous use of practical work; others would emphasise humanistic or linguistic studies.

The major problem with which the book was concerned was how this goal was to be achieved. Tawney did not suggest any one route; neither did he make any drastic proposals for swift action. He rejected the idea of harnessing the wealth and facilities of the public schools to the service of the nation as a whole.<sup>4</sup> He believed that the goal could only be achieved gradually,<sup>5</sup> by the transformation of the existing system over at least a generation.<sup>6</sup> He recognised that there could be several routes to the goal and the guide lines which he suggested were based upon experiments already in progress or contemplated by leading education authorities and the recommendations of Governmental Committees. He accepted the recommendation of the Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places that preparatory departments in grant aided secondary schools should be

1. Ibid p.29

2. Ibid. p.66.

3. Ibid. p. 30 and p.59.

4. Ibid. p.22.

5. Ibid. p.19

6. Ibid. p.30.

closed and the accommodation used to provide secondary school places for children of eleven and over.<sup>1</sup> In addition suitable primary schools could be converted into secondary schools.<sup>2</sup> These specific suggestions were not mentioned in his later writings. Priority was given by him to the transformation of central schools and junior technical schools as in the scheme of the Kent Education Committee, but, above all, to a more rapid expansion of secondary school accommodation than could be accomplished simply by the conversion of preparatory accommodation. The line of advance could include all of these reforms providing that in the case of central and junior technical schools they were seen as part of the secondary stage of education<sup>3</sup> and their facilities and staffing levelled up accordingly. Even continued education was acceptable provided that it was a continuation of the secondary and not the primary stage.

All reforms other than those which had a direct bearing upon the expansion of existing secondary school accommodation were largely of peripheral interest to Tawney. He argued that this was the direction from which the major advance toward 'secondary education for all' would come. To demand the expansion of existing secondary school accommodation was 'not a leap in the dark' but 'the natural culmination of the main developments which have taken place in the world of public education during the last twenty years'.<sup>4</sup> In his immediate steps he was thus willing to join forces with those who did not share the breadth of his vision, who demanded an increase in secondary school accommodation solely for the generally accepted reason of giving equality of opportunity to able working class children. As such he was in danger of being identified with the

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1. Ibid. p.10.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid pp. 101-104.

4. Ibid. p.21.



narrower rather than the broader interpretation of 'secondary education for all'.<sup>1</sup> Yet there was strength in his argument. Because of the demand all new places would be utilised and the expansion of the teaching profession could proceed apace for it would be through the secondary school that most intending teachers would pass.

The process of providing additional accommodation, facilities and teaching staff would be slow but targets should be set. He condemned the provision by the London County Council of 10 places per 1,000 population as inadequate and regarded the Departmental Committee's suggestion of 20 per 1,000 as 'a better basis for development'. Even this figure, as Tawney<sup>2</sup> and a recent commentator<sup>3</sup> have recognised, would do little more than double the existing standard of provision over a period of ten years but it was a figure in advance of that of many of the education authorities which Tawney regarded as progressive.<sup>4</sup> He was, however, more concerned with 'the gulf of principle' between the education authorities which underlay the different standards of accommodation,<sup>5</sup> between those authorities which saw the goal as the provision of secondary education for all up to the age of 16 and those who saw their goal as the provision of secondary education only for the exceptionally able working class children. It was with the latter idea that Tawney identified the policy of the L.C.C., of the Federation of British Industries, Geddes, and the Conservative Government.

Tawney also supported the Departmental Committee's

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1. See pp.190<sup>191</sup> & of this Chapter.
  2. Ibid. pp. 57-58.
  3. Barker Op. Cit. P.172
  4. Ibid. p.57.
  5. Standards varied not just because of 'the varying economic circumstances of the different localities but in some cases to a radical if sometimes not fully realised divergence of educational and social theory'. (p. 58).

recommendation that there should be 'a large and immediate increase in the number of free places'; he accepted the recommendation of an increase from the existing twenty five per cent to forty per cent,<sup>1</sup> but he recognised that this would by no means end the evil of the highly competitive free place examination.<sup>2</sup> Even if all places were made free, this would not remove all of 'the economic disabilities which at present thwart the development of the children of parents of small means'. There was a need to increase the number and amount of maintenance allowances to compensate for the loss of income to the parent and to 'make sure that they cover the expenses - books, travelling, stationery and other items - incidental to secondary education, and to grade them in such a way that they may increase with age'. Maintenance allowances would enable children to stay on at school to 16. His only point of disagreement with the Departmental Committee's recommendations was that in the meantime until fees were abolished and maintenance allowances provided it was wrong to lay down, as the Departmental Committee had done, that 'only those children should enter a secondary school who were prepared to remain in it to at least sixteen'.<sup>3</sup>

What is remarkable about 'Secondary Education For All' is that despite the fact that it was drafted during a period of rising unemployment,<sup>4</sup> nowhere in the book does Tawney justify his proposals by reference to their possible economic benefit in dealing with adolescent unemployment. The temptation must have been great to reply in kind to Geddes that the cuts in educational expenditure on economic grounds would only increase the nation's economic problems,

1. Ibid. p.83.

2. Ibid. p.86. He emphasised however that examinations should be supplementary and subsidiary to the use of school records and reports, by teachers.

3.

4. Mowat Op.Cit. pp. 125-129.

and then to proceed to argue for educational reforms on the basis of their economic merits. This had been Tawney's instinctive approach to educational issues in the period of unrest prior to the war and served as the primary motivation for his support for Fisher's plans for continuation schools. The difficulties of implementing the continuation clauses of the Fisher Act gave him time for reconsideration. He had firstly looked at continued education from the point of view of its economic benefits; by 1919 he had looked more closely at its educational merits; in the period from 1919 - 1921, when the difficulties of implementing the Fisher Act became apparent, he took the opportunity to consider in the light of schemes put forward by progressive education authorities whether the 'improvement of the working class' could not be better achieved by attention to what had been hitherto a vague demand, the reorganisation of secondary education. He laid it down clearly in 'Secondary Education For All' that 'the reforms of the transition period should be planned with the goal in view'<sup>1</sup> and no other. His starting point was the reorganisation of education 'as two stages in a single process'. All reforms must be considered primarily with that end in view. He condemned the piecemeal approach to educational reform which would arise if priority of attention was given to economic merit. It does not mean that after 'Secondary Education For All' Tawney refused to consider the economic value of such reforms as the raising of the school leaving age. He was always willing to use economic arguments for educational reform but the principal criterion by which reforms were judged was their contribution towards the ultimate objective of establishing secondary education for all up to the age of 16. The economic argument was an additional argument not the principal argument. He realised that that which was granted on economic grounds could also be withdrawn on economic grounds.

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1. Ibid. p.77.

Thus the raising of the school leaving age in time of depression could, if justified solely by economic considerations, be later reduced or wholesale exemptions granted.

'Secondary Education For All' was well received by the press. There was general agreement about its value as 'a clear, concise and particularly valuable review of the present state of our system of public education',<sup>1</sup> and as 'a reasoned statement of policy for making secondary education accessible to all'.<sup>2</sup> The main discordant voice was that of Fred Clarke. In his 'Essays in the Politics of Education'<sup>3</sup> he wrote,

'Unless I misunderstand Mr. Tawney seems to accept the present order of things in secondary education and confines himself to the demand that all who are mentally fit should be admitted to its opportunities .... The task of the Labour Party .... is not merely to get the children of the working-man into the free secondary school. It is to point us the way to a social order where, in and through the educative function of that social order itself, what was for the Greeks the special privilege of the few may become for us the common heritage of the many'.

One only has to place alongside Clarke's interpretation, Tawney's statement, that 'If the majority of boys and girls receive a full time education up to 16 then, what is even more important, quite apart from the selection of special talent for special cultivation, the rank and file of the community will carry into their working lives the idealism, the corporate loyalty, the intellectual alertness which

1. 'Challenge' April 1922.

2. M.G. April 12th 1922: 'Nation and Athenaeum' June 1922.  
New Statesman April 7th 1922.

3. Footnote p.94.

are fostered during the impressionable years of adolescence by the life of a good school and their outlook will gradually permeate and transform the whole structure of society',<sup>1</sup> to realise how great was his misunderstanding of Tawney's position. He was as much concerned with equality of provision as he was with equality of opportunity. Yet Clarke's criticism indicates a fundamental problem confronting Tawney. Had he suggested that the existing system be transformed by startling innovations, he could not have persuaded the Labour Party to accept the goal which he laid down in the opening paragraph of his book. By necessity and by choice he gave support to lines of action which were already being undertaken but often for different ends. There was the danger that support for existing reforms could be misconstrued as support for objectives which lacked the breadth of vision of his idea of secondary education for all. The central and junior schools were developed as 'inferior substitutes' for secondary education; his proposals for their further development if taken out of context could be misread as an acceptance of the doctrine of the parallel systems. The same was true of his demand for the extension of secondary school accommodation, his major proposal. Tawney's programme for the expansion of secondary school accommodation was so akin to the demands made by those who were solely concerned to extend secondary education to working class children of exceptional ability in that it envisaged only the doubling of the existing standard of provision over ten years, that Clarke attributed to Tawney the goal which was commonly associated with the demand. For Tawney the progressive opening up of the places in the existing secondary schools by free competition was one method only of pursuing the principle of

1. 'Secondary Education For All' p.34/35

secondary education for all,<sup>1</sup> though in the prevailing conditions it was, at that time, the only practical means of advance.

Had Tawney clarified his ideas upon the likely future organisation of secondary education he might have avoided Clarke's criticism. His thinking went little beyond the statement that there would be a variety of schools, not one common school. Provided that they were 'liberal in spirit' and governed by secondary school regulations such schools could develop a variety of biases. Calling upon his knowledge of curriculum differentiation derived from the Consultative Committee's investigations, he advocated the development by some schools of a 'practical bias' through relating the curriculum 'to the life of the neighbourhood', a position which involved him in no contradiction despite a recent statement to the contrary.<sup>2</sup> The organisation of secondary education would not lead to the sacrifice of 'the amenities of culture' nor the 'peculiar excellence of particular institutions'.<sup>3</sup> His comments glossed over such issues as the position of the existing kind of secondary school in the 'new educational synthesis' and the problems of selection. On the latter he simply remarked that 'selection would be hardly distinguishable from universal provision'.<sup>4</sup> By this he meant that the existing kind of secondary school would be 'the dominant and typical element in the system', rather than catering for a minority. His later statements<sup>5</sup> that these schools would be progressively opened up until they became the educational experience of the majority also indicated his belief

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1. Barker Op. Cit. p.171

2. Doherty Op. Cit. p. 93 See pp.159-160 of the present study for a full discussion of Tawney's viewpoint.

3. 'Secondary Education For All' p.30.

4. Ibid. p.61.

5. 'The British Labour Movement' (1925) p.67.

that the major changes would take place within the existing type of school rather than elsewhere. At the same time he was convinced that 'the fear that a wide extension of secondary education may lower the standard' was 'obviously groundless'.<sup>1</sup> The 'peculiar excellence of particular institutions' would be preserved. He did not seem very far from the position of advocating a community school for 'working class improvement'.

Tawney was in agreement with the aim set down by Clarke that 'the special privilege of the few' should become 'the common heritage of the many'. He had seen continued education as partial access to what had been hitherto exclusive to the middle and upper classes. Tawney's belief in 'secondary education for all' was inspired by the view that it would give all working-class adolescents access to a form of education confined hitherto to the upper classes. As the existing secondary school represented the traditional education at its best then it could be expected that he would see this type of school as predominant in the new educational order. However, he recognised with Nunn<sup>2</sup> that a technical education could satisfy the requirements of a good secondary education 'provided that inspiration is sought from the traditions of the industry or craft at their noblest'.

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1. 'Secondary Education For All' p.72.

2. 'Education, The Socialist Policy' p.33.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE 'HADOW' PERIOD (1923-1926)

1. A New Direction for Education?
2. The Labour Government of 1924
3. Tawney, Labour and the 'Hadow' Reference
4. Educational Campaigns During the 'Hadow' Enquiry
5. The 'Hadow Report'



1. A New Direction For Education?

The General Election of 1922 for which Tawney had prepared 'Secondary Education For All' took the Labour Party one step nearer to office. The number of Labour M.P.'s rose from 59 to 142 and the popular vote from 2.3 millions to 4.2 millions. The following election in 1923 resulted in the formation of the first Labour Government. Many of Tawney's close friends, who shared his educational interests were returned to Parliament. Webb, the only successful member of the Fabian trio which Laski had backed in 1922,<sup>1</sup> had a long standing interest in education, as had Arthur Greenwood, a vice president with Tawney, of the W.E.A., and Charles Trevelyan who, recruited from the Liberals is said to have largely derived his 'concrete proposals' for reform from Tawney.<sup>2</sup> Other members of the new Parliament whom Tawney knew but with whom he had no prolonged contact were Henderson, who had been Labour's first President of the Board of Education under Asquith, Haldane, who had backed Tawney's election campaign in 1922 and who was MacDonald's first choice for President of the Board of Education, Morgan Jones a former school teacher who served on Labour's Advisory Committee on Education, Lord Chelmsford, and Sidney Arnold. With such a wide range of educational interest and experience represented in Parliament Tawney fully expected a 'new direction in education'.<sup>3</sup>

Trevelyan replaced Wood at the Board of Education, Haldane having declined the Presidency.<sup>4</sup> The Webbs welcomed the appointment of a 'determined, and industrious, go-ahead administrator'.<sup>5</sup> Tawney was equally enthusiastic and saw Trevelyan's 'chief merit' as his

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1. Tawney and Shaw were the other two (Holmes-Laski Letters p.432)
  2. Webbs Diaries (1924-1932) p.2.
  3. M.G. May 6th 1924
  4. Autobiography p.319/320
  5. Webb Diaries (1924-1932) p.26.

ability to envisage the problems of educational policy as a whole'. He was a person who saw 'the unity and continuity of the business of education'.<sup>1</sup> Presumably Tawney meant that Trevelyan by this time accepted the approach to the education system laid down in 'Secondary Education For All' which involved not 'an extension or continuation of education' but its reclassification or regrading to establish 'a living and organic connection' between its stages.<sup>2</sup> Though Tawney recognised that Trevelyan was faced with 'unusual difficulties' and the time was not right 'to introduce sweeping innovations',<sup>3</sup> he argued that Trevelyan had taken office at a time of 'unusual opportunity in the sphere of education'. In Tawney's view 'there existed a large body of opinion which is in advance of the educational policy pursued by the Government since 1920 and which without being interested in other aspects of the Labour programme has welcomed a Labour Government because it will stand for sane and enlightened progress in matters of education'.<sup>4</sup>

Trevelyan was not free to pursue a bold policy even if he wished to do so. He could scarcely expect to make much progress in achieving the reorientation of the educational system proposed in 'Secondary Education For All'. The ideas embodied in Tawney's book were of too recent an origin to gain general currency. Trevelyan's course of action was circumscribed by the Party's weak parliamentary position, the lack of strong support from the leadership and the leadership's policy of moderation or what Tawney later termed 'cautious conventionality',<sup>5</sup> the prevailing fear of Government spending and the

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1. M.G. May 6th 1924

2. 'Secondary Education For All' p.17.

3. Undated typescript (probably February 1924) in a box of Tawney's papers labelled 'Memoranda on Education and Educational Policies'.

4. Ibid p.1.

5. 'The Choice Before the Labour Party' p.23.

need to gain widespread support for its policies. There was no widespread support within parliament or without for 'secondary education for all' in the broad sense of raising the standards of facilities in all post elementary schools to the level of that which prevailed in the traditional secondary school and providing courses of similar length and quality. As Trevelyan pointed out in the House of Commons,<sup>1</sup> and in the preface to Tawney's book 'Education - The Socialist Policy', 'I cannot hope to carry the development of our Education System into new regions unless there is not only public acquiescence but public understanding of what is intended'. Though there may have been a body of opinion with advanced educational ideas willing to give support to the Government, these ideas had not been sufficiently diffused within the Party or the nation to form the basis of policy even if Trevelyan had wished it, and the state of the nation's finances permitted it.

## 2. The Labour Government of 1924

Webb's statement that Trevelyan derived most of his practical proposals for educational reform from Tawney is difficult to substantiate in view of the fact that Tawney's own thinking did little more than sum up ideas which had a broad currency in the educational world. Yet the closeness of their friendship and Trevelyan's willingness to endorse the views which Tawney expressed in 'Education - the Socialist Policy' suggest that, although Webb's claim may be exaggerated, Tawney exercised an important influence over Trevelyan's thinking. His advice to Trevelyan contained three main elements, to 'reverse the engines', to publicise all information which could possibly be of value to those concerned with educational advance into hitherto unfathomed areas, and to set the direction for progress in education.

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1. Hansard 5th Series Vol. 176 Col. 1164.

In Tawney's view, it was not simply a question of 'restarting the engine'. Public education had not been at a standstill during the years of Conservative rule. It had 'been slipping backwards'. He denounced those who treated education as a machine to be slowed down or stopped in times of economic difficulty and to be 'resumed again at the point where it was interrupted'. 'Opportunities for growth' which were lost were lost for ever and thus nothing could undo 'the mischief done between the beginning of 1921 and the end of 1923'.<sup>1</sup> He lost little time in using the press and platform to denounce Conservative educational policy which had been 'reactionary in the last degree'.<sup>2</sup> In his prefaces to books,<sup>3</sup> in his press articles and in his public addresses he pointed to the 'blundering ineptitudes' of the Conservatives. The principal reactionary steps which he listed were the curtailment of expenditure on school buildings, on the teaching of subjects not connected with any future occupation, on maintenance allowances and scholarships, and on provision for children with special disabilities. Free secondary education was confined solely to children whose 'mental calibre' justified it and whose parents could not afford it. Secondary school fees had been substantially increased and free places limited to a maximum of twenty five per cent.<sup>4</sup> The immediate step for the new Labour President of the Board of Education was to 'reverse the engine in order to prevent the continuation of reactionary measures'.<sup>5</sup>

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1. M.G. May 6th 1924 'The New Direction in Education'.
  2. Undated typescript Document B 'Advice to the Labour Government' (Tawney Papers).
  3. 'The Story of the Workers' Educational Association' by T.W.Price (W.E.A. 1924). 'London Education: The Story of Two Years' by S. Laurence (L.C.C. 1924). 'Staffing in Public Elementary Schools' by B. Drake (L.P. 1924).
  4. The Need For Educational Provision for the Adolescent' Document C (Tawney Papers) Oct. 1923.
  5. M.G. May 6th 1924.

It was equally important for the future that the widest publicity should be given to information which could be of relevance to 'the new direction of education'.<sup>1</sup> In 'Secondary Education For All' Tawney had argued that the 'new order in education' should be 'brought into existence with the utmost rapidity'<sup>2</sup> and that this could only be achieved by Labour playing a leading role in the creation of a strong body of public opinion sympathetic to such objectives which could put pressure on central and local government. But 'public opinion cannot be formed unless the materials are regularly supplied'.<sup>3</sup> The regular dissemination of information relevant to future educational progress had been a function which the Board of Education had hitherto neglected. His earlier appeals to Fisher<sup>4</sup> to fulfill this function more effectively had gone unheeded. Trevelyan's appointment gave Tawney the hope that Labour would reform the Board in order to execute to the full its obligation to give publicity to all information which was likely to have a bearing upon the future lines of educational advance. Thus as soon as the Labour Government was formed, Tawney's resolution passed at a meeting of the Party's Advisory Committee on Education in February 1922 was forwarded to Trevelyan<sup>5</sup>. A sub-committee of eleven people, with Tawney as chairman, was set up by the Advisory Committee to investigate the means by which Tawney's resolution calling for a reform of 'the statistical, information and publicity work of the Board of Education' could be put into effect. The machinery by which the sub-committee's findings could be conveyed to the Board was contained in another resolution that the Advisory

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1. The title of the Manchester Guardian article of the above date.
  2. p.30.
  3. Undated typescript 'Advice to the Labour Government' p.15.
  4. L.P. - A.C.E. (Min.) February 1922.
  5. L.P. - A.C.E. (Min.) January 22nd 1924.

Committee 'should be able to communicate directly and frequently with the President'. The matter did not, however, proceed much further during Labour's short period of office.

Tawney believed that the immediate steps which Trevelyan should take were those laid down in 'Secondary Education For All'. In the House of Commons, Morgan Jones, the teachers' representative, argued that there were, in the main, three types of education which were being provided for the adolescent, education in the continuation school, central school and secondary school, and neither should be exclusive of the others.<sup>1</sup> Tawney adopted a more cautious attitude, more in line with that of the Labour backbencher, Cove. Despite the increased popularity of continuation education in the light of the nation's unemployment problems, Tawney held firmly to the position which he laid down in 1922. In 'Education - the Socialist Policy'<sup>2</sup> he called for 'something more fundamental than Section 10 of the Act of 1918' and shared with Cove the belief that the continuation school was 'a misfit in modern industrial society' except as an extension of secondary education.<sup>3</sup> In an article in the Manchester Guardian shortly after the fall of the Labour Government,<sup>4</sup> supporting Conway and Jackson, his colleagues on the Consultative Committee, and Cove, a colleague on Labour's Advisory Committee, Tawney attacked Fisher, who was the main proponent of a system of continuation schooling after the age of fourteen. Fisher stood out against raising the school leaving age to fifteen as an 'impractical ideal', arguing that parental reliance upon their children's earnings, together with other factors including the cost and administrative problems of raising the school

1. 176 H.C. Deb. 5S. 1169 - 1183 22nd July 1924

2. p.31

3. 17C H.C. Deb 5S 1189

4. January 16th 1925 'Adolescent Education : The Alternatives'.

leaving age pointed to the more realistic need for a system of continuation schools. Tawney answered that the additional cost of four million pounds for providing full time education was not great in comparison with expenditure on other government ventures, that the provision of maintenance allowances would compensate for the loss of the child's income, and that, above all, full time education to fifteen provided 'the stimulus, the restraint, the food for imagination and character .... by life in a community of young persons with a corporate tradition and a social ideal'. However Tawney was willing to concede in an article a few months later<sup>1</sup> that 'these two lines of advance' were complementary, though Fisher was criticised for not giving priority to raising the school leaving age. Despite the pressures of unemployment, Trevelyan favoured Tawney's view. He was willing to consider proposals for introducing continuation schools though he, himself, had no strong attachment to the idea of part time continued education. He was not willing however, to have compulsory continuation education as an alternative to raising the school leaving age, at any cost'.<sup>2</sup>

In February 1924,<sup>3</sup> Trevelyan said that he was willing to consider on their merits proposals for the raising of the school leaving age to fifteen by bylaw. This was clearly a step forward in that it reversed circular 1262 of May 1922 but it was not likely to satisfy many educational reformers in that it placed the onus for change upon the local education authorities. It was probably Trevelyan's answer in the House to Lady Astor<sup>4</sup> that he was not willing to introduce the legislation which would be needed for raising the school leaving age

1.M.G. April 8th 1925 'A Study of Juvenile Unemployment'

2.170 H.C. Deb. 5S 1220 4th March 1924

3.169 H.C. Deb. 5S 199s 21st February 1924

4.171 H.C. Deb. 5S 2456 3rd April 1924.

universally which caused Tawney to urge the President to reconsider. In May 1924,<sup>1</sup> he played a leading role in urging the Workers' Educational Association to organise a deputation to the President of the Board whom he would brief with a memorandum.<sup>2</sup> In June he was nominated to serve on a deputation of the Labour Party's Advisory Committee to the Party's Executive Committee concerning the matter of the school leaving age.<sup>3</sup>

Before he left for a short tour of the United States in the summer of 1924 he published a short article in the 'Manchester Guardian', entitled 'The Next Step in Education - The Case for the Raising of the School Age'.<sup>4</sup> It drew upon his previous writings, especially 'The Need of Educational Provision for the Adolescent'<sup>5</sup> and 'Education - the Socialist Policy' and served as the basis of the memorandum which he produced in September<sup>6</sup> for the Workers' Educational Association. Overlooking the fact that two past Presidents of the Board and one future President disagreed<sup>7</sup> with the immediate and universal raising of the school leaving age he argued that all parties were convinced of its necessity. The immediate need was to fix the date when compulsory attendance at the age of fifteen should begin. The argument on educational grounds was generally accepted and its value as a means of combating the problem of adolescent unemployment was obvious. 'When a reservoir is full the most obvious way to prevent an overflow is to dam up some of the streams which feed it. In the same way when more persons are looking for jobs it is necessary to check the flow from school'.<sup>8</sup>

1. W.E.A. - G.P.F.C. (Min.) May 29th
2. W.E.A. - G.P.F.C. (Min.) June 26th
3. L.P. - A.C.E. (Min. June 24th). The Party's Executive Committee had refused to accept the Advisory Committee proposal for a universal raising of the school leaving age (Letter to Middleton from Milne Bailey 2nd July 1924).
4. M.G. June 24th 1924
5. Tawney Papers (Document B)
6. W.E.A. - E.C. (Min.) September 27th 1924.
7. Fisher, Wood and Percy believed such a step to be impractical.
8. 'The Need of Educational Provision for the Adolescent'.



To meet the difficulty of the partial dependence of many families of small means on the earnings of the elder children, maintenance allowances should be given.

Tawney argued for the raising of the school leaving age at the end of a period of three years preparation. He was thinking of 1927 or 1928 as the year when the school leaving age should be raised to fifteen. In the meantime, several steps could be taken before the law came into effect. Maintenance allowances could be used to encourage more children to stay on voluntarily. The Board should give eighty per cent grants to meet the cost of providing extra school accommodation. These measures would increase the school population gradually and allow a smooth transition to the compulsory school leaving age of fifteen. Even though Tawney had considered the case more carefully than in the preceding February<sup>1</sup> when he had simply demanded that the 'school leaving age should be raised in some areas', and had suggested transitional arrangements, Trevelyan regarded the proposals as unrealistic. In Circular 1340 Trevelyan repeated his willingness to consider schemes from local authorities involving the raising of the school leaving age by byelaw, and urged that local authorities should give 'their most serious and active attention to the matter'. However, in his view, it was not a suitable time to introduce new legislation for the universal raising of the school age.

In August 1924, when the Labour Government was over half way through its first period of office, Tawney visited the United States to deliver a series of lectures on the British Labour Movement at the Williamstown Institute of Politics. In his penultimate lecture,<sup>2</sup>

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1. M.G. February 16th 1924. See also 'Advice to the Labour Government (Document B - Tawney Papers) p.4.
  2. These lectures were published in 1925 under the title 'The British Labor Movement' Yale University Press.

he acquainted his American audience with the broad outline of progress in education in England since the turn of the century and indicated the lines of future advance advocated by Labour. He repeated the Party's distant objective of a regrading of the educational system, with a secondary stage of varying kinds which would provide schooling for nearly eighty five per cent of adolescents.<sup>1</sup> Tawney indicated the problems in the way of the realisation of this objective, especially in terms of the provision of teachers and buildings<sup>2</sup> but stated that Trevelyan recognised the value of the ultimate goal and in pressing education authorities to erect schools, in increasing the number of scholarships, free places and provision for maintenance allowances, and in encouraging them to raise the school age, he was taking the first steps towards the goal of an education system reorganised as a continuous process.<sup>3</sup>

Tawney was not absent from the country for long. He returned in time to present his memorandum on the school age to the September meeting of the Executive Committee of the W.E.A. Yet the future of the reform did not appear hopeful. Only four local authorities had submitted proposals under Circular 1340, a sign of the lack of support for the measure even as a matter of bye-law. Even the Circular itself, marked by its moderate tones was in doubt, when early in October, the Labour Government was in danger of being ousted by the Conservatives. The Association's Executive Committee, whilst acknowledging with gratitude Tawney's memorandum, decided, in view of the political uncertainty, not to proceed with the proposed deputation to the Board on the leaving age. In November, it recorded in the minutes of its meeting that 'owing to the General Election nothing further had been done in regard to the proposed deputation'.<sup>4</sup> Tawney did not, however, give up the campaign for the

1. p.128

2. p.135

3. p.136

4. W.E.A. - E.C. November 29th 1924.

raising of the school leaving age.<sup>1</sup> The choice between continued education and full time education to fifteen he believed would be 'the most important decision in the field of educational policy',<sup>2</sup> over the following decade. The former was at best 'transitional' and 'better than no education'.<sup>3</sup> The latter was the main line of advance but still fell short of the Departmental Committee's recommendation of a leaving age of 16 for the 75 per cent of the children leaving elementary school who were 'intellectually capable of profiting by fulltime instruction'.<sup>4</sup> However as an immediate step the raising of the school leaving age to 15 would be a valuable accomplishment. It was this issue which was to figure large in the verbal duel which went on for the rest of the decade between Tawney and Trevelyan's Conservative successor at the Board, Eustace Percy.

Tawney held firmly to the belief expressed in 'Secondary Education For All' that the schools in which adolescents should remain until they were fifteen should be varied, that Labour had no 'intention of imposing on all children the same pattern of education'.<sup>5</sup> The Labour Movement, he stated, 'does not demand that all children should pass through the precise type of curriculum which is commonest in secondary schools today'.<sup>6</sup> Without commenting upon whether it would be the principal type of curriculum, he repeated his belief in the development, by some schools, of a 'practical bias' which did not sacrifice 'the main object of providing a good general education'.<sup>7</sup> The path towards the provision of a variety of

1. An offshoot of this campaign was his concern that the Post Office refused to engage messenger boys over the age of 14½. He presented a letter to the Advisory Committee on the matter in July 1924 and led a deputation to the Post Master General in December 1924.
2. M.G. January 16th 1925.
3. 'Education The Socialist Policy' p.30-31
4. Ibid. p.31.
5. M.G. May 6th 1924.
6. 'Education the Socialist Policy' p.32.
7. Ibid. p.33.

secondary schools lay not in the immediate imposition of any radically new structure but in the gradual transformation of the existing system on the lines suggested two years earlier.

The first step was 'to make the best use we can of the existing materials' by which Tawney meant the central schools, but above all, the existing secondary schools. It was a position which Trevelyan accepted through personal choice and necessity. In February, Trevelyan said that he was ready to entertain 'on their merits proposals for providing advanced courses in elementary schools whether by means of central schools or otherwise'.<sup>1</sup> His object was to provide 'advanced instruction for all our people'. He had already expressed his belief in the value of a general education up to 16 and in the need for variety of provision.<sup>2</sup> The immediate need was to accomplish as much as possible without further legislation. On occasions, however, he went further than Tawney in his support for the central school. Tawney's suspicion of central schools as cheap educational makeshifts had caused him to be less enthusiastic about their development than about the development of freer means of access to the existing secondary schools. Neither the Labour organisations nor Trevelyan appeared to share to any great extent his fear that they would be developed as an alternative to secondary education for all.<sup>3</sup> In June 1924, Trevelyan gave a greater priority to them in a speech to the House,<sup>4</sup> than would have been acceptable to Tawney. Tawney and the Advisory Committee strongly objected to central schools and other adolescent forms of education which were developed under the elementary code rather than under secondary school regulations.

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1. 169 H.C. Deb 5s 1995-8 21st February 1924.

2. Daily Dispatch 16th February 1924.

3. Schofield Op.Cit. p.547

4. 169 H.C. Deb. 5s 174 1435

In all of his writings in 1924 Tawney gave priority to the development of existing secondary schools along the lines suggested by the Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places. His demand for the expansion of secondary school places was in keeping with the general feeling in the Labour Movement. He argued that the Conservative policy of placing severe restrictions on the number of free places in secondary schools was 'monstrous',<sup>1</sup> and a 'plain defiance of the spirit if not the letter of the Act of 1918',<sup>2</sup> which had required local authorities to make provision for all 'capable of profiting' irrespective of ability to pay fees. The restriction on the number of free places was nothing less than 'educational inequality erected into a principle of public inequality'.<sup>3</sup> In consequence, and contrary to McKenna's statement in 1907 that the free place examination should be 'a qualifying examination',<sup>4</sup> the examination had become highly competitive. Not only did it decide the future of the working class child,<sup>5</sup> it imposed a dual standard of entry, one for the fee payer and another for the non-fee payer. 'If the criteria of ability to profit is to be applied it must be applied equally to all whether their parents are rich or poor'.<sup>6</sup>

If the immediate aim was to ensure that the limited resources that were available were used by the children best qualified to profit by them, then the Conservative policy of a dual standard of entry was equally indefensible.<sup>7</sup> The reversal of Conservative policy implied

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1. M.G. February 16th 1924.
  2. 'Education - The Socialist Policy' p.36.
  3. Address to the North of England Education Conference, January 1925 (Tawney Papers) p.12.
  4. Ibid. p.10
  5. 'Education - The Socialist Policy', p.32.
  6. Address to the North of England Education Conference p.12. Also Barker Op;Cit. p.186 and 187.
  7. Ibid. p.15.

the abolition of fees and the provision of maintenance allowances firstly for those who were excluded from attending secondary school because of the existence of fees even though they were of high ability. Tawney was, however, careful not to identify himself too closely with this narrow definition of secondary education for all. He added that when the demand was made for secondary education for all those who had 'the capacity to profit', it was 'a mistake to place too rigorous an interpretation on the phrase, 'capacity to profit', for few persons can have taught long without being impressed by the fact that some persons benefit by higher education who appear to profit by it intellectually very little'.<sup>1</sup> The children of the upper and middle classes who were 'not conspicuously intelligent' profited by a secondary education and whilst not wishing to deprive them of it, he recognised that what was 'sauce for the goose was obviously sauce for the gander'.

Tawney clearly agreed with W.G. Cove, that 'fee paying is anti-democratic',<sup>2</sup> and should be abolished 'as it already is in most parts of the United States and in some British Dominions and as was recommended by the Departmental Committee'.<sup>3</sup> Trevelyan could not adopt such a radical policy but he was able to be more liberal than the previous government in the removal of restrictions on the number of free places and in asserting that the figure of twenty five per cent was to be taken as the minimum and not the maximum standard of provision. Circular 1340 of September 1924 gave an additional grant of £2 rising to £5 for each additional place in excess of the minimum.<sup>4</sup> He was careful to point out, however, that he did not intend that all

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1. *Ibid.* p.12.

2. H.C. Deb. 5 S col. 1188.

3. 'Education - The Socialist Policy' p.35.

4. Doherty Op. Cit. p.207; Schofield Op. Cit. p.538.

new secondary school places, which would come into existence through building programmes, would be free. The proportion of free places and the amount of fees to be charged was to be left in the hands of local authorities.<sup>1</sup> Trevelyan had gone as far as he could in the circumstances to meet the demand for the abolition of fees. Within the restraints of his position he could urge a minimum standard of provision of twenty five per cent free places with a somewhat optimistic maximum, derived from the recommendations of the Departmental Committee, of forty per cent whilst Tawney's, free from the worries of office, could demand the more generous minimum of forty per cent<sup>2</sup> as an immediate step towards the abolition of fees.<sup>3</sup> Until fees were abolished there existed 'the mischievous idea that whilst primary education was a necessity, secondary education was a luxury'.<sup>4</sup> Whilst such thinking prevailed, the organisation of education as 'a continuous process' was impossible.

Tawney did not organise any deputations to the President on the subject of the provision of free places; neither did he on the issue of the provision of maintenance allowances but it was a demand which he voiced throughout the period of office of the Labour Party.<sup>5</sup> He believed that there should be 'no limitations on the number of maintenance allowances' given,<sup>and</sup> that the provision of such allowances was necessary before many families could dispense with the earnings of the elder children; involved in the raising of the school leaving age. The value of allowances should be graduated 'in order to encourage as many as possible to remain' at school after the age of compulsory attendance. Trevelyan was not in a position to meet this

1. H.C. Deb. 5S 176 2230. Quoted by Schofield p.538.
2. Advice to a Labour Government p.4. M.G. February 16th 1924.
3. For a full discussion of Labour's position see Barker p.p.180-181.
4. North of England Education Conference address, p.15.
5. M.G. February 16th 1924; M.G. June 24th 1924; 'Education - The Socialist Policy' p.36.

demand in full, even though, in principle, he accepted the case for maintenance allowances. Whilst his successor, Eustace Percy, regarded maintenance allowances as 'doles',<sup>1</sup> Trevelyan gave them a more sympathetic consideration. In February he stated that he could not provide universal maintenance allowances for all over 12<sup>2</sup> but shortly afterwards indicated that he would consider increased provision for those children over the age of 14.<sup>3</sup> Whilst he could not and would not force local authorities to pay such allowances, if they wished to raise the school leaving age he would make more money available to them. On this matter Tawney made no suggestions for the gradual extension of the system of maintenance allowances. In the case of reforms such as the provision of secondary school accommodation which involved factors in addition to the supply of the necessary finance, he was willing to suggest interim measures; in the case of reforms, such as maintenance allowances which were in his view entirely dependent on the provision of finance, he was not willing to allow compromise.

Trevelyan had been in office for a little over eight months when the Labour Government fell on October 8th 1924. Tawney made no immediate assessment of the Labour Government's record. His later remarks<sup>4</sup> were coloured by his attitude towards Labour's second period of office and contained little direct reference to Trevelyan's achievements. Historians have since varied in their assessments depending on the yardsticks which they have adopted.<sup>5</sup> Tawney had less reason to be disappointed than many, for he did not expect the advance towards the goal laid down in 'Secondary Education For All' to be rapid. He recognised the impossibility of realising the broader

1. H.C. Deb. 5S 176 1257

2. H.C. Deb. 5S 169-1998 21st February 1924.

3. H.C. Deb. 5S 174 - 1730

4. 'The Choice before the Labour Party' 1934.

5. Mowat regards the government as 'largely a disappointment' p.174.



objective at that time and laid more stress on 'reversing the engines' and setting the direction of advance. He could be satisfied that the economic restraints had been lessened if not removed, and that whilst only tentative steps had been taken in regard to expanding secondary school accommodation and the number of free places, the provision of maintenance allowances, and the raising of the school leaving age, they had at least helped to create a climate of opinion favourable to advance.<sup>1</sup> These steps were in themselves an achievement in view of the restraints imposed on Trevelyan by Labour's parliamentary position, the demand for economy, and the need to win the support of local authorities, and the body of the Labour movement and the leadership. Trevelyan's successor, Percy, paid tribute in the Commons to Trevelyan,<sup>2</sup> and recognised the handicap of working under such unsympathetic leaders as MacDonald and Snowden.<sup>3</sup> The Socialist policy which Tawney had laid down in 1924, was far from radical. Had he adopted a more radical programme and had he been less sympathetic towards Trevelyan he would no doubt have joined the ranks of those historians who emphasise Labour's 'meagre record'.

Tawney could, however, gain more encouragement from the growing body of support outside Parliament for the demand for a re-examination of the provision of adolescent education.<sup>4</sup> The Reference given to the Consultative Committee which 'occupied its attention from May 1924'<sup>5</sup> reflected the interest in the subject.

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1. Tawney indicated that the Labour Government should be measured less by its achievements than by its attitudes. "We must dwell less on the work which has actually been done than on the manner in which British Labour conceives the work which there is to do". (The British Labour Movement') p.6.
  2. H.C. Deb. 5S 179 1466
  3. 'Some Memories' p.97.
  4. Op.Cit. Doherty p.p. 211-213.
  5. 'The Education of the Adolescent' (H.M.S.O. 1927) p.ii.

The part which Tawney and Trevelyan played in the genesis of the Reference has been the subject of much confusion.

### 3. Tawney, Labour and the Hadow Reference.

In July 1924,<sup>1</sup> Hadow recommended to Trevelyan that Tawney who was due to retire from the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education should be reappointed under clause 2(ii) of the Orders in Council of 1920, for a further six years. Trevelyan readily agreed, for the Consultative Committee had completed its investigations into the use of psychological tests and had embarked on its consideration of the famous 'Hadow Reference' on the education of the adolescent, a subject on which it seemed Tawney had a great deal to contribute. It would seem at least appropriate that the editor of Labour's principal work on adolescent education should take part in an investigation into the subject, begun whilst Labour was in power. There is danger, however, in suggesting a closer relationship, as some historians<sup>2</sup> have done, between Tawney, Trevelyan and the genesis of the Hadow Reference.

The genesis of the Hadow Reference was different from that of the Committee's previous references. The two references given to the Consultative Committee after its reconstruction in 1920 originated with the Board. They were handed by Fisher to the Consultative Committee without the latter having made any suggestions about them; the 'Hadow Reference' found its origins within the Consultative Committee itself. In March 1923 the Conservative President of the Board, E.F.L. Wood, accepted the principle that the Consultative Committee should be able to suggest its own subjects for discussion

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1. The following analysis is based upon documents at the Public Record Office (Ed. 24 1226)
  2. H.C. Dent 'Secondary Education For All' p.40.

and the necessary machinery was set up to enable the Committee to submit its proposed references to the Board. It was recognised, of course, that the Board had the final decision. Dr. Ernest Barker, a 'most zealous protagonist of the Committee' who 'was forward in suggesting the terms of the new reference',<sup>1</sup> has recorded how some of the Committee 'were seized by the revolutionary idea'<sup>2</sup> of proposing to Wood that they should be allowed to suggest 'a subject of .... their own choice'. In a letter dated March 20th 1923, Wood accepted the suggestion.<sup>3</sup> It was agreed that Hadow should set up a standing committee 'to deal with matters specially referred to the Committee by the Board',<sup>4</sup> and that this standing committee should also act as the body to forward suggested references to the Board. As all Committee members resident in London were to serve on the standing committee, Tawney became a member. The 'Hadow Reference' was the first to pass through the hands of the standing committee.

Although the 'Hadow Reference' originated inside the Consultative Committee, it owes little to Tawney. The subject of adolescent education was raised by J.A. White, who was reappointed to the Committee in 1924 at the same time as Tawney. He proposed 'that in view of the great demand for a comprehensive scheme of full time education beyond the elementary stage - a demand testified not only by increasing pressure on secondary school accommodation but also by the large and growing number of children in institutions such as Trade Schools, Junior Technical Schools, Central Schools, and in establishments such as Clark's and Pitman's, this committee desires to present to the Board that an investigation into the possibilities of

1. Undated letter from Hadow to Selby-Bigge, the Secretary of the Board (P.R.O. Ed. 24 1226).
2. 'Age and Youth' p.146.
3. Consultative Committee Minutes 26th July 1923.
4. Ibid.

providing various types of full time education up to the age of 16 would be welcomed by administrators, teachers, employers and parents generally and that a report on the subject would do much to enlighten public opinion and to guide and encourage developments on satisfactory lines'.<sup>1</sup>

Tawney took no recorded part in the discussion which followed, though Hadow, the Chairman, at first favoured a narrower investigation into the question of 'education for commercial pursuits favoured by the Board'. However at the end of the meeting the Committee were evidently unanimous that White's proposal should be the most important and the one with which they should deal'.<sup>2</sup> The matter had been raised and agreement reached at one meeting, on October 26th 1923. Tawney had taken no direct <sup>part</sup> in framing the resolution nor in pressing it forward though it could be argued that the publicity which he gave to adolescent education helped to swell the demand which made an investigation of the subject possible.

The resolution went to the standing committee and a small deputation, of which Tawney was not a member, went to the Board on November 22nd 1923,<sup>3</sup> after parliament had been dissolved but before the general election of December 6th. Had Tawney been on the deputation he would have favoured Barker's suggestions for investigating 'the point of junction between elementary and secondary education', of 'going beyond White's concern solely with curriculum' and for 'assuming a leaving age of sixteen'.<sup>4</sup> He would certainly have spoken out strongly against Jackson's comment that an enquiry of this kind

1. Consultative Committee (Min.) October 26th 1923.
2. Letter from Hadow to Selby Bigge dated 29th October 1923, (P.R.O. Ed. 24 1226)
3. Consultative Committee Minute November 22nd 1923.
4. Barker finally accepted the assumption of a school leaving age of fifteen.

would "be useful in dispelling the Socialist and Labour cry of 'Secondary Education for all' .... before the Labour Party came to power" and "in disposing of shams and perhaps of burying the King Charles' Head of 'The Times Education Supplement'". The meeting with the Conservative President of the Board finally agreed on an investigation 'into the type of course suitable for children between the age of 11+ and 15 who would not proceed to Secondary School, regard being had to the desirability of preserving the means of transfer between advanced elementary or central schools and secondary schools, the courses to be planned primarily with a view to preparation for employment but also to contain provision for the continuance of a good general education'. A draft reference was drawn up, which after five subsequent redraftings became the terms of reference given to the Committee. Wood's later statement to the Commons summed up the event. 'Almost the last thing that it fell to me to have the opportunity of doing before the last Government left office was to give .... a reference to the Consultative Committee'.<sup>1</sup>

At the end of his first week as Wood's successor at the Board, Trevelyan looked into the matter of the reference. It was brought to his attention in a letter<sup>2</sup> drawn up by Selby Bigge, the Board's Secretary and addressed to Hadow. Trevelyan added a footnote to Bigge's letter which recognised that the Hadow Reference had a particular interest 'when public attention is being turned to the problem of unemployed children between 14-16'. He felt sure that a 'substantial contribution' to the solution of the problem of juvenile

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1. H.C. Deb. 5S 176 1182-1183. 22nd July 1924.

2. January 30th 1924 (E.D.24 1226). This letter was dispatched to the Committee on February 1st. It was Trevelyan's acceptance of the Reference and is that mentioned in the preface of the Report (p.xvii).

unemployment could be made by 'an improved education system' and that the Committee could be relied on 'to keep this aspect of the question in view'. Any recommendations which the Committee had to make on the subject would be warmly received. Hadow's answer was polite but firm. It would be wrong, he argued, 'to hurry the Committee's investigations of their subject and divert their attention away from the permanent improvement of the system to the immediate exigencies of unemployment'.<sup>1</sup> There was no indication of Trevelyan's emphasis in the reference which the Committee began investigating in May 1924. He accepted the terms of the reference agreed upon by Wood, and finalised arrangements for the investigation. Thus he too could claim in the Commons 'I have asked the Board's Consultative Committee to advise upon the organisation, objective and curriculum of courses of study for children who will remain in full time attendance at schools other than secondary schools up to the age of 16',<sup>2</sup> and Morgan Jones could make the exaggerated claim that the new reference originated with Trevelyan.

Three points clearly emerge. The spade work for the Hadow Reference had been done by Trevelyan's Conservative predecessor, Wood; secondly, Tawney's role in the genesis of the Reference was slight even though it would have been perfectly in order for him to have put forward the whole idea of an examination of adolescent education. Thirdly, and in consequence, any suggestion that it was 'Secondary Education For All' which gave the inspiration to the Labour Government to draw up the Reference is entirely without foundation. The Reference would have been drafted had Tawney not served on the Consultative Committee, and had he not edited 'Secondary Education For All'. It would have been investigated had there been no Labour Government in 1924.

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1. P.R.O. Ed. 241226.

2. H.C. Deb. 169 Col. 1198. In actual fact the age of 15 was stated in the Committee's reference.

4. Educational Campaigns During the 'Hadow' Enquiry.

In May 1924 the Consultative Committee began its investigations into its reference, which was

" (i) To consider and report upon the organisation, objective and curriculum of courses of study suitable for children who will remain in full time attendance at schools, other than Secondary Schools up to the age of 15, regard being had on the one hand to the requirements of a good general education and the desirability of providing a reasonable variety of curriculum so far as is practicable, for children of varying tastes and abilities, and on the other to the probable occupations of the pupils in commerce, industry and agriculture.

(ii) Incidentally thereto, to advise as to the arrangements which should be made (a) for testing the attainments of the pupils at the end of the course; (b) for facilitating in suitable cases the transfer of individual pupils to Secondary Schools at an age above the normal age of admission".<sup>1</sup>

The Committee's immediate task was to follow the procedure laid down in a resolution by Tawney, a year earlier;<sup>2</sup> the Committee's Secretary, R.F. Young, had been instructed 'to direct the special attention of the Committee 'to Tawney's resolution 'when a fresh reference was received from the Board'.<sup>3</sup> The Committee had not gone very far in determining the principal witnesses and the order in which they were to appear before the Committee, by the Summer of 1924. Hadow had suggested<sup>4</sup> that it was best to delay further consideration

1. 'The Education of the Adolescent', p.iv.

2. Chapter 4 p.p.158-159.

3. Consultative Committee Minute 26th and 27th July 1923.  
p.p. 2 and 3.

4. In an undated letter to the Board.

of the Reference until White and Tawney had been reappointed, as requested in a letter by him to the Board the preceding November,<sup>1</sup> and until Barker and Tawney had returned from their foreign visits. When the Committee reassembled in the early Autumn, Tawney's close friends, Mansbridge and Nunn had joined it, the latter as a member of a subcommittee rather than as a full member. By the end of its first year the Committee had heard the evidence of 'thirty seven witnesses and forty two representatives of fifteen organisations'.<sup>2</sup> Among them had been the W.E.A. representative.

In the second year of the investigations a great deal of Tawney's time was taken up in helping to draft the Report. Had he not been a member of the Committee it is likely, as A.V. Judges has pointed out, that 'the report would have been less well written, less compelling'.<sup>3</sup> He did not make any reservations about the Committee's conclusions and recommendations as did several other members. He signed the Report on October 28th 1926.

During the period for which the Committee sat, from May 1924 until October 1926, Tawney was actively engaged outside of the Committee in campaigning for reforms which were urged by many of the Committee's witnesses. The evidence of the various organisations of the Labour movement gave priority to the problem of the raising of the school leaving age.<sup>4</sup> This priority was reflected in Tawney's demands in the first year of the Committee's investigations. Trevelyan had gone as far as he could in encouraging local authorities to raise the school leaving age by bye-law but was unable to legislate for the universal raising of the school leaving age despite

1. Letter dated 28th November 1923.
2. 'Report of the Proceedings of the Consultative Committee for the Year ended 31st July 1925'. p.1.
3. Letter to the author dated 1st January 1969.
4. e.g. T.U.C. Evidence (26th June, 1925).



deputations from various organisations. His successor at the Board, Eustace Percy, too, was to grow tired of receiving deputations on the matter,<sup>1</sup> among which were those led by Tawney. Whilst Percy was willing to allow the schemes presented by Caernarvonshire and East Suffolk for raising the school leaving age to 15 by bye-law he was willing neither to encourage other authorities to follow their example nor to raise the school leaving age universally. Though the Malcolm Committee shortly afterwards claimed that a policy of raising the school leaving age 'was not practicable for some years',<sup>2</sup> Tawney refused to accept its conclusions and the arguments of Percy.<sup>3</sup>

Tawney was convinced of the necessity of raising the school leaving age as part of his long term plans for secondary education for all and as a solution to the problem of adolescent unemployment. In January 1925, two months after the Conservative Government took office, the matter of the deputation to the Board was again raised at a meeting of the W.E.A.'s Central Council.<sup>4</sup> It was decided to include in the agenda for the deputation to the Board reference to the demand for the extension of free places as well as to that of raising the school leaving age.<sup>5</sup> Tawney agreed to draft a memorandum on the two matters for submission to the Board.<sup>6</sup> A wide range of organisations, including the N.U.T., was to be represented on the

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1. T.E.S. Report of his speech at Maidstone (6th June 1925).
  2. Malcolm Report pp. 56/57.
  3. The first of his major speeches was at Maidstone in March 1925. Laski notes an amusing incident during the Maidstone meeting. Gore had spoken first and then the Mayor rose and said 'After what we have just heard anything I could say would be out of place; indeed anyone who spoke at all would be an idiot, I call upon Mr. Tawney'. (Holmes-Laski Letters Vol.1. p.720).
  4. W.E.A. - C.C. (Min.) Jan. 23rd 1925. Greenwood gave his support in an article entitled 'Secondary Education For All', Highway, Spring 1925.
  5. In February 1925 Percy withdrew Trevelyan's 'super grant' for places above the twenty five per cent minimum. (82 H.C. Deb 5S 2358 - 2364).
  6. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. (Min.) February 3rd 1925.

deputation which was to meet Percy on the morning of May 21st. Tawney presented the Association's argument,<sup>1</sup> and he was unimpressed with Percy's counterarguments that public opinion was overwhelmingly opposed to the compulsory raising of the school leaving age, and that there were insufficient teachers and buildings.<sup>2</sup>

The answers to Percy's points were the substance of the evidence submitted to the Consultative Committee by the W.E.A. Tawney was asked to prepare a memorandum for the Consultative Committee but 'expressed his inability to do so as he was a member of the Committee'.<sup>3</sup> He was, however, present at the discussion of a memorandum by the General Secretary and no doubt the final draft which was sent to the Consultative Committee in June 1925 represented his views.<sup>4</sup> His views on the subject had already been aired in the press<sup>5</sup> in which he related the matter to the unemployment situation and to his theory of growth which underlay the demand, in 'Secondary Education For All', for the organisation of the education system into a continuous process with two stages. He argued that it was little use making unemployed adolescents attend unemployment centres. The 'real solution' lay 'on a different plane altogether'. The great error was to regard 'children between fourteen and sixteen' as wage earners. These years were 'a critical period of rapid growth; the place for the adolescent was not in the factory or unemployment centre but in the school which could provide the right conditions in which that growth could take place'. Not only would the universal raising of the school leaving age help the unemployment situation, it would

1. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. (Min.) April 30th 1925.
2. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. (Min.) May 28th 1925.
3. W.E.A. - E.C. (Min.) May 16th 1925.
4. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. (Min.) 25th June 1925.
5. M.G. April 8th 1925.

fulfill a basic need for adolescents. However Tawney made no suggestions in this press article about the type of secondary organisation or curricula.

It was within the context of his work for Labour's Advisory Committee on Education that he restated his views on the broader issues of organisation and curricula. In July 1925,<sup>1</sup> the Advisory Committee set up a subcommittee to consider the preparation of a statement on educational policy. Tawney was one of eight members of the subcommittee and was responsible for the section on 'Secondary Education For All'. The subcommittee presented its memorandum to the Advisory Committee in January 1926. The memorandum entitled 'An Outline of Educational Policy'<sup>2</sup> was published by the Labour Party under the title 'From Nursery School to University',<sup>3</sup> and gained immediate publicity in a press review by Tawney.<sup>4</sup> The statements contained in the memorandum and pamphlet reveal no great advances in his thinking; they were, in the main, a reiteration of those contained in 'Secondary Education For All' with the liberal use of quotations from it. Education was to be organised as 'a single and continuous process'. There was to be a secondary education for all normal children up to 16 irrespective of the income, class or occupation of the parents. The immediate extension of secondary school accommodation was demanded on the basis of 20 places per 1,000 population,<sup>5</sup> and in future local authorities should be required to submit schemes for dealing progressively with 25 per cent, 50 per cent and 75 per cent of children reaching the age of 11. Free places

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1. L.P. - A.C.E. (Min.) July 13th 1925.

2. Labour Party Memorandum No.133b.

3. L.P. - A.C.E. (Min.) March 15th, 1926.

4. M.G. May 24th 1926 'Labour and Education'

5. 'An Outline of Educational Policy' p.4.

should be immediately expanded to at least 40 per cent, the principle adopted by the previous Labour Government, and special grants given to encourage an expansion beyond the minimum percentage.

To achieve the reorganisation of the educational system, upper classes in elementary schools should be remodelled to provide a break at eleven and henceforth the Board should not approve of any scheme which did not 'provide for children over eleven in separately organised schools or, as a temporary expedient, in separate departments'.<sup>1</sup> The Board's regulations for Secondary Schools should be widened to cover the education of all children over eleven, including new central schools. Staffing and equipment should be on the secondary school basis and no class should exceed 40 in number, to be progressively lowered to 30. The staff should increasingly have university qualifications.

New kinds of secondary or 'central' school should provide a wide variety of courses 'suited to children of different aptitudes and capacities'.<sup>2</sup> Only a proportion of pupils should take the existing secondary school course; other courses would have 'a more practical bent'. There was no intention of creating a hierarchy of schools. Tawney stressed that 'we would be opposed to a scheme which differentiated between a type of school which would retain its pupils until university age and a type where the pupils were expected to leave at the age of fifteen or sixteen. A division on these lines would tend to accentuate undesirable social distinctions; the lower grade school would also lose the valuable stimulus of a university class'.<sup>3</sup> A year before the publication of the Hadow Report, Tawney had made his first major statement on the implications of variety. To maintain parity of status as well as to provide a stimulus within

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1. Ibid.

2. Ibid. p.5.

3. Ibid.

the schools, the new types of secondary or central school should provide, in every case, a general course leading to university. However, in the section on transference from one type of secondary school to another there was an implicit recognition that the parity of status would not be achieved very easily; the existing secondary schools raised a problem. The traditional and tested route to the university would still be regarded as superior and the most sought after prize. No amount of reference to parity in the sense of the provision of equal facilities and the abolition of fees and provision of graded maintenance allowances for all pupils would overcome the widespread feeling within the Labour movement that a secondary education of the traditional kind was superior.

This was Tawney's last statement of general policy before the publication of the Consultative Committee's Report. It was not, however, his last educational activity before the Hadow Report was published. In addition to his statement of policy and concern for the school leaving age he gave attention to matters which would help to create a climate of opinion sympathetic to the Consultative Committee's recommendations. He attacked cuts in educational expenditure which would make the implementation of any progressive scheme for education impossible, and took the leading part in setting up a 'Bureau of Public Education'<sup>1</sup> to publicise, through a series of pamphlets, current progressive thinking in education.

'Economy campaigns', Tawney was to write in the year of the Hadow Report,<sup>2</sup> are no longer launched with a flourish of trumpets but are veiled behind the discreet technicalities of circulars which are read by few and understood by still fewer'. In 1925 and 1926 his

1. M.G. March 25th 1927.

2. See p.p. 274/<sup>276</sup> of the following chapter.

struggle was against the cuts in educational expenditure threatened in Circulars 1358 and 1371. In May 1925,<sup>1</sup> Tawney was appointed to a subcommittee of the Labour Party's Advisory Committee on Education to examine the former circular and to prepare a report for the National Executive. The circular stated that all educational programmes should be carefully planned with a close eye upon expenditure. It was the latter circular which was to draw his strongest protest and to lead even Percy to the brink of resignation.<sup>2</sup>

Even before the circular was issued, Tawney was warning the nation of the new dangers of an economy campaign like that of 1921,<sup>3</sup> which would have a drastic effect on the 'quality of education'. His particular concern was the curtailment of the Board's inspectorate and the intention of the Government to throw the weight of inspection upon local authority officials. He declared such an action unsound in that the Board's inspectorate was the best instrument to judge the effects of the Board's expenditure, the best means of ensuring a minimum standard of efficiency especially among laggardly authorities, and the best people to express detached opinions and to make known current experiments in education. The warning did not stop the Board issuing Circular 1371 in November 1925. It proposed economies, including the revision of the grant system. Cove regarded the circular as 'the most insidious, reactionary and subtle circular that ever came out of the Board of Education'.<sup>4</sup> Tawney seized on the circular to demonstrate the falsity of Conservative election promises to reduce the size of classes, to improve insanitary schools and to develop central schools and other forms of post elementary education.<sup>5</sup>

1. L.P. - A.C.E. (Min.) May 4th 1925.

2. 'Some Memories' p.97.

3. M.G. October 29th 1925.

4. 189 H.C. Deb. 5S 1699-1810 17th December 1925.

The financial reorganisation implied in the circular would prevent the realisation of these proposals and any other advance in the educational system. Like Cove, he pointed to the subtlety of the circular which did not introduce economies in the Geddes manner with 'an iron hand' but 'with a silken glove'. The circular, in Tawney's view, was nothing less than 'an attempt to take away education from the working class'.

Tawney took part in producing a memorandum on the circular for Labour Party speakers.<sup>1</sup> This emphasised the effects of economies on buildings, staffing, teachers' salaries, the education of the under fives, higher education, and on the freedom of local authorities 'to cut education'. With five others including Mallon, he was appointed in December to a subcommittee of the Finance and General Purpose Committee of the W.E.A. to arrange for an organised demonstration against the circular with the British Institute of Adult Education.<sup>2</sup> The withdrawal of the circular late in December 1925 led to the abandonment of the idea of a demonstration. Though a storm of protest had caused its withdrawal,<sup>3</sup> Tawney believed the danger of economies had not passed. Like the Times Education Supplement,<sup>4</sup> he continued to give warnings that though the 'circular had been withdrawn for a year the education cuts go on quietly'. The cuts which were said to be in the interests of the improvement in the efficiency of educational administration were nothing more than 'a reversion to the old economy policy of 1921'.<sup>5</sup>

In January 1926,<sup>6</sup> he launched his most stinging attack on the Conservative President of the Board. Percy was likened to Fagin and it was alleged that 'education is being bled to death by its official defender, who keeps up a stream of pious chatter in the very

1. Memorandum 135a. 'Circular 1371' December 1925.
2. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. December 10th 1925.
3. Doherty Op. Cit. p.236; Schofield Op.Cit. p.582.
4. T.E.S. 6 January 1926.
5. M.G. January 6th 1926.
6. M.G. January 18th 1926.

act of delivering another stab at his victim'. The N.U.T. took the attitude of 'The Times Educational Supplement' over Administrative Memorandum 44, which was introduced in the place of Circular 1371 and contributed £500<sup>1</sup> to the campaign fund of the W.E.A., especially to arrange a national protest demonstration and district protests against it. The memorandum, the N.U.T. declared, was Circular 1371 'overlaid with glosses and qualifications'. Welcoming the opportunity of stating from the platform what he had just written about Percy in the press, Tawney took a full part in the protest to which the N.U.T. had generously contributed. The resolution which he prepared for the meeting was, however, far more mildly worded than the vehement speech which preceded its acceptance by those present at the meeting. It did not specify any measures of educational reform but stated that the educational economies were bound to inflict 'grave injury both on the physical health and on the mental development of children'. It reaffirmed Tawney's conviction that 'social and economic wellbeing depends on the development of capacities - physical, mental and moral - of the rising generation' and urged all those interested in education to assist in securing 'by every means within their power and with the utmost rapidity possible a continuous and progressive increase in the education provision made by the nation'.<sup>2</sup> The protest meeting took place in February 1926. Before introducing the resolution Tawney addressed the meeting on the insuperable difficulties which he believed reductions in educational expenditure in the year 1926-1927 would place upon the provision of adequate school buildings, the establishment of smaller classes and the extension of secondary education. In order to achieve the broad

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1. W.E.A. - E.C. (Min.) January 22nd 1926.

2. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. (Min.) 11th February 1926.



highway of education' more not less expenditure was necessary. In May he took part in the Advisory Committee's discussion on the economies.<sup>1</sup>

His 'Manchester Guardian' leader in June followed up the protest meeting and Advisory Committee discussions with a general judgment upon the inadequacies of the nation's education system, expressed in a peculiar mixture of humour and irony. It began,<sup>2</sup> 'A celestial visitor might observe how singular are the ways of these earth dwellers', and pointed to the paradox of an education system which denied an adequate education to the majority yet it was contained within a political system which rested on the assumption that each individual should be able to make informed judgments. Further paradoxes were to be found in a nation which complained about class feeling yet organised its educational system in such a way as to lay the greatest possible emphasis on class divisions, in a nation which spent considerable sums of money on education up to the age of 14 yet destroyed half of the effects of the previous expenditure by bringing it to an abrupt end at that age for nine-tenths of the population, and in a nation which lamented unemployment yet allowed half a million adolescents to enter an industrial system which could not find work for a million adults.

Tawney also struggled in another way for the creation of a climate favourable to educational progress. On the eve of the publication of the Report on adolescent education by the Consultative Committee he advocated within the Executive Committee of the Workers Education Association the establishment of a bureau for disseminating current thinking on educational matters. It was intended that the 'Public Education Bureau' should gain the support of all leading

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1. L.P. - A.C.E. (Min.) 17th May 1926.

2. M.G. 1st June 1926.

educational organisations in producing a series of pamphlets on current educational ideas. In July 1926<sup>1</sup> he was asked to draw up a memorandum on the matter by the Association's Finance and General Purposes Committee. In September his memorandum was under consideration by the Association's Executive Committee<sup>2</sup> and was brought before its Central Council on which a wide range of educational interest was represented.<sup>3</sup> At the beginning of 1927 further steps were taken to bring the suggestion before a wider audience and a conference of all interested bodies was called.<sup>4</sup>

Tawney's concern for the creation of a body of informed opinion favourable to educational advance was found also in the evidence which he presented to the Commission on Education set up by the Bradford Independent Labour Party in 1926 and in his press articles. 'Too much discussion' on educational matters was 'conducted in amiable vagueness'.<sup>5</sup> There was a need for educational research and information service especially on 'the educational and sociological aspects of the relationships of primary and post primary education'. He selected, as an example for greater publicity, the findings of Kenneth Lindsay<sup>6</sup> who had shown that the percentage of children passing to secondary schools was still lamentably small, that the figure

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1. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. (Min.) July 24th 1926.

2. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. (Min.) September 17th 1926.

3. W.E.A. - C.C. (Min.) September 18th 1926.

4. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. (Min.) February 23rd 1927.

5. M.G. November 26th 1926.

6. Lindsay's book 'Social Progress and Educational Waste' provided many of the leading people within the Labour movement with valuable statistical material for articles and speeches. His statement 'selection by differentiation will take the place of selection by elimination' became a catchphrase. An example of the welcome given to his book is found in Drake's 'Our Secondary School System' 'The Highway' February 1927. An example of Tawney's use of the catchphrase is found in 'The Education of the Adolescent' (The Highway) July 1927.

varied from area to area and that the free place system had 'done little as yet to make secondary education accessible to the children of the poorest parents'.<sup>1</sup> Immediately after the publication by the Consultative Committee of its recommendations on 'The Education of the Adolescent' on the first day of the new year, Tawney commented further on the issues raised by Lindsay.

##### 5. The Hadow Report

Tawney signed the Hadow Report on October 28th 1926 without making any reservations about its recommendations. It was not that he agreed fully with all of the points that it made, although there was a very substantial measure of agreement between his views and those of the Committee. He was willing to accept certain inadequacies, providing that they did not amount to a fundamental disagreement on principle. He later<sup>2</sup> summed up his general attitude to reports and acts dealing with educational matters.

"When we feel exasperated by the omissions or outraged by the provisions of an educational nature, the question I submit, which we should ask ourselves is not whether it is in accordance with our personal preferences and private convictions, it is whether on balance with all its imperfections on its head .... will or will it not result in a happier and more fruitful life for the boys and girls whose future will be affected by our attitude to it. If we decide it will not, we ought to oppose and oppose it not half heartedly but with all our power. If we decide that it will we ought not to allow our disappointment with particular parts of it to prevent our according it our general support".

1. Tawney was Lindsay's 'tutor and mentor' and wrote the introduction to his book though it was signed by Haldane.
2. 'Education, The Task Before Us' p.12. (W.E.A.).

On balance, Tawney could be well satisfied with its recommendations.

His influence over the Committee's recommendations is more difficult to discern. The Report, like 'Secondary Education For All' was not meant to propound original ideas. In general its aim was to sum up the current thinking of educationalists and educational bodies.<sup>1</sup> Tawney recognised this in a speech which he delivered after the Second World War at the opening of a school in North Staffordshire.<sup>2</sup>

'It was my lot to be a member of the Committee which prepared the Hadow Report. I am acutely aware of its limitations. Its merits, in so far as it could claim any, was not that it was original but that it put into a practical shape and drew public attention to ideas which had long been in the minds of educationalists'. It was from such sources that Tawney had derived most of his ideas. Thus often there was a broad similarity of outlook and a lack of distinguishing characteristic between Tawney's ideas and those of the witnesses, who appeared before the Committee and upon whose evidence the Committee based its proposals. Tawney drew heavily upon the common fund of educational thinking. It is possible, however, to detect from internal evidence those parts of the Report with which he was most closely associated. These reveal a correspondence in the period from 1924 to 1926, between his activities outside of the Committee and those which took place within.

In May 1925, Tawney was appointed to a Drafting Subcommittee under the Chairmanship of Dr. Ernest Barker. The parts of the final draft which are studded with the phraseology, rolling sentence pattern, and order of argument characteristic of Tawney are concerned with 'The Lines of Advance'<sup>3</sup> and 'The Lengthening of School Life'.<sup>4</sup> The former endorsed in detail the demand in 'Secondary

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1. On certain subjects, especially that of the leaving examination, the Report disagreed with much current opinion.
  2. L.S.E. Papers. Box entitled 'Various Speeches'.
  3. Chapter III.
  4. Chapter VIII.

Education For All' for a regrading of education as 'a single whole' with two stages, primary and secondary, and gave due emphasis to the need 'for a body of well informed opinion' to overcome apathy and opposition to such regrading.<sup>1</sup> The latter opened with his traditional line of approach, that the time was right, because of the large body of support, for the raising of the school leaving age and despite the objection of four Committee members,<sup>2</sup> argued on educational, social and economic grounds for the universal raising of the school leaving age to 15 from 1932.

The lines of advance were not novel. The Committee were not trying to erect 'a structure on a novel and untried pattern' but were following 'the initiative of enlightened Education Authorities' and 'following to their logical conclusions precedents already set'.<sup>3</sup> The regrading of education into a single and continuous process had the support of 'a large and influential section of educational opinion'.<sup>4</sup> Thus the Committee's first main conclusion, in Tawney's words, was that, 'Primary education should be regarded as ending at about the age of 11+. At that age a second stage, which for the moment may be given the colourless name 'post primary' should begin; and this stage, which, for many pupils would end at 16+, for some at 18 or 19 but for the majority at 14+ or 15+, should be envisaged so far as possible as single whole, within which there will be a variety in the types of education supplied, but which will be marked by the common characteristics that its aim is to provide for the needs of children who are entering and passing through the stage of adolescence'.<sup>5</sup>

1. Report p.94.

2. Note by H.J. Mundella, p.184.

3. Note by S.O. Andrews, S. Taylor and W.H. Webbe p. 186 - p.188

4. Ibid. p.70

5. Ibid. p.71.

On the subject of the age of transfer to the second stage, Tawney recognised that a break at 11+ was in accordance with existing secondary school practice and was an obvious necessity with regrading if the secondary school course was to be of sufficient duration to have the maximum educational benefit. For the psychological argument for the break, which lay outside his field of expertise, he accepted the findings of the Consultative Committee's previous investigations,<sup>1</sup> and those of Burt and Nunn. In March 1926, whilst drafting the section on 'The Lines of Advance', he had been present at a meeting of the Child Study Society with Ballard, Burt and Drake, a colleague on Labour's Advisory Committee.<sup>2</sup> All, including Tawney, spoke in favour of the 11+ age of transfer but, whilst Ballard and Burt meant mental age with some concessions to chronological age, Drake meant chronological age. Tawney accepted Burt's position and it was this which found expression in the Hadow Report.<sup>3</sup>

Furthermore, it was argued, 'By the time that the age of 11 or 12 has been reached children have given some indication of differences in interests and abilities sufficient to make it possible and desirable to cater for them by means of schools of varying types, but which have, nevertheless, a broad common foundation'.<sup>4</sup> Tawney accepted the current thinking that lay at the heart of the Hadow Report that if education was to be suited to different 'aptitudes, capacities and interests' it should be provided in separate schools.<sup>5</sup> Whilst divisions on social and economic grounds were pernicious, divisions on educational grounds were beneficial. The Committee did

1. Report on 'Psychological Tests of Educable Capacity' (1924).
2. T.E.S. 13th March 1926 p.121.
3. P. 71 Footnote 2.
4. P. 74.
5. Barker discusses this presupposition within the Labour Movement especially in Chapter 5, Section 4, though of course the presupposition and its implications provides a dominant theme in his work.

not get to the point of working out fully the implications of this presupposition, especially the problems of selection, transfer and parity of status. Their few comments on the first two of these problems left the impression that the existing type of secondary school was superior yet their comments on the latter problem denied any intention of creating any hierarchical structure. Dent pointed to the ambivalence which the Report reflected and which long survived its publication.<sup>1</sup>

The Committee did not list the difficulties of selection among the principal problems with which it had to deal<sup>2</sup> and glossed over the issue in a 'flowery'<sup>3</sup> statement in the introduction that even 'the most pleasant of parks will none the less have an entrance and an exit; and we are disposed to believe that we may safely recommend the institution .... of an entrance examination on the lines of the present examination for scholarships and free places'.<sup>4</sup> The Committee admitted<sup>5</sup> that the free place examination was highly competitive and gave no indication of how a form of selection by elimination could be adapted to the type of selection by differentiation which they envisaged. They had accepted that nothing should be done to 'cripple'<sup>6</sup> the existing secondary school which presumably meant retaining the existing entrance examination to preserve its high academic standards. In its main conclusion,<sup>7</sup> it threw the weight of importance on a written examination on the lines of a free place examination, advocated the use of psychological tests whose value for the type of selection which the Committee intended had been placed in doubt in a previous Committee Report<sup>8</sup> and was to be further

1. 'Secondary Education For All' pp. 69-70.

2. Report p.45.

3. Miss Simeon of the W.E.A. was one who found the Report too 'flowery' in parts. 'The Highway' Vol. II 1972.

4. p. xx

5. p.135.

6. p.80

7. p.139

8. Report of the 'Consultative Committee on Psychological Tests of Educable Capacity' (1924) p.79. See Chapter 4 p. 160 of this present study.

questioned by Tawney,<sup>1</sup> and tended to give less priority to 'teachers' estimates' without objection from either Miss Conway, the N.U.T. representative, or Tawney. Tawney had hitherto identified himself closely with the N.U.T. policy of emphasising the importance of school records in any process of selection. The Committee had not questioned the suitability in a regraded system of education of a type of examination which had been designed to 'throw a bridge across the parallel systems'. Whilst, in his immediate comments on the Report, Tawney questioned the value of a leaving examination for those forms of post primary education other than the existing secondary type, he never questioned the need for an entrance examination not considered the most suitable methods of selection

In the Report Tawney quoted the words of Nunn,<sup>2</sup> in favour of organising the secondary phase 'as a unitary process with its own distinctive character, planned, in its several varieties as a whole,<sup>3</sup> and called upon the recommendations of the Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places<sup>4</sup> as part of a body of supporting evidence. Diversity of educational provision would cater for the 'diversities of gifts' 'Education should not attempt to press different types of character and intelligence into a single mould, however excellent in itself it may be'.<sup>5</sup> The Committee tentatively put forward a system of secondary education consisting of existing secondary schools, selective and non-selective Central Schools and Senior Classes, Central Departments, and 'Higher Tops' within existing elementary schools. It was the latter which caused

1. Equality p.282.
2. Sir Percy Nunn's daughter, Miss Elsa Nunn, has confirmed the similarity in outlook between Tawney and her father. (Letter to the author dated 1st October 1973).
3. Ibid. p.76
4. Ibid. p.79
5. Ibid.



most disagreement within the Committee. The majority of the Committee whilst recognising arguments in favour of the latter form of post primary education, believed the balance of evidence to be in favour of transference to another school. The N.U.T. representative on the Committee believed that 'advanced instruction may be adequately provided in existing schools'<sup>1</sup> and added a note accordingly.

Tawney had never made any clear pronouncements on the matter, despite his close association with N.U.T. representatives within the W.E.A. and Labour's Advisory Committee. He had not listed upper classes in elementary schools in the summary of the immediate lines of development in 'Secondary Education For All' though he had made brief references to them in the press. A break at eleven could best be brought about by transference to a separate school which could be made subject to secondary school regulations. It would be difficult to apply such regulations to higher classes in elementary schools and backward local authorities could continue to develop 'higher tops' as a substitute for secondary education and so perpetuate the parallel systems. Before Hadow, he had not included in his list of transitional measures a break at eleven within the elementary school.<sup>2</sup> He accepted the Hadow standpoint that 'transfer to another school outweighs its disadvantages'<sup>3</sup> but was careful not to offend the N.U.T.<sup>4</sup> Tawney rarely returned to the issue after Hadow. He still continued to concern himself almost exclusively with the expansion of the existing secondary schools and the development

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1. Ibid. p.184-186

2. Barker Op.Cit. p.124

3. Report p.90.

4. It is likely that Tawney was influenced by Nunn's evidence (C.P.R.O. Ed 10/47). He believed that all pupils should be transferred at about 11+ to 'another institution with a distinct staff and organised definitely for post primary education'. Upper Classes in elementary schools 'could not be thought to yield a generally satisfactory solution'. Labour's Advisory Committee viewed the N.U.T. proposal with 'some apprehension' (L.P. - A.C.E. Mem. No.194a)

of central schools.

The Committee regarded as inferior any kind of provision which allowed co-education<sup>1</sup> and which approached the idea of a common school.<sup>2</sup> The secondary school tradition had influenced the Committee's thinking to the extent that it hardly seemed necessary to them to point out the virtues of the separation of the sexes.

'We regard the mixed central school as a less satisfactory arrangement which should not as a rule be adopted except in cases of necessity'. Similarly it was only on the grounds of utmost necessity that 'a system of parallel forms' within one school should cater for pupils with varying ability. Ideally, separate schools should be provided for each band of ability; the greater the variety the better the provision. Tawney accepted without question the Committee's assumptions.

The Committee argued that major developments should take place outside the existing secondary schools, that there should be a 'wide development of post-primary schools more analogous to the 'central' than to the existing 'secondary' schools. This position was at variance with Tawney's view expressed a year earlier when he argued that the gradual extension of existing secondary school accommodation would lead to the majority of pupils being transferred at the age of eleven to that kind of school.<sup>3</sup> Tawney was, however, in full agreement that whilst differences in curricula and leaving age would exist between schools of the 'central school' kind and those of the traditional secondary school kind, the former must not be regarded as belonging to an 'inferior order'. Courses in the central or 'modern' schools would allow greater opportunities for practical work

1. p.91.

2. p.89

3. 'The British Labour Movement' p.85.

than in the existing secondary or grammar schools, though in the first few years there would be little to distinguish the kinds of secondary education.<sup>1</sup> Tawney had emphasised the need for a 'practical bias' in 'Secondary Education For All' and in 'Education, The Socialist Policy' and accepted the Committee's statement :that'a humane or liberal education is not one given through books alone'. He also agreed that for the present, at least, courses in modern schools would generally be shorter.<sup>2</sup> Arrangements for transfer between the 'modern' and 'grammar' schools would be made after the age of eleven 'provided that their school course in the new institutions lasts sufficiently long to allow of their deriving benefit from the transfer'.<sup>3</sup> One of the main reasons for transfer was to enable a pupil to receive an academic education suitable for entry to a university. This cut across the point expressed by Tawney in 'An Outline of Educational Policy'<sup>4</sup> (January 1926). "We attach great importance to the condition that new types of secondary or central school should be allowed to retain pupils after the age of sixteen and should provide in every case a general course leading to the university". On no occasion did the Hadow Committee suggest that modern schools should provide a course suitable for entry into university. The Modern school curricula and leaving examination were not designed to lead to any university course and the Committee started with the idea that on no account were the interests of existing secondary schools to be affected. The Committee had deliberately chosen the term 'Grammar School' for the existing type of secondary schools to emphasise the link through the universities or old Foundations with an ancient and dignified tradition of culture.<sup>5</sup> The Modern Schools, 'more closely related

1. p.84. The fourth main conclusion.

2. p.87.

3. p.89

4. Labour Party Memorandum 1933b p.5.

5. p.100.

to practical interests' were not meant to pursue the 'predominantly academic curriculum' upon which a university education was based.

The other section of the Report which Tawney helped to draft was that concerning 'The Lengthening of School Life'. The recommendation which was very much in accordance with the proposals which Tawney had urged outside of the Committee during 1925 and 1926 was more positive than preceding references<sup>1</sup> in the Report to the subject would suggest, and caused the most dissension within the Committee. Without stating how the school life was to be lengthened, the introductory remarks stressed that the school leaving age should be raised to fifteen 'as soon as possible'.<sup>2</sup> The references to the subject before Tawney's section of the Report stressed the tendency of parents to keep their children at school longer because of 'a heightened appreciation of the value of education'. Such statements tended to suggest that the line of approach which the Report would advocate would be the application of the voluntary principle over a prolonged period, that is the encouragement of local authorities to provide the quality of education sufficient to persuade most parents to leave their children at school until the age of fifteen. An Act of Parliament would set the seal to the process by compelling the relatively few parents who had not seen fit to leave their children in school to do so. Such was the line of action urged by Andrew, Taylor and Webbe.<sup>3</sup>

Tawney had already demanded more positive action outside of the Committee and there is little doubt that it was he who was the principal mover behind Recommendation 21; it stated that 'it is desirable that legislation should be passed fixing the age of fifteen years as that up to which attendance at school will become obligatory after the lapse of five years from the date of this Report - that is to say, at the beginning of the school year 1932'.<sup>4</sup>

1. p. xxii

2. p.p. 42, 50, 77, 83.

3. p. 186-188

4. p. 178.

The representatives of the various branches of the Labour movement had stated their belief that 'to be of any material benefit the age of 15+ should be adapted generally throughout the country'<sup>1</sup> and provision should be made for maintenance allowances 'in certain instances'. This implied the rejection of the line which Trevelyan had followed during his period as President of the Board when he had encouraged the raising of the school leaving age to fifteen by bye-law. The Committee also were against this method of advance, firstly on the grounds that the two existing examples of its use had shown that it had not been applied with the object 'of establishing any general system of education for all children up to the age of fifteen'.<sup>2</sup> Secondly pupils in areas where local bye-laws were applied would be disadvantaged in finding employment if pupils in nearby areas could leave school earlier to find employment. Such an anomaly could be removed only 'when the age is advanced throughout the country as a whole'.<sup>3</sup> However it was recognised that most local authorities believed that 'practical difficulties of one kind or another made it questionable whether the reform, however, desirable in itself, could be carried out in the immediate future'.<sup>4</sup>

Other arguments were thrown into the balance. The first condemned as 'unreasonable' attempts 'to harvest crops in spring'.<sup>5</sup> Premature entry of many thousands of young persons on to the labour market, because of the demand by industry for juvenile labour, resulted in 'the social and intellectual deterioration' of the rising generation. At a time when the labour market could not absorb the available adult work force this seemed even more 'tragic'. Many

1. Evidence on behalf of the T.U.C. 26th June 1925. ED 24-1226  
Committee Papers.

2. p. 143.

3. p.147

4. p.144

5. p.145.

adolescents were only able to find 'casual and sometimes demoralising occupations' in those areas where work was available.<sup>1</sup> To this argument, Tawney added others which he had expressed elsewhere. When education ceased abruptly at the age of fourteen, there was a resulting grave wastage of 'effort and money applied to the early stages of life'.<sup>2</sup> The compulsory retention of pupils in schools to the age of fifteen would provide a fruitful return on the time, money and effort invested. Its effects would not merely be 'quantitative but qualitative' in that courses could be planned in a more coherent and progressive manner for a period of four years rather than for three.

The issue of maintenance allowances, raised in the evidence of the T.U.C. and other bodies, was examined. No new principle was being introduced for 'local authorities already spend considerable sums' upon them. The Committee believed that 'public opinion would regard favourably some extension of expenditure in those cases where serious hardship would be involved if no financial assistance were forthcoming'.<sup>3</sup>

On the subject of when the compulsory raising of the school leaving age should begin, the Committee drew upon the evidence of the local authorities. It noted that the result of the decline in the birth rate would ease the problems of accommodation and teaching staff in the following three years, and that most local authorities were of the opinion that a period of two to four years would suffice to make the necessary preparations. On that basis, and realising the value of determining the date of operation in advance, the Committee recommended the beginning of the school year, 1932, as the date from which

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1. p.146

2. p.145

3. p.147

compulsory attendance at school to the age of fifteen would become effective.<sup>1</sup> Of all of the Committee's recommendations it was this one with which Tawney became most clearly identified in the immediate post Hadow years. It was these arguments which Eustace Percy sought to answer in the verbal duel which he fought with Tawney until he gave up the Presidency of the Board in 1929.

Tawney's overall influence on the Report was probably less than that of Barker or Nunn,<sup>2</sup> but in general he shared their views even on the recommendations for which he had less direct responsibility. The two chapters of the Report which were devoted to the curricula for modern schools and senior classes were in full accord with Tawney's previous statements on the matter. He accepted the general aim which the Committee laid down that curricula should 'offer the fullest possible scope to individuality, while keeping steadily in view the claims and needs of the society in which every individual citizen must live'. He regarded the 'large body of illuminating suggestions as to curricula and methods most likely to be successful in post primary schools'<sup>3</sup> as one of the most important achievements of the Report. In his statements in his two major books on education in 1922 and 1924 he had not waived in his belief in the value of a 'practical bias' providing that it was neither too pronounced so that it prejudiced a good general education nor confused with a 'vocational bias'.<sup>4</sup> The Hadow Report reflected a continuity of thinking with Tawney's books and with the previous report issued by the Committee on curriculum differentiation in the secondary school. On no account should the

1. p.144.

2. p.148. Apart from disagreement on the school leaving examination, the Committee's recommendations were in accord with his beliefs. He envisaged twenty five per cent of pupils attending Grammar Schools; forty five to fifty per cent attending central schools and junior technical schools and twenty five to thirty per cent attending senior classes.

3. M.G. January 3rd 1927 'Grading English Education'.

4. Report p.121 distinguishes between the two.

curricula of the modern school and senior classes be a 'simplified edition',<sup>1</sup> of the scholastic studies undertaken in the Grammar School nor should the emphasis upon a practical bias be regarded as a mark of inferiority.<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Ernest Barker was strongly in favour of the Report's recommendation concerning 'a realistic bias relating their work to practical life' and argued that<sup>3</sup> it would 'maintain and enhance the dignity of manual work'. Such a bias, the Committee had argued would meet the criticism that instruction given in schools appeared to have little or no bearing 'on the problems of their daily environment'.<sup>4</sup> He emphasised the value of the first two years of general education followed by a two year 'realistic bias' which included 'a manual course', 'a course of natural science and a foreign language'. Barker attached weight also to the Report's recommendation on the value of a school leaving examination at the end of the four year course. He believed it would give 'some objective to the school and prevent it from wobbling in its aim. It would also give a child something of an open sesame into employment'.<sup>5</sup> Whilst Tawney made no immediate reference to the leaving examination, second thoughts on the matter in the light of criticisms of the Report led him eventually to the conclusion that it was 'the most dubious of the Committees recommendations'.<sup>6</sup>

Nearly one quarter of the recommendations in the Report were

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1. p.109
  2. p.108
  3. T.E.S. 15th Jan. 1927. Report on the North of England Education Conference.
  4. Nunn also believed that a practical bias would not 'prevent such schools from being places of genuine culture differing in little except in breadth and rank of curriculum from the Grammar School'. (E.D. 10/47).
  5. Ibid.
  6. M.G. October 16th 1928. 'A Critical Moment in Education'. Nunn had argued that the schools should be left to work out their own solutions 'unshackled by the requirements of public exams'. (E.D. 10/47 Evidence given by Professor Percy Nunn on 26th February 1925).



concerned with administrative problems. In general, these did not receive the attention of the members of the Committee in their speeches after the publication of the Report. The initial step to deal with administrative problems should be greater co-operation between 'the existing Authorities for Elementary Education only and Authorities for Higher Education'. A further step would be the transference of the powers of the former to the latter, the ultimate object being the creation of new provincial authorities in which the authorities are merged.

Hadow, in a major speech after the publication of the Report stressed that what the Committee looked for was variety 'and that the ground had to be fully explored before attempts were made to put this into practice'.<sup>1</sup> The Hadow Committee, Tawney included, were not tripartitists; they emphasised variety without working out its implications. A.V. Judges has argued that this latter task was regarded by them as 'a job for administrators'.<sup>2</sup> The Committee stated clearly that they must not be understood to be suggesting any final or exhaustive scheme of organisation'.<sup>3</sup> Tawney followed Hadow's belief in his addresses from January 1927 onward. The important thing was variety of provision with approximating standards for grammar and modern schools. To ensure that the Committee's intentions were observed it was 'of vital importance that the new order, which the measures taken by the local authorities would gradually introduce, should be the subject of vigilant and increasing scrutiny while it is still young and plastic'.<sup>4</sup>

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1. The Times 17th October 1927.

2. Letter to the author dated 5th January 1969.

3. Report p. 79

4. M.G. October 16th 1928.

Any final word upon the Report should mention how it underlines the value of Tawney's work 'Secondary Education For All'. Four years before the publication of the Report he had presented in outline, in a summary of contemporary opinion, the main lines of advance advocated in Hadow. He had achieved this within a quarter of the time which the Consultative Committee had for the task and with a fraction of the assistance and facilities which were at the Committee's disposal.

## CHAPTER SIX

### AFTER HADOW (1926-1930)

1. Reaction to Hadow
2. The Kingsway Hall Conference and the Steel Maitland Memorandum
3. The Tawney - Percy Dialogue
4. The Public Education Bureau
5. The Second Labour Government
6. Education and Socialist Policy

## 1. Reactions to the Hadow Report

Reactions to the Hadow Report were mixed. The General Strike had stiffened the resistance of those who, even in better times, were unsympathetic to the extension of working class education. Tawney's support for the miner's cause and his condemnation of the government as being 'in the pockets of the owners'<sup>1</sup> was not likely to gain favour in official quarters for an educational report with which his name was associated. Percy, the Conservative President of the Board, declared that the extra cost of school feeding in the mining areas would have built schools for an additional 25,000 children.<sup>2</sup> The miners' action had thus harmed the cause of educational advance. In any case, he argued, the local authorities had already formulated their programmes for 1927 to 1930, and were not ready for the full scale reorganisation suggested in the Hadow Report.<sup>3</sup> Tawney concluded that Percy was 'one of the lions in the path of reform'. The 'Daily Mail', ever watchful for signs of squanderomania, led an attack upon both Percy and the Report. It believed that 'Lord Eustace Percy belonged to the Socialist or pink wing of the Cabinet and was always thinking of pink measures'.<sup>4</sup> It feared the heavy burden upon the rates which would result from implementing the recommendations of the Hadow Committee. Tawney regarded the statement about Percy as too ludicrous for comment and concentrated his attack upon the figures, which the 'Daily Mail' claimed, would be the cost of implementing the Hadow proposals for reorganising adolescent education. He believed the figure to be a 'work of fiction' and set about making a more realistic estimate.<sup>5</sup>

1. Whitehall Diary Vol. II, p.73.

2. T.E.S. 16th November 1926.

3. T.E.S. 8th January 1927.

4. D.M. 23rd June 1927

5. See Section 2 of this Chapter.

Tawney hoped for a more balanced appraisal of the report from the educational press and professional organizations. As it had done little more than clarify the principles upon which education had already been developing, and laid bare 'the logic of events' the report could, in his view, expect general acclaim. 'The Times Educational Supplement', which he always looked upon as a good barometer of opinion, gave strong support to the proposals, arguing that the Committee had underlined the policy which it had advocated for several years.<sup>1</sup> Miss Simeon of the W.E.A. emphasised that the chief merit of the proposals was not their novelty but 'the refreshing newness in the fact that they had come from a Committee of this character.'<sup>2</sup>

Most criticisms of the report underline an interesting fact about it, that its spirit was often more progressive than many of its recommendations. Tawney declared that its vital principle was the 'declaration that the relations between primary and secondary education must be radically altered'.<sup>3</sup> Thus he could argue that 'the essence of the Committee's proposals does not lie in its recommendations as to curricula and administration important though these are'. He was willing to heed criticisms which aimed at making more effective the 'organic relationship between primary and post primary education' and the parity between all forms of post primary education. The report of the Association of Assistant Masters disagreed with the proposals that the Secondary Modern School Course should be shorter than that of the Grammar School and condemned the idea of a leaving examination in the Modern School.<sup>4</sup> It also commented upon the

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1. T.E.S. January 1st 1927.
  2. 'The Education of the Adolescent' 'The Highway' February 1927.
  3. 'The Education of the Adolescent' 'The Highway' July 1927.
  4. None of the professional organisations commented on the Hadow proposals for single sex schools.

inadequate references which were given to maintenance allowances. Yet in their overall assessment of the report the professional organisation agreed that it was 'a great piece of public work', 'a masterly document' and of great value in achieving an early end to the most 'serious obstacle to progress', the organisation of education on class lines.

Some criticisms dealt with matters which were outside of the Committee's terms of reference. Sir Robert Blair argued that in not considering day continuation education the Hadow Committee 'merely heaped up evidence and arguments in favour of their own plan'<sup>1</sup>. Others<sup>2</sup> regretted that by not giving attention to continuation education it tended to imply an acceptance of the end of the influence of education at 15. Tawney did not comment on this matter but no doubt would have regarded Blair's argument for 'continuation education at one third of the cost of raising the school leaving age' as a demand for a cheap substitute for secondary education for all. He would have accepted a scheme for continuation education only as an extension of secondary education after the age of fifteen or ultimately sixteen.<sup>3</sup> He would not have accepted the argument that the demand for a leaving age of fifteen was an implicit acceptance of the end of education at that age. The school leaving age of fifteen was the matter of greater importance to which the Committee had directed its attention.

The issue of the virtual exclusion from the Reference of consideration of existing secondary schools raised surprisingly little comment. The only concern expressed, related to the Committee's

1. 'The Education of the Adolescent' Contemporary Review March 1927.
2. e.g. The Director of Education for Burnley (T.E.S. Oct. 8th 1927).
3. This combination was accepted by Norwood in 'The English Tradition of Education'.

suggested nomenclature. The term 'Modern', it was felt,<sup>1</sup> implied that the existing secondary schools were archaic. Behind this belief was the more deep rooted worry that the term 'secondary' was losing its exclusiveness.<sup>2</sup> No criticism was raised that the exclusion of existing secondary schools from the Reference meant that the Committee could not view the whole range of adolescent education. However the Committee had chosen its own reference and accepted the view that nothing should be done to 'cripple' the existing secondary school. This had an interesting effect on Tawney's thinking. Hitherto he had accepted that the major changes in post primary education would take place in the existing secondary school; he had accordingly given great emphasis to the expansion of existing secondary accommodation. Hadow accepted that the major changes would take place outside of the existing secondary school and its terms of reference reflected this. Tawney came to accept this position in 1926, but after that date he devoted more attention to more general matters, especially the extension of the school leaving age and the virtues of 'variety of secondary schools' without working out closely their organisational implications. This was<sup>a</sup> matter for the administrator once the broad pattern had been accepted.

Tawney was willing to modify his attitude on points of detail providing that the broad lines of advance were observed. On questions of terminology or the desirability of a leaving examination<sup>3</sup> in the 'Modern' school he was willing to reconsider his attitude. On points which had a direct bearing upon the general line of advance,

1. The Council of the Headmasters' Association (T.E.S. 26th March 1927). The Association of Assistant Teachers agreed on the nomenclature.
2. This fear was shared by the N.U.T. and the matter was raised by the N.U.T. deputation to the Board on March 3rd 1929.
3. The issue of the desirability of a leaving examination was raised in many quarters, e.g. 'Journal of Education' Feb. 1927. and in a report by the Association of Assistant Teachers.

he remained obdurate. On the raising of the school leaving age he would allow no compromise.<sup>1</sup> Despite his close association with the N.U.T. he would not accept the proposal in 'The Hadow Report and After', which in arguing for a "reclassification of children within the existing elementary school" tended, in Tawney's view, to obscure the break at 11+ and put difficulties in the way of applying secondary school regulations. As a member of a subcommittee of Labour's Advisory Committee on Education<sup>2</sup> which looked into the N.U.T.'s publication 'The Hadow Report and After', he fully endorsed the subcommittee's statement that,

'We view with some apprehension to authorities to make no separate provision for children over eleven. While we agree that the circumstances in many cases may make it desirable to provide temporarily a secondary course within the elementary school we think that, as a general rule children over eleven should be transferred to a separate institution'.<sup>3</sup>

A survey of Tawney's comments on the Report during the following two years after its publication reveals his priorities. He came more and more to reflect the progressive spirit of the Report.<sup>4</sup> His initial review, two days after its publication<sup>5</sup> gave a fairly full coverage of its recommendations though most attention was focused upon the importance of the underlying principles rather than upon the specific recommendations about organisation. In July 1927, he was concerned with 'the essence of the Committee's proposals' which dealt with relationship between primary and secondary education, the break

1. Memorandum in reply to a letter to Tawney by Arthur Thomas (30th January 1928) L.S.E. Papers Doc. E.
2. L.P. - A.C.E. (Min.) January 28th 1929.
3. L.P. Memorandum No. 194. Observations on Certain Recommendations of the National Union of Teachers made in 'The Hadow Report And After'.
4. A full account of the reaction of Eustace Percy, the Conservative President of the Board, to 'The Hadow Report and After' and to the proposed N.U.T. deputation to him is given in P.R.O. document ED 24/1265.
5. M.G. January 3rd 1927 'Grading English Education'.



at 11+, the creation of a variety of institutions of secondary education and the school leaving age.<sup>1</sup> By January 1928<sup>2</sup> references to matters of detailed organisation had disappeared and his concern was parity of standards; there should be 'no cheap substitutes for secondary education'. In October 1928<sup>3</sup> and June 1929<sup>4</sup> he was anxious that whatever names were given to secondary schools, there should be no 'change of labels', that all forms of adolescent education should be under secondary school regulations.

The aspect of the Report which gained most attention from educational opinion was its recommendation on the school leaving age. Blair regarded it as 'the most striking feature of the Report',<sup>5</sup> whilst the Haldane Committee believed the proposal to raise the school leaving age to 15 in 1932 to be 'unexpectedly moderate'.<sup>6</sup> General support for the measure came from most professional bodies. Permissive legislation, the N.U.T. argued was unlikely to achieve the lengthening of school life which was so essential to the Hadow plans. The Association of Education Committees<sup>7</sup> accepted the principle of compulsory legislation for lengthening the school life but suggested an additional year to the Hadow's proposal of five to prepare for it. The President of the Board of Education had already made his attitude known. In a letter to Sir Henry Hadow in December 1926,<sup>8</sup> he argued that he could not disturb the plans for 1927-30 already formulated by the local authorities and these did not lend themselves to a universal raising of the school leaving age. Several of Percy's critics,

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1. 'The education of the Adolescent', The Highway, July 1927.
  2. M.G. January 11th 1928.
  3. M.G. October 16th 1928.
  4. M.G. June 15th 1929.
  5. 'The Education of the Adolescent' The Contemporary Review, March 1927.
  6. 'The Next Step in National Education', p.25.
  7. N.U.T. Annual Report 1927, p. XXXIII
  8. T.E.S. 18th June, 1927.

including Tawney,<sup>1</sup> commented on the way the President had dismissed the idea of such legislation before he had had time to read the report. The issue of the universal raising of the school leaving age was to monopolise Tawney's energies for the rest of the twenties and later.

The opposition of Percy to many of the Hadow recommendations and the recommendations contained in the pamphlet, 'The Hadow Report and After' published by the N.U.T. led to the development of closer relationships between the W.E.A. and the N.U.T. The latter body gave its support to the Bureau of Public Education, largely Tawney's brainchild, and to various national demonstrations. The more virulent Percy's opposition became, the more closely were contacts established between these two bodies. Percy's rejection of the N.U.T.'s request for 'a public deputation' on the grounds that it 'would simply confuse the public' increased the fear that the President had no intention of implementing the Hadow Report. Goldstone, General Secretary of the N.U.T., wanted to discuss in particular 'the effect of reorganisation schemes upon the development of secondary schools as we know them. The future position of the recognised secondary school and the possibility of maintaining its standards while endowing it with more freedom than hitherto are matters of concern to the public generally and not only to those of our members who are serving in schools of this type'.<sup>2</sup>

Even when Percy reversed his decision and allowed a deputation,<sup>3</sup> it did little to allay the fears of the N.U.T. and Tawney, who was in close touch with developments, that the President was against rapid progress in adolescent education. Percy could only 'accept in general terms the principle of uniformity of regulations

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1. M.G. January 5th 1927.

2. Ed 24/1265 (P.R.O.) Box 87. 'The Hadow Report and After' and the 'Deputation to the President 8/3/29'.

3. On the 8th March 1929.

for post elementary schools, parity of standards and the abolition of fees' and his statement that 'little could be done towards reclassification because it would need an Act because of a change in character'<sup>1</sup> was taken as an indication that he intended to take no action at all. Percy stated his objection to experiments in the provision of 'multiple-bias schools', an idea supported by G.M. Ellis and Merrick but which received no comment from Tawney. On the raising of the school leaving age, he had nothing new to say. 'When Senior Schools provided the necessary accommodation to enable a four year course to be taken, then the time would come to consider legislation but, even then you must have parents on your side.' He regarded the question of the abolition of fees as 'too contentious' for the deputation to discuss, especially as this involved 'the loss of income of £3 million to local authorities'.

Such, in brief, was the reaction to the Hadow Report which was closely watched by Tawney for an indication of the main areas and bodies of support and opposition. He was able to use the existence of a strong body of support for the Hadow principles in his campaign to secure the implementation of its recommendations.

## 2. The Kingsway Hall Conference and the Steel-Maitland Memorandum

Having spent a quiet Christmas with the Webbs in 1926, Tawney began the New Year by campaigning for the implementation of the Hadow proposals. In February 1927,<sup>2</sup> he warned the nation that the chief threat to schemes for reorganising post primary education was circular 1388. The circular, which demanded economies in educational expenditure, would make impossible the opening of new secondary schools

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1. p.12.

2. M.G. 15th February 1927 'Circular 1388'.

and would check the provision of free places and attempts to raise the school leaving age.<sup>1</sup> The N.U.T. were also aware of threats of cuts in educational expenditure and approached the W.E.A. with a scheme for joint action.<sup>2</sup> Tawney, Mactavish and Muir were selected by the Association's Executive Committee<sup>3</sup> to meet an N.U.T. sub-committee on the matter. From the start it was agreed that any joint action should involve more than a protest against the Board's Circular. It was held that a campaign in the Autumn of that year 'for the progressive development of education' would be more valuable than an anti-economy campaign.<sup>4</sup> The highlight of the campaign in London, which was to be extended throughout the country by the W.E.A. Districts, was a demonstration, followed by a national conference at Kingsway Hall.

In July it was agreed that the Conference entitled 'The Education of the Adolescent' should be under the Chairmanship of Sir Henry Hadow. Tawney's friendship with the members of the Consultative Committee and other leading educationalists ensured that all of the speakers were authorities on their subjects. Nunn was to speak on 'Schools and Curricula', Sir Percy Jackson was to speak on the raising of the school leaving age and Ernest Barker was to outline the recommendations of Hadow. Tawney was reported 'to be considering the preparation of a paper on the economic and financial aspect of the problem of the leaving age'.<sup>5</sup> It was clear from the attention which the educational world gave to the school leaving age that this would be the main concern of the Conference. Labour's Advisory Committee had already pressed for the introduction into the House of a short bill

1. M.G. March 25th 1927.
2. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. (Min.) March 24th 1927.
3. W.E.A. - E.C. (Min.) March 25th 1927.
4. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. (Min.) 28th April 1927.
5. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. 22nd July 1927.

for raising the school leaving age<sup>1</sup> and a resolution was introduced by a Labour M.P. calling for all the legislative and administrative measures necessary to secure a universal system of post primary education on Hadow lines.<sup>2</sup> Cove agreed with Tawney that the 'acid test' was the school leaving age. Various bodies, including the Association of Education Committees, were reported by Tawney<sup>3</sup> to favour the compulsory and universal raising of the school leaving age.

With a strong body of leading educational opinion in favour of raising the school leaving age, the Conference assembled at Kingsway Hall, on Saturday 15th October 1927 to press for the implementation of the Hadow proposals for lengthening the school life. Shortly before the meeting Tawney made his attitude and the object of the Conference clear. No matter what opposition might come from Lord Eustace Percy and the other members of the Board of Education, the raising of the school leaving would come 'by the march of events';<sup>4</sup> the President could however 'delay the rate of evolution' and therefore those interested in educational progress 'should not fold their hands and wait for the immanent logic of events to produce its results'. Pressure must be put on the Board to accelerate 'the process of evolution'. With this end in view Tawney urged the educational world to support the Kingsway Hall Conference resolutions.

Most of the popular press<sup>5</sup> gave more attention to a disturbance in which a member of the audience cried out that the speakers were hypocrites than to the speeches from the platform. Lord Percy, however, showed more interest in the addresses made by Hadow,

1. L.P. - A.C.E. February 14th 1927.
2. 202 HC Deb. 5s. 1026 February 12th 1927.
3. M.G. June 14th 1927
4. M.G. September 28th 1927.
5. e.g. Daily Herald 17th October 1927.

Nunn, Barker and Tawney,<sup>1</sup> and carefully read 'The Times' report of the Conference.<sup>2</sup> Hadow emphasised the advisory nature of the Consultative Committee and its breadth of educational experience before outlining the principal recommendations of the Report. Nunn concentrated on the issue of 'the break at 11'. Barker examined the recommendations concerning the curricula in tones similar to those in which Tawney had commented upon the value of handicraft in schools a few months previously.<sup>3</sup> It was Tawney's speech, however, which brought an immediate response from Percy.

Tawney argued<sup>4</sup> that the Hadow recommendation concerning the lengthening of the school life was not included in the Report as an 'afterthought' or 'counsel of perfection'.<sup>5</sup> It was an essential part of the Report though whilst 'the abandonment of that recommendation would not, indeed, stultify its other proposals, it would certainly have the effect of seriously diminishing their practical value'. His address was not primarily concerned with putting the educational arguments for the reform. Other speakers had already done that. His arguments were financial and economic and centred upon three issues, the cost of the reform, the provision of maintenance allowances and the likely effects on industry of the raising of the school leaving age.

On the likely cost to the nation of lengthening the school life, there had been varying estimates from the figure of twenty million pounds suggested by the 'Daily Mail' to that of less than eight million pounds put forward by 'The Schoolmaster'. The W.E.A.

1. On the Monday following the Conference he had a series of newspaper cuttings about the Conference prepared for his perusal. (P.R.O. Lab. 2 EDJ 1036/28).
2. 'The Times' 17th October 1927.
3. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. resolution on handicraft (Feb. 23rd 1927).
4. His address was later published in pamphlet form. 'The Possible Cost of Raising the School Leaving Age'. (N.U.T. - W.E.A.)
5. p.1.

had by a 'reasonable calculation' suggested a figure of nine million pounds. Tawney recognised that it was not easy to arrive at an accurate estimate when dealing with such matters 'concerning the amount of new buildings, staffing and standards of provision'. He could offer no more than 'a conjectural figure which could not pretend to be more than approximate, but which may at least indicate an upper limit that is not likely to be exceeded'.<sup>1</sup> Even a conjectural figure would act as a corrective to the extravagant hypothesis found in the press. Depending on whether costing was based upon existing elementary or central school places, the estimated expenditure on new places could either be just over six and a half million pounds or nearly nine and a half million pounds. Offset against these figures would be savings achieved through decreased expenditure on evening schools and through reorganisation. To the figure of the cost of school places Tawney added his estimates of the cost of maintenance allowances which were on an exceedingly moderate basis which would not have been acceptable to left-wing supporters of the Labour Party. He suggested raising the value of maintenance allowances from £11.15s. to £15 and paying them to only thirty per cent or at most fifty per cent of the school population. He thus placed on top of the sum for the provision of school places, a maximum sum of just under four million pounds, giving a maximum cost to the nation of less than thirteen and a half million pounds. From this figure could be deducted savings on unemployment payments through retaining children at school and so enabling unemployed adults to find work. His final estimate of the maximum cost to the nation was just over four million pounds.

Tawney expanded his comments about unemployment into an attack upon the existing system of industrial organisation. Since his years in Glasgow he had expressed anxiety at the practice of industry of dismissing before the age of eighteen one third of the adolescent

labour force which it engaged at fourteen. Industry believed that the whole industrial system would be 'dislocated if the age of school attendance was raised'.<sup>1</sup> The shortage of adolescent labour would lead to the end of the system of 'casual labour' and would cause a severe blow to industry. Tawney's answer was uncompromising. 'If to raise the age at which children enter industry will cause dislocation then such dislocation is eminently to be desired, since it may lead them to abandon methods of organisation which should long ago have been discarded'.<sup>2</sup>

His final point was a development of the statement in Hadow that 'it is unreasonable to harvest crops in spring or to divert into supplying the economic necessities of the immediate present the still undeveloped capacities of the rising generation'.<sup>3</sup> It was extremely unlikely that Tawney would have avoided making explicit moral judgments upon industry and attitudes to education. The relay system in industry, he declared, was not only 'a misuse of human resources' but the sacrifice of 'the most precious of the nation's endowments .... The health, the character and the intelligence of its children'. Expenditure on extended education for the adolescent was not a luxury since it added to 'the quality of human beings'. To snatch at the miserable gains to be won by exploiting 'the vitality of the rising generation was not simply an unwise economic step but a morally indefensible attack upon the most precious gifts of humanity'. Tawney's moral argument being unanswerable, Percy centred his attention on the claim that the raising of the school leaving age would hold back many adolescents from the labour market and enable adults to find employment in industrial work formerly undertaken by adolescents, thus

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1. p.8.

2. Ibid.

3. Report p.145.



saving the nation's unemployment fund a sum of nine million pounds.

The main issue for Percy was the interchangeability of labour.

The Kingsway Hall Conference was held on Saturday, 15th October 1927. The following Monday, Percy wrote to the Minister of Labour, Steel-Maitland,<sup>1</sup> for an answer to Tawney's arguments, especially on the matter of the interchangeability of labour. 'There have been a number of exaggerated statements on the subject recently', he wrote, 'and I see that Tawney, who ought to know better has now come out with an estimate of a saving in unemployment insurance of nine million pounds a year'.<sup>2</sup> The wheels of the Ministry of Labour moved too slowly for Percy, who expected an immediate reply. Despite his 'fussing'<sup>3</sup>, it was nearly a month before he received a reply.

Steel-Maitland handed Percy's note to the senior members of the department which dealt with juvenile unemployment. Basham, its principal civil servant, believed 'Mr. Tawney's arguments are too unreal for serious discussion'.<sup>4</sup> His colleague, Wolfe thought they were more worthy of close consideration. It appeared to him that Tawney's 'outstanding point' that the shortage of juvenile labour would be made up by the engagement of adult labour was 'impractical'. It did not take into account the alternative devices which notice of the change would enable employers to adopt, especially the wider use of machinery. By November 10th the memorandum for the President of

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1. Steel-Maitland had attended Rugby a few years before Tawney. Comparing the two, Frank Fletcher wrote, 'But inspite of this remarkable academic record (Steel-Maitland's) I can not put him in the same class of scholarship, and intellectual ability with boys like R.H. Tawney'. 'After Many Days' p.89.
  2. P.R.O. Lab. 2 EDJ 1036/28
  3. 'The Board of Education are still fussing', complained Steel-Maitland early in November.
  4. Note by Miss Durham 3rd November 1927.

The Board of Education was ready and Steel-Maitland advised Percy, in a covering letter,<sup>1</sup> that if he wished to use the memorandum as a public reply to Tawney then 'it would be safe to state the considerations which have to be taken into account which are mentioned in the memorandum'. Tawney had omitted many of them and this could be used to support the inference that his conclusions were unreliable.

The memorandum of the Ministry of Labour in reply to Tawney gave Percy several lines of argument to adopt. It suggested that as there would be a substantial period of notice and preparation by industry if the school leaving age were raised then it would not follow that adult labour would replace the labour of the adolescents who had been retained at school. Industry would introduce labour saving machinery on a wider scale.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore if industry was compelled to employ adult workers at higher rates of pay then it could mean 'the difference between selling and not selling' and force several firms to close down thus adding to unemployment. However, the bulk of the memorandum was concerned with Tawney's assumption about the savings to the unemployment fund and the interchangeability of labour. Tawney had argued that the annual reduction of expenditure on unemployment would be in the region of nine million pounds. This figure, the memorandum argued, was open to doubt. The only group of people who could be said with any certainty to be removed 'from the live register' by the raising of the school leaving age would be a fair proportion of juveniles. The amount of benefit saved by their removal would be 'quite small proportionally'.<sup>3</sup> At another point, the memorandum concluded that as a lot of people who might find work

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1. Maitland to Percy 10th November 1927. Lab 2 EDJ 1036/28

2. Memorandum p.1. (Lab 2 EDJ 1036/28. P.R.O.)

3. p.2.

were hitherto uninsured or never drawing benefit, the savings on unemployment benefit would be far below Tawney's figure.

The memorandum's main point was concerned with Tawney's assertion<sup>1</sup> that the place of children of 14 to 15 would firstly be taken by unemployed juveniles below 18 and secondly by unemployed adults. The Ministry regarded this as 'highly improbable'. Adolescent labour 'unlike adult labour can not easily follow the trend of employment'.<sup>2</sup> The mobility of adolescent labour from depressed areas to areas of high employment was unlikely for 'boys and girls live at home and whatever shortage elsewhere they will continue to be unemployed'. Furthermore there were always many adolescents who found it difficult to retain employment. Tawney's argument that adult labour would replace that of 14 to 15 year olds was also stated to be an oversimplification. It would firstly be difficult to persuade skilled unemployed workers to undertake work formerly done by juveniles. The miner could not be expected to do the work of an errand boy. Secondly, the work force was not mobile. The textile workers of the north could scarcely be diverted to toymaking in the south. Thirdly, there was insufficient female adult labour to replace the girls who would remain at school. Fourthly Tawney's assumption 'that one adult would be sufficient to take the place of two juveniles' was open to grave doubt. It was only tenable 'if superior skill or strength or both' were the critical factor but in practice the work then done by juvenile labour offered 'no scope for superior strength or skill'. Thus on a strictly mathematical basis, it would be safer to assume that at least 300,000 adults would be needed to replace 398,000 juveniles. If this were the case, industry would probably increase its use of

1. The Possible Cost of Raising the School Leaving Age, p.5.

2. p.1.

machinery rather than face the increased cost of adult labour. In any case, it was difficult to find the number of adults to replace the juveniles, and even those who were available would not be 'sufficiently dexterous and nimble'.

The memorandum, consisting of a disjointed series of arguments, was forwarded to Percy, though it was suggested that it would not be best to make any reply 'on Mr. Tawney's pamphlet except to point out that the scarcity of juvenile labour has never yet resulted in a larger employment of adult labour and is never likely to, and that no large decrease in the demands on the Unemployment Fund can be looked for'.

The Steel-Maitland memorandum confirmed the beliefs which Percy had expressed in his initial letter to the Minister of Labour. On the basis of the conclusions already reached by the Civil Research Committee's investigations into the mining industry, he had suggested to Steel-Maitland that 'the interchangeability of labour would be nil'. He saw the value of the Steel-Maitland memorandum as additional evidence to be placed before the Malcolm Committee, which was looking into the issue of the school-leaving age. Percy recognised, however, that despite the arguments of the Steel-Maitland memorandum, 'The Tawney argument' was widely accepted in its most simple form. In a public speech at Tunbridge Wells,<sup>1</sup> Percy had stated that the current widespread belief that the raising of the school leaving age would markedly affect adolescent and adult unemployment would combine with the growing belief by parents in the value of education to produce in the future a demand for the raising of the school leaving age. At Cardiff,<sup>2</sup> however, he argued that the demand, at the present time, was weak. He was willing 'to consider the position five, seven or ten years hence when we shall

1. T.E.S. 1st October 1927.

2. T.E.S. 15th October 1927.

see what the position is. At the present moment let us get on with our job and do not drag the red herring of the school leaving age across the educational problem'. In his memoirs,<sup>1</sup> he indicates that he intended to introduce compulsory attendance to fifteen by 1934. At the end of 1927 and the beginning of 1928 his statements suggested a more distant date. The problems of cost, provision of teachers and buildings and the attitude of local authorities would have placed many obstacles in the path of a compulsory lengthening of the school life in 1934 even if the attitude of Percy and the Conservative Party was discounted.

### 3. The Tawney-Percy Dialogue

To Tawney, however, the practical problems of cost and accommodation were not the serious obstacles. The support given to the compulsory raising of the school leaving age by the Association of Education Committees demonstrated this. 'The Association of Education Committees which included some of the most experienced administrators in the country had agreed to the Hadow Report except they had asked for an extension of the five years to six because of the need for more teachers and buildings'.<sup>2</sup> 'The real obstacle,' he declared in a memorandum prepared shortly after the Kingsway Hall Conference<sup>3</sup> was 'the President of the Board of Education, and of course, the Chancellor of the Exchequer'. Elsewhere, however, he recognised that Percy reflected and was identified with the outlook of the industrial interest. In his attack on the latter, Tawney believed he was answering the arguments of the former. Whilst the Daily Mail

1. 'Some Memories' p.100.

2. M.G. June 14th 1927.

3. 'The Need For the Raising of the School Leaving Age' (L.S.E. Document D).

believed Percy belonged 'to the Socialist or pink wing of the Cabinet'<sup>1</sup> Tawney in his Manchester Guardian leaders and other writings, identified Percy with the most reactionary sections of the Conservative Party and British industry.

The most reactionary of all industries in Tawney's view, was the cotton industry. He had formed this view during his prewar years at Manchester and during the debate over the Fisher Bill. In 1927, a week after the Kingsway Hall Conference, he wrote a memorandum<sup>2</sup> in reply to the argument of the cotton interest, put forward in the 'Cotton Factory Times', that the raising of the school leaving age would impose an intolerable burden upon working class parents. Tawney's starting point was that of his address at Kingsway Hall. 'If children under 15 are no longer available then their place must be taken by other workers'.<sup>3</sup> On this basis, he argued that the scarcity of labour caused by the retention at school of one age group would lead to a greater demand for and hence higher wages for adolescents over fifteen and adults. The parents and elder brothers would thus be able to compensate the family income for the loss of earnings of the fourteen to fifteen year olds. In addition, the provision of maintenance allowances would contribute to the family income and thus no 'intolerable burden' would be incurred.

Tawney saw behind the argument of the cotton interest two presuppositions which were indefensible. Firstly, it was accepted by employers as a natural law that the low wages of parents should be subsidised and perpetuated by the earnings of children. Secondly, and in consequence, it led to the acceptance of a 'vicious circle which

1. Daily Mail 23rd June 1927.
2. Memorandum dated 23rd October 1927, on the 'Cotton Factory Times' article of October 1st 1927. (L.S.E. Papers Document F).
3. p.2.

binds poverty in one generation to lack of educational opportunity in the next'.<sup>1</sup> Whilst employers can afford a prolonged education for their children they expect the working class to send its children to the mill at 14. The economic disabilities could be removed by 'a really adequate system of maintenance allowances' and by increased wages, which Wood in his 'History of Wages in the Cotton Trade' had shown, would come from the diminution of the adolescent labour force. The vicious circle would be broken and the economic and educational fetters of the working class removed. This could only be achieved by demonstrating the hollowness of the arguments of the opposition and by creating a body of opinion sufficiently powerful to overcome the obstacles put in the path of progress by Percy and the Conservative Government.

In 1928, Tawney again produced a memorandum in answer to Percy and the Industrial interest. In particular, he aimed to show the weaknesses of the evidence which the Confederation of Employers Association presented before the 'Malcolm Committee on Education and Industry'. He examined the point made by the Confederation that it needed a constant supply of juvenile labour and found it difficult to believe that industry 'will stand or fall by the presence or absence of a little more than one quarter of a million boys and girls in 1932 and a little more than one third of a million boys and girls in 1935'.<sup>2</sup> The experience of other countries 'with highly prosperous industries' had shown the hollowness of the Confederation's argument as had past experience in this country. Conscription in Germany and France, which removed 'one whole year of young men' from the labour force, and compulsory attendance at full time or part time schools on the Continent

1. p.3.

2. 'The Effect on the Supply of Juvenile Labour of Raising the School Leaving Age - a memorandum in answer to the evidence laid by the Confederation of Employers Associations before the Malcolm Committee on Education and Industry'. L.S.E. Document G. p.3.

and in the U.S.A. to the age of fifteen or sixteen had caused no grave damage to industry; nor had the prolonged education of 185,000 under the Fisher Act'. Industry can again adapt itself to a change which is little more serious than that brought about by the Fisher Act'.<sup>1</sup>

The argument of the Confederation was untenable on the grounds that it exaggerated the results of the diminution of the supply of juvenile labour and ignored past experience; it was equally untenable on the grounds that even when a supply of juvenile labour was available, industry was unable to absorb all juveniles in the sense of providing regular employment. It was difficult to claim that juvenile labour was vital to industry when many juveniles had 'not been employed in such industries but spent some time doing odd jobs.'<sup>2</sup> Industry had shown a large number of the fourteen to fifteen age group to be dispensable; those juveniles whom it regarded as indispensable could, be replaced by adolescents over fifteen and by adults.

Industry's real objection was not that juvenile labour performed tasks for which other age groups were unsuited. Its underlying concern was the effect upon wages of raising the school leaving age. Juvenile labour was cheap labour. If other sections of the work force were employed to carry out its functions then the cost of labour would increase. On this matter Tawney concluded that 'the substitution of juveniles over 15 for juveniles under 15 is quite practicable' despite Steel-Maitland's and Percy's arguments, and 'though it will involve some increase in the wage bill, the aggregate cost is not likely to be a heavy burden.'<sup>3</sup> The tragic fact, for Tawney, was that employers hardly ever considered the question of whether the raising of the school

1. p.4. Tawney also used this argument elsewhere, e.g. 'Journal of Education and School World' p.790 November 1927. "British industry may be a fragile plant but it is not so fragile as to wither through the withdrawal of the services of half a million boys and girls.

2. p.5.

3. p.9.



leaving age might not be for the benefit of the children themselves.<sup>1</sup>

The educational grounds for the measure were indisputable.

Tawney was, however, willing to examine the claim that after the age of fourteen juveniles or adolescents were unable to acquire 'manual dexterity', that there was a particular quality which the age group up to fourteen had which was not shared by their peers. He pointed out that most juveniles were employed in tasks which gave little opportunity for the exercise of manual dexterity, and there was no evidence to suggest that 'juveniles of fifteen could not acquire such manual dexterity'.<sup>2</sup> Of all branches of industry the cotton industry claimed that it would be hardest hit by the raising of the school leaving age, yet it was wasteful of its existing supply of juvenile labour, and had a ready supply of adult labour to undertake the work which would formerly have been done by juveniles. Tawney argued that even if the cotton industry shifted its ground and accepted the continuation schooling which it had opposed in 1918 in order to retain fifteen year olds for part of the time, this was not acceptable on educational grounds. Education, he believed, ought to be the main influence in the lives of youngsters 'up to 18 and this would not be so if they spend forty hours in the factory and eight in school'.

Tawney would not agree to any scheme in which a system of part time continuation schools replaced full time education up to the age of fifteen; neither would he allow concessions on the age of full time attendance nor the nature of full time adolescent education. On the latter, he urged that industry's insistence on specialised technical instruction should be carefully watched, and that any confusion between 'practical' and 'vocational work' should be cleared up.<sup>3</sup> On

1. Memorandum: 'Views of Trade and Industry on the Education System'  
L.S.E. Document G.

2. p.3.

3. p.1.

the issue of concessions on the school leaving age, he wrote a memorandum early in 1928 in reply to a letter to him by Arthur Thomas.<sup>1</sup> Thomas had asked Tawney for his views on a scheme to raise the school leaving age to  $14\frac{1}{2}$  in 1934 and to 15 in 1937. Tawney's, in reply, stated that he believed four things should be considered before substantial concessions were made. Firstly, that the reasons for making the concessions were really cogent. Secondly that the concessions did not lead to further serious difficulties. Thirdly that concessions would remove opposition and fourthly that granting concessions would not jeopardise any important principles.

The reasons for his refusal to be conciliatory in his dialogue with Percy and in his consideration of the arguments of industry stand out clearly in his answers to the four points which he raised in his reply to Thomas. The arguments of the Confederation of Employers Associations were not regarded by him as 'very cogent'. There would be no great diminution in the supply of labour.<sup>2</sup> The difficulties which a concession would raise would be great. It would be easier for the local authorities to raise the leaving age at one stroke rather than by instalments. 'It is a mistake', he declared, 'to make two bites at a cherry'.<sup>3</sup> The local authorities should be given due notice, probably the six years requested by the Association of Education Committees. Furthermore, neither Percy nor the industrial interest would withdraw their opposition if the school age was raised by two instalments rather than one, for they would realise that the first step was just a preliminary to the second and thus would continue in their opposition. On the fourth matter, that of principle, the Labour movement had deeply committed itself to the issue; it had already

1. Memorandum in reply to a letter to Tawney by Arthur Thomas (30th January 1928) L.S.E. Papers Document E.

2. p.1.

3. p.3.

granted a concession in extending the period of preparation from Hadow's five years to six. To postpone the raising of the school leaving age to fifteen in 1937 would be a definite and grave setback to a cause which had the support of a large body of opinion. He thus concluded, 'The more I reflect on the stage in which the question now is, the more convinced I feel that the essential thing<sup>is</sup> for all of us to insist that up to fifteen children must be under full time education and that industry must adapt itself to that arrangement'.

To Tawney, the dialogue with Percy and the industrial interest was not an arid or academic debate. The issue was of vital and immediate importance when the nation was 'year by year tolerating, quite knowing and callously, grave injury to the moral wellbeing and intellectual development of several hundred thousand young persons and indeed the ruin of too many of them.'<sup>1</sup> In essence the argument for lengthening the school life whether advanced on economic or educational grounds was a moral one. It was appropriate therefore that the churches should be drawn into the campaign. Tawney listed the ways in which this could be achieved.<sup>2</sup> A conference of church representatives could be called, at which eminent educationalists such as Sir Percy Jackson, Spurley Hey or Boyce could be asked to speak. The church leaders should send a letter to the press demanding legislation and arrange a deputation to the Prime Minister and President of the Board of Education. Ministers of all denominations should use their pulpits to persuade the public of the moral value of the arguments for lengthening the school life and to show that Percy was 'the lion in the path'.

Tawney opened the year, 1928, with a characteristic press attack on Percy who, he argued, had turned the 'Board of Education into

1. Memorandum on 'The Need for Legislation for Raising the School Leaving Age' Document D (L.S.E. papers).

2. p.6.

a Department for Discouraging Expenditure on Education'.<sup>1</sup> Circular 1395 issued by Percy in January 1928 and upon which Tawney commented in a 'Manchester Guardian' leader gave a fresh lease of life to the Percy-Tawney dialogue. In the Circular, the President of the Board of Education put his reasons for not lengthening school life by legislation. He restated his case that it was not the Board's intention to impose a leaving age of fifteen upon the country, and that whilst the raising of the school leaving age was desirable, it was more desirable that the existing balance 'of some of the most comprehensive of local authority programmes' should not be disturbed. In a letter to the W.E.A. Executive Committee<sup>2</sup> Percy drew the Association's attention to the Circular and also pointed out that the Malcolm Committee had explicitly stated its opposition to raising the school leaving age on economic grounds, though the Circular had been drafted by Percy as a reply to a deputation from the Executive Committee of the Association of Education Committees,<sup>3</sup> rather than as a direct reply to the arguments of Tawney or the W.E.A. Tawney agreed to draft an answer on behalf of the W.E.A. to the points raised in the circular. By March Tawney's comments upon the circular were ready for publication,<sup>4</sup> though the demand for the pamphlet containing his counterarguments was not as great as expected.

Before March, he had already aired his views on the circular at a meeting of Labour's Advisory Committee on Education<sup>5</sup> and in the press.<sup>6</sup> His pamphlet entitled 'Adolescent Education - the Next Step' and published by the W.E.A., presented his views in full. Tawney

1. M.G. January 11th 1928.
2. W.E.A. - E.C. January 28th 1928.
3. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. January 26th 1928.
4. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. March 15th 1928.
5. L.P. - A.C.E. February 13th 1928.
6. M.G. February 1st 1928.

began the pamphlet by reiterating the main recommendations of the Hadow Report and by underlying the crucial importance of raising the school leaving age.<sup>1</sup> He then outlined the body of support within the educational world and without, for the compulsory lengthening of school life. The Association of Education Committees, the November meeting of the Association of Municipal Corporations, the teachers' organisations, the T.U.C. and the Labour Party had all declared in its favour. To this body of support, he added the findings of recent enquiries and committees. The Liberal Industrial Enquiry had recommended a leaving age of 16;<sup>2</sup> the Malcolm Committee had urged the measure on educational grounds in a forceful statement. "We should not have hesitated to discard any of our recommendations, however valuable they might have appeared to be in themselves, if in our opinion, there had been any prospect of their tendency to defer even by one day the future provision of some form of compulsory education beyond the statutory age". The Salvesen Committee enquiring into 'Education and Industry in Scotland' had urged the raising of the school leaving age to 15 years 'at the earliest possible date'. The Haldane Committee had regarded the Hadow proposals on the school leaving age as 'unexpectedly moderate'. To this large body of favourable opinion, Tawney added that of fourteen Anglican bishops and many free church ministers.

The second part of the pamphlet was a series of answers to the opponents of the measure. In the main, they repeated the arguments which had already appeared in Tawney's previous publications. Against the argument that the measure would be too costly, he underlined the fact that he was not the only person to arrive at an estimated figure of ten million pounds; Sir Percy Jackson and others present at the Kingsway Hall Conference had 'each arrived at this independently'.

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1. p.1.

2. p.5.

This was the gross cost which represented less than  $2\frac{1}{4}$ d. on the income tax and from which could be deducted savings from reorganisation, the cost of plans of expansion already in existence and the saving from holding a half a million juveniles from the labour market. In answer to Percy's argument that it would be better for individual local authorities to act independently, under the 1921 Act, Tawney pointed to the support of the Association of Education Committees for raising the school leaving age in one compulsory step, and to the problems raised by adjacent authorities which did not act in step. He dismissed the fears of industry that disaster would result if the supply of juvenile labour were reduced, as unfounded. The only argument that he had not answered up until that date was that of the danger of children 'marking-time' to fifteen as fourteen year olds were then alleged to be doing. In reply he pointed out that 'the marking-time argument' showed 'the need for a long enough period of adolescent education to make a post primary course essential for every child'.<sup>1</sup>

The third and largest part of the pamphlet was devoted to the attitude of Lord Percy who was 'the only educationalist of any note who did not desire a date to be fixed at which the leaving age would be raised throughout the country'.<sup>2</sup> Percy had originally argued that the measure would upset the plans of local authorities but once the Association of Education Committees had relieved him of that anxiety he was forced to change his ground and stress that it would be useless to lengthen the school life until some form of secondary education was available for all adolescents. Tawney pointed out in reply that most educationalists saw a fixed date for raising the school leaving age as a spur to the provision of post primary education. Sir Percy Jackson had argued<sup>3</sup> that it would be more economical to take the major step of

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1. p.7.

2. p.8.

3. In 'Education' 3rd February 1928.

lengthening the school life to fifteen than to attempt it in stages. Percy, Tawney alleged, was thus driven back upon the argument of *laissez-faire* and had in a speech to the National Chamber of Trade in September 1927 pointed out that 'there was a strong tendency for children to stay on until 15 voluntarily and educational opinion encouraged parents to do this. In answer Tawney stressed that there were still nearly sixty per cent of children leaving school at the age of fourteen, partly because parents believed that if they stayed on, 'their children's jobs would be taken by the other children of a minority of parents who wished them to get a job at the earliest moment'.<sup>1</sup> The fall in the birth rate would enable local authorities in the near future to make provision for secondary education for all at little extra cost.

Tawney believed that it was Percy's view that it was the business of a statesman not to lead but to hang back until the least progressive section of the community compelled him to go forward'. This, for Tawney, was the message of Circular 1395. In the circular Percy had expressed alarm that if there were a universal leaving age of fifteen before 1938 then there would be overcrowding in schools in the years 1933, 1934 and 1935 because of the high birthrate around 1920. Tawney's answer was swift and decisive; it is 'better that children be temporarily overcrowded in schools than be on the streets or in the factory'.<sup>2</sup> Overcrowding however, need not take place if preparation was made on the lines of Spurley Hey's proposals. Ultimately, the answer was that which Percy Jackson put forward. 'It requires the driving force which lies behind the fixing of a given year' and the end of 'the policy of drift'. The next step, therefore, in

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1. Adolescent Education - The Next Step, p. 9.

2. p.10.

Tawney's view, was for Percy to carry out as soon as possible the survey regarding the cost of raising the leaving age, which he had promised in the House of Commons in July 1927. The basis of the survey should be the cost of the provision of some form of secondary education for all up to 15. 'With definite schemes before him Lord Percy can have no excuse for holding up this long overdue reform'.

In July 1928,<sup>1</sup> Drake joined Tawney in specifying what the schemes should include: the transfer of all children over eleven to separately organised schools or temporary departments offering advanced courses suited to children up to 15 and over, more grammar school places on the basis of at least twenty places per thousand population, reduction in size of classes to existing secondary school standards and parity in standards of provision, the universal raising of the school leaving age to fifteen not later than 1933 and the provision of maintenance allowances.

In the Summer of 1928, partly in preparation for the general election the following year, Tawney turned to other related aspects of adolescent education, in addition to the lengthening of the school life. He was concerned to show 'the contrast during the previous four years between the rapid advance of educational thought and the comparative stagnation'<sup>2</sup> of Percy's educational policies. The first step was to restate Labour's aims which he believed were in full accord with progressive educational thought. In June 1928, he was appointed to a subcommittee to draft a statement of the Labour Party's educational policy in 'simple and telling phrases'.<sup>3</sup> In September, he drew up a revised statement of policy for the W.E.A. which approved of

1. 'The Highway' July 1928, pp.102-104.
2. M.G. April 5th 1929.
3. L.P. - A.C.E. June 25th 1928.



its new president's proposals<sup>1</sup>: All of Labour's demands were summarised by Tawney in a major party publication 'Labour and the Nation'. Education in all its stages should be free from class divisions and organised as a continuous whole. There should be free secondary education for all, of varying types with an extension of the school leaving age to 15 and later to 16 with adequate maintenance allowances. It was still generally accepted that variety of courses implied a variety of schools.

In the Autumn of 1928, Tawney was able to find occasion for attacking Percy in his reviews of the N.U.T. pamphlet 'The Hadow Report and After'. In October,<sup>2</sup> he urged the N.U.T. not to be 'content with the issue of an isolated statement' on adolescent education, 'useful though such a statement was' but to maintain constant pressure on the President of the Board in order to make sure that the Hadow Committee's proposals were carried out. Percy should be watched carefully to make sure that he did not starve secondary education of finance and to ensure that he did not give support to schemes for cheap substitutes for secondary education, involving standards of provision which were less than those of existing secondary schools. In December,<sup>3</sup> he was on a subcommittee of Labour's Advisory Committee to look into the N.U.T. statements on Hadow. In the subcommittee's observations,<sup>4</sup> stress was placed on separate provision after the age of eleven, the value of a general education, variety of courses and parity of standards between secondary schools. Articles in the press in the early months of 1929<sup>5</sup> were used by Tawney to underline his belief in this educational pattern

1. W.E.A. - E.C. September 15th 1928.
2. M.G. October 16th 1928.
3. L.P. - A.C.E. December 10th 1928.
4. L.P. - A.C.E. Memorandum 194 (February 1929) 'Observations on certain Recommendations on the National Union of Teachers made in 'The Hadow Report and After'.'
5. M.G. April 5th, April 26th.

and to point to the limitations of Percy's policies. However Percy had but a few months left at the Board and the Labour Party was soon to have the opportunity of putting on the statute book, the main recommendations made by Hadow. Whether economic conditions would favour this or whether the Party leaders were sympathetic to the proposals remained to be seen.

#### 4. The Bureau of Public Education

Only on one occasion had Tawney suggested direct action by the trade unions to achieve educational advance. In general he accepted that change must come more slowly through pressure of public opinion. It was to create an informed public opinion that Tawney had joined the Consultative Committee. It was to that end that he proposed the establishing of a Bureau of Public Education to publicise the Hadow recommendations and to point the chief obstacles in the path of progress. The bureau was also seen by Tawney as an instrument to persuade the President of the Board of Education of the error of his ways.

Tawney had brought his initial memorandum on the value of a Bureau before the Executive Committee of the W.E.A. in November 1926.<sup>1</sup> He envisaged it as a body which could focus attention on the educational issues of the day, and through a series of pamphlets, publicise the progressive ideas of educationalists and professional bodies. The W.E.A. Executive Committee gave the idea its approval and suggested that Tawney proceed with arrangements for setting up the Bureau. The cost of the venture was a principal consideration and it was suggested that a meeting be held with various organisations to 'avoid or minimise overlapping and expense'.<sup>2</sup> In September 1927, the idea of the bureau

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1. W.E.A. - E.C. 27th November 1926.

2. W.E.A. - E.C. 25th March 1927.

was merged in the campaign for raising the school leaving age. Tawney agreed to write a pamphlet on the cost of lengthening the school life 'as a sample work which the W.E.A. Education Bureau contemplated undertaking'. The pamphlet was to be circulated at a joint conference with the N.U.T. and other bodies. Thus at the time when he was preparing his address for the Kingsway Hall Conference, he was writing a similar memorandum for the Bureau of Public Education.

Tawney's 'sample' pamphlet was ready by October 1927 and it was sent to a number of people 'who were thought to be capable of verifying the figures contained in it'. In its final form, it contained references to the Kingsway Hall Conference and to the education-  
alists who had read preliminary drafts. The pamphlet began by quoting from Percy's statement in the Commons on the estimated savings to the Unemployment Fund of the raising of the school leaving age. 'Any estimate .... based on present information would be so hypothetical as not to justify the very considerable amount of time and labour which it would involve',<sup>1</sup> and proceeded to show by the use of the arguments of his Kingsway Hall address that whilst any estimate of the cost of extending the school life was necessarily imprecise the exercise was valuable in that it furnished details of a probable maximum cost. In addition to the substance of the Kingsway Hall address, the pamphlet contained an appendix of favourable comments by local authorities.

The conference at which it was hoped that the idea of a Bureau of Public Education would gain wide acceptance was arranged for February 1928.<sup>2</sup> This was attended by a wide range of representatives of professional organisations: The National Union of Teachers, the Association of University Teachers, the Association of Tutorial Class Tutors, the Incorporated Associations of Assistant Masters and

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1. 'The Estimated Cost of the Hadow Committee's Proposals to Raise the School Leaving Age to 15', p.3.

2. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. January 26th 1928.

Assistant Mistresses, the National Associations of Head Teachers and Head Mistresses, the Association of Teachers in Technical Institutions, and the Education Information Bureau of the Joint Four. Tawney addressed the meeting on the aims and objects of the Bureau, and the methods to be employed. His pamphlet on the cost of raising the school leaving age was circulated. The Conference did not, however, achieve all that was hoped for. The representatives of the various bodies were reported to have 'shown interest but they were not free to commit their organisations to definite proposals'.<sup>1</sup> The N.U.T. gave most support to the venture and contributed two pamphlets. In September 1928, although somewhat disappointed by the lack of strong commitment, but swayed by the views of Tawney, the Association's new president, the W.E.A. decided 'to go on with this new venture', to which Tawney had contributed a second pamphlet entitled 'Adolescent Education - The Next Step'.

During the remaining part of 1928 and for most of 1929 the future of the bureau remained undecided, several discussions about it being adjourned.<sup>2</sup> It was, however, given a new but short lease of life during Labour's period of office. An instrument which Tawney had created to put pressure on a Conservative President of the Board of Education to legislate for universal raising of the school leaving age was now used against the Second Labour Government for the same purpose. In 1930, Tawney produced the Bureau's third pamphlet, 'Reorganisation and the School Leaving Age' to try to persuade the Labour Government to carry out its promise to take 'The Education Bill' through its final stages before the end of 1930.

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1. W.E.A. - E.C. April 20th 1928.

2. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. June 6th 1929, September 12th 1929.

## 5. The Second Labour Government

Tawney believed that whilst the Conservatives remained in power little would be done to implement the Hadow proposals. Only a period of Labour rule could lead to progress in education along the lines laid down in the Hadow Report. In the two years immediately prior to the general election of 1929 Tawney was able to find some evidence to support this belief. The Labour Party Annual Conference of 1927 had passed a resolution calling for all children of 11+ to pass from elementary school to some form of secondary school and to remain there until the age of 15 and ultimately until the age of 16.<sup>1</sup> It was generally accepted that this should be achieved not by an 'appointed day' scheme but by a date specified in an act of Parliament. To Tawney, however, this was merely a favourable sign of the Party's future intentions when in office; much more depended on the personal qualities and beliefs of the person who would replace Percy at the Board of Education, and the measure of support which he was given by the Party's leadership. He had more doubts about the sympathy of the leadership for educational reform than he had about that of Labour's future President of the Board of Education, Charles Trevelyan.

Trevelyan had welcomed the Hadow recommendations,<sup>2</sup> especially the proposals which the Consultative Committee had made for immediate progress. He accepted the idea of 'selection by differentiation in the place of selection by elimination' and had argued that Labour's immediate task was to work out the financial implications of a programme based upon Hadow. In February 1927,<sup>3</sup> he had played a leading part in introducing into the Commons a resolution, drafted by Labour's Advisory Committee on Education, which called for the

1. L.P. - A.C.R. p.213.

2. e.g. 'Advanced Education For All', Labour Magazine 7th February, 1927.

3. 202 H.C. Deb. 5s 1026.

legislative measures necessary to implement the Consultative Committee's recommendations. His particular concern was the provision of maintenance allowances, which were dismissed disparagingly by Percy as 'doles'. He accepted Tawney's argument that the cost involved in their provision would be more than offset by savings to the unemployment fund<sup>1</sup> and that without such provision, secondary education for all was an objective that should not be realised. In June 1929, Trevelyan found himself once more at the Board of Education. Tawney called upon the new President and the Labour Government to fulfill its electoral promises.

Within a few days of the formation of a Labour Government under MacDonald,<sup>2</sup> Tawney had laid down a list of reforms which the Government 'ought to tackle at once and which it ought to carry well on the way to settlement before leaving office'. The first need was to clarify the existing situation in adolescent education, to show that whilst Percy had fostered the idea that 'a new order was growing up' in education this was far from the truth. The true situation was that whilst the principles of Hadow had been accepted by Percy, they 'had been watered down in fact and application'. Hadow had stressed that post primary schools should approximate grammar schools in standards of provision. Percy had sanctioned schemes which gave post primary schools an inferior status. The Board had refused to legislate for compulsory school attendance to 15. The secondary schools still charged fees, whilst other forms of post elementary school were free and this was causing the perpetuation of class division within the educational system which was contrary to the spirit and letter of Hadow. Furthermore, Percy had limited expenditure by local

1. 202 H.C. Deb. 5s 1066/7.

2. Memorandum on Education and Education Policy. Document H. (L.S.E. Papers); M.G. June 15th 1929 'The Future in Education'.

authorities on additional grammar school places and on maintenance allowances<sup>1</sup> with the result that working class children were still under a great handicap in the competition for grammar school places.

The Labour Government, in Tawney's view, should follow the lines laid down by Hadow and not by Percy. The education of children over eleven should be treated as a whole by creating a system of secondary schools which varied in type but complied with grammar schools standards of provision. Trevelyan should take three immediate steps; he should call for a report from his inspectors upon the steps being taken by the local authorities to carry out the recommendations of the Hadow Report. He should issue a set of revised regulations for secondary schools to apply to all post primary schools. He should then introduce legislation to raise the age of compulsory attendance to fifteen, not later than the beginning of 1932, although in Tawney's view, an earlier date was practicable.

As the latter needed legislation Tawney hoped for reference to it in the King's Speech. Public opinion, the unemployment situation and Labour's election manifesto demanded the compulsory lengthening of school life and it was a measure which was more likely to meet with success early in the life of the Labour Government than close to the next election. He repeated his belief that the raising of the school leaving age, like the provision of one hundred per cent free places, should be achieved in one step, by 'one bite at the cherry'. Once the school life had been lengthened it should then be made a duty, instead of a power, for local authorities to provide maintenance allowances.

The King's Speech was a disappointment. No reference was made in it to Labour's educational programme. Four days later, on

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1. Memorandum p.2.

July 6th 1929, at a meeting of the W.E.A.'s Executive Committee, Tawney moved a resolution from the chair deploring the omission:

'This meeting', the resolution ran 'expresses its profound regret that no reference to education is made in the King's Speech and in particular that the Government had not announced its intention to introduce during the present session, legislation raising the school leaving age to fifteen. It reaffirms its conviction that the immediate raising of the school age is vital both on educational and social grounds and recalls to the Government the repeated and explicit pledges of the Labour Party to introduce legislation for that purpose if returned to power and in view of the necessity of enabling local education authorities to initiate at once the necessary preparations urges the Government to announce at the earliest possible date that it will during the present session introduce a bill to raise the school leaving age to 15.'

The Executive Committee resolved to forward copies of the resolution to the Prime Minister, the Lord Privy Seal, the President of the Board of Education, the first Commissioner of Works, the Minister of Labour, the W.E.A. Districts and the press. The Districts were urged to take action. A few days later in the press,<sup>1</sup> Tawney reiterated Labour's electoral promises, pointed to the favourableness of the hour and the weakness of the Opposition case, and demanded that the Government declare its intentions. Labour's Advisory Committee on Education were also moved to action. On July 1st, it had agreed that if no reference were made in the King's Speech to the raising of the school age then Tawney, Chuter Ede, Cove and Drake would form a deputation to Trevelyan. Trevelyan had agreed to accept 'small informal deputations' as the need arose.<sup>2</sup> However, the matter of the deputation was

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1. M.G. 9th July 1929. The School Leaving Age.

2. L.P. - A.C.E. July 1st 1929.



postponed 'in expectation of a statement by the Government'.<sup>1</sup>

The lines which this statement should take were indicated in a memorandum which Tawney helped to draft for Labour's Advisory Committee.<sup>2</sup> The memorandum drew attention to the support for raising the school age, which came from several quarters and examined some of the problems inherent in the reform. It recommended that those parents with an income limit under the National Insurance Acts of £250 should be entitled to maintenance at a rate not less than £15 per year and the whole cost to be thrown on the National Exchequer. The memorandum accepted, however, as an interim measure that it would be 'better to secure maintenance for half the children concerned'.<sup>3</sup> In its estimate of the savings to the unemployment fund, the memorandum followed closely the figures given by Tawney in his various writings of 1928 and 1929. It also drew heavily upon Tawney's statements in 'Labour and the Nation'<sup>4</sup> to demonstrate Labour's pledges on the matter of the school leaving age. Yet despite the strong arguments of the memorandum, Labour's leadership had done little by the end of the year about the issue; in November 1929,<sup>5</sup> the Advisory Committee was still urging the need for legislation and Tawney was still calling upon the Government to fulfill its electoral promises.<sup>6</sup>

The W.E.A. appeared to be more active in support of its demand for the lengthening of the school life. In September,<sup>7</sup> Tawney drew the attention of the Association's Executive Committee to a

1. L.P. - A.C.E. July 16th 1929.
2. L.P. Memorandum 200 'The Raising of the School Age' July 1929, also 'Raising the School Leaving Age with Maintenance Allowances for children over 14' Personal Memorandum. L.S.E. Papers (Document J).
3. p.2.
4. p.3-4.
5. L.P. - A.C.E. November 4th 1929.
6. M.G. October 28th 1929 'The Educational Programme'.
7. W.E.A. - E.C. September 13th 1929.

resolution from the Yorkshire District calling upon all branches and districts to report on the steps made by local authority to put into operation the school leaving age of fifteen and to inaugurate a national campaign with the N.U.T. and other bodies 'to ensure that the I.E.A.'s make this not merely a question of raising the school leaving age but the starting point for putting into operation the main principles of the Hadow Report'. Tawney gave the resolution his full support. Papineau of the N.U.T. and G.D.H. Cole wanted the resolution to be more specific and to include reference to the break at 11+. The resolution was carried in amended form. The Yorkshire District followed up their resolution with a demand that an early interview be arranged with Trevelyan, to put before him the findings of the Districts on the attitudes of local authorities to the school leaving age, and to ask his views upon 'the best way in which we can assist in the development of this question on the lines of our national policy of secondary education for all'.<sup>1</sup> In December,<sup>2</sup> Tawney reported from the chair that the material on the attitudes of local authorities was still being collected by the Association's branches and districts.

Trevelyan had not been inactive. On July 18th 1929,<sup>3</sup> he had announced that the Government had decided to prepare legislation for the raising of the school leaving age, and had stated that he proposed to introduce 'a bill and print it before Christmas, whatever the difficulties were'.<sup>4</sup> The terms of the bill were published in December 1929. Tawney described the bill as 'a short and simple measure'<sup>5</sup> which fixed the date for raising the school leaving age as

1. W.E.A. - E.C. November 15th 1929.
2. W.E.A. - E.C. 13th December 1929.
3. 230 H.C. Deb. 5s - 613. For a full discussion of the period 1929-31 see D.W. Dean's 'The difficulties of a Labour Policy: The Failure of The Trevelyan Bill 1929-31' Brit. Journ. of Ed. Studs. Vol. 17 1969.
4. 231 H.C. Deb. 5s 2681-2095.
5. The Highway, February 1930 'The School Leaving Age Bill.

April 1931 and aimed to provide maintenance allowances for those over 14. Trevelyan gave assurances<sup>1</sup> that the Bill would become law before Christmas 1930. Tawney in a series of articles gave support to Trevelyan and argued for the necessity for early legislation.<sup>2</sup> In Tawney's view it would be wholly impossible to bring the measure into operation at the date fixed if it were not passed during the parliamentary session of 1930.

Tawney believed that delay in passing the Bill would be playing 'into the hands of the reactionaries' who were mainly the industrial interest and the London County Council.<sup>3</sup> In an article in 'The Highway',<sup>4</sup> he restated the arguments of his Kingsway Hall Conference address in answer to the financial objections and to the view that the lengthening of the school life would ruin industry. In two further articles<sup>5</sup> he took the Education Committee of the London County Council to task for providing post primary education of an inferior kind to the grammar school education, and for opposing Trevelyan's Bill on the grounds that it would be impossible to find the teachers required, not only by April 31st 1931 but 'even at a much later date'. The London County Council were hoping to place the Government in a dilemma. 'Having refused to make the necessary preparation until the Bill is actually on the Statute Book they will

1. Labour Magazine January 1930.
2. The Highway February 1930 'The School Leaving Age Bill'.  
M.G. February 19th 1930 'The Bill This Session'  
New Statesman February 22nd 1930  
The School Master 'The Necessity for Early Legislation'  
March 13th 1930.  
Bureau of Public Education Pamphlet No.3. 'Reorganisation and the School Leaving Age.'
3. Opposition was likely to be more extensive than Tawney suggested. Trevelyan was aware that some of his colleagues were 'anxious about the unpopularity of the change in the textile districts' though he added 'there has been no enthusiast of the traditional opposition to every raising of the age because of the well-defined commitment of Labour to maintenance allowances' (Charles Trevelyan's Memorandum Cab 24/205 CP 204, July 1929. The support of the Liberals was also waning (Dean Op.Cit.p.289)
4. 'The School Leaving Age Bill' The Highway, February 1930.
5. in M.G. Feb.19th 1930 and 'The School Master' March 13th 1930.

turn on the Government, when, next Session, the Bill is passed, with protests that it is impossible to bring it into operation at the date proposed. If the Government gives way they will have attained their object. If it adheres to its policy they will denounce it for the dislocation caused by their own recalcitrance'. However, such tactics were, for Tawney, too naive to be alarming. It was pressure from more influential quarters, especially industry which was the more dangerous to the early passage of the Bill. He claimed that he did not doubt the sincerity of the Government's promise to pass the Bill but warned of the delaying tactics of the opposition which could give 'ground for scepticism' about the Government's intentions.

Tawney suspected that many within the Labour Party were not very enthusiastic about the Bill, despite the Government's promise to pass it. In March 1930, he told the W.E.A.'s Finance and General Purposes Committee that 'the time had come for further action'.<sup>1</sup> Significantly, the first step was to request an interview with the Prime Minister. MacDonald refused to receive a deputation on the grounds of pressure of business though he pointed out 'the Government had definitely promised to get the Bill through by Christmas'.<sup>2</sup> There were good grounds for believing that his support was far from whole-hearted. He gave Trevelyan no encouragement and voiced the views of those who urged extreme caution.<sup>3</sup> Snowden was no more enthusiastic, fearing the financial burden of raising the leaving age, whilst Henderson was preoccupied with the repeal of the Trades Dispute Act. Support for Trevelyan had thus to come from elsewhere.

In March 1930, Tawney led an influential deputation to

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1. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. March 13th 1930.
  2. Ibid. April 25th 1930.
  3. In December 1930 he told Trevelyan 'I hope you will be very careful regarding them as we have been putting all sorts of people's backs up recently'. (MacDonald to Trevelyan Ed. 24/1529 24th December 1930).

Trevelyan which urged the need for haste. The deputation representing Labour's Advisory Committee on Education, repeated the points made by Tawney in the 'New Statesman'.<sup>1</sup> If the Bill did not become law by July 1930 there would be four main consequences. There would be greater difficulty in securing the number of teachers by April 1931. Dilatory authorities would take advantage of further delays. Employers would be uncertain about the extent of the financial commitments and reorganisation which the raising of the leaving age would entail. Hesitancy would also be playing into the hands of the opposition in the House of Lords.

A likely stumbling block in the plans to raise the leaving age was the attitude of the Churches. The reorganisation envisaged by Hadow would add an impossible burden on the Church schools, which were already facing grave financial difficulties. Increased aid to non-provided schools to meet the cost of reorganisation seemed the only way out. Yet this was not without difficulties. Trevelyan proposed that for a limited period, three years, special grants would be made available to provide for alterations to Church schools, which were necessary for lengthening the school life and reorganising secondary education. The proposals were likely to face criticism from many of the Catholic bishops<sup>2</sup> and within Parliament. Trevelyan believed that publicity would demonstrate the reasonableness of the proposals and would thus force agreement.<sup>3</sup>

Tawney was asked to help. He was willing to use the columns of the 'Manchester Guardian' but explained<sup>4</sup> 'the religious

1. On February 22nd 1930.

2. Dean Op.Cit. p.295

3. Charles Trevelyan Memorandum Cab 24/211 C.P. 125 11th April 1930.

4. Tawney to Trevelyan Ed. 24/1522, 11th April 1930.

question is off my beat. I have never given it the thought it deserves'. Towards the end of April,<sup>1</sup> he wrote a leader on 'Denomination Schools' which voiced the main points of a memorandum which he had helped to draw up with Chuter Ede, Ellis, Lowe, Lucas and Drake in November 1929.<sup>2</sup> This had laid down certain points to maximise co-operation between the churches and local authorities in order to achieve the universal raising<sup>of</sup> the school leaving age. Tawney realised that denominational schools would need help, for the reform meant 'not merely changes of curricula and improved staffing but the provision of science rooms, rooms for practical work, halls and playing fields'.<sup>3</sup> He accepted Trevelyan's proposals to assist the 'non-provided schools' in providing such facilities in return for which the teachers in the schools were to become 'servants of the local authorities'. Whether permanent greater public control would be accepted in return for temporary financial aid remained to be seen.

The Bill was strongly attacked by the Catholics and Isaac Foot despite Trevelyan's strategy. The Minister announced the withdrawal of the original bill on May 12th 1930.<sup>4</sup> Ten days later Tawney reported to the W.E.A. that 'a new Education (School Attendance) Bill had been introduced into the House'. Trevelyan hoped that further concessions would overcome resistance.

Tawney gave the new bill his full support in a publication for the Bureau of Public Education.<sup>5</sup> He told the W.E.A. Executive Committee<sup>6</sup> that the Association's actions had, in no small measure,

1. M.G. April 25th 1930 'Denominational Schools'.
2. L.P. - A.C.E. November 4th 1929. Memorandum 206 'Reorganisation and Non Provided Schools'.
3. M.G. April 25th 1930.
4. 240 H.C. Deb. 5s 1152.
5. 'Reorganisation and the School Leaving Age'
6. W.E.A. - E.C. May 24th 1930.

contributed to the Government's decision to introduce the Bill during the current session. It should thus give the measure its fullest support and encouragement whenever possible. On May 30th,<sup>1</sup> he welcomed the successful second reading of the Bill and applauded the actions of all but 55 of the 317 local authorities in submitting schemes to raise the leaving age. However, the forces of opposition were growing almost daily. MacDonald was seeking a postponement. On June 25th,<sup>2</sup> he informed the House that the lack of time prevented the inclusion of the Education Bill in the Government's programme. Before the Bill was formally withdrawn on June 30th, Tawney had given his support to a resolution regretting the Government's decision but welcoming the Prime Minister's undertaking to pass it into law before the end of the calendar year.<sup>3</sup>

The W.E.A. resolved to make arrangements for 'a national campaign with a view to influencing public opinion to press for the passing of the School Leaving Bill before the end of the year'.<sup>4</sup> There was good reason for such action. MacDonald was thinking of a prolonged postponement of the Bill, an idea which Trevelyan attacked. Trevelyan's reply indicated MacDonald's intentions. 'I have been giving very careful consideration to the suggestion which you made that the Bill for raising the School Age might have its later stage next year.'<sup>5</sup> Trevelyan believed his 'own position would be destroyed'.

Tawney also believed it would be a breach of faith and would gravely affect the future prospects of the Bill but circumstances were to prevent him from giving active support to Trevelyan's third Bill

1. M.G. May 30th 1930 'The Education Bill'.
2. 240 H.C. Deb. 5s. 1152.
3. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. June 27th 1930.
4. Ibid.
5. Trevelyan to MacDonald Ed. 24/1529 21st September 1930.

which was introduced in October 1930. In July<sup>1</sup>, Tawney had informed the W.E.A. that he would be visiting China during the Autumn of 1930 and in 1931, partly in order to 'report on Chinese education' to the China Council of the Institute of Pacific Relations 'and to advise the Chinese Government as to its reconstruction'.<sup>2</sup> Before he left he drew some comfort from a report to the September meeting of the Association that 'J. Muggeridge M.P. was personally confident as to the future of the Bill'.<sup>3</sup> Trevelyan was not. Agreement with the non-provided schools was again the stumbling block. Scurr gave warning that if a settlement was not reached he would move an amendment to postpone the operation of the Bill. Divisions ran deep at the Conference which was convened to discuss a settlement.<sup>4</sup> The fate of the Bill was sealed. On February 18th 1931, it was rejected by the House of Lords. By the time that Tawney returned to Britain for a short time in the early summer of that year, Trevelyan had resigned.

## 6. Education and Socialist Policy

In his lectures at the Williamstown Institute of Politics in August 1924, towards the end of the first period of Labour rule, Tawney eulogised the Labour leadership and was full of optimism about Labour's readiness and ability to deal with the problems that confronted the nation. He attacked those who caricatured Labour's leaders as 'coarse ignorant materialists, untouched by culture and impervious to the things of the spirit',<sup>5</sup> and expressed his satisfaction with Labour's plans for the establishment of minimum standards of life and

1. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. July 25th 1930.
2. A brief account of his observations is to be found in an undated manuscript among his 'Various Speeches' at the L.S.E.
3. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. September 12th 1930.
4. For a discussion of this Conference, see Dean p.297-298.
5. 'The British Labour Movement' (Yale University Press) p.3.



employment, for the extension of communal provision including the health and education services, for the development of a graded system of taxation and for advances in public ownership. He believed that whilst such a general scheme of social reorganisation would 'provide work for several Parliaments', the Labour Party would pursue 'consciously and systematically as mutually complementary elements in a deliberate policy of increasing social equality',<sup>1</sup> all of the various parts of its programme. After Labour's Second Ministry which ended in August 1931 he produced a very different assessment. He was dissatisfied with the leadership of the Party, and criticised Labour's policies for lacking coherence.

In 1934, using the yardsticks laid down five years previously in a series of lectures to the Halley Stewart Trust and published under the title 'Equality', he examined Labour's leadership and its record in the twenties. MacDonald was seen as one 'who fawned on the owners and symbols of money', who, with others, had 'succumbed to convivial socialities like Red Indians to firewater'.<sup>2</sup> He could have caused no greater offence to Tawney than by his offer of a peerage to strengthen the Labour voice in the Lords. Honours, to Tawney, 'stank of snobbery, servile respect for wealth and social position',<sup>3</sup> and were the external expression of Labour's inner flaw', its lack of a creed. But, if Labour's leadership had betrayed the movement's true cause in pursuit of material gain and social position 'the smaller fry were no better'.<sup>4</sup> The thirty six Labour members of Parliament in 1931 who had voted against Trevelyan's Education Bill, who regarded the defence of the 'interests or fancied interests of

1. p.53.

2. 'The Choice Before the Labour Party' Political Quarterly 1934, also in 'The Attack'.

3. Obituary by Dr. Ernest Green, February 1962.

4. 'The Choice Before the Labour Party' p.134.

denominational schools as more important than the need to strike a small blow at class privilege in education', were typical of the majority of the Labour Party's members. Lacking a coherent body of socialist principles and a scheme of priorities derived from it, they were unable to distinguish the vital from the trivial. What Labour needed was a body of men and women, who, whether 'trade unionists'<sup>1</sup> or intellectuals would put socialism first and whose beliefs would carry conviction because they would live in accordance with them. What it had was a leadership which pursued material and social reward and a membership which was scarcely influenced by socialist principles.

Before progress could be made in education or any other sphere, it was necessary that it should develop, what Tawney termed, a 'creed' which was neither a system of 'transcendental doctrines nor a code of rigid formulae' but 'a common conception of the ends of political action and of the means of achieving them, based upon a common view of the life proper to human beings and of the steps required at any moment nearly to attain it'.<sup>2</sup> Firstly the party should agree upon the principles which should underlie the new social order, then discern clearly the nature of the opposition to be overcome and then agree on the techniques, methods and machinery necessary to establish the new society. Hitherto the party had largely confined its attentions to the latter. It would appear that Tawney envisaged greater authority being given to bodies, on the lines of the advisory committees, consisting of dedicated socialists; such bodies would assist in the development of a coherent body of socialist principles and so avoid disasters such as that which had overtaken Trevelyan's

1. According to Beatrice Webb (Diaries 1924-1932 p.127), Tawney believed that most of the Trade Union leaders had become 'inflated with a vision of power altogether out of proportion to their ability'.

2. Ibid. p.56.

Education Bill. Only if the priority of education were seen in the broader context of social reform would the Labour Party avoid the mistakes of the past.

Tawney had paved the way for the development of a 'Socialist creed' in his lectures to the Halley Stewart Trust in the Autumn of 1929. He had related educational policy to socialist principles in a synthesis whose ultimate objective, in the words of the Trust to which he delivered his lectures, was the realisation of 'the Christian Ideal in All Social Life'. Whilst drafting his lectures he pointed out<sup>1</sup> that it was idle to talk of equality in education whilst grosser forms of social and economic inequalities existed. By the time that the lectures were published in book form in 1931 under the title 'Equality', the economic trends of the period had underlined the truth of his statement. What was needed, Tawney argued, was not particular measures of reconstruction but a new synthesis, 'a new equilibrium'.

It was characteristic of Tawney that in times of national crisis he should find the inspiration for dealing with twentieth century economic problems in the writings of a nineteenth century educationalist who knew little about economics. What the times demanded, was what Matthew Arnold had called 'a common culture'. 'What a community requires, as the word itself suggests, is a common culture .... and evidently it requires it in a special degree at a moment of transition like the present, when circumstances confront it with the necessity of giving a new orientation to its economic life, because it is in such circumstances that the need for co-operation and for the mutual confidence and toleration upon which co-operation depends is particularly pressing'.<sup>2</sup> The creation of a 'common culture' entailed the entire reorientation of the nation's social and

1. M.G. 26th April 1929.

2. 'Equality' p.41.

economic structure to serve not the interests of a section of the community but the entire community. In terms of educational reform it involved the creation of a unitary system to foster social harmony in the place of the existing system which emphasised social divisions. Such a culture was incompatible with great divergences in economic wealth, and could only be achieved through a greater measure of equality.

When Tawney spoke of equality he made it clear that he was not concerned with 'a biological phenomenon'. He was not denying the variety 'of natural endowments of character and intelligence'. A common culture did not involve attempts to suppress individual differences in order to create 'a dead-level uniformity'. On the contrary, it respected individual differences and asserted that 'while individuals differ profoundly in capacity and character, they are equally entitled as human beings to consideration and respect, and that the well-being of a society is likely to be increased if it, so plans its organisation that, whether their powers are great or small, all its members may be equally enabled to make best use of such powers as they possess'.<sup>1</sup> By equality he did not mean equality of capacity or attainment<sup>2</sup> but 'equality of circumstances, institutions and manner of life'. His concern was equality of opportunity which obtained in so far as each member of the community whatever his birth or occupation or social position possessed equal chances of using to the full 'his natural endowments of physique, of character and intelligence'.<sup>3</sup> But in a society in which 'the capacities of many were sterilised or stunted by their social environment whilst others

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1. p.47.

2. p.50.

3. p.147.

were favoured or pampered by it, equality of opportunity became a graceful but attenuated figment'. Thus Tawney arrived at the notion of 'practical equality' or 'the equal start' which could be only achieved through economic and social reorganisation. It was not simply a matter of increasing the material comforts of the working class. What mattered was an improvement in the 'quality of life' not merely an increase in the quantity of possessions. This could be achieved, in Tawney's view, only through a system of progressive taxation, increased expenditure on housing, education and health. Comprehensive social provision alone could end 'capricious inequality'. Socialist policy intended not to eliminate inequality which had its source in individual differences but to abolish inequality which was rooted in forms of social organisation and which prevented individual differences from 'ripening and finding expression'.

Once the grosser forms of inequality had been removed the way was open to the development of a culture which was neither 'the product of the kitchen garden', nor of 'the hot house'. Though 'its flowers may be delicate .... its trunk must be robust, and the height to which it grows depends on the hold of its roots on the surrounding soil'.<sup>1</sup> His conception of culture was not that of 'a cloistered and secluded refinement', the province of an elite. Tawney maintained, as in his *Commonplace Book*, that a culture could only survive and develop if it had wide social roots. By this he meant that the working class should be given access to 'the heritage of civilisation' from which it had hitherto been excluded, to enable the development of 'their range of emotional experience and intellectual interest'. It was clear that he had in mind the wider circulation of 'the known gold', and the humanising of society on its own best terms.<sup>2</sup> Tawney had an unwaivering belief

1. p.106-107.

2. Williams 'Culture and Society', p.223.

that this was compatible 'with the preservation of existing standards of excellence'<sup>1</sup> and never seriously considered whether such standards would be superceded by others. It was an assumption based upon his experiences with the W.E.A. movement in which culture had 'been brought into a new relation with young men and women who desire, while continuing to work in industry, to carry on serious studies of a humane character'.<sup>2</sup> Socialism had before it the new order in miniature.

The economic crisis could be a time of opportunity. The co-operative effort necessary to economic recovery could produce a 'new equilibrium; the wealth which would come' from recovery could, if used wisely, provide the 'practical equality' which was necessary before equality of opportunity could be achieved. 'Judged by Arnold's standard', wrote Tawney in 1929, 'we are all barbarians',<sup>3</sup> but the economic crisis could be the birth pangs of a new social order if truly Socialist policies were pursued and the Labour party and working class took the lead in applying them.

The interpretation of Socialist policy which Tawney put forward in 'Equality' had an obvious application to the nation's system of education. To a great extent his comments on education in 'Equality' were a summary of the ideas which he had expressed from 1922 onwards. It was not difficult for Tawney to find illustrations of 'the religion of inequality' from the sphere of education. Whilst the walls of the middle and upper class monopoly of education had been breached, 'conditions of accommodation, equipment and staffing which would not be tolerated by an instant in schools attended by the well

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1. p.121

2. 'The British Labor Movement' (Yale University Press) p.128.

3. p.35.

to do' were to be found in schools attended by working class children. But it was not simply a matter of 'external organisation'. 'Not only their external organisation but their spirit and temper (were) smitten by the blight of social inferiority'.<sup>1</sup> Whilst the favoured few pursue 'a humane education to manhood' the majority of the nation's children left school at the age of fourteen without having much opportunity 'to cultivate their powers'. Socialist policy should ensure that all children 'continue their education as a matter of course, not because they are exceptional, but because they are normal .... Working class children have the same needs to be met and the same powers to be developed'.<sup>2</sup> as those of other classes.

But 'equality of provision' was not 'identity of provision'. Tawney returned to the theme of 'Secondary Education for All' that 'diversity of gifts require for their development diversities of treatment'. He was aware that because the grammar schools were often given superior treatment in matters of staffing, accommodation and equipment that 'a new class division (was) in danger of arising within the world of secondary education'.<sup>3</sup> There should be common standards of provision with teachers free to develop 'different types of intelligence by different curricula'. But also a community required unity as well as diversity. Education could become 'the cement and symbol of social unity',<sup>4</sup> but, in Tawney's view 'the English educational system will never be what it should be, the great uniter, instead of being, what it has been in the past, a source of disunion, until children of all classes of the community attend the same schools'.<sup>5</sup>

Parity of provision between educational institutions was not the only necessary step towards 'a common culture'. Tawney

1. p.32.

2. p.203.

3. p.204

4. p.205

5. p.204

quoted Burt's findings which 'in loose non technical language stressed the importance of social circumstances to inherited ability as one in three'. This led to his demand for 'environmental equality' which included provision of adequate housing, health services and income.

'Equality' illustrates clearly the point made by Fahey<sup>1</sup> that education, to Tawney represented, however imperfectly, the main survival of spiritual values in a materialist world and thus the most hopeful approach to reform. At each point of national crisis Tawney had urged educational reform as a principal means of national recovery. In the First World War he saw greater educational provision as a counterpoise to the materialist forces over which the war had been fought. In 1922, when as the result of economic depression the demand for economies in education was made, Tawney in 'Secondary Education For All' urged increased expenditure partly in order to counterbalance the materialist forces to which working class adolescents were particularly vulnerable. In 1929, in the month of the Wall Street Crash, he produced his greatest piece of social synthesis in which education was seen as a principal agent in the revitalisation of society. Yet, though 'Equality' was recognised as a major writing on social theory and the ideas upon education which it contained given wide publicity, he was still left with the task of winning acceptance for his ideas within the Labour Party.

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1. D.H. Fahey 'R.H. Tawney and the sense of Community'. The Centennial Review, Volume 12, No.4, Autumn 1968.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### DEVELOPMENTS IN ADOLESCENT EDUCATION 1930 - 1951

1. Secondary Education: Structure and Curricula
2. Further Campaigns against Economies in Education
3. The School Leaving Age and the Education Act of 1936
4. The Early Problems of War
5. Reconstruction: The Education Act of 1944
6. The Modern School
7. The Public Schools

1. Secondary Education: Structure and Curricula

In 'Equality' Tawney made an eloquent plea for equality of educational opportunity. Like Arnold's plea for an extension of the system of national education, its attractiveness lay not in closely reasoned argument, which examined fully the implications of the demand, but in the sweeping statement which glossed over basic problems, chief among which were the organisation and content of secondary education. This had also characterised his response to the Hadow Report. He identified himself more with the spirit of the Report than with many of its specific proposals and thus avoided such thorny issues as how 'diversity of provision' could be achieved in practice or how parity of status between schools could be achieved if the traditional secondary school was to be retained. In the twenties, he never closely examined the implications of 'reorganisation' and 'experimentation'. They remained largely catchwords. The thirties witnessed no perceptible change in attitude.

Tawney saw himself as a representative of that 'strange and torpid animal, the general public', and disclaimed having the expertise of the educational psychologist, theorist and administrator. This tended to disarm his critics and to enable him to concentrate on those aspects of reform which were his major interest, especially his campaigns for raising the school leaving age and against economies in education which prevented the implementation of such a measure. He examined matters of structure and curriculum only in response to requests either to produce or review reports. When given an entirely free choice of subject matter, as in his lectures on education

at Oxford and Cambridge in 1934 and 1935,<sup>1</sup> he preferred to discourse in a general manner upon such subjects as educational inequalities, equality of educational opportunity, and education and juvenile unemployment, charming his audience with a range of rural imagery rather than developing the arguments in 'Equality'. He had mastered fully 'the grammar of persuasion'. Tawney refined the metaphors of 'growth' and 'cultivation' which were part of the common stock of contemporary educational vocabulary. To those who opposed raising the school leaving age he replied, 'Neglect in spring means a thin harvest in August'.<sup>2</sup> In answer to those who objected to educational expenditure on the grounds that 'the influence of environmental factors, of which education is one, is negligible compared with that of inherited characteristics', he pointed out, 'One can not make Englishmen into giants by means of it, any more than one can turn trout into salmon by changing their diet. But one can double the weight of a Devonshire trout by putting it, when young, into a trout stream, and one can raise the level of attainment, both physical and mental, among English boys and girls by appropriate care during childhood and adolescence'.<sup>3</sup> The force of the argument rested on the splendour of the analogy rather than on any detailed consideration of the meaning of 'appropriate care'. At a time when increased attention was being given to matters of secondary school organisation and curricula, his lectures proved remarkably uninformative.

1. The Public and Education: A Lecture to the New Education Fellowship', January 1934.  
Undated Lectures of the period, entitled 'Lectures II and III'. The Sidney Ball Lecture on 'Juvenile Unemployment and Education' delivered at Oxford in June 1934.  
'The Finance and Economics of Public Education' delivered at Cambridge in March 1935.  
All of these lectures are to be found in a box entitled 'Lectures on Education' in his personal papers at the London School of Economics.
2. Lecture II p.5.
3. Lecture II p.6.

Towards the end of the 'thirties, Tawney looked more closely at the structure and content of secondary education. He appeared before the Spens Committee which examined 'the organisation and inter relation of schools other than those administered under the Elementary Code .... regard being had in particular to the framework and content of the education of pupils who do not remain at school beyond the age of about 16', as a representative of the New Education Fellowship<sup>1</sup> and as an individual witness. In addition, he sent a memorandum for the use of the Committee, and advised the Education Advisory Committee of the W.E.A. on the evidence which was forwarded to the committee. There were large areas of agreement between his proposals, based largely on principles either implicit in or made explicit by the Hadow Report, and the recommendations of the Spens Committee. His views on the Report were summarised in the press<sup>2</sup> two months or so after it was signed. He welcomed the basic idea of the Report that secondary education should 'become the designation of an enlarged genus, embracing several species - namely, modern schools, grammar schools, and a new and interesting proposal - technical high schools'. Such schools, while varying in type would, he hoped, become equal 'in quality and public esteem'. On the other hand, he was disappointed that, "the encouragement to experiment with the schools horridly called 'multilateral' was not more enthusiastic". As an experimental form of provision it was worthy of more general support than its limitation to 'new' or 'sparsely populated areas'. Tawney's view of the multilateral school seemed to be well in line with the educational statement issued by the Labour Party in 1938.<sup>3</sup>

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1. He was wrongly described as 'Professor of Economic Geography, the University of London' (p.390)

2. M.G. 30th December 1938 'The Spens Report'.

3. Barker Op.Cit. p.72.

On this new type of school which was given the cautious support of the Spens Committee, Tawney was to blow hot and cold over the next few years. The weight of his approval in his evidence to the Committee was given to 'the more practical arrangement' of separate Grammar, Modern and Junior Technical Schools. He expressed his particular concern for 'sufficient provision for vertical mobility to ensure that capacity passes, unimpeded by vulgar irrelevancies of class and income, to the type of education best fitted to develop it.'<sup>1</sup> In making such provision it should be borne in mind that the grammar schools had shown their worth. In 1943 he was still of the same opinion. They 'had done admirable work' and he 'was not in sympathy with the contemporary depreciation of them'.<sup>2</sup> In his estimation of them he seemed to be guided by the meritocratic principle.

On the other hand, Tawney's strong attachment to egalitarianism and discussions with his close friends in the Labour Movement, especially Harold Clay who was shortly to succeed him as President of the W.E.A, led to an increased sympathy with the idea of the multilateral school.<sup>3</sup> Addressing a meeting at the London School of Economics in 1943<sup>4</sup> he indicated his preference for the multilateral school as the 'normal type of secondary school', yet he still had a strong attachment to the grammar school.

"But just as there are diversities of gifts so the means for cultivating them must be equally diverse. What policy does involve is the creation of a universal system of secondary education provided in schools of varying types but equal in quality or better still in schools containing several different departments or sides so as to

1. 'Some Thoughts on the Economics of Public Education' (1938) p.9.
2. Unnamed speech (L.S.E. Papers).
3. The statement that 'Tawney did not like the concept of a multilateral school' (Barker 'Education and Politics 1900-1951' p.76-77) is a gross oversimplification.
4. Unnamed speech (L.S.E. Papers).

make possible easy transfer in accordance with the varying tastes and requirements of children".

This statement reflects the opinions which he expressed in an abortive report prepared by him for the Labour Party in 1943.

In the Report<sup>1</sup> Tawney seemed to have moved decisively from his position in 1938 when he advocated the introduction of the multi-lateral or common school as an experimental addition to the existing system, to a position in which he supported the common school as the normal kind of secondary school. He appeared to have moved beyond the position of most people within the Labour party.<sup>2</sup> The Spens Committee had not gone far enough in its proposals; its conservatism, he believed, had led it to recommend a system in which 'one school may lead to a university and so on to a learned profession or to higher technical and administrative posts',<sup>3</sup> whereas other schools were placed in an inferior position by not possessing these advantages. The multilateral school had merits which were strong arguments in favour of its becoming 'the normal kind of secondary school of the future'. Hitherto it was given consideration as the only kind of school which can offer the necessary diversity of provision in thinly populated areas. If equality of opportunity was to become a reality then separate forms of provision within a system which allowed one type of school to be regarded of superior status to the others must be ended. In addition,

1. On January 22nd 1943, Morgan Philipps, Secretary to the Research Department of the Labour Party, wrote to Tawney inviting him to draft a report on education to put before the Party's Annual Conference. Illness and other demands upon his time led Tawney to think of refusing the invitation. It was finally agreed that the work would be shared, Drake, Shearman and others contributing sections (Clay to Tawney 9th March 1943). In March, Tawney was complaining that "the materials provided by the Labour's Advisory Committee on Education' hardly seem to provide an adequate basis for a comprehensive report' but by that time he had already written 'a brief introduction' and was engaged in writing 'a chapter on secondary education'. By April, he had little time to spare for the task. 'I hope to be able to devote a week to the report now and may perhaps get a few more days in April. But that is all the time I shall have'. (Tawney to Philipps April 5th 1943). The Report was never completed, largely because of an unexplained change in policy by the Labour Party.
2. Report p.7.
3. Report Section III The Content of Education p.22. (L.S.E. Papers Box labelled The Labour Party and Education).

the multilateral school avoided some of the problems of early selection. 'In the first place, the varying capacities and aptitudes of children cannot be satisfactorily determined at the end of the primary school course even, if, as we have proposed, it lasts longer than at present'.<sup>1</sup> Assessment could be made on a continuous basis throughout the common school 'by observation and experiment'. The problem of transfer to 'appropriate types of education' would be eased. 'Transfer from one secondary school to another is more difficult and a far more serious break in a child's life than transfer from one department to another within the same school'.<sup>2</sup> For pupils and teachers alike, there was the additional advantage of the 'stimulation which occurs when different specialisms find their limitations supplemented and corrected by contact with each other. The pupils following one line mix with those who are concerned with interests different from theirs and come to appreciate what is done by them'.

The Report concluded that the Labour Party should, therefore, press that when new secondary schools were established they should be of the multilateral type and that existing schools of different kinds should whenever practicable be grouped so as to secure some of the advantages of the multilateral school. Not only would certain administrative and educational problems be diminished but a bold step would be taken towards the creation of a common culture. Such schools 'bring together in the formative years of adolescence children of widely different outlook and prospects, who can share in the study of particular subjects, and in all-out-of school activities and so create for the first time the common social and cultural background which is the basis of a democratic community'. It was recommended that in size the 'common secondary school should not normally exceed 600 pupils'.

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1. p.22.

2. Ibid.

The Report was Tawney's most explicit statement of support for the common school. Yet the question remains of the extent to which it was a truly accurate representation of his thinking. It was a report compiled in a hurry,<sup>1</sup> largely under the guidance of Clay,<sup>2</sup> and with materials supplied by those members of Labour's Advisory Committee who were ardent advocates of the common school.<sup>3</sup> In view of the doubts which he expressed in private to some of his close friends,<sup>4</sup> it could have been that the Report, which Tawney reluctantly undertook to write,<sup>5</sup> was an expression of what he believed many of the members of Labour's Advisory Committee would want to hear. Pressures upon his time left him little opportunity to engage in discussions with the Committee and thus he placed great weight upon the opinions of Clay who was shortly to succeed him as President of the W.E.A. Furthermore his attitude towards public school reform which smacked strongly of a desire to retain separate provision for an academic elite<sup>6</sup> suggests that this support for the common school was not as firm as the Report indicated. The Report was, however, abandoned by Tawney, who could not find time to complete it and by the Labour Party because reaction to the Norwood Report revealed divergences<sup>ncs</sup> of opinion about multilateral schools within the Party,<sup>7</sup> and because Butler had made it clear that he gave no more than limited and cautious approval to experiments involving such schools. Neither during his many deputations to the President,<sup>8</sup> nor in his review of the Norwood Report<sup>9</sup> did Tawney

1. See footnote p. 301

2. Clay held to the view that the common school should be the only kind of school. Barker Op;Cit. p.78.

3. Barbara Drake 'an open champion of the idea' of the multilateral school supplied him with memoranda.

4. Ernest Green (in a letter to the author dated 10.1.74.) and the late Professor A.V. Judges (in a letter to the author dated 5.1.69.) have stated that Tawney had certain misgivings. These 'misgivings' were not specified.

5. See footnote p. 301

6. See p.p. 372-383

7. Barker Op. Cit. p.79.

8. See p.p. 339-369

9. M.G. 23rd August 1943.



produce the arguments in favour of the common school which were expressed in the Report.

Tawney turned away from the subject of the organisation of adolescent education to the related issues of a common leaving age, the abolition of fees and a common code of regulations.<sup>1</sup> He returned to the theme of parity between secondary schools in March 1945.<sup>2</sup>

'There is no reason to suppose that the modern secondary schools will necessarily be regarded as inferior to the more specialised grammar and technical secondary schools. On the contrary, the former, if wisely planned, are likely to provide the education best calculated to give the majority of boys and girls a hopeful start in life'.

He had dropped his demand 'that modern secondary schools and grammar school be merged into the county secondary school'.<sup>3</sup> His earlier fear that unless 'all sorts of secondary education were combined in a single institution they would not be regarded in future as on an equal level of importance' was replaced by an optimistic belief that all types of secondary school would be held in equal esteem.

Of less immediate importance to Tawney was the question of curricula.<sup>4</sup> Though, on occasions, he had disagreed with the Spens and Norwood Reports on the relative importance of the multilateral school, his views on curricula were orthodox. In his press reviews of these reports,<sup>5</sup> he accepted their basic assumption that there were three broad kinds of ability and a type of education suited to each. He had no criticisms to offer of the section of the Spens Report

1. See p.p. 339-369

2. M.G. March 31st 1945 'A Starting Point'.

3. Report p.22.

4. Within the Labour Party questions concerning curricula scarcely arose (Barker Op.Cit. Chapter VIII). Tawney could not therefore expect much help or inspiration from it.

5. M.G. 30th December 1938. 'The Spens Report).

M.G. 23rd August 1943. 'The Norwood Report'.

concerned with 'The Content of the Curriculum',<sup>1</sup> believing that the 'Committee had done its work well'. The only point of disagreement he had with the Norwood Committee was that they had 'erred on the side of caution in allowing the School Certificate to survive another seven years' and so continue its undue pressure on the curriculum. In the main he saw his role as that of publicising rather than criticising the findings of these Committees.

In the case of the latter, Tawney accepted a slogan of 'forward with Norwood'. He echoed the Reports' indictment of an unduly academic or over intellectualised secondary education, overcrowded timetables and the distortion of the timetable by pressure of examinations. The School Certificate examination 'had substituted order for anarchy but has now done its work'.<sup>2</sup> There were two hurdles, the 11+ examination and the leaving examination by which schools were judged. The result was 'over pressure in which precocious cleverness may thrive but more important qualities, needing leisure and reflection in order to mature are liable to be smothered'. Tawney accepted the Committee's recommendation concerning internal examination 'conducted by the teachers at the school on syllabuses and papers framed by themselves'.<sup>3</sup>

Tawney also examined 'the distortion and domination' of the secondary school curricula by the insertion of some branches of knowledge simply because they were of importance to adults'. This implied a misconception of the nature of the educational process and of the relation of school studies to adult life. Children should not be regarded as young adults any more than adults should be looked on as old children. 'An education which is to aid their harmonious development must deal with them at the stage of life at which they

1. p.164-197.
2. M.G. 23rd August 1943 'The Norwood Report'.
3. Norwood Report p.140.

stand. The business of the school, therefore, is not to anticipate the interests arising from adult experience by inflicting them on children to whom that experience is yet a closed book'. Tawney's plea was thus for 'a child-centred education .... to aid and clarify the interests within their grasp and to introduce them to new interests as they become ripe for them'. To aid such development the rigid separation of knowledge into departments must be overcome. Hence he concluded 'What matters is less the name by which it is called than the spirit in which it is taught'. In this perhaps he went beyond the Norwood Committee, who in their comments upon the teaching of History<sup>1</sup> never went so far as Tawney in stating, 'The best teaching of history may be given in the literature lesson and the best literature teaching in one on Scripture'.

On the Norwood proposals for the teaching of Civics, Tawney had little to say except that Civics should not be regarded simply as another subject. The cultivation of civic virtues was a matter not primarily of instruction but of example and practice and the school which best prepared its pupils for 'the exercise of social rights and responsibilities' was one which was itself a good society. The answer to the question of curricula was not the addition of more subjects but to 'simplify, unify and vitalise .... in schools and universities alike. This is the formula of salvation'.

Tawney's other comments on curricula were contained in the Report which was prepared for the Labour Party but jettisoned before it was completed. In this, he adopted an historical approach to the question. His starting point was the new schools which emerged after 1902 and 'took over with little modification the educational conceptions which had been made familiar by the older institutions'.<sup>2</sup>

1. Norwood Report, Chapter V.
2. Report for the Labour Party. Section III 'The Content of Education' p.14 (L.S.E. Papers Box labelled 'The Labour Party and Education').

He thus turned to the broader issues affecting the curricula rather than the piecemeal appraisal of particular recommendations of the Spens and Norwood Reports, which had characterised his comments in the press. The curriculum was too academic; its backbone was the subjects studied at a more advanced stage in the Universities. The result was that secondary education had been over-intellectualised and too often judged by examination results. 'Their results not infrequently resembled the stamp on the parcel, the contents of which had dropped out in the post.'<sup>1</sup> Such an education made 'insufficient appeal both to aesthetic and to practical interests'. As the 'diversity of taste and capacity' among future secondary school pupils would be wider than in the past there was a great need for diversity of educational provision.

The secondary school should not impart 'specialised technical qualification' but ought to recognise that as 'pupils grow towards maturity their interests will be coloured by the thought of the part which they will play in the world and the occupations they will pursue'.<sup>2</sup> School work should thus be made relevant 'to the world around them and their future careers'. What mattered most was not the content of the curriculum 'but the angle from which it is approached and the spirit in which it is handled by the teacher'. 'Humane' and 'vocational' studies were conventionally contrasted but for Tawney it was a contrast with little substance. A humane education was not one which gave prominence to the particular subjects traditionally described as the humanities but one which 'introduces the pupils to the major interests, activities and achievements of mankind. It is possible for such an education to be based on the great crafts, which are the foundation of civilization, agriculture, building, engineering and seamanship as are the study of literature and mathematics'.

1. Labour Report p.16.

2. p.19.

Tawney underlined the Norwood Committee's recommendation that, 'The curriculum of the Lower School should be roughly common to all schools'.<sup>1</sup> He believed that in the earlier stages of the secondary school course 'a differential curriculum is neither necessary nor desirable'.<sup>2</sup> During the first two years when 'the children are being sorted out and some provisional estimate of their varying aptitudes and capacities being made' the curriculum should be made as broad as possible and substantially the same for all. When that period was over there should be a gradual increased differentiation but it was important 'that education should not be dissolved into a collection of unrelated specialisms'. The problem of the later years was to maintain a due balance between the common code of the curriculum, consisting of activities and studies required by all children, and those designed to enable 'different groups among them to develop their varying bents. In the case of the former, the unifying principle was to be that advocated by the Norwood Committee,<sup>3</sup> the education of the future citizen. By this Tawney meant an education that will fit 'children for the responsibilities of democratic citizenship and lay the foundations for an understanding of the world which they will enter'.<sup>4</sup> He was awake to the danger that such an education could be reduced simply to the teaching of civics which could overload youthful minds with a mass of inert information or abstract ideas. The cultivation of civic virtues, he repeated, was a matter of example and practice, not primarily of instruction. Furthermore, an education for democratic citizenship was as much a goal of other subjects such as History and Geography.

1. Norwood Report Recommendation 6. p.139
2. Labour Report p.19.
3. Norwood Report p.58-59
4. Labour Report P.20.

An emphasis upon education for democratic citizenship was to be expected from reports compiled in time of war against dictators. The war also caused priority of place in 'the common nucleus' to be given to physical education. Tawney believed that this common nucleus should include physical education, English, Religious Instruction and 'some form of practical work'. At the same time there should be an increasing measure of specialisation. 'Some of the pupils will have an academic bent, and will carry languages',<sup>1</sup> or history, geography or maths and science to a more advanced level; others will have artistic gifts; others again will best develop their powers by some form of practical work and studies related to it'. Accepting the Norwood Committee's notion of three types of ability, Tawney added that the last two groups would probably be in a considerable majority.

Tawney always had an interest in rural schools. In rural areas, schools should make full use of 'their fortunate circumstances' by exploiting the wealth of educational stimulus to be derived from agriculture and the sciences serving it. But the purpose was not 'to produce little craftsmen. It is to offer young people an education which is related to his own interests, cultivate initiative and adaptability and to give them some insight into the world about them.' The small rural school keyed to the interests of the local community remained his ideal.

This concept of the secondary school greatly affected Tawney's thinking on continued education.<sup>2</sup> Continued education was 'best regarded as a species of secondary education', and should aim at combining 'a cultural with a practical education'. The former should be as realistic as possible in the sense of making a free use of

1. Tawney accepted the Norwood Report's recommendations concerning foreign languages. Norwood Report, p. 70, 73, 74, 76, 118.
2. Labour Report p.24.

material drawn from everyday life. 'It should deal with the practical problems of health and home management. It should interest pupils in social and political institutions as they work today in their own localities. It should help them to realise that government is not a mystery, but their own business and history not a story told in books but a process going on beneath their own eyes'. Again he emphasised that the principal object of education, whether secondary or continued, was not to give a special training for particular trades, which could be done better in the workshop and the technical school. Its chief purpose was to provide 'opportunities of practice in the handling of tools and materials, to give some insight into the scientific background of industrial processes, to impart a general knowledge of the facts of the industrial system, and of the place of local industries within it'.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Further Campaigns against Economies in Education

Before his departure for China in the autumn of 1930 Tawney wrote a letter to the W.E.A.'s Executive Committee expressing his good wishes for the Association's future, and 'for its educational campaign'. By the time that it was read out to the Executive Committee in February 1931<sup>2</sup> the future of the latter seemed bleak. The Labour Government in that month was attacked by the Conservatives for its financial extravagance, and the threat of another Geddes Axe seemed imminent<sup>3</sup> when a Committee on National Expenditure was set up under Sir George May. The Economic Advisory Council, to which Tawney had been appointed while absent in China, failed to cope with the problem

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1. p.25.

2. W.E.A. - E.C. Feb. 13th 1931.

3. Lowat Op.Cit. p.379.

of unemployment so that by the time that he returned to England for a brief spell in the summer of 1931 unemployment had risen to over 2,800,000. Things grew worse in July 1931 when the financial crises affecting Europe hit London. The remedy was sought in a balanced budget which entailed drastic economies. The tradition of the twenties had placed education in the forefront of economies; it could scarcely expect to remain unscathed.

Tawney realised the vulnerable position in which education found itself when he returned to England from China in mid June. Writing to Bishop Bell in July 1931,<sup>1</sup> he expressed his anxiety about 'the future prospects of educational reorganisation' and believed he would be better employed in a campaign against economies than in returning to China on behalf of the League of Nations.

'I am wobbling. I don't want to go but I feel a coward in refusing so I'm hanging fire in a contemptible manner'. Bell was concerned about Tawney's health and urged him to ask the League to find another man.<sup>2</sup> However, despite Tawney having 'begged them several times a la jonah to get someone else', he became resigned to the idea of returning to China.

He left England on August 31st, 1931 leaving Clay, the W.E.A.'s acting President to initiate a campaign against the educational economies which MacDonald had tried to justify in a letter to the Association's Executive Committee.<sup>3</sup> Tawney was in full agreement with the Association's reply to the Prime Minister. It deeply regretted 'the steps taken by His Majesty's Government to reduce expenditure on education' and believed that they would have 'the effect of retarding

1. Tawney to Bell July 24th 1931 (Lambeth Palace Collection L.P.C.)

2. Bell to Tawney July 22nd 1931 (L.P.C.)

3. W.E.A. - E.C. November 7th 1931.



developments which had already been planned for essential reorganisation, and of undoing much of the preliminary planning upon which public money has been laid out since the publication of the Hadow Report.

Economies would rob many adolescents of the opportunity 'for complete social and individual development'. In consequence, the Association embarked on a campaign to resist economies in expenditure on education and to create 'an intelligent public outlook towards and sympathy for, educational progress'.

In December, in a letter to Bell, from Nanking,<sup>1</sup> Tawney gave his views upon the economic and political crises and the National Government's policy for education. He saw the economic crisis as 'the climax .... of thirteen years of international and national folly and greed', and the political crisis as the result of 'the tolerant, easygoing and pacific character of the socialist movement in Britain', which had distracted it from 'concentrating on essentials' and which had left it without effective policies in a time of emergency. He attacked the economic remedies put forward by the National Government, which had succeeded the Labour Government in August 1931. He opposed 'its onslaught on the happiness of children' in such measures as the reduction of expenditure on 'health and education'. The crisis and the thinking behind the proposed remedies was 'symptomatic .... of a vicious regimen and way of life' which would continue unless a more fundamental reappraisal of the causes of the crisis was undertaken. Tawney returned just before the New Year to give publicity to these views, and to lead the campaign initiated by the W.E.A. in his absence.

He began by stating in general the consequences of the National Government's policies, and as the year, 1932, progressed he singled out each of its proposals for specific comment. In March

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1. This letter of December 5th 1931, outlines the arguments which he later put forward in 'The Choice Before the Labour Party' (1934).

he summarised in a letter to Bell<sup>1</sup> the contents of an address given to an unnamed educational society. He stressed three consequences of governmental policy; firstly, 'the extreme wastefulness of these rapid changes of policy. An organisation is built up at considerable cost. It is then scrapped before any return is got from it. Later it has to be built up again'. Secondly, 'that what is being cut is not merely the frills but services which are vital to the entire health of the nation e.g. the school medical service'. Thirdly, 'the whole policy of reorganisation is paralysed. Such reduction of capital expenditure means that the regrading of schools cannot go on'. In his 'Manchester Guardian' leaders<sup>2</sup> he was more specific. He condemned proposals to raise the school entry age to six and to reduce the school leaving age to thirteen; such measures should not be allowed to be implemented especially in view of the crippling actions already taken in terms of the reduction of expenditure on medical services, books, furniture, equipment and playing fields'.

Under Tawney's direction the W.E.A. ordered its Districts to 'prepare their machinery', ready to mount a campaign in the early autumn.<sup>3</sup> It had already begun to prepare its case against further economy measures in education by collecting details of the age of compulsory school attendance in all of the European countries. A preliminary step was taken in July when Tawney headed an informal deputation to the Board of Education to place before it the Association's findings and recommendations. In September<sup>4</sup> the campaign gained momentum when the Association asked its President to prepare a pamphlet, under "some such title as 'Does Education Matter?'," to be circulated at protest meetings. Tawney chose instead a more emotive title 'The New Children's Charter'.

1. Tawney to Bell March 22nd 1932 (L.P.C.)
2. M.G. 10th May 1932 ('Saving Money on Education'; 19th September 1932 and 28th November 1932.
3. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. June 28th 1932.
4. W.E.A. - E.C. September 13th 1932.

Whilst he was drafting the pamphlet, the Board of Education issued Circular 1421. Four days after its issue Tawney summarised and attacked 'these new regulations' in an article in the 'Manchester Guardian'.<sup>1</sup> He claimed that they would reverse educational development by demanding that fees be charged in all grant-aided secondary schools and by requiring that fees should be increased that even if 'a child wins a free place parents must pay if they can afford it'. Progressive authorities such as Manchester would be forced to reintroduce fees in secondary schools, having abolished them. School fees would be raised by between fifty to seventy per cent and free places reduced from eighty or ninety per cent to forty. It was precisely these points that he developed in his pamphlet 'The New Children's Charter'.

In it, Tawney examined MacDonald's statements to the Association that 'no real harm' would come to the educational system and that, 'The Board of Education contemplated not only the maintenance of existing facilities but some measure of necessary new development' in the light of the Draft Regulations for Secondary Schools contained in Circular 1421. The principles embodied in the Circular were, Tawney argued, three in number. 'No more free secondary schools; no fees below nine guineas, and an increase of fees which are below fifteen guineas; no free places for children unless their parents satisfy a Means Test which requires that, as a condition of the award of a free place, the income of a family with one child shall not exceed a figure of £3 or £4 a week'. The regulations brought a storm of protest from those who were concerned with establishing free secondary education for all.<sup>2</sup>

Their effect would be to force one sixth of existing secondary

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1. 'The Government and Education' September 19th 1932.

2. 'The New Children's Charter' p.3.

schools to raise their fees by fifty per cent or over if the minimum fee was fixed at nine guineas; if the Board insisted that fees below fifteen guineas should also be raised then at least three quarters of the schools would be affected.<sup>1</sup> The imposition of a means test would 'mean that even parents with incomes above the low limit fixed by the Board would not be able to afford to pay the greatly increased school fees.' Even the London County Council, 'not a particularly progressive Authority .... finds it necessary to award free places to parents with incomes between two and three times as large as the figure which the Board has chosen as the exemption-limit'.<sup>2</sup> Tawney concluded that even if the principle of a means test were accepted, the income-limit for a free place should be raised to not less than £6 per week', and the fees should be reduced 'to £5.5s. and £9.9s.' Only the earnings of the head of the family should be taken into account whilst the greatest care should be taken to allow for such factors as sickness, short-time, unemployment and special domestic liabilities.

For Tawney, however, the major question was one of principle, namely 'Do we desire to establish in England the maximum possible equality of educational opportunity or do we not?' He detected in the new regulations the confirmation and reinvigoration of 'the hereditary curse both on English education and on English society which associated educational opportunity with money'. Using the evidence gathered by the Association on the French system of secondary education, he contrasted the French government's policy of 'continuing till French secondary education is free throughout' with the government's policy. Behind the regulations which were to come into force in April 1933, was a policy which emphasised economic class and social stratification.<sup>3</sup>

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1. p.4.

2. p.5.

3. p.8.

It is interesting that Tawney, in his pamphlet called to his support those who had signed a letter in 'The Times' on September 12th 1932. The letter signed by such eminent persons as Beveridge, Pigou, Hilton, Robertson and Bell had warned the government against further educational economies. Tawney's correspondence with the latter reveals the important part which he played in its publication. In early August Tawney forwarded to Bell<sup>1</sup> a letter 'signed by influential persons', which the Manchester Education Committee, Lady Simon, and others felt should be sent to the press. Expressing his alarm that 'the educational situation would be very serious in the following Autumn,' Tawney urged Bell to sign the letter, for Sadler, Hadow, Temple, Nunn and others had already given the letter their support. By early September, the number of signatories was described as 'pretty weighty, and the problem arose of who should send the letter to 'The Times'. He believed that if the W.E.A. sent it 'The Times' would be unwilling to publish it; if he himself forwarded it with a covering letter, he believed the result would be the same. 'I have known it do that before now'. Eventually Tawney helped to draft the covering letter which Bell after some initial reluctance, forwarded to 'The Times' with the letter containing the list of signatories.

By the end of October 1932, the W.E.A. was stepping up its campaign against economies. Though the idea of a deputation to the Board of Education was rejected, a deputation to the Association of Education Committees was agreed on. Also it was resolved that Tawney should meet Morgan Jones, M.P., to discuss the advisability of holding a meeting of Members of Parliament to agree upon future possible lines of action. The President was also requested to draw up a questionnaire to be used by Branches and Districts in the forthcoming municipal

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1. Tawney to Bell August 13th 1932 (L.P.C.)

2. . . . - T.E.A.C. 24th November 1932.

elections. However, in November, the Association decided that 'the present campaign be concluded by the end of the year but on the publication of the Ray Committee's Report immediate consideration would be given to further activities'.<sup>1</sup> This decision by the Executive Committee did not prevent Tawney from continuing the campaign in the columns of the 'Manchester Guardian',<sup>2</sup> where he reiterated the points made in the pamphlet, which he had drafted during the preceding summer.

Before the close of the year, the Finance and General Purposes Committee of the W.E.A., under Tawney's chairmanship had before it a memorandum on the sections of the Ray Report concerning education. The memorandum was discussed and amended and a pamphlet, based upon the modified memorandum, was issued in January 1933 to serve as a focal point for a renewed campaign against economies in education. As in previous campaigns, however, the issue of a pamphlet expressing the Association's views was the prelude to a broader campaign. Tawney suggested to the Association that it should arrange for leading trade unionists to sign a manifesto which would be sent to the press, urge 'literary persons of standing such as Galsworthy' to send a letter to the press, consult with the N.U.T. on the possibility of a London demonstration and explore the avenues by which the W.E.A. could co-operate with the Education Defence Council.<sup>3</sup> To these suggestions was added a further line of action, that Tawney should chair a meeting in the Autumn at which such persons as Bevin, Citrine, Nicholson, Fisher, Sadler, Moberley and Wootton should be invited to speak.<sup>4</sup>

The comments of the W.E.A. concerning the Ray Report,

1. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. 14th November 1932.
2. M.G. November 28th 1932 'Education and Economy'.
3. W.E.A. - G.P.F.C. January 13th 1933.
4. W.E.A. - G.P.F.C. March 10th 1933.

published at the beginning of 1933, began with a hint of the future discussions over the school-leaving age. The halt in legislation which involved Local Authorities in fresh expenditure, recommended in the Report, was regarded as particularly damaging to the future prospects of raising the school leaving age and of implementing the recommendations concerning registration and inspection made by the Departmental Committee on Private Schools.<sup>1</sup> The system of block grants in the place of percentage grants, which the Report advocated, would 'tend to encourage parsimonious expenditure by reactionary Authorities, and thus check progress'. The Association also raised objections to the recommendations for closing small schools, amalgamating small departments, reducing school staffs, charging fees in selective central schools, concentrating advanced work in a few selected schools and increasing fees for evening and day classes. It also attacked proposals for the revision of the scale of maintenance allowances and the reduction of expenditure on such special services as the school medical service and special schools.

Tawney's particular concerns, expressed in a private memorandum on educational policy<sup>2</sup> and in his Manchester Guardian leaders, were the effects of the Ray Committee's recommendations upon the prospects of the implementation of the Hadow proposals and the thinking which was behind the demand for educational economies. Regarding the latter he believed 'the Board of Education to be the office boy of the Treasury' and the Treasury the tool of the Conservative party's dislike of educational equality. The economies in education which the Conservatives claimed the economic situation demanded, were a pretext for attacks on the 'standard of education that is being given to the child of poor parents and which is in very many

1. 'Summary of Educational Recommendations of the Ray Report with Brief Comments' (W.E.A. pamphlet) p.2.
2. Unnamed typescript on Education and Educational Policy written sometime in 1933 (L.S.E. Papers - Collection labelled 'Memoranda on Education and Educational Policy').

cases superior to that which the middle class parent is providing for his own child'.<sup>1</sup> Every measure which was taken to reduce educational inequality was seen by the Conservatives as a menace to social privilege and aroused their bitter opposition. The object of Conservative policy was to preserve and if possible to deepen the lines of social class which the educational system reflected. To illustrate his point, Tawney examined Conservative policy in relation to free school places and school fees. Fees had been increased and the number of free places reduced to prevent the class system being undermined, as it might be if the doors of education were thrown open too widely.

The Labour Party, when next in power, should reverse the Conservative policy which regarded secondary education as a privilege to which children were to be admitted only either if their parents could afford to pay or if they gave proof of exceptional capacity. Though Tawney did not go into the issue of the organisation of secondary schools, he demanded that 'the next Labour Government must make it clear from the start that it is not merely going to offer rather better educational opportunities to the children of workers but that it stands for complete educational equality'.<sup>2</sup> Following the Hadow proposals, he urged the abolition of fees, the reorganisation of schools with a unified secondary system and the raising of the school leaving age. In the case of the latter, he examined the choice of method. A date could be fixed in the near future for raising the school leaving age to fifteen and two years later to sixteen. Alternatively an Act could raise the leaving age to 15 and confer powers on the Board to raise it to 16 by Orders in Council or the

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1. p.2.

2. p.5.



leaving age could be raised to 15 with local authorities empowered by bye-law to raise it to 16. Having little faith in most local authorities, Tawney argued that the first method was preferable but that the second was infinitely more suitable than the third.

In his Manchester Guardian editorials,<sup>1</sup> Tawney pointed to the difference between 'Lord Irwin, the orator and Lord Irwin, the Minister'. He found little difficulty in contrasting Lord Irwin's words to the North of England Education Committee which supported the Hadow Committee's recommendations, with his actions in reducing expenditure in education and thus defeating the chances of implementing them. Irwin still supported the organisation of education on lines of economic class and social stratification and had made educational policy the battleground of something like a class struggle. Tawney argued that the Government ought 'to be forced into the open on its education policy and asked whether it intended to continue to discourage authorities from carrying out reorganisation on the lines of the Hadow Report'.

Within the W.E.A. Tawney drafted a resolution to put before the Association's Annual Conference.<sup>2</sup> It reiterated the demand that 'the reorganisation of public education on the lines of Hadow should now proceed to completion without delay, that the leaving age be raised to fifteen, that maintenance allowances should be provided and that the Board of Education should encourage expenditure on school building.' He still saw the most practical and immediate line of advance as the increase in the number of schools providing a form of secondary

1. M.G. January 9th 1933, 'Lord Irwin and Education'.  
M.G. April 21st 1933, 'Education'.  
M.G. July 10th 1933 'The Educational Future; Whither Education'.  
M.G. November 25th 1933, 'The National Government and Education'.  
The points expressed in these leaders are also found in his speeches at protest meetings, some manuscript copies of which are kept at Temple House.
2. W.E.A. - E.C. July 1st 1933.

education within the elementary system. On the subject of examinations, he surveyed 'the recent evidence on the effect of examinations in school, and included in the resolution a demand for 'the consideration of the scope and purpose of secondary education and its relation to other parts of the educational system'. Tawney was anxious lest 'the broad cultural education suited to the needs of the majority of pupils was crippled by the pressure of exams'.

In an address to a protest meeting<sup>1</sup> Tawney expressed his 'abhorrence of any system under which the whole future of a child is decided by a competitive examination held at eleven or twelve. There can not be any satisfactory system of selection at that age'. Though he condemned the existing system of selection which was to decide 'not what kind of secondary education a child is to receive but whether it is to receive secondary education', he had little to say about the problems involved in the selection of children for secondary schools organised on the lines of Hadow. His chief concern was to ensure that the secondary school course was of sufficient duration to be effective, once that selection had taken place. Thus towards the end of 1933 and early in 1934 he redirected his energies to the issue of the school leaving age.

### 3. The School Leaving Age and the Education Act of 1936.

From the time of his return from China in 1931 until 1933 Tawney had been fighting a rearguard action in the movement against economies in education. However in 1933 economic recovery, despaired of in 1931, was in the air<sup>2</sup> and an improvement in education seemed possible. Tawney, always sensitive to signs in favour of progress

1. Undated but probably that for which the resolution was prepared. A manuscript copy is preserved at Temple House.

2. Mowat Op.Cit. p.432.

in education, turned his attention once more to the issue of raising the school leaving age. Matters concerning selection he left to the psychologist; the problems of the forms which adolescent education should take, he left to the administrator and the educationalist; curricula, in his view, was the concern chiefly of the teacher. To a nation which still had 2.5 millions unemployed, the matter of the raising of the school leaving age had an appeal which went far beyond educational circles.

Two events early in 1934 helped to focus Tawney's attention on the leaving age. In January the N.U.T. invited the W.E.A. to appoint representatives to attend a meeting on the subject.<sup>1</sup> The following month the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education asked the W.E.A. to prepare a memorandum on 'the organisation and interrelation of schools, other than those administered under the Elementary Code which provide education for pupils beyond the age of 11+, regard being paid in particular to the framework and content of the education of pupils who did not remain at school beyond the age of 16'.<sup>2</sup> Without the certainty that the leaving age would be raised ultimately to 16, Tawney regarded the exercise as lacking conviction.

In February 1934, with the unemployment figures high enough to add considerable weight to his arguments, Tawney produced a pamphlet entitled 'The School Leaving Age and Juvenile Unemployment'. Whilst he emphasised that it 'was not expedient to make educational policy dependent on the state of the labour market at any given moment' he added that 'when the economic situation is such as to add support to a policy which is educationally sound, it is proper that

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1. W.E.A. - G.P.F.C. January 19th 1934.

2. W.E.A. - G.P.F.C. February 23rd 1934.

due weight should be given to that consideration'. Though juvenile unemployment was not a new phenomenon, two new factors were present in the situation which strengthened the argument for keeping children at school longer. There was an increase in the number of young persons requiring to be absorbed into industry at a time when industry had a diminished capacity for absorbing them.

Tawney turned to the clauses of the Government's Unemployment Bill to see to what extent it could meet the new situation. He summarised its three main provisions;<sup>1</sup> firstly the local authorities should make a survey of the number of those between fourteen and eighteen who were unemployed or in part-time occupations, and if necessary submit proposals for courses of instruction to the Minister of Labour; secondly the Minister of Labour, after gaining the consent of the Treasury and consulting the Board of Education, may approve the courses and oblige the Local Authorities to implement them. If the Minister of Labour believes that insufficient provision has been made then the Local Authority has to make the necessary provision within three months; thirdly the Minister of Labour may require if he thinks fit, the attendance at authorised courses by fourteen to eighteen year old people, the machinery of compulsion being the Education Act of 1921.<sup>2</sup>

Tawney regarded such proposals as 'a poor makeshift' to the universal raising of the school leaving age. The layman finds it difficult to believe that so elaborate a mill may succeed nevertheless in grinding nothing but air .... Majestic phraseology does not by itself butter parsnips'.<sup>3</sup> He raised several objections to the scheme. Most authorities were already sceptical about the value of junior instruction centres, and doubted whether the Minister of Labour

1. 'The School Leaving Age and Juvenile Unemployment' (W.E.A. pamphlet) p.4.

2. p. 6-8

3. p.9.

would coerce authorities. It was for Tawney another example of the way in which a Conservative Government was avoiding doing justice to all children by raising the school leaving age and implementing the Hadow proposals for a four year secondary course.

The universal raising of the school leaving age to fifteen and later to sixteen was desirable on social and educational grounds. 'Compulsion to attend a properly organised school for a definite period is one thing; compulsion on young persons who are in and out of industry and who, when out, are only eager to get back to it .... is quite another'. Neither from the teacher's point of view was 'the shifting membership of classes' a good thing. Tawney realised that alternative methods of keeping young people at school were not without their difficulties. He examined the ideas of raising the school age by law but not implementing the measure everywhere at the same time, and of raising the school age by bye-law. Though the former was preferable it had several weaknesses. In particular if the leaving age was to be raised at once in a whole region it relied upon the co-operation between authorities. He maintained his opposition to the idea of local bye-laws to raise the school age to fifteen.

In place of the Government's schemes and the schemes suggested by other bodies, Tawney put forward a plan involving the insertion of three provisions in the Bill. Firstly, local authorities should be empowered to raise the age by one year above the statutory minimum which would be fifteen. Secondly the bill should fix the dates when the leaving age should be universally raised to 16. Thirdly the Board should be empowered to raise the leaving age to 16 when it was economically expedient. Such a scheme would create employment for unemployed teachers, and make savings in unemployment benefits, evening schools and courses for unemployed juveniles which 'were very far from being negligible'.<sup>1</sup> The Local Authorities would be able to

make their plans in advance and also the Board would have power to

1. Ibid. p.12.

act in an emergency.

Despite the strength of the economic argument in favour of raising the school leaving age, Tawney regarded it as 'a secondary issue'.<sup>1</sup> The matter was essentially one of humanity and social justice. 'Capricious educational inequalities which make it impossible for a nation to develop the full powers of its children are offensive to humanity and good sense'.<sup>2</sup> To those who objected to the 'reckless extravagance' of such a measure, he pointed out that only 'one-fourtieth of annual output' was devoted to education. To 'a government which could find money for everything from agriculture to armaments', the cost was trifling. Such was the fundamental argument of a series of lectures delivered at Oxford, Cambridge and elsewhere in 1934 and 1935<sup>3</sup> and a number of leaders in the Manchester Guardian.<sup>4</sup>

Further improvements in the economic situation in 1935<sup>5</sup> led Tawney to believe that the financial objections to the measure had lost much of their strength. Yet it was not simply a question of sitting back and expecting the Government to introduce educational reforms. Though 'the subject of the leaving age had been discussed threadbare', pressure on the Government had to be maintained, especially with an election pending. In June 1935 he noted with approval the intention of the Government to withdraw Circular 1413, a belated repentance being better than none at all. The main obstacle in the way of reform was no longer financial, for the Government had signalled the go-ahead for further expenditure; it was the opposition of employers who feared

1. M.G. July 12th 1934 'The School Age'.
2. 'The School Leaving Age and Juvenile Unemployment' p.16.
3. For an examination of these lectures see p.p. 297-298.
4. 21st February 1935, 'A Strong Case'  
1st May 1935, 'Education Questions'  
2nd May 1935, 'Progress of Education'  
19th June 1935, 'Policy in Education'  
17th August 1935, 'Problems of Education'  
31st October 1935, 'A Question of Brass Tacks'  
16th December 1935, 'The Educational Outlook'.
5. Mowat Op.Cit. p.433

a diminution in the supply of juvenile labour,<sup>1</sup> and the government's dislike 'of fixing the same minimum age for leaving school for different children in different localities'.<sup>2</sup>

When the Government's plans were made known concerning the leaving age, controversy centred upon the proposals for exemptions for beneficial employment. As soon as it was known that the Conservatives had won the November election with a majority of 247 over the opposition, Lawney produced a memorandum on the Government's education policy for circulation to the W.E.A. Districts,<sup>3</sup> and drafted a resolution for the Association's Annual Conference. In the latter, he summarised his attitude to the Conservative plans for adolescent education.

'It (the Annual Conference) regrets that the undertaking of the Government to raise the school leaving age to 15 is accompanied by proposals as to exemptions which are likely to deprive that essential reform of the greater part of its value, contains no reference to the provision of maintenance allowances and gives no indication of the date at which the measure will be brought into operation. It records its conviction that

1. A Bill raising the school leaving age to 15+ and fixing a date at which attendance to 15 will become obligatory should be among the earliest measures of the new Parliament.

2. Such a Bill should not be qualified by any provisions for exemptions whether for beneficial employment or for other reasons since exemptions in adding to the administrative difficulties will deprive many children of the opportunity of completing a four years' post-primary school course and will gravely prejudice the effective working of the Hadow scheme of reorganisation.

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1. M.G. June 19th 1935.

2. M.G. October 31st 1935.

3. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. 22nd November 1935.

3. Provision for the payment of maintenance allowances, as and when necessary, should be included in the Bill'.<sup>1</sup>

The scheme of exemptions, which undermined the effectiveness of the Bill, was an attempt to evade the demand for maintenance allowances and 'partly to stop the mouths of the less intelligent of its agricultural supporters, and partly to pacify employers who fear a shortage of juvenile labour'.<sup>2</sup> In his last leader in the 'Manchester Guardian' of 1935, he reiterated the shortcomings of the Government's proposals, which he examined in more detail in his pamphlet 'The School Age and Exemptions' drafted in February of the following year, and discussed at the first meeting of the Association's Executive and Central Committees in the New Year.

In a discussion<sup>3</sup> which involved Thompson, Elvin, Garstang, Green, Clynes and Tawney, the latter pointed to the ambiguity of the term 'exemptions' and outlined the least objectionable form which they could take. The Government's electoral programme had pledged it to grant exemptions if the school leaving age was raised to fifteen. The intention was to impose a statutory obligation on local authorities to grant exemptions but if pressure were brought it might instead simply give powers to local authorities to give exemptions when they thought fit. Pressure on the government might induce it 'to substitute the less objectionable form'. Thompson and Elvin pressed for co-operation with the T.U.C. in a propaganda campaign. Garstang also favoured as full a campaign as possible involving as many bodies as could be persuaded to co-operate. Clynes urged the lobbying of M.P.'s and 'a properly organised meeting in one of the Committee Rooms of the House of Commons'. It was left to the Association's Finance

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1. Ibid.

2. M.G. October 31st 1935.

3. W.E.A. - C.C. 11th January 1936.



and General Purposes Committee to arrange a protest meeting in February at the Central Hall, Westminster. In addition, Tawney's pamphlet on 'The School Age and Exemptions' was to be circulated in proof form to members of Parliament and was to be revised in the light of the debate during the Bill's second reading.<sup>1</sup> He received the full support of the Association's Education Advisory Committee and Shearman, the Association's Education Officer, who was in constant contact with Tawney.<sup>2</sup>

The first six sections of the Government's Bill were concerned with raising the school leaving age to 15 'in the case of some persons with exemptions and with conditions on which such exempted children may be employed'. Sections 7 to 11 empowered the L.E.A.'s to make grants for a limited period to non-provided schools for the purpose of providing for children over 14 or facilitating reorganisation. For Tawney, that by which the Bill should be judged was simply 'the objective of raising the leaving age to 15' and it was mainly the first six sections of the Bill which were discussed especially the clauses for requiring attendance at school up to the age of 15 from September 1st 1939, and the obligation upon local authorities to grant an 'employment certificate' to an intended employer if the employment of a child of 14 was deemed beneficial; also exemptions could be granted if exceptional hardships would be caused by keeping a child at school until the age of 15.<sup>3</sup>

Predictably, it was the meaning of the term 'beneficial employment' and the complications which a system of exemptions

1. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. February 28th 1936.
2. Several pieces of their correspondence are to be found among Tawney's papers at the London School of Economics and Political Science. They have survived because Tawney chose to write his public speeches on the back of them.
3. 'The School Age and Exemptions' p.6.

introduced which concerned Tawney. In estimating whether a particular form of employment was beneficial it was necessary to consider the nature of the employment, wages and hours, opportunities for further education and the time available for recreation. Tawney regarded such a system as exceedingly complex, "especially as what was regarded as 'beneficial employment' for one child was not necessarily beneficial to another". A certificate was to be given to a particular child for a particular employment and the local authority was obliged to take legal action against an employer if he failed to comply with the terms of employment. Such demands on the resources of the local authorities, especially in view of the fact that 'children often take on several jobs in a short time' would be excessive. In addition, the authority had to provide for the education of those who had not gained 'beneficial employment'.

At the very least, 'a novel if not inconsiderable burden would be placed on local authorities', which the Government would find hard to justify. The Government had rejected the 'simplicity of the universal raising of the leaving age to 15 with maintenance allowances for three reasons. Such a measure presupposed a uniformity in the economic, industrial and occupational conditions throughout the country, which did not exist; in addition, it ignored the fact that for many children retention at school was not the best thing and ignored the wishes and circumstances of parents. The first objection Tawney rejected as 'a confusion of thought' scarcely to be regarded as a model of logic; neither did the second objection stand up to close examination. A system of exemptions did not ensure that the children best qualified to profit by an extra year at school would remain there until the age of 15; 'the brighter children would find beneficial employment easiest especially if their parents were poor'.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore it was scarcely the correct way of allowing for 'individual

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1. p.18.

differences of capacity' by turning the more capable children into industry at 14 .... The sensible method for catering for individual differences was that stated in Hadow.

Tawney went on to examine the additional arguments for exemptions put forward by Stanley, the Conservative President of the Board of Education, in the House of Commons on February 13th 1936. Stanley's argument that the universal raising of the leaving age would be 'too sudden a shock' was dismissed by Tawney on the grounds that three years' preparation time would be sufficient. He then went on to examine the traditional Conservative argument against the use of compulsion to keep children at school. Stanley, using the argument of his Conservative predecessors in office pointed out that when the education offered was of a sufficiently high quality then parents by their own volition would leave their children at school until the age of 15+. In answer to this, Tawney underlined the fact that 'the poorest parents were not free agents'. Pressure upon the elder children to go into the factory to supplement family income was stronger than the desire to stay on at school, no matter how high the quality of education offered. A universal raising of the leaving age with adequate maintenance allowances was the only just method.

In practice, there would be 'insuperable administrative objections' to a scheme of exemptions, which, if imposed on local authorities would present such a colossal task that there would be 'a tendency to descend to the lowest level of the least progressive authority'. In addition, education authorities would be faced with the difficulties of planning courses for classes which were in a constant state of flux. Such a scheme raised other problems. In an area where there were only one or two great industries a local authority would hesitate to make a formal declaration that such industries were not beneficial to children. The pressure upon authorities would

always be in the favour of granting exemptions; it would be difficult for one authority to pursue a different policy from its neighbours. The basic objection, however, was that the Conservative scheme continued 'the vicious circle which binds the poverty in one generation to the lack of educational opportunity in the next'.<sup>1</sup> Because of the poverty of many parents, children who would benefit from staying at school would be forced to leave. The circle could only be broken by the universal raising of the leaving age to 15 and the provision of adequate maintenance allowances.

Tawney summarised his views in a penny pamphlet<sup>2</sup> published by the W.E.A. in its campaign against exemptions, and presented them to a wider audience in his 'Manchester Guardian' leaders. In the latter,<sup>3</sup> he was able to call to his support such eminent people as Sir Percy Jackson. Even such 'non-revolutionary bodies as the County Councils Association' had protested against the scheme, and had been further angered by the Board's refusal to accept a deputation on the matter. The underlying fear of the bodies which had raised their voices in protest was that the number of exempted children would be an actual majority. 'The Government had attempted to bluff men more experienced than itself by a trick which would hardly have deceived one of the children whom it is anxious to turn out of school at 14 .... It had drafted a bill to raise the school age to 15 and provided, in effect, that in the case of half the children or more the school age shall not be raised'.<sup>4</sup>

In March 1936,<sup>5</sup> Tawney advocated 'amendments to the Bill which would make it a more serious one'. He suggested three possible lines

1. p.22.
2. 'What is Beneficial Employment: The Administration of the Education Act'. Also printed in The Highway, November 1937.
3. M.G. February 3rd 1936 'The Education Bill'
4. M.G. February 13th 1936 'Raising the School Age?'
5. M.G. March 12th 1936 'Education Bill Prospects'.

of approach. The first involved a compromise with a leaving age of 15 in order to restrict exemptions. The leaving age could be raised universally to fourteen years six months and exemptions could only be granted above that age. Secondly, the age could be raised to 15 over a period of three years by one term a year. Thirdly, the date at which the Bill came into operation could be delayed. Despite the publicity which Tawney gave to alternative proposals, it seemed to have little impact upon the Government. In April, the Education Advisory Committee of the W.E.A. concluded that 'no useful purpose could be served by carrying on the campaign against the Bill'. It was not in Tawney's character, however, to give up suddenly a campaign to which he had given his full support. Throughout 1936, he continued to denounce the exemptions which largely nullified the effectiveness of raising the leaving age. 'When the Bill becomes an act', he declared,<sup>1</sup> 'not much will have been achieved'.

Before the end of the year 'the sorry makeshift' was on the statute book. To Tawney this was not the end of the battle. He called upon the Government to 'undertake an honest attempt to make a practical reality of the principles of Hadow, which on paper are already accepted'. A society could reasonably look to its education system 'to promote and express a common culture .... to diminish class divisions .... to contribute to the mutual understanding between the different sections of the population'.<sup>2</sup> The Act of 1936 had taken but a short step in the direction of facilitating the reorganisation of adolescent education to achieve these ends. Nevertheless, despite its shortcomings, the Act had assisted educational progress and by 1938 Tawney was expressing his anxiety lest even its modest achievements would come to nought. In May 1938,<sup>3</sup> he reminded the nation that the

1. M.G. May 25th 1936, 'The Education Bill Again'.

2. M.G. August 17th 1937, 'Our Schools'.

3. M.G. May 27th 1938, 'The School Age'.

Act was to come into operation on September 1st 1939 yet some local authorities had made little preparation for it, especially in deciding the terms which were acceptable for exemption certificates. Furthermore, the effectiveness of the Act was likely to be undermined by another economy campaign which the Government was seeking to introduce.<sup>1</sup>

Tawney believed that the demand for economies in education came from two main sources. Firstly 'a series of reports had emphasised the increased cost of education and the desirability of reducing it'.<sup>2</sup> Secondly, many wished to starve education of financial resources in order to increase the nation's expenditure on armaments, necessitated by the precarious international situation.<sup>3</sup> To counter these demands, he chose as his subject for the Hobhouse Memorial Trust Lecture delivered at Bedford College, London, in May 1938, 'Some Thoughts on the Economics of Public Education'. He led his audience through the dark labyrinth of educational finance, demonstrated the effects upon educational provision of inadequate expenditure and urged the importance of 'increased investment in the nation's human resources'.

By early 1939, the pressure for increased expenditure on armaments made the proposals put forward in the Hobhouse Memorial Trust Lecture appear a pipe dream. A period of illness and his visit to the United States left Tawney little time to defend them. He did not entirely shelve the campaign for educational advance. Following the pattern of the preceding years, he opened the New Year<sup>4</sup> with a lengthy leader in the 'Manchester Guardian' which restated the Hadow case for reform of adolescent education. In August,<sup>5</sup> in the shadow of war he was not so much concerned with the lines of future advance as the task

1. M.G. June 9th 1938 'Education Policy'.
2. 'Some Thoughts on the Economics of Public Education' p.28.
3. Letter from Tawney to the W.E.A.'s Finance and General Purposes Committee (W.E.A.- F.G.P.C. September 30th 1938)
4. M.G. January 2nd 1939 'The Work of Secondary Schools'.
5. M.G. August 17th 1939 'Education in Time of Crisis'.

of maintaining existing standards, and to implement the Act of 1936. 'Within just over a fortnight the Act of 1936 raising the age of attendance to 15 will come into operation. The more progressive authorities have given a lead to the country by laying down stringent standards of administration to ensure that the conditions on which alone exemptions can legally be granted shall be strictly observed'. Alas for pious hopes! The second World War postponed the appointed day. It also produced a more comprehensive reform of public education, the Butler Act of 1944.

#### 4. The Early Problems of War

War was a schoolmaster, especially in searching out defects. It was not long before the nation was shocked by the revelations of evacuation,<sup>1</sup> and by the inadequate preparations for it. Shearman reported to the W.E.A.,<sup>2</sup> the 'neglect of education due to evacuation and the closing of schools commandeered by Military Authorities'.<sup>3</sup> Lady Simon, who had steered the work of the Association's Educational Advisory Committee, quickly produced a pamphlet outlining the problems and suggesting remedies. About one million children were in evacuation areas where schools were still closed. They had been left often to 'run wild'. The breakdown in compulsory attendance was bound to have repercussions on the physical health of working class children for schools were often their chief contact with medical and other communal services.<sup>4</sup> A move back to compulsory education was essential. Tawney was in full agreement. In his first 'Manchester Guardian'

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1. Lord Butler in 'The Art of the Possible' (p.92-93) briefly examines the revelations.
  2. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. October 16th 1939.
  3. 'The Children in War-Time' December 1939
  4. p.5-7.

leader of the war<sup>1</sup> echoed Lady Simon's plea. He demanded compulsory school attendance, and the introduction of the double shift system with paid helpers to assist teachers. The Government should end 'its hand-to-mouth policy' and set up a Commission of Enquiry to survey, as a matter of urgency the problems arising from evacuation.

These were the preliminary moves by the Association to a deputation to the President of the Board of Education. On January 27th 1940, Shearman informed Tawney that a meeting with Lord De la Warr had been agreed on.<sup>2</sup> The President was to receive a deputation on January 31st, when Tawney was to speak first after an introduction by Creech Jones M.P. Lady Simon was present on the occasion to hear Tawney's eulogy of her pamphlet and to listen to his description of 'the partial paralysis of education (which) many parents were beginning to regard as a disaster'. His plea for more 'boots and shoes .... (for) town children .... facing the rigours of a country winter'<sup>3</sup> was expanded by Lester Smith, Director of Education for Manchester, into a demand for fuller medical provision which could only be achieved through the restoration of compulsory school attendance. De la Warr was sympathetic to Lester Smith's argument and a week later indicated in Parliament, that he would restore compulsory education. He regretted the proposals for an independent survey, which led the deputation to believe that the Government was not fully aware of the problems of the reception areas. Further agitation by the Association's Districts and Branches could perhaps awaken the Government to the true position.

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1. January 5th 1940, 'The Problem of Children'.
  2. Shearman to Tawney 27th January 1940.
  3. Report of the W.E.A. deputation to the President compiled on February 8th 1940. A Memorandum was also produced for the Deputation.



Tawney repeated the points which the deputation had raised, in his leader in the 'Manchester Guardian' in March.<sup>1</sup> The darkest blot on the English education system was 'the persistent and callous neglect of the special needs of the adolescent'. There was no need to continue injustices by postponing the leaving age until the end of the war. He also began his broadside against the public schools.<sup>2</sup> 'The segregation of different groups of young people in different schools in accordance not with their needs and capacities but with parents' bank accounts was always an uncivilised proceeding and contrary to the national interest'.<sup>3</sup> With the 'phoney war' scarcely over, he was turning his attention to the structure of postwar society and education, a subject which increasingly occupied his attention as the war wore on. He had come to emphasise, early on in the war, the belief that future educational reform would enable the nation not only to exercise but to preserve 'the rights of citizenship'. The W.E.A. also had a duty to ensure that 'out of the welter of war and its sacrifices a real democracy and a new civilisation shall arise'.<sup>4</sup>

Reflection on the matters arising out of the January deputation to the Board, the information supplied by the Districts on such issues as the release of children below the age of 14 for work in agriculture, and the discussions of the Association's Education Advisory Committee led the Association to consider the publication of a manifesto on 'Public Education and The War'. The manifesto was to set out the principles necessary 'for the democratisation of Education after the War'.

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1. 'Issues in Education' 8th March 1940.
  2. 'Can Democracy Survive' April 1940. Tawney developed the theme of the future services of the W.E.A. to the reconstruction of society in a discussion with Harold Nicholson and representatives of the Ministry of Information (W.E.A. - E.C. July 10th 1940).
  3. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. July 19th 1940.
  4. See pp. 339-369.

But the war had to be won before an advance could be made. Two days after the idea of a manifesto was first aired,<sup>1</sup> Tawney stated Britain's case for war against Germany as part of a bid to gain the support of the United States and thus bring about a speedier conclusion to it. Though he did not make any direct reference to education it was apparent from his argument that Britain was fighting against Germany not for territorial gain or economic advantage but for the preservation and extension of 'certain spiritual values' that he believed found their clearest expression in education.

Whilst the manifesto was under consideration, an old controversy was revived, which threatened the prospects of the reimposition of compulsory education. In a resolution prepared for the Association<sup>2</sup> Tawney expressed his concern at 'the recent speeches by the President of the Board of Education at Manchester and in the House of Commons indicating that the establishment of Day Continuation Classes may be given preference over the policy of raising the school leaving age, of full time attendance and of providing for all children a secondary education of varying types as recommended by the Consultative Committee in the Hadow and Spens Reports'. Schemes for continuation education were not acceptable as an alternative to bringing the Education Act of 1936 into force. The nation should be looking forward to raising the leaving age to 16 not backwards to alternative schemes which had long been rejected. Lady Simon once more gave substance to the Association's case in a well argued pamphlet<sup>3</sup> which Tawney used as the basis for an article in the Manchester Guardian.

'What the nation needed was an altogether bolder and more generous vision

1. 'Why Britain Fights' letter by Tawney published in the New York Times, July 21st 1940 and reproduced as a W.E.A. pamphlet and in 'The Attack'.
2. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. November 30th 1940.
3. 'The School Leaving Age' and 'Day Continuation Schools'.

of educational justice than these timorous reversions to a vanished past suggest'.<sup>1</sup>

The manifesto, published in December 1940, did not provide the vision. It concentrated upon the remedying of specific education problems brought about by the war rather than laying down proposals for educational advance once the war had ended. The threat of irreparable damage to the existing structure was of more immediate importance. The problems of evacuation were still the dominant issue of the day, especially as the W.E.A. believed that insufficient steps had been taken to assess the enormity of the problems. Their solution lay in a review of the whole situation by the War Cabinet through the inspectors of the Board of Education. The number of children of school age should be accurately established as should those receiving full or part-time education. Particular attention should be given to those persons receiving no education at all. Appropriate measures for dealing with the situation should be based on the acceptance of the principle that school attendance should be compulsory. Shelters should be adapted 'to enable educational activity to be continued', the extension of communal feeding and the medical services was urgently needed.

The Government did not respond to the W.E.A. proposals but Tawney took heart from the declaration by the President of the Board of Education, at Oxford on January 2nd 1941, that the raising of the school leaving age to 15 remained the policy of the Government and should, in his view, be followed as soon as this was feasible, by a further advance to 16. Though the announcement made no reference to an immediate reimposition of the principle of compulsory education, Tawney introduced a resolution<sup>2</sup> welcoming the statement and urging

1. 'A False Expedient' December 21st 1940.

2. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. January 24th 1941.

'the initiation of action to speed up preparations for complete provision for the varied needs of all young people through different types of full time education up to the age of 16 followed by day time continuation classes from 16-18 for all who do not remain at school after the age of 16'. The new year had begun well with attention moving towards the future line of educational advance.

The pattern of the preceding year was repeated with a deputation to the President Mr. Hereward Ramsbotham, arranged for mid-February.<sup>1</sup> As in the previous year it was introduced by Creech Jones with Tawney making the first main speech. Tawney referred to the existing educational provision and outlined the recommendations of the Association's Manifesto. His statement on future policy underlined the orthodox position of the W.E.A. In any general system of secondary education there should be complete equality of status for all children and schools in that stage. To achieve this, fees should be abolished and if that reform could not be achieved immediately 'admission to secondary education should be put on the basis of 100 per cent special places'. It was necessary that plans should be made in advance if reorganisation, which was far from complete, was to continue immediately after the war. Tawney asked for clarification of the point whether Mr. Ramsbotham was still against the raising of the leaving age with exemptions, and requested that the President fix a date for the raising of the school leaving age to 16, a measure which he had supported in his recent speech at Oxford. It would scarcely be 'an adequate scheme of reconstruction which proposed to re-enact in 1943 of what was already law in 1936'.<sup>2</sup>

Ramsbotham's reply was more positive than that of his predecessor. He agreed with Tawney's insistence on a single code of

1. Report of the Deputation to the President of the Board of Education - W.E.A. 20th February 1941.

2. p.2.

secondary schools but added, 'As to fees, he would have the Treasury to contend with'.<sup>1</sup> The Board were, however, 'busily at work planning a new testament of education which would include the raising of the school leaving age and the question of raising it to 16 would be under review'. It would be unfair and unwise to press local authorities, at that moment already heavily burdened, for detailed plans. On the exemption clauses, he was in agreement with Tawney; no alternative proposals whether for continuation classes or exemptions would be acceptable in the place of the universal raising of the leaving age. He also stood by what he had said at Oxford in agreeing with the Spens Report proposals about a school age of 16. The deputation had some grounds for satisfaction when it reported to the Association's Executive Committee in March 1941. Tawney also had the added satisfaction of the support of Sir Richard Livingstone whose book 'The Future of Education' lent weight to the points he had underlined during the meeting with the President.<sup>2</sup>

Since the beginning of 1941 Tawney had also played an active part in the Labour Party's Advisory Committee on Education as vice chairman under Tomlinson. Here too, he had taken part in a deputation to Chuter Ede, Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education. Though his chief contribution to the Committee's work was his study of the public schools,<sup>3</sup> he played an important part in urging the Labour Party to demand that the Government introduce a new Education Bill<sup>4</sup> and in formulating policy on the raising of the school leaving age. On the latter, the Committee agreed that 'the policy of the Labour Party is to raise the school leaving age to 16;

1. p.3.

2. Tawney reviewed this book in 'Ends and Means in Education' M.G. April 2nd 1941.

3. See p. p. 372-383.

4. See Butler p.93.

that this be effected by raising it by statute to 15 without exemptions as from the end of the war and that it be raised again to 16 within a period of three years by an appointed day to be specified in the Act'. During the war years, however, Tawney's main contributions to education reforms were made through the Workers' Educational Association.

The 'new testament of education' to which Ramsbotham had referred in the meeting with the W.E.A. deputation appeared in June in the form of a 'Green Book'. It did not attempt a definitive solution of the many thorny problems of education. Its object was to serve as a basis of preliminary talks with all the bodies associated with education. One of Butler's first tasks on succeeding Ramsbotham at the Board, was to assess the response to the Green Book's proposals. Both the Government's statements and Butler's appointment were welcomed by the Association<sup>1</sup> as important steps on the road to educational reconstruction. Tawney, however, had left to take up a post in Washington when the Association began a close examination of the proposals contained in the 'Green Book' but not before he had warned that, 'to judge by experience there is no such thing as Post War Reconstruction. A quarter of a century ago all the serious measures called by that name were carried out before the Armistice and some were later emasculated. If the Fisher Act had not been passed in 1918 it would certainly not have become law in any of the following four years'.<sup>2</sup> The lesson was obvious. The Association should press on immediately with the clarification of its plans for reconstruction. The 'Green Book' had provided a great impetus to the formulation of detailed proposals for postwar education.

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- × 1. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. September 30th 1941.
  - 2. Highway, November 1941.

Two general points were, in Tawney's view, worthy of note. The time had long since passed when a few 'minor and qualified instalments of educational justice' would suffice. What was needed was the creation of an educational system, free from the odious taint of class privilege, through a bold new Education Act. Secondly, the necessary legislation should be introduced at an early date and be carried into law before the War was concluded. The Association must be vigilant to see that that course was followed.

5. Reconstruction: The Education Act of 1944

At times of national crisis, Tawney was always hopeful that a better social order would emerge. The more intense the crisis, the greater was the need for co-operation to overcome it, and the greater was the likelihood that new social attitudes would prevail once the crisis was over. This had been the message of the private memorandum which was produced with 'Secondary Education For All' in 1922, and of 'Equality' written during the depression of the early thirties. It was also the underlying assumption in the introduction which he wrote in 1940 for Leybourne and White's 'Education and the Birth Rate'. In it, he indicated the direction which educational reconstruction should take.

Tawney's introduction contained no new ideas. It dealt with existing educational inequalities and the restricted meaning which was generally given to equality of educational opportunity. Educational opportunity was associated in England with wealth and social position to a far greater degree than in other countries of Western Europe, in the British Dominions, in most of the States of the American Union and in Scotland. This was to be found not merely in the distinction between the private and state sectors but even within the state sector itself. Even if a child passed the Special Place examination it was often the case that his family was too poor to

dispense with his earnings. Thus Tawney concluded,<sup>1</sup> 'To consider, in treating human beings, not their personal worth but accidents of birth and income is the essence of injustice, and an injustice which is doubly repulsive when it injures the young. Clearly, they result in a misdirection of ability in the rising generation.' Even if equality of opportunity was taken to mean equality of opportunity for the able working-class child to compete on equal terms with the sons of wealthier classes, it could be seen that such a concept was far from being realised.

Tawney argued that what was required in any reconstruction was not simply a change in the structure 'but a change in the moral values which find expression in it'. The war was likely to lead to a change in social attitudes and thus create a favourable climate for the realisation of the broader concept of equality of opportunity. What was needed was not simply the educational ladder but the broad highway. Every child should receive a secondary education. Post-primary education should be reconstructed "treating the different types of school concerned, senior central and 'secondary' as different species of one genus; staffing and equipping them with equal liberality; abolishing fees in the schools which now charge them; providing adequate maintenance allowances where such are required; and using the Special Place examination to decide, not whether children shall obtain a secondary education or not, but merely what kind of secondary education is best suited to them".<sup>2</sup> He looked to Butler to include these points in any measure of reconstruction.

Tawney was in the United States from October 1941 until late September 1942.<sup>3</sup> Events were willing to wait neither upon his return

1. Leybourne and White 'Education and the Birthrate', p.10.
2. p.13.
3. Tawney's post was that of 'Adviser on Social Politico-Economic Affairs', a title which he admitted was an awful mouthful and one to put up the backs of Labour people'. (Tawney to Creech Jones, August 16th 1941).



nor upon the reaction of the educational bodies to the proposals contained in the 'Green Book'. The Report of the Executive of the National Union of Teachers upon the proposals was ready for the Union's Easter Conference in 1942 but by that time Butler had drawn up his own plans to put before the Conference.<sup>1</sup> The ideas upon which Butler had worked during the winter of 1941-42 were not entirely identical with those of his predecessor, expressed in the 'Green Book', though his starting point, the idea of a system of free secondary education for all, was common. Butler had still to wrestle with the problem of 'the religious settlement' but he accepted the policy of secondary education for all over eleven 'with training suited to the talents of every individual' and combined with more expert training for industry, including an improved system of apprenticeship and continued education.

In the absence of its President and under the guidance of Clay, the acting President, the W.E.A. resolved to convene a meeting of all national bodies interested in educational advance. It was hoped that such a conference would arrive at 'an agreed list of proposals essential to a comprehensive Education Bill'.<sup>2</sup> But it was also clear to the Association that the traditional pattern of W.E.A. activity was no longer adequate to meet the demands of a rapidly changing situation. The one-day meeting was envisaged not as an isolated event but as the occasion on which 'a standing Committee of national bodies interested in the cause of education' would be inaugurated. Lady Simon, Shearman, the Educational Officer and Green, the General Secretary, were the prime movers behind the idea of a Council for Educational Advance. There was little doubt about who was to be its chairman. They had, however, to wait for Tawney's return from the United States before they could receive his official acceptance.

1. Butler Op.Cit. p.96.

2. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. 20th May 1942.

Much of Tawney's work for reconstruction was done through the Council for Educational Advance. Unlike during the First World War, he did not serve on any Government Committees on reconstruction though Butler has recorded the fact that he had several talks with Tawney about the Education Bill and 'the latter's assistance was a tremendous help'.<sup>1</sup> Tawney's contacts with the President were largely through the leadership of deputations from the W.E.A. and C.E.A. His participation in the work of the Labour Party's Advisory Committee on Education was spasmodic and confined largely to writing reports, one on the public schools and one abortive general statement of educational policy. He no longer attended its meetings because of constant demands upon his time from other quarters and frequent bouts of ill health. He was also contemplating retirement from the Presidency of the W.E.A., a position which he had held since 1928. The chairmanship of the C.E.A. kept him at the centre of educational thinking when he was reducing his commitments to other educational bodies.

The Council for Educational Advance was in many ways akin to Tawney's Public Education Bureau of the thirties, except in that it had a more specific purpose, 'to secure educational advance and early legislation on Education'.<sup>2</sup> In its second meeting, held while Tawney was still in the United States, it enlarged upon its initial statement of aims, 'to press for immediate legislation to provide full equality of educational opportunity for all children, independent of social and economic status, in order to equip them for a full life and democratic citizenship'.<sup>3</sup> In its statement of how these aims were to be accomplished it put forward ideas which were of common currency among progressive educational bodies. At the centre of its demands was the

1. Letter to the author dated 29th November 1973.
2. C.E.A. September 18th 1942
3. C.E.A. September 24th 1942.

raising of the school leaving age to 16 in two stages, but as part of a single process, to 15 without exemption from the end of the war and to 16 not more than three years later. This plan carried with it the assumption made explicit a year earlier by the Labour Party's Advisory Committee on Education,<sup>1</sup> that a date would be specified in the Bill when the latter stage was to become operative. This became a major point in all of the deputations to the President which Tawney led. On other points, the Council was more explicit. The secondary stage of education which was to last ultimately to the age of 16 and over was to be governed by a single common code of regulations, concerning staffing, equipment and amenities. Medical services and school meals were to be free, adequate maintenance allowances were to be provided, a system of day continuation education to the age of 18 was to be instituted and the employment of children below school leaving age was to be prohibited. Schools outside of the national system should be inspected and licensed and a unified system of administration should be erected.<sup>2</sup>

Tawney fully accepted the Council's proposals for educational reform, and went beyond the simple demand for 'free secondary education for all'.<sup>3</sup> Generally, however, he tended to concentrate on selected aspects. He did not give much attention to the problem of maintenance allowances, though he did not entirely ignore the issue. In general, he gave emphasis to those aspects of reform upon which he believed the idea of parity of status between all forms of secondary education hinged, namely a common leaving age for most adolescents of 16, a common code of regulations for all secondary schools, and the abolition of fees in all secondary schools. These were matters which

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1. L.P. - A.C.E. October 9th 1941.

2. Council for Educational Advance - Pamphlet No.1. - 'Aims'.

3. Butler, however, alleges that he did not go 'into more detail' than this (Letter to the author dated 29th November 1973).

could be written into a bill. Of lesser importance for him was the particular form which secondary education could take. He noted Labour's arguments in favour of multilateral schools, especially their value as a means of achieving common standards, and tended to reiterate them in Party reports or when addressing Labour audiences but he did not hold strong or consistent opinions on the matter. Neither in the years when the 'Green Book' 'White Paper' and Education Bill were under discussion did he refer to the subject in public.<sup>1</sup>

In October 1942, when Tawney first chaired the meeting of the Council, the immediate concern was to press 'for a new Education Bill to be introduced at an early date, and to be announced in the King's speech, which would provide for the realisation of educational equality'.<sup>2</sup> He readily agreed to a request that he should draft a letter to this effect and forward it to the principal newspapers. The columns of the 'Manchester Guardian' were already available to give publicity to the Council's proposals; he lost no time in summing up, in its leaders the reaction to the 'Green Book', and in pointing to the next steps which the President should take if educational reform was not to get lost in the post-war scramble. Writing in the 'Manchester Guardian' in November 1942,<sup>3</sup> he pointed out that eighteen months had elapsed since the Board had given the signal for discussions to commence on educational reconstruction in its 'Green Book'. Whilst it was proper to give an interval of time for pooling ideas and sifting proposals, further delays or prolonged discussions could so defer the introduction of a Bill that there would be the likelihood of it not reaching the statute book before the end of the war. If that was the case, it was

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1. See p. p.300-304

2. C.E.A. October 21st 1942.

3. M.G. November 11th 1942, 'Education'.

unlikely to become law at all. The need was for immediate action to produce a Bill containing bold measures of reform, which was possible in view of the unanimity of opinion on the matter. The Association of Directors and Secretaries of Education had already laid down the maxim upon which measures of reform should be based. 'The provision made for children and adolescents should be founded on educational principles which have regard only to the nature of the individual and to the needs of the community'. 'Irrelevant accidents of birth and income' should play no part in plans for educational reconstruction. The lines of future advance were those laid down in the Council's pamphlet; even 'the hoary problem of religion should not deter the President from following them.

The time was ripe for another deputation to the Board. In December 1942, the Council decided to ask the President to receive one. Butler consented and Tawney headed the deputation on January 22nd 1943. In the meeting with the President, he reiterated the view that if educational reconstruction was left to the postwar scramble it would stand little chance, and that whilst it was realised that difficult negotiations were unavoidable 'there would be the heaviest public disapproval if the Bill merely sought to placate opposition by evading certain fundamental problems'.<sup>1</sup> Tawney emphasised the widely-held view that provision for different groups of adolescents should be based on their educational needs alone.<sup>2</sup> There was need for a common code for all secondary schools and for raising the leaving age to 15 from the end of the war and to 16 within a limited period to be defined in the Act. Dismay was felt at the suggestion that fees might be retained in certain Secondary Schools 'which could only be regarded

1. C.E.A. February 12th 1943. Report of the Deputation to R.A. Butler.
2. Butler has recalled that Tawney 'stressed the importance of free secondary education for all but I do not think he went into more detail beyond that'. (Letter to the author 29th November 1973).

as one more move in the discreditable game of retaining certain schools for people better off than their neighbours'. Part-time day continuation education was favoured only if it came after a five year secondary school course instead of part of it. Thomson, of the T.U.C., Stewart, of the Co-operative Union and Griffiths of the N.U.T. gave support to Tawney's proposals.

In replying to Tawney and the other members of the deputation, Butler was naturally cautious. He pointed out that 'the date of the Bill and the extent of what could be achieved directly after the war, would have to be related to other measures of social reform'. The deputation remained emphatic that the date for raising the school leaving age to 16 should be fixed in the Act and fees in secondary schools should be abolished. A common leaving age of 16 for all secondary schools and the abolition of all fees were vital to parity of status between secondary schools. At that time, Butler wisely refrained from giving any assurances on these ambitious proposals. He found it difficult enough to persuade Churchill to mention educational reform in the King's Speech, let alone give his support to such bold proposals.<sup>1</sup>

Tawney believed that the President's non-committal answer was playing into the hands of 'the forces of reaction'. He thus intensified his publicity campaign to gain widespread support for his proposals for reform. His immediate reaction was to send a letter on the subject of the leaving age to 'The Times'.<sup>2</sup> The nature of the President's reply also acted as a spur to closer co-operation with the Labour Party. Tawney, with some reluctance, accepted the invitation by Morgan Philipps<sup>3</sup> to write a report on education for the Labour Party's Annual Conference. By 1943, the Council for Educational

1. Butler Op. Cit. p.109

2. W.E.A. - E.C. January 12th 1943.

3. Morgan Philipps to Tawney 22nd January 1943. For an account of the Report which Tawney produced see p.p. 300-304.

Advance had, however, largely replaced the Labour Party's Advisory Committee on Education as the principal agency through which he worked for educational reform.

Renewed co-operation with the Labour Party was but one way of helping to create a strong body of opinion favourable to a common secondary school code, a leaving age of 16 and to the abolition of fees. The columns of the 'Manchester Guardian' provided another means 'of educating public opinion'. Since his return from the United States in the early autumn of 1942, he had used his anonymous capacity of leader writer to press on the new President the reforms which he believed the nation would come to demand. Butler's reluctance to commit himself to all that the January deputation demanded served only to intensify the campaign which Tawney waged. In the weeks immediately prior to the deputation he drew the attention of the readers of the 'Manchester Guardian' to a book by a leading administrator, Lester-Smith, with whom he had established a close friendship within the W.E.A. movement. Lester-Smith's 'To Whom Do the Schools Belong?' was vital reading 'at a time when crucial issues of educational policy are about to come before Parliament'. To those interested in the future of education and wishing to understand the educational proposals under discussion throughout the country, 'this wise, tolerant and sympathetic book' was a valuable guide. The reports of other educationalists and other educational bodies were summarised<sup>2</sup> to show the widespread acceptance within educational circles of the recommendations of the Hadow and Spens Reports. The new President of the Board could do no better than to declare himself boldly in favour of 'reorganisation', 'the abolition of fees and a leaving age of 16'.

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1. M.G. 8th December 1942, 'The Schools'.

2. M.G. 16th December 1942 'Educational Pillars'.

However it was not to be, and in the new year, Tawney renewed his campaign in the 'Manchester Guardian'. In February 1943, a few weeks after the deputation, he wrote a letter to its editor on the subject of 'Fee-Charging Schools'.<sup>1</sup> It was a reply to a letter of a Mr. Graham, published ten days earlier. Graham had used the traditional arguments for the retention of fees, "that they were 'morally beneficial' for services which were free were valued by no one". If fees were abolished, the independence of schools would be destroyed and the cost of their abolition would be too large for the nation to bear. Tawney, in reply, could find no justification for fees when secondary education ceased to be regarded as part of a system of educational privilege and became one normal stage in the educational career of all children. His letter was followed by a number of articles or leaders in which other aspects of educational advance were also discussed. In 'An Urgent Problem',<sup>2</sup> in which he summarised the Nuffield College Report on 'Industry and Education', he outlined his views upon the nature of continued education which should follow upon full time education to 16. In 'The Schools', he referred to 'the spiritual as well as physical benefit which would be conferred' by the careful siting of primary, secondary and continuation schools.<sup>3</sup> He attacked 'the special place examination'<sup>4</sup> and rounded off his campaign,<sup>5</sup> before his thoughts turned more closely towards the details of Butler's Educational Bill, with the demand for overall planning of the educational system in the place of 'planless planning .... without reference to a common objective'.

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1. M.G. February 16th 1943.
  2. M.G. February 18th 1943.
  3. M.G. 7th April 1943.
  4. M.G. 7th May 1943, 'The Study of Education'.
  5. Educational Leaflets 2-4,5.



Tawney was anxious for Bevin to play a more active part in putting pressure on Butler to make his proposals more definite. He wrote to Creech-Jones<sup>1</sup> asking if it would be possible to persuade Bevin to make 'a speech about education (for) Butler when we saw him gave a fairly encouraging account of his prospective bill but was vague and unsatisfactory about the date when it will be introduced'. Tawney realised that it would be wrong for Bevin 'to poach on a colleague's preserves' but all that was needed was 'a speech to bring to a point the talk about educational reform now going on in the country'. It should be made clear that only a bold measure would establish genuine equality of opportunity, and the government should state this without 'embarking into debates or technicalities'. Creech Jones responded to Tawney's suggestion, and shared his alarm that Butler would miss 'the psychological moment' if he continued to remain indefinite about the date of the introduction of a bill into the Commons.

Tawney appreciated the difficulties which faced Butler but believed that immediate action should be taken to introduce a bill whilst public opinion was favourable. However, opinion was 'not a tap that runs for ever or can be turned on at will'. Bevin should thus be urged to make a speech demanding an early bill which should include reference to a leaving age of sixteen. Tawney believed the Tory reaction to 'a serious measure to be extremely powerful' and feared that the Bill when introduced was in danger of 'either being so emasculated as to be almost worthless or so long delayed that it will end by being crowded out'.<sup>2</sup> Labour should thus put pressure on Butler to act quickly. Butler's procrastination was already giving heart to the reactionaries and the reformers were coming to think that Butler's words and the government's pledges meant nothing<sup>3</sup>.

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1. Tawney to Creech-Jones April 15th 1943.

2. Tawney to Creech-Jones April 15th 1943.

3. Ibid. May 18th 1943.

Butler's speech to the Yorkshire Council for Further Education in May 1943 did little to allay Tawney's fears. The President was reported to have referred twice to part time continuation schools from 14 to 18 and to have omitted any reference to raising the school leaving age.<sup>1</sup> Tawney suspected that 'pressure behind the scenes' might have induced him to offer the cheap substitute of part time education in the place of raising the leaving age. It was thus necessary in Tawney's view, to exert pressure to gain a definite assurance for a leaving age of fifteen at the end of the war and of sixteen in not more than five years later. Bevin and the Labour Party ought to secure this assurance. Unfortunately the latter seemed to Tawney to be bent 'on licking their opponents' boots'.

In the months during which the Education Bill was under discussion, the crystallisation plant for Tawney's thinking was the Council for Educational Advance. For the Council, the month of June 1943 was one of great expectations. It had done as much as it could to urge reform through the publication of leaflets such as 'The New Britain and The Children', 'The School Leaving Age and Educational Opportunity' and 'Education Should Be Free' but could not proceed much further in its campaign until the text of the Bill was published. The Council resolved to meet as soon as the Bill was published, 'to examine its provisions, to make proposals and to take steps to ensure that the public understand what is involved'.<sup>2</sup> Tawney voiced the impatience of the Council in the 'Manchester Guardian'<sup>3</sup> and expressed the fear that if the President did not act at once he would 'miss the tide'. To deal with the problems of the post war world would require

1. Ibid May 24th 1943. Butler's speech was reported in the T.E.S. on May 22nd.
2. C.E.A. June 8th 1943.
3. M.G. 11th June 1943 'Time For Action'.

'an immense effort of sustained co-operation' which could come partly through a common culture fostered by educational advance. This was in danger if the President did not publish his plans immediately. Butler realised that he was in a favourable position for an early announcement, 'no other Minister on the home front had been able to bring his plans to fruition',<sup>1</sup> but his aim of issuing the Bill and White Paper together was frustrated by complications in the drafting of the former. The White Paper was thus issued separately on July 1st, 1943.

The Council did not meet to discuss the White Paper until the end of July, by which time Tawney had already hailed the proposals as a great advance and an indication that 'the reign of organised torpor in the Board, masquerading as statesmanship, shows signs of ending'.<sup>2</sup> The strength of the White Paper lay in its realism, and in the fact that it 'contained a plan not a mere collection of belated instalments of long-overdue reforms .... which would give the nation what it never possessed, an educational system. All children after the age of 11 were to receive a secondary education of diversified types but of equal standing. Selection was to be based not on examination but on school records and intelligence tests. The leaving age was to be raised to 15 and to 16 as soon as circumstances permitted with continuation education to 18. 'In its breadth and comprehensive-ness it deserves the warmest welcome'. However, at this point, Tawney had made no close examination of the contents of the White Paper.<sup>3</sup>

At the first meeting of the Council after the publication of the White Paper,<sup>4</sup> Gould of the N.U.T. handed to Tawney, who was in

1. Butler Op.Cit. p.117.
2. M.G. July 17th 1943 'A Great Advance'.
3. In a letter to Creech-Jones (July 19th 1943) he admitted that 'The White Paper was better than I hoped. But it will need a good deal of pressure to get through, in fact a bill based on it'.
4. C.E.A. July 28th 1943.

the chair, a series of proposals concerning the Government's intended programme. The main points put forward by the N.U.T. which Tawney fully accepted, were firstly that the raising of the leaving age to 15 and to 16 should be seen as two stages in a single reform and as such a date for the latter should be fixed in the Bill and secondly that fees should be abolished in all types of aided schools. Wray of the T.U.C. believed the objections to the scheme, in order of priority, were the timetable, the proposed settlement with the voluntary schools, the loophole concerning fees in direct grant schools and the failure to deal with the independent schools. To these Tawney added the failure to provide free milk and school meals, to provide more than two and a half days part time education per week, and to require local authorities to begin their plans at once and to submit them to the Board by a specified date. This was, however, the Council's first brief statement which was to be forwarded to the press. A fuller statement was to be prepared. To be included in it was 'the material which Tawney had prepared'.<sup>1</sup>

Tawney was becoming more apprehensive about the vagueness which surrounded the idea of raising the leaving age to sixteen. The White Paper had given no definite date of its implementation, and he came to the conclusion after reading the second appendix that it was not intended to do anything about it until at least seven years after the war.<sup>2</sup> Thus he saw cause for alarm. Another matter for immediate attention was the failure of the White Paper to state that fees in all schools in receipt of public grants would be abolished. As no final decision on the latter issue had been taken it was thus an opportune moment to exercise pressure on the government to secure the abolition of all fees.

1. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. July 28th 1943.

2. Tawney to Creech-Jones July 25th 1943.

The W.E.A. did not feel that it should leave everything in the hands of the Council. Tawney prepared an emergency resolution for the Association's Annual Conference which welcomed the Government's 'declared intention .... to provide a longer school life, secondary education of diversified types but with equal standing for all children, young people's colleges ....'<sup>1</sup> It deplored the failure of the Government to fix a definite and early date for a leaving age of 16, to provide for the abolition of fees in all secondary schools aided or maintained from public funds 'since without these provisions the promise of real equality of social and educational opportunity' was lost. It urged that the provision of school meals and milk, like that of medical treatment, should be free and 'that standards of staffing shall be clearly defined in the Bill'. It also regretted that it had been thought necessary to retain a modified form of the dual system, especially in single school areas. The resolution also demanded a unified teaching profession. The points were repeated by Tawney in his article on 'Education' published in the 'Manchester Guardian' in August.<sup>2</sup>

In his correspondence with Creech-Jones, Tawney returned to the subject of the leaving age.<sup>3</sup> He criticised Butler's statement in the House that 'our decision to raise the leaving age to sixteen depends on circumstances but it is in our interests to do this by taking powers in the Bill to raise the leaving age to sixteen by Orders in Council as soon as circumstances permit' as 'too vague' and one which gave an apathetic or reactionary government endless opportunities for delay. Local authorities could not make preparations for the two age groups together on the basis of Butler's remarks. In place of raising the age by Orders in Council, Tawney suggested a different procedure. A given number of years within which the leaving age should

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1. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. August 24th 1943.

2. M.G. August 11th 1943.

3. Tawney to Creech Jones August 2nd 1943.

be raised to sixteen should be stipulated within the Bill, a maximum of four was suggested by Tawney. In addition, the Board should be given powers to prolong the period of preparation by Orders in Council if by the stipulated date 'schools were not in a condition to justify retaining children at school to 16'. The 'burden of proof' would thus be on those who wished to postpone the date of implementation and local authorities could, by this scheme, go ahead with preparations.

By mid October the Council's fuller statement on the White Paper was ready. Tawney had played a central part in drafting it, and was elected to a subcommittee which was to use its guidelines to keep a careful watch 'on proceedings in the House of Commons and to take any emergency action that might be required'. The Council, in both of its statements on the White Paper,<sup>2</sup> took as its yardstick the idea of 'a happier childhood and a better start to life', which the White Paper emphasised. It considered the recommendations concerning primary, secondary and continued education in the light of this. In the case of secondary education it raised once again the question of a leaving age of 16 and asked how could parity between all forms of post primary education be achieved whilst one form alone, the grammar school had a leaving age of 16 and whilst fees continued to be levied in 'an important group of secondary schools'.<sup>3</sup> The only sound method of progress was to abolish all fees and to raise the leaving age to 16 universally. The Council welcomed the idea of 'The Young People's College', the new policy for day-time continued education up to eighteen but believed the details of the scheme needed 'to be cleared up'. It

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1. C.E.A. October 18th 1943.

2. 'A New Start in Education: What the White Paper means for the Children'. C.E.A. Educational Leaflet No.5. and 'A Statement on the White Paper on Educational Reconstruction'.

3. 'A Statement on the White Paper on Educational Reconstruction' p.4.

also expressed concern about the vagueness of the proposals for freer access to universities; the proposals concerning school meals were equally vague in that the Government's statement did not make it clear whether or not they were to be free.

The vagueness of the time table of reform was criticised. Reforms of vital importance requiring administrative action were given no specific date for their implementation. These reforms included the substitution of better arrangements for the special place examination, the introduction of a common code of regulations applicable to all secondary schools and the improvement of facilities for students of small means to enter universities. No date was given by which local authorities had to complete their plans. Of the reforms which appeared in the timetable, some of the most important would not be launched until the third year after the war, especially the scheme of raising the leaving age and compulsory continued education to eighteen. The statement concluded that the timetable 'seems needlessly and dangerously dilatory'.<sup>1</sup> On the point of the timetable, the Council had several specific suggestions to make which were in accord with Tawney's earlier thinking. Local authorities should begin their surveys as soon as the Bill became law, and the Board should fix a date for completion. The raising of the leaving age to 15 should take place no later than twelve months after the end of the war, and should be regarded as one stage in a reform which ultimately aimed at a leaving age of 16; the common code for secondary schools should also be issued not more than twelve months after the end of the war.

Though the Council did not meet in full session from October 12th 1943 until May 5th 1944, its subcommittee on the Education Bill met frequently under the chairmanship of Tawney. The subcommittee, which first of all consisted of Tawney, Gould, Bullock, Clay and Mrs. Allen and which later was enlarged to include Lady Simon, Mallon,

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1. p.7.

Creech-Jones, Keir, Lester-Smith and Dent, decided that the time was opportune for a conference on Educational Reconstruction.<sup>1</sup> The Conference was to be held early the following year when Temple, Hart, Mander and Tawney were to be invited to speak under the chairmanship of Citrine.

In the period prior to the national conference, Tawney and the Council clarified their attitudes towards the Bill. At the end of November, Tawney made his last statement prior to the publication of the Bill, praising the President for 'rightly labouring hard and not without success to reconcile conflicting claims'.<sup>2</sup> No further concessions should be granted especially on the crucial issue of secondary education for all instead of a few. Mere general assurances that improvements in staffing, buildings and amenities would take place, were not satisfactory. The Bill should include a clear statement of time limits and a firm statement on the raising of the leaving age to 16. The Bill was, however, 'the most memorable education measure brought before Parliament' and was an improvement upon the White Paper in several ways. The timetable was to be speeded up, April 1st 1945 being the date when the new administrative structures were to come into existence and when the school leaving age was to be raised to 15 unless the Minister postponed it.<sup>3</sup> Tawney was pleased that the raising of the leaving age to 16 'was made more definite in the bill than in the White Paper'. The phrase 'as soon as circumstances permit' was replaced by 'a provision that the Minister must submit to Parliament an Order in Council to that effect directly he is satisfied that the further step is practicable'.

The subcommittee on the Education Bill, set up by the Council

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1. C.E.A. - Ed. Bill Subcommittee 22nd November 1943.
  2. M.G. 30th November 1943, 'The Education Bill'.
  3. M.G. 17th December, 'A Great Bill'.



for Educational Advance was more critical of the Bill in its last sitting in 1943.<sup>1</sup> Meeting in December, it suggested several amendments. The leaving age of 16 should be fixed 'within a definite period'. Fees in all aided schools should be abolished; attendance at Junior Colleges should be for two days a week; the employment of students who attended Young People's Colleges should be subject to control by the local authorities; all employment of children of school age for purposes of gain should be forbidden; the minimum grant to local education authorities should be sixty per cent and general medical inspection should be at intervals of not more than two years. In essence, these proposals were a restatement of the earlier policy of the Council.

However Tawney recognised that 'three-quarters of the White Paper' even without amendment were 'a long step forward'. Yet it was an achievement which he believed was placed in jeopardy by the 'religious issue'.<sup>2</sup> Government policy as a whole could be defeated by animosities arising over one issue. He fully expected a tussle within the W.E.A. and the Labour Party over the denominational schools. In many ways he believed himself unsuited to taking part in discussions for he lacked insight into the complexities of the problem and an understanding of the practical details of educational administration. He confessed he had not got the background knowledge to judge whether the control of local authorities over controlled schools would enable them to level up standards. The White Paper was not clear on the point about whether the local authorities could close non-provided schools because they were 'bad as well as because they were redundant'. Hargrave, a member of the Association's Finance and General Purposes Committee, had expressed the belief that the proposals regarding the

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1. C.E.A. December 28th 1943.

2. Tawney to Creech-Jones August 2nd 1943.

denominational schools would deprive the White Paper of much of its value.

Tawney recognised that it was a thorny issue. He was in favour of 'getting such amendments as we can', but was against the idea of raising 'the whole question of the principle of the continued existence of controlled and aided schools.'<sup>1</sup> As there was no chance of getting all schools made provided schools, it was unwise to throw the question of principle into the arena for it would give a golden opportunity to the reactionaries to destroy the whole policy of the White Paper. In September 1943, he expressed his anxiety about the Bill's future prospects. The Roman Catholics had 'shown their hand' and demanded better terms than fifty per cent of the cost of reconstruction, failing which they 'would oppose the Bill tooth and nail'. He feared that the Catholic Members of Parliament within the Labour Party would take that line and would be joined by the Tories. He reminded Creech-Jones of the effect of the Scurr Amendment which destroyed Trevelyan's Bill through Tory support for an amendment moved by a Labour Member. 'Unless we are careful', he warned, 'there may easily be the same situation and the same result'.

To avoid a recurrence of that situation Tawney believed it necessary to persuade the Labour Roman Catholic Members of Parliament not to play into the hands of the Tories. In addition, there ought to be a special committee of Labour Members which would make the Education Bill its prime concern.

At the end of 1943 Tawney also restated his attitude to the multilateral school.<sup>2</sup> If the leaving age was raised to 16 then it was all the more imperative that provision should be made for 'cultivating the diversity of gifts'. This could be 'in schools of varying type but equal in quality but better still in schools containing several different departments or sides so as to make

1. Ibid 21st September 1943.

2. An unnamed address contained in a box at the L.S.E. entitled 'Various Speeches'.

possible easy transfer in accordance with the varying tastes and requirements of children'. Ernest Green, the General Secretary of the W.E.A. at this time, has stated however that though Tawney's attitude to comprehensive schools was determined by his advocacy of equality of opportunity, he did not give much attention to the issue in the years immediately before his retirement from the Presidency of the W.E.A. in 1944.<sup>1</sup> He referred to the multilateral school only when addressing Labour audiences; when addressing most educational bodies his concern was for parity of status between secondary schools for it was a tripartite system which was likely to be the general pattern of provision.

In January 1944, Tawney reflected the more critical attitude of the Council to the Bill in an article in the 'Manchester Guardian',<sup>2</sup> and in a letter to Labour's Advisory Committee on Education.<sup>3</sup> Again it was the proposals for raising the leaving age to 16 that came under fire. Parker and Greenwood had challenged Butler on 'the loose wording' of the provisions concerning the leaving age and received the unconvincing reply that it was impossible to be more specific. Tawney, in support of them, argued that 'the sensible course is to state in the Act that the school leaving age was to be raised to 16 in a specified number of years of its becoming 15'. The retention of fees in schools receiving grants direct from the Board was 'equally indefensible'. Butler had thrown out the report of the Fleming Committee in deference not to educational principles but from fear that some governors of secondary schools would be displeased. The one day per week of continued education was inadequate as was the 55 per cent grant from the Exchequer to the cost of implementing the Act. Furthermore the

1. Letter to the author 10th January 1974.
2. M.G. January 22nd 1944, 'The Education Bill'.
3. L.P. - A.C.E. January 4th 1944.

lack of a statutory guarantee regarding the minimum percentage of total expenditure and the inadequacy of the £900,000 special aid to poorer authorities should be 'righted when the Bill is in Committee'.

At the Conference of National Organisations which the Education Bill Subcommittee of the C.E.A. had arranged for 12th February 1944, Tawney argued that one's attitude towards the Bill should not be entirely moulded by a consideration of its deficiencies.<sup>1</sup>

'The proper course is not to make too much of personal predilections and private disappointments. It is to ask oneself whether on balance with all its imperfections on its head, it will or will not result in a happier and more fruitful life for the boys and girls whose future will be affected by our attitude to it. Given an essential condition, sufficient expenditure to make wheels turn, I can not doubt that Mr. Butler's Bill meets that test'. He then moved a resolution in support, but added that 'support ought not to preclude criticism'. Outlining the weaknesses of the Bill, which he had given publicity to in the 'Manchester Guardian' in the preceding month, he concluded that it was the task of the W.E.A. to see that the Bill 'was not emasculated but strengthened in its later stages'. Butler was grateful for Tawney's support and wrote later, 'I naturally respected his views because it would have been impossible to get the Bill through Parliament without the respect of prominent Labour men such as Bevin, and to get Tawney's assistance was a tremendous help'.<sup>2</sup>

Neither Tawney nor the Council gave up their attempts to amend the Bill. The resolution passed at the February Conference was sent to Butler with due emphasis placed upon the proposals which the Council felt ought to be included in the Bill; the idea of a

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1. 'Speech at the Conference of National Organisation on Saturday 12th February 1944' (L.S.E. Papers, Box entitled 'Various Speeches').

2. Letter to the author. 29th November 1973.

deputation to the President to press him upon the amendments was, however, rejected in favour of circulating a letter to about one hundred Members of Parliament who were taking an active interest in the Bill.<sup>1</sup> Tawney kept a close eye upon the passage of the Bill in the columns of the Manchester Guardian, praising Butler for persuading the Cabinet to select education as the first essay in reconstruction but also chiding him for the Bill's weaknesses. In April,<sup>2</sup> Tawney lamented the fact that Mrs. Keir's 'suggestion for raising the leaving age to 16, three years after it had been raised to 15, at most three years from April 1945', was narrowly defeated in the Commons. He reiterated also the Council's regrets concerning other deficiencies especially that in the case of the poorer authorities, 'insufficient water will be put in the pump to make it draw.'

But all was not lost, Tawney believed. The Report on 'Teachers and Youth Leaders' gave the opportunity, in Tawney's view,<sup>3</sup> of re-opening two vital issues while the Bill was still in its Report stage.' He argued that the Report made two proposals which were 'trump cards in favour of the abolition of fees in direct grant schools and of the raising of the leaving age to sixteen.' The Report urged that secondary education must be abundant and free if the fifteen thousand new recruits to the teaching profession were to be found, and that, in future, teachers must be drawn from Modern Schools as well as Grammar Schools. In which case, Tawney concluded 'the school life of all must be at least sixteen'. It was thus opportune for Labour Members to re-open the matter in the House. Butler could thus make concessions in deference to the new situation created by a report

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1. C.E.A. - Ed. Bill Subcommittee March 10th 1944.
  2. M.G. 15th April 1944, 'The Education Bill'.
  3. Letter from Tawney to Creech-Jones May 1st 1944.

which was not available when he last spoke in the House. If it ever really existed, the moment was not seized upon and Tawney realised that there would be no speedy solution of the problems.

The W.E.A. Executive hoped that Tawney's involvement in the educational campaign to secure the modification of the Bill and the full implementation of its terms when it became an act, would lead to his reconsideration of his decision to give up the Presidency of the Association. It intimated to Tawney that as educational reform 'had reached so critical a stage that he might consider that his experience and advice over the next twelve months or more might be so valuable as to warrant the reconsideration of his desire to retire'.<sup>1</sup> Tawney's answer was firm. 'The critical period would last for several years and so his staying in office for twelve months would not greatly assist. These problems were too large and too serious to be met by makeshift expedients'.<sup>2</sup> He declined nomination but pressed on with the campaign for amendments to the Bill with unabated vigour.

At the May meeting of the Council for Educational Advance, notes on the progress of the Bill in Committee were considered.<sup>3</sup> It was resolved to approach members of the House of Lords to ensure that the Council's point of view was put before the House and 'to guard against the danger of wrecking the amendments'. In due course, Tawney, led a deputation to Lord Nathan, Lord Latham and Lord Anman and supplied the peers with 'points to be put during discussions in the Lords'.<sup>4</sup> In addition, Tawney put forward to the Council a proposal for a two day conference on education. The proposal was accepted in principle but no definite date was fixed.

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1. W.E.A. - E.C. 2nd March 1944.
  2. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. 24th April 1944.
  3. C.E.A. 5th May 1944.
  4. C.E.A. 13th November 1944.

The raising of the leaving age and parity of status between secondary schools remained Tawney's paramount concerns. A threat to both was the circular of August 10th 1944. Butler had decided to use his powers under section 108 of the Act to defer, by at least a year and possibly longer, the raising of the leaving age to 15. At the September meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of the W.E.A, Tawney was requested to draft a statement on the postponement of the raising of the leaving age.<sup>1</sup> He readily agreed and the statement and resolution deploring the action were read out at the Council's November meeting before being sent to the Minister. His statement was also included in the Council's pamphlet 'Educational Advance: The First Objectives'.<sup>2</sup> The latter demanded that pressure be put on the Minister to make urgent preparations for raising the leaving age to 15 'not later than 1946', if the target of 1945 was out of the question, and then to raise it to 16 three years later.<sup>3</sup>

Though by December 1944 there were increasing demands upon Tawney's time from several quarters, he still accepted the leadership of a deputation to the Minister on the question of the method of entry into secondary schools, an issue which arose out of the Fleming Report. Creech-Jones, Cove and Green accompanied him. Tawney gained Butler's assurance that whatever scheme was adopted, 'the Government would provide a common entrance examination for all irrespective of whether they are fee-paying students or not.' The Minister reaffirmed his belief in 'free access to schools based on ability not income' and stated that agreements with Direct Grant schools would provide for a minimum admittance from L.E.A. schools. Mr. Creech-Jones would be kept informed on the matter. The W.E.A. resolved to draw up a

1. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. 7th September 1944.
2. C.E.A. Educational Leaflets No.6.
3. p.2.

memorandum on the Minister's reply and subsequent educational developments and arrange another deputation at a later date to include Tawney but to be lead by the Association's new President, Clay.<sup>1</sup> The matter of regulations for Direct Grant Schools continued to occupy the Association the following year. Lady Simon, Clay, Tawney and Wray of the T.U.C. agreed that representations should be made to the Minister on the subject. The list of Direct Grant schools should be substantially reduced and all fees should be abolished; if this was not possible then the Minister should be pressed to 'include every safeguard in the Regulations to ensure that the scheme operated on the lines which the Association wanted.

Tawney said of the Act 'It is not a terminus; it is a starting point'.<sup>2</sup> He was not happy about its concessions on matters such as the school leaving age and fees, and continued to press for further reforms as well as the full implementation of many of its more definite achievements. The question of fees dragged on into 1945. The controversy over the schools which received their grants direct from the Ministry was renewed with the issue of regulations concerning them in April of that year. Tawney, supporting Lady Simon's statement on the Act, argued<sup>3</sup> that there was 'nothing in the nature of things to make fees an essential part of the 'direct grant system', especially when, 'the majority of the Fleming Committee proposed to abolish the former whilst retaining the latter'. Butler had surrendered to the die hards of his party in retaining them and was condemned by his own words on free secondary education for all in the White Paper. In the place of the abolition of fees and the provision of maintenance allowance, there was to be an inferior substitute whereby the old scandal of admitting fee payers on easier terms than those of non-fee

1. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. 11th December 1944.

2. M.G. March 31st 1945.

3. M.G. March 19th 1945; M.G. May 7th 1945.



payers' was to be retained. It was essential that the common admission test was subjected to close scrutiny and that all efforts should be made 'to ensure that all considerations except those relating to the capacities and characters of the children themselves shall be excluded as irrelevant'. In particular, more information was needed about the financial aspects of the proposed arrangements.

Tawney had little to say on the aspects of the religious settlement, although he did examine the problems of the supply of teachers and the provision of buildings. In March,<sup>1</sup> he made a plea for a high priority being given to the building of schools. But what kinds of schools? His answer<sup>2</sup> was that of four years earlier. 'The threefold classification, of which most is commonly heard, was never tended to imply, as the recent circular points out that only three types of secondary education are practicable or desirable. There is a need for not only separate grammar, modern and technical schools but also multilateral and bi-lateral schools and school bases. The essential need at the moment is for experiment'. The matter of teacher supply was equally a critical question with the need for 70,000 additional teachers, and one which would not entirely be answered by the release of teachers from the forces. There was need for a new policy for a new age. What that policy should be Tawney gave no clear indication, except that it should involve rapid progress in the emergency training of teachers.

Tawney introduced a deputation to the Minister on the subjects of teacher training and the leaving age in December 1945.<sup>3</sup> He repeated the importance of raising the school leaving age to 16 in two stages. The following year<sup>4</sup> he argued that this measure was 'not a

1. M.G. March 31st 1945.
2. In 1947. M.G. July 14th
3. Reported in the W.E.A. Annual Report for 1946.
4. M.G. May 15th 1946 'The Leaving Age'.

pious aspiration but an essential part both of the nation's education system and of the Government's policy'. Thus it was necessary to fix a date to facilitate the necessary preparation. His basic argument was that of parity of status; if different secondary schools were to enjoy an equal standing then the minimum leaving age should be the same for all. Those with a leaving age lower than others were regarded as inferior. The raising of the leaving age had remained his dominant concern throughout the war though the grounds for his support for the reform had shifted more towards a doctrinaire acceptance of 'equality' rather than a consideration on educational grounds whether a common leaving<sup>age</sup> was of value to all.

#### 6. The Modern and Common School

A tripartite structure for secondary education was proposed in the White Paper<sup>1</sup> but not stipulated in the Act. The emphasis given by the Board in 1944 to the need for a division of secondary education into three kinds, each with its distinctive aims and character to accommodate three different types of children served to focus Tawney's attention upon the future of the modern school. He took no part in the discussions on multilateral schools which took place within the Labour Party after the publication by the Ministry of Education in May 1945 of the pamphlet 'The Nation's Schools'.

The pamphlet was published by the Conservative Caretaker Government before the General Election. It argued that there was already a de facto tripartite system in existence and gave a seal of approval to its development. Though the multilateral school offered a number of social benefits these were outweighed by its disadvantages, especially the estimated size of 1,500, which was alien to the English

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1. 'Educational Reconstruction'. Cmd. 6458 H.M.S.O. 1943 p.10.

tradition of small community schools. Thus, whilst limited experiments with such schools should be encouraged 'it would be a mistake to plunge too hastily on a large scale into a revolutionary change which would entail some losses that are clear and offer gains, the value of which for this country are perhaps somewhat uncertain'.<sup>1</sup> Flying in the face of a resolution from the Party's Annual Conference which demanded the repudiation of the pamphlet,<sup>2</sup> Ellen Wilkinson, the first Minister of Education in Labour's post-war government, affirmed her belief in many of its basic tenets. In this, she could claim Tawney's support. She placed 'her faith on the parity of material conditions between the different schools leading to parity of esteem'.<sup>3</sup> One of these conditions perhaps not strictly 'material' to which Tawney gave emphasis was a common leaving age of 16. 'If the different schools were to enjoy an equal standing the minimum leaving age should be the same for all',<sup>4</sup> otherwise the schools with the lower leaving age, the modern and technical schools, would be regarded as inferior. However in his review of 'The Nation's Schools', he was more concerned to voice his opposition to a system of continuation schooling, which he feared would be introduced in the place of a school leaving age of 16, than he was to demonstrate his support for a particular system of secondary schools. What mattered most was 'not the instruction which a child received but whether the determining influence in its life (was) .... the school or factory'. Tawney was fighting a battle which had been largely won but in which he had been engaged since the first decade of the century.

Tawney took no central part in the postwar debate over the multilateral school.<sup>5</sup> His principal concerns were the leaving age and

1. 'The Nation's Schools' p.13.
2. 1946 Labour Annual Conference Report, p.191.
3. 'The Labour Party and the Organisation of Secondary Education 1918-1965'. M. Parkinson, p.103.
4. M.G. May 15th 1946 'The Leaving Age'.
5. His chief interests lay elsewhere, in the development of the universities, in adult education and in historical research.

the status of modern schools; these were for him two sides of the same coin. In 1949, he listed among the achievements of the 1944 Education Act, the fact that henceforward 'all children and not merely, as hitherto, a minority, will pass .... to one type or another of secondary schools';<sup>1</sup> he accepted the tripartite division and urged that the necessary finance should be made available 'to make the secondary modern schools what they might and should be, but too often are not'. Any material advances towards parity of status with the grammar schools were threatened, in 1951, by the economy measures announced by the government. At the age of seventy one, Tawney attacked the proposed cuts and expressed his opposition to the rumoured reduction in the school leaving age which would place the modern schools in a more inferior position in relation to the grammar schools.<sup>2</sup> He continued to urge a 'secondary school life of all to sixteen', throughout the fifties. Even though the threat of a reduction in the leaving age receded, Tawney became increasingly sceptical about whether parity of esteem would be achieved and increasingly critical of selection at 11 plus. 'The secondary education of the majority of children is now given in the Secondary Modern School. Some brilliant examples of such schools exist; but many still remain, it is to be feared, the old elementary schools called by another name. Because of the traditional superiority of the particular kind of secondary school known as the grammar school, the struggle to win a place in it is intense, with the result of disillusionment for those who fail and over-pressure on all'.<sup>3</sup>

Tawney had regarded multilateral schools as a future growth point and had concentrated on the problem of parity between schools in

1. 'Social Democracy in Britain', a chapter in 'The Christian Demand for Social Justice' reprinted in 'The Radical Tradition' p.146.
2. M.G. December 12th 1951.
3. 'British Socialism Today', Socialist Commentary June 1952. Tawney re-read this article in 1960 when it was decided that it should be included in a volume of his writings entitled 'The Radical Tradition'. The only alteration he made to it was the reference to the Crowther Report.

the tripartite system, but he became increasingly sceptical about whether parity could be achieved. He partly blamed many within the Labour party for the 'sad state' of many of the modern schools. Many of its members were more concerned with 'enlarging the meshes of selective sieves' than with the raising of the standards of universal provision. In his abortive report of 1943, he had outlined the social advantages of the common school. In 1951, aware of the handicaps suffered by modern schools and the unsatisfied demand for grammar schools, he saw the educational advantages of the common school. Those who knew him in the last decade of his life refer to his support for the small common community school. Like the authors of 'The Nations Schools', he had misgivings about schools which had numbers greatly in excess of 600 pupils. It was this figure which he had laid down as a rough maximum in 1943.

## 7. The Public Schools

The Second World War brought the public schools to the forefront of political discussions for the first time in Tawney's lifetime. Tawney had not attempted seriously to make them a live political or educational issue before 1940, though he had not entirely ignored them. In his articles on university reform in the Westminster Gazette in 1906<sup>1</sup> he had shown the close links between the great public schools and the older universities. Though he had then called for the reform of the universities and the national system of secondary education, he had not put forward proposals for the reform of the public schools. In 1919, he contributed a paper on 'The Public Schools and the Older Universities' to a symposium by J.H. Whitehouse,<sup>2</sup> in which he attacked the class basis of the public school system, but again he put forward

1. See p.p. 19-23.

2. J.H. Whitehouse 'The English Public Schools'.

no clear proposals for their reform. 1922, for Tawney, was the year of a missed opportunity. In 'Secondary Education For All' he could have put forward a bold demand that the facilities of the public schools could be harnessed to the service of the entire community, instead of a small section of it, in the drive for universal secondary education. Such a proposal, accompanied by the recommendation that the public schools should be abolished if they did not accept this new role could be expected from one who had extolled the virtues of a common culture. But 'Secondary Education For All' tended to reflect rather than generate ideas and thus the question of the reform of the public schools was ignored. Even the strictures against such schools in 'Equality', nearly a decade later, were not accompanied by detailed proposals for their reform.

It was not that Tawney was unaware of the contribution which such schools could make to educational advance. As a person who had enjoyed a privileged education at Rugby he realised the ways in which the greater public schools could act as a model for developments within the national system as well as contribute materially to the solution of the problems of constructing a secondary system for all. 'A well grounded dislike of certain other features of these schools .... ought not to cause their merits to be overlooked. The quality of the staff at some public schools is extremely high. The conditions under which boys and masters work are probably more favourable than those at most other schools. The tyranny of examinations is certainly less pronounced at many secondary schools. More encouragement is given to boys to follow their own bent and there are ampler facilities for enabling them to do so. The intellectual level of the abler pupils from public schools who pass to universities is probably above that of any other group of boys in the country. At the same time, a one-sided and clever-silly intellectualism is, on the whole avoided; self-reliance is encouraged. Within narrow class-limits, a genuine training

in social responsibility is given.<sup>1</sup> Their class basis was, however, an offence to an ideal which lay at the heart of Tawney's concept of education.

'A society may reasonably look to its education system to promote and express a common culture .... to diminish class divisions .... to contribute to the mutual understanding between different sections of the population which is a condition of good citizenship. The private education system does the opposite'.<sup>2</sup>

In 1934, the matter of the public schools was raised within the Labour Party. Three years later Tawney gave his first statement on the question of public school reform in the 'Manchester Guardian'.<sup>3</sup> His initial remarks suggested an uncharacteristic attitude of 'laissez-faire'; he argued that the first task was to level up the standard of education within the national system in order to demonstrate to parents that attendance at public schools conferred no educational advantage. However, he combined this with a demand that their governing bodies should be made representative and their endowments used for the public interest to make them accessible to all sections of the population. This latter statement, somewhat more radical than the first, assumed that such schools should continue to exist in some form. He did not, however, spell out in any detail how these latter objectives were to be accomplished. It was not until fourteen months after the outbreak of war<sup>4</sup> that he clarified his thinking in the light of a debate which was in progress in such publications as 'The Journal of Education'.

Though it has been alleged<sup>5</sup> that the debate was sparked off by Cyril Norwood, Headmaster of Charterhouse, in an article in 'The

1. L.P. - A.C.E. Memorandum 'The Public Schools' p.13 (January 1941).

2. Ibid.

3. M.G. August 17th 1937.

4. Barker mistakenly takes the year 1942 as that when Tawney turned to the subject. In November 1940 he was drafting a lengthy memorandum on the subject for the Labour Party.

5. Op. Cit. Barker, p.337.

'Spectator' in February 1940,<sup>1</sup> the problems of the public schools were already being aired before then by C. Dowie in the columns of 'The Journal of Education'.<sup>2</sup> Such people as Frank Fletcher, J.W. Skinner, Hugh Elver and W.F. Bushell followed up Dowie's articles with further discussions of the future of the public schools.<sup>3</sup> Tawney followed the arguments and was particularly impressed and influenced by those of his former teacher at Rugby, Frank Fletcher, who had underlined the difficulties in which the public schools found themselves, and had put forward suggestions for meeting their difficulties through financial assistance from the state. Tawney chided the Labour Party for not having produced a statement of policy of the matter, drafted a memorandum on the subject in November 1940 and presented it to a meeting of the Labour Party's Advisory Committee on Education in January 1941.<sup>4</sup>

Three factors had combined to confront the public schools, or some of them, with difficulties which, if not wholly new, were considerably more severe than in the years before the Second World War. They were the fall in the birth rate, 'The improved quality and quantity of secondary education', and war taxation. As a result, representatives of the Headmasters Conference and the Board of Education had begun discussions on the methods by which the problems could be met, including a consideration of the idea of giving some assistance from public funds. In Tawney's view, these developments posed two important questions for the Labour Party. Should it maintain

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1. February 9th 1940.
  2. 'Can England afford her Public Schools' July and August 1939.
  3. Journal of Education September 1940 to January 1941.
  4. L.P. - A.C.E. January 29th 1941. It was discussed by the Committee at each meeting up to June 1941. Tawney had also made a brief reference to them in an article in the 'Manchester Guardian' on 8th March 1940, in which he stated, 'It is out of the question to grant them public money except, on conditions that will ensure that they are employed to the best advantage for the service of the public'.



an unconditional opposition to the idea of financial assistance from the State to the public schools or should it allow such assistance with stringent conditions laid down? The public schools, even in their weakened condition, exercised too important an influence on national life and educational policy for the Party to ignore them. The defects of the schools Tawney believed to be as obvious as the failings of the parents who sent their children there. Such parents were 'like frogs, (who) wear their eyes on the top of their heads, spend their lives in a condition of goggling upwards, and regard education as existing primarily to ensure that their own tadpoles are automatically converted into frogs in their turn.'<sup>1</sup>

Their main defects, in Tawney's view, sprang not from the quality of education which they offered but from their social exclusiveness, which had mischievous results. They produced a race of social mandarins, 'isolated during youth from natural and easy contact with the life of other young people'.<sup>2</sup> Whereas education ought to be a solvent for class divisions, the public schools deliberately aim to perpetuate them. They bred an arrogance towards people of other classes, narrowed the area from which recruits for positions of responsibility were drawn,<sup>and</sup> 'presented the most powerful obstacle to the progress of the democratic spirit, and encouraged an unsympathetic attitude towards state education among those politicians who have attended them'.

Yet Tawney was not willing to propose their extinction. The quality of the education at the leading public schools and their value in fostering initiative, experiment and diversity in education suggested that they should be allowed to survive but in a considerably modified form. 'Given the history of English education, it is the only possible policy'.<sup>3</sup> But upon what terms should they be allowed

1. p.19.

2. p.12.

3. p.24.

to survive? In answer, Tawney quoted approvingly from the article in the 'Journal of Education' by Sir Frank Fletcher;<sup>1</sup> the problem of today is to secure this equality of opportunity for boys of all classes not merely for those whose parents can afford a boarding school education .... The democratisation of the public school must come and come quickly'. Tawney summarised the main ideas upon how their 'democratisation' could be achieved. The provisions of special places for pupils from senior, central and secondary schools, the reduction of costs and therefore fees, and 'the extension of the day-boy element' were the principal means suggested. To enable the public schools to undertake these measures assistance from public funds would be necessary. Such assistance could take the form of a system of 'national scholarships', grants direct from the Board or L.E.A.'s, or grants on the lines of university grants.

In consequence of the public schools occupying, 'a recognised place within the state system', certain administrative arrangements were necessary. They could take the form of inspection by the Board, and compliance with some regulations, analogous to secondary school regulations or the public schools could be administered on the lines of the universities with quinquennial inspection and annual reports. Alternatively closer co-operation between the L.E.A.'s and the schools with the governing bodies of the latter containing representatives of the former could become an established pattern. Tawney did not pronounce on the relative merits of these schemes but suggested certain preliminary steps towards reform, including the setting up of a Royal Commission on the matter,<sup>2</sup> and an initial survey

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1. Fletcher and Tawney had a great respect for each other and each other's views. Three years before Tawney produced his memorandum, Fletcher presented Tawney with a copy of his book 'After Many Days', in which he eulogised Tawney's 'remarkable academic record'.

2. p.25.

to determine the number of schools to be maintained in existence. As in all other instances of educational reform, he emphasised the principle of equality of opportunity. The preliminary steps taken must be towards the goal of making the schools 'equally accessible to all boys intellectually qualified to profit by them without regard to the means or occupation of their parents'.<sup>1</sup>

Tawney's views about reform appear to be based on the assumption that the public schools would develop into superior kinds of grammar school. They would draw their entrants from all social classes but that which the pupils would have in common would be that they had all passed an entrance examination. His search for some kind of examination which favoured 'the bright working-class child',<sup>2</sup> and his constant reassurances 'that their quality as educational institutions would not suffer' suggest that he still saw the public schools, even in their modified form, as the chief reservoirs from which those who would occupy positions of great responsibility would be drawn. Their role would remain largely unaltered but their social composition would change partly through greater provision for day boys who formerly attended local elementary schools.<sup>3</sup> There is a basic conservatism in his thinking which can be traced to his desire to preserve the intellectual quality of that kind of public school education which he received at Rugby, and thus to retain their status. It is significant that the only public schools referred to by name in his memorandum were those of St. Paul's and Merchant Taylor's,<sup>4</sup> which were taken as examples

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1. Ibid.

2. p.26. Note also that Tawney's only example of the 'Conversion of public schools' concerns the development of 'higher or advanced secondary schools for older boys' (p.33).

3. p.27.

4. Ibid.

to show that high intellectual standards are perfectly compatible with a predominance of day-school pupils and, in fact, with an influx of very able elementary school children as day-school pupils. He believed that academic standards would rise. Tawney thus attached great importance to the reversal of the historical process, whereby the public schools would once again serve the immediate neighbourhoods from which they had become divorced in the nineteenth century.

His memorandum ended with an examination of proposals to make the governing bodies of public schools more representative, especially through the provision that they should contain people 'with some knowledge of the national system of education, to ensure that all public schools would have their financial administration supervised by the Board, and to <sup>fix</sup> a minimum percentage of places for day boys and 'special place' pupils. The key to the successful implementation of these proposals was a system of licensing and inspection. It was only these latter points which were included in the policy-summaries of the C.E.A. and W.E.A.

Though Tawney's views were not as radical as they appeared they were sufficient to cause consternation even among some Labour Party members. Ernest Green who was Treasurer of the C.E.A. and General Secretary of the W.E.A. has recalled<sup>1</sup> a meeting between Butler and a deputation headed by Tawney, which put forward the idea of a scheme of reform incorporating the public schools in the national system. Chuter Ede, a Labour member and Butler's Private Secretary was present, and it was he, not Butler 'who (with almost tears in his eyes) pleaded for caution on this question as so many of them were doing such useful work and he was against abusing the freedom of parents to choose their children's schools'. Green concludes, 'We had been used to these arguments from quite different sources!'<sup>2</sup>

1. Letter to the author dated January 10th 1974.
2. Barker gives a fuller examination of Labour's attitude to the public schools in his doctoral thesis (pp. 337-352) and in 'Education and Politics 1900-1950' Chapter VI.

The 'Green Book' did little to arouse public interest in the public school problem but Tawney was always sensitive to the response from other quarters, in particular to that from within the teaching profession. At its Easter Conference in 1942, the N.U.T. expressed its concern about the standard of education in the public schools at a time when they were in difficulties,<sup>1</sup> and suggested a scheme of inspection. An amendment was put forward, proposing a more radical overhaul, 'to close all educational establishments outside the State Educational System by opening the public schools 'to the children of all classes of the community and that admission to them shall be decided neither by the privilege of birth nor wealth'. The general tenor of the thinking behind the amendment by D.J. Johnston and F.E. Tomlinson was very much in line with the ideas which Tawney had put forward in his memorandum and in his introduction to Barbara Drake's 'Education for Democracy'.<sup>2</sup>

The campaign for reform grew whilst Tawney was in the United States. In June 1942, the President of the Board of Education announced to the Commons his intention to set up a committee 'to work out a plan under which the facilities of a boarding school education might be extended to those who desire to profit by them, irrespective of their means'.<sup>3</sup> A committee under the chairmanship of Fleming was appointed the following month. Tawney returned to the country when the Fleming Committee was just beginning its deliberations, and when the C.E.A., only recently formed, was considering the public-school problem.

The C.E.A., however, went little further than noting with

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1. 'A Report of the Proposals by the Executive of the National Union of Teachers' p.8-9.
  2. B. Drake 'Education For Democracy' (London 1941).
  3. 380 H.C. Deb. 5s. c 1416 16th June 1942.

approval the White Paper's proposals for the inspection and registration of private schools.<sup>1</sup> The Education Advisory Committee of the W.E.A. examined the matter more closely in a memorandum which, after modification, was submitted to the Fleming Committee.<sup>2</sup> Tawney had remained largely outside of its discussions for he was already considering retirement from the Presidency of the Association. He chose instead to voice his views in the press. In the 'Manchester Guardian' in February 1943,<sup>3</sup> he reiterated the basic points of his earlier memorandum. 'Education ought to be the great uniter. The one-class school .... if it does not create class divisions tends to accentuate and perpetuate them'. There was no justification for them on social grounds, but on educational grounds, because of the quality of education offered and their value as an experimental form of educational institution, there was a case for reform. The extent and kind of reform involved four considerations, an assessment of 'how many residential schools are required in the present circumstances', an examination of 'the special functions which such schools should perform', an investigation of the methods to secure 'genuine equality of access', and an enquiry into 'the relations which should exist between the public schools and the general education system of the country'.

Tawney's best known writing on the problem of the public schools appeared under that title in the Political Quarterly April/June 1943, and was later printed as a W.E.A. pamphlet.<sup>4</sup> It did not reveal any advances in his thinking since the memorandum of November 1940; in fact much of it was a reproduction of sections of the memorandum. His basic argument still reflected an innate

1. See also its statement of aims, item 9 'the licensing and inspection of any schools outside the national system'.
2. W.E.A. - G.P. 18th March 1943.
3. M.G. February 5th 1943 'The Public Schools'.
4. W.E.A. - G.P.F.C. 29th October 1943.

conservatism; a system of public schools catering for a social elite should be replaced by a system of public schools, under state supervision and receiving state aid, catering for an intellectual elite. He believed that 'reform, whatever shape it may assume, should not impair educational values, but should preserve and extend them'.<sup>1</sup> The educational value of the leading public schools was the training which they offered for leadership; their grave disadvantage was that they did not cast their net wide enough. A political democracy demanded the 'easy movement of ability to the types of education best calculated to cultivate it, and as easy movement, again, from educational institutions to the posts which such ability is qualified to fill'.<sup>2</sup> There is no suggestion in any of Tawney's writings that the public schools, even after reform, should admit any but those of the highest academic standards. His thinking was still very much in line with that of his former Rugby tutor, Frank Fletcher, who had seen Tawney as the best representative of such standards.

The Fleming Committee, of which two of Tawney's closest friends, Cole and Clay,<sup>3</sup> were members, produced its first report in April 1943. Cole and Clay were in agreement with the majority of the committee's members in proposing the abolition of all fees in direct grant schools and ~~that~~ the retention of those direct grant schools with unusual functions or non-local status. They received the support of Tawney in a leader in the 'Manchester Guardian' in August.<sup>4</sup> He recognised that the legacies of history were not easily wound up but called for the abolition of all fees in direct grant schools. In October,<sup>5</sup>

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1. 'The Problem of the Public Schools' (Reprinted in 'The Radical Tradition') p.57.
  2. p.63.
  3. Cole lectured with Tawney at the L.S.E.; Clay succeeded Tawney as President of the W.E.A.
  4. M.G. August 27th 1943.
  5. M.G. October 5th 1943.

he gave his support to the Nuffield College Social Survey's Report on 'The Open Door in Secondary Education' in its demand for 'a one hundred per cent special place system in independent schools'.<sup>1</sup> Butler's rejection of the idea of the abolition of fees in all direct grant schools led Tawney to urge a deputation to the President.<sup>2</sup> The final report of the Fleming Committee received very little comment from Tawney. His remarks were confined largely to those parts of the report which concerned fees in direct grant schools, and he made little reference to the suggested arrangements for the independent boarding schools. The public school problem had by 1944 become the problem on the one hand of direct-grant schools and on the other of the independent boarding schools. The former was the more immediate and occupied Tawney's attention during the talks on reconstruction. The latter issue receded into the background, especially when the Labour Party took office in the summer of 1945.<sup>3</sup> In consequence, it ceased to be a matter of central importance to Tawney.

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1. Ibid.

2. see p.p. 367-368.

3. Barker Op. Cit. p.116-119.



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CHAPTER EIGHT

THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN UNDER ELEVEN

1. Inspiration and Priority.
2. The Elementary School Teacher in the Twenties:  
Working Conditions and Remuneration.
3. The Training of the Elementary School Teacher.
4. From Elementary to Primary Education.
5. Nursery - Infant Education.
6. The Welfare of the School Child.

## 1. Inspiration and Priority

Though Tawney was a constant advocate of the need to study and to learn from educational developments in other countries, his thinking on educational matters was rarely if ever influenced directly by the ideas of Continental reformers or those in the United States. This is particularly true of his attitude towards nursery and elementary education. Nowhere in his writings does he mention such pioneers as Froebel, Montessori or Dewey. His acknowledged debt was always to the English reformers, especially to Matthew Arnold and Margaret McMillan. Behind his thinking there was an equally vast, if less obvious debt to English writers in the socialist tradition such as Ruskin and Morris. There is no direct trace of any foreign influence upon his thought.

This resulted largely from Tawney's approach to nursery and elementary education. He was never led to an examination of their problems through a study of current literature upon them. Before 1914, the only relevant book he appeared to have read was Arnold's 'Reports on Elementary Schools 1852-1882'. As in the case of most of his educational interests, he came to them along a very practical path. His social work from 1903 to 1914, in London, Glasgow and Manchester led him to realise the importance of socio-medical welfare and to sympathise with the efforts of the early pioneers in this field. However, it did not give him much insight into the organisational arrangements necessary to deal with malnutrition and the physical handicaps of schoolchildren. The fund at Toynbee Hall of which he was secretary from 1903 to 1906, the Children's Country Holiday Fund, scarcely touched the fringes of the problem.<sup>1</sup> He came only to realise the importance of the nursery and elementary school as the

1. Whilst Tawney supervised the Fund there were many complaints from the country reception areas about the lack of supervision. (letters in 'The Times', September 12th, 28th 1905).

principal coordinating agency for medical services after he had joined the Executive Committee of the Worker's Educational Association in 1905.

The Association, formed two years earlier, was making its first attempts to construct a general educational policy at a critical time in the nation's history when schemes for the introduction of a school medical service, and for the provision of school meals were under public discussion. As a member of the Association's Executive Committee, Tawney was brought for the first time to a close examination of the importance of nursery and elementary schools as centres for medical inspection and for the provision of meals to counteract deficiencies of diet. Margaret McMillan served on this committee; it was largely under her influence and after visiting the schools which she and her sister ran at Bow and later Deptford, that Tawney became a principal supporter of the idea of nursery schools, and of the extension of medical services within the elementary school. She and Tawney co-operated on the Labour Party's Advisory Committee on Education, to press the importance of providing nursery schools and adequate facilities within the elementary schools for meals, physical exercise and medical inspection.<sup>1</sup>

Neither Tawney nor Margaret McMillan looked upon schools simply as 'educational hospitals', though the great importance they attached to medical welfare is perfectly understandable. True to the tradition of Owen and Ruskin they gave due weight in the curriculum to aesthetics, and full scope for imaginative play and experiment while enabling children to learn motor control and to develop their five senses under skilled guidance in a physically healthy environment. Schools should become neither hospitals where medical welfare was the sole objective nor factories where the basic subjects, reading, writing and arithmetic were the sole pursuits.

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1. See p.p. 132-134.

Tawney never gave up his interest in nursery schools and the lower reaches of elementary schools, but from 1918 onwards he became more engrossed in the education of the adolescent. He helped to produce statements of policy which included reference to nursery and primary education for the W.E.A. and the Labour Party, defended them at times of economic crisis when they were faced with threats of reductions in expenditure, and served as a member of the Consultative Committee of the Board when it examined, in two reports,<sup>1</sup> the education of children under the age of eleven. He played an important part in the choice by the Consultative Committee of its reference on nursery and infant education.<sup>2</sup> Yet it must be said that he did not give the same priority to nursery and primary education that he gave to the education of the adolescent. Not one of his 174 'Manchester Guardian' leaders or articles was devoted exclusively to the nursery or primary school. More often than not, recommendations for the reduction in the size of classes in elementary schools, the replacement of blacklisted buildings or the provision of nursery schools were an appendage to the demand for reforms concerning the reorganisation of secondary education.

Tawney skirted the issue of educational priorities by assuming the bottomless public purse. He was able to escape the dilemmas and problems which confronted successive Presidents of the Board of Education, both Labour and Conservative, by starting with the idea that 'the Board should never be made the servant of the Exchequer'. On the occasions when he evolved a system of priorities, these were always within the different stages of education, never consciously between them. If nursery and primary education were the

1. 'The Primary School' (1930) and 'Nursery and Infant Schools' (1933). In the case of the latter he acted as a co-opted member.

2. See p.p. 416-417.

Cinderellas of educational policy between the wars, it was in a small part due to the overwhelming emphasis which he placed upon adolescent education.

2. The Elementary School Teacher in the Twenties: Working Conditions and Remuneration

Very early on in the history of the Worker's Educational Association, Margaret McMillan drew the attention of the Association's Executive Committee to the problem of overcrowded classes in elementary schools,<sup>1</sup> but it was not until discussions on educational reconstruction got under way during the First World War that the matter was given serious attention by Tawney and the Association. In September 1917, Tawney was present at the Central Council's discussions on Fisher's First Education Bill. The Council's seventh resolution deplored the omission from the Bill of reference to 'the size of classes'.<sup>2</sup> This criticism, was based on the statement of policy, drawn up at the May meeting of various educational bodies convened by the W.E.A.,<sup>3</sup> which recommended that classes in elementary schools be reduced immediately to a maximum of forty and later thirty. The amendments to Fisher's second bill, drafted by Tawney, gave fuller attention to the matter.

The amendments, contained in the Association's pamphlet 'The Choice Before the Nation' regarded overcrowded classes of up to sixty children as 'the greatest impediment' to progress in elementary education.<sup>4</sup> Oversized classes made the teachers' task impossible.

'When, as at present, there are classes in which the number

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1. W.E.A. - E.C. May 8th 1909.

2. 'The Proposals in our Educational Reconstruction Pamphlet, the resolutions of the Central Council of 27th September 1917, the proposals of the Education Bill and amendments thereto', p.4.

3. The 14th Annual Report of the W.E.A. gives details of the May meeting and its series of resolutions embodied in its Report 'An Education Policy For After the War'.

4. p.23-24.

of children reaches the number of 60, the individual contact between teacher and child, which is the essence of education becomes impossible and the task of the teacher, which should be a stimulus and a pleasure becomes something not far removed from exhausting drudgery'. The reduction in the size of classes depended largely on an increase in the number of teachers and in school accommodation, and could thus be accomplished only by the administrative pressure of the Board upon Local Education Authorities. But Parliament also had a duty, which was to lay down in the Education Bill, the vital principle urged by Matthew Arnold that no class in an elementary school should contain more than forty, and ultimately, thirty, children. With such a declaration before them, the Board and Local Education Authorities would have a goal for which to work. To establish such a standard, the Bill should give a specific time limit to Local Authorities, upon which payment of a full grant depended. The Bill therefore needed amending to accommodate this provision. By 1918, this demand found a place of prominence in the Association's and Tawney's statements on elementary schools. When in 1917, Tawney wrote that, 'Reform must begin with elementary schools',<sup>1</sup> he implied that the reform of elementary education should begin with the reduction in the size of classes.

The first memorandum drafted by Tawney for the Labour Party's Advisory Committee on Education reiterated this demand, and in 1919,<sup>2</sup> lest the Advisory Committee forget the central importance of reducing the size of elementary school classes, he amended a proposed list of questions for the Party's Executive Committee to include specific reference to the matter. The Advisory Committee's first

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1. M.G. March 10th 1917.

2. L.P. - A.C.E. June 23rd 1919.

major statement on the size of classes did not appear until 1924, and was not written by Tawney, though he was called upon to provide an introduction to it and had outlined its main conclusions a few months earlier in 'Education - The Socialist Policy'.<sup>1</sup> In May 1924,<sup>2</sup> the Committee had before it Barbara Drake's pamphlet on 'Staffing in Public Elementary Schools'. Tawney welcomed the opportunity of writing its introduction and of reminding the nation that 'as long ago as 1869, Matthew Arnold urged that no class in a primary school should exceed forty children'.<sup>3</sup>

Tawney adopted his characteristic technique of outlining the respectable history of the demand. The Consultative Committee of the Board, the National Union of Teachers and Local Education Authorities had decided in its favour at various times. In view of the general agreement about the urgency of reducing the size of classes, the numbers of classes which exceeded fifty and even sixty pupils was disconcerting.<sup>4</sup> The Cabinet had ranged itself 'on the side of the powers of darkness' and had supported the conclusion made by the Geddes Committee that 'primary schools were seriously overstaffed'. In consequence, the gifted young teacher found himself in the position of a racehorse harnessed to a roller. With swollen classes, the children, who 'desire to be active to construct and experiment, to follow their own bent' were forced to be passive. 'They must listen to talk, and more talk and again more talk, for it is by oratory that a spell is laid on mobs'. They were forced to be passive for the movement of large numbers meant confusion. The answer to the problem of large

1. Chapter III. Primary Education. See especially p.18-p.24.

2. L.P. - A.C.E. 16th May, 1924.

3. 'Staffing in Public Elementary Schools' p.3.

4. Tawney quoted from the 'Statistics of Public Education' which showed that in 1919-1920 there were 31,204 classes with 50 to 59 children and 6,970 classes with 60 children and over.

classes lay in the provision of additional grants to pay increased staffs and to reconstruct school buildings, and Tawney looked to Labour's President of the Board, Charles Trevelyan to take steps to provide such grants.<sup>1</sup> The first step was to ascertain the exact position and the degree of variation in standards of provision in rural areas, where overcrowding was less of a problem and in urban areas where the problem was greatest.

Transformation could only occur in a piecemeal manner but the aim should be the standard of staffing of secondary schools. 'Nor if thirty is as large a class as can be taught in the latter (secondary schools), are classes of sixty tolerable in the former (elementary schools)'.<sup>2</sup> The Board should aim to eradicate the problem of overcrowding by a series of steps. It should set a limit of fifty children to each class to be attained within three years and of forty within five years. But the vital point was that the stages should be determined in advance. The ultimate aim was to make it easy for the teacher to apply the methods which the progress of his craft has led him to trust. That which paralysed the development of primary education was not professional conservatism but financial parsimony. In 1925, Tawney was able to find an example of the latter in Circular 1371 issued by the Board.<sup>3</sup>

Further publicity was given to the evils of overcrowded classes in 'An Outline of Educational Policy', a memorandum produced by a subcommittee of the Advisory Committee upon which Tawney served, which was published in 1926 under the title 'From Nursery School to University'. These reports repeated the timescale laid down by

1. Trevelyan indicated his willingness to initiate reform in his preface to Susan Laurence's 'The New Spirit in Education' and to Tawney's 'Education - The Socialist Policy'.
2. 'Education - The Socialist Policy' R.H. Tawney p.16.
3. He helped to produce a series of notes for speakers on Circular 1371 for the Advisory Committee (Memorandum No.135a December 1925).



Tawney two years earlier of a reduction to fifty 'forthwith' and to forty within a period of five years. Classrooms should be remodelled to suit the smaller numbers.<sup>1</sup> These points were included in the revised statement of policy which Tawney drew up for the W.E.A. in 1925,<sup>2</sup> and in a statement by Labour's Advisory Committee also in that year.<sup>3</sup>

In the twenties, Tawney's analysis of the main factors affecting the size of classes followed the general line of progressive opinion. He examined the problems of teacher supply and provision of school buildings, particularly at the times of economic crisis. In 1922, 'he expressed his concern at the proposals of the Geddes Committee for reducing expenditure on school buildings and teachers' salaries. The teaching profession had only recently been rescued from the realms of a decaying trade. Schools, which in 1870, were a kind of educational factory, were on the way to becoming places of natural and many sided growth. All that movement with its infinite possibilities for body and spirit for the individual and society, is to stop.' In 1924, with the advent of a Labour Government he was much more hopeful that steps would be taken to increase the supply of teachers and school buildings. He spoke out strongly against the previous government's discouragement of building schemes and laid down the lines of advance which a Labour Government should take.

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1. W.E.A. - E.C. September 15th 1928.
  2. L.P. - A.C.E. 12th November 1925.
  3. M.G. February 21st 1922. This view was also expressed by Tawney at a meeting of the W.E.A. Executive Committee on January 28th 1922. The statement of general educational policy made by the W.E.A. on October 29th 1922 made no reference to either teachers' salaries or schoolbuildings.

In 'Education - The Socialist Policy', Tawney repeated his view that up to 1918, largely because of miserably inadequate salaries elementary or primary teaching deserved to be called a decaying trade. Before the establishment of the Burnham scales, 'some branches of teaching were, by common consent, a sweated industry'.<sup>1</sup> The Burnham Committee had temporarily settled the salary question though subsequent downward revision of salaries in the name of 'economy' had again aggravated the problem of recruitment. Without giving details of adequate scales of remuneration and of building grants, he urged that no further reductions should take place. The Labour Party's statement of policy in 1926, which Tawney helped to produce, was a little more specific.<sup>2</sup> It estimated the cost of rebuilding and equipping elementary schools over a period of five years at nearly £23 million, part of which could be saved by the construction of central schools reclassified as secondary schools. The cost of increasing the staffing of elementary schools it put at £280,000 though it had nothing to say directly on the subject of adequate salaries for teachers.

### 3. The Training of the Elementary School Teacher

The training of the elementary school teacher was a subject which aroused Tawney's interest more than that of the remuneration of teachers or building schemes to reduce the size of classes. This was mainly because he considered it a matter of concern for the universities, the sphere of education with which he was most familiar, and partly because G.S.M. Ellis of the N.U.T.,<sup>3</sup> who was Secretary to

1. p.37.

2. 'From Nursery School to University' Chapter XIX. 'Problems of Finance).

3. Ellis produced a brief memorandum for the Advisory Committee on November 15th 1920.

Labour's Advisory Committee on Education, requested his assistance in drafting a memorandum on teacher training. Though Ellis proved to be an important influence on Tawney's thinking, Tawney never felt himself sufficiently conversant with the details of the subject to present evidence to the Board of Education's Departmental Committee on the Training of Teachers set up in 1923. He agreed to appear as a witness before the Committee on behalf of the W.E.A. 'only if no one else would' but suggested that 'it would be advisable to ask some person more acquainted with the subject than he was'.<sup>1</sup> To his relief the task was given to Greenwood though he was even less qualified than Tawney,<sup>2</sup> who produced a lengthy leader on the subject in the 'Manchester Guardian'.<sup>3</sup>

The years immediately prior to the publication of the Departmental Committee's Report on Teacher Training were ones during which the Labour Party's Advisory Committee on Education, made strenuous efforts to clarify its attitude on the subject of teacher training. As early as 1920 the Advisory Committee passed a resolution to the effect that 'the education of teachers be an integral part of the work of the universities and all specialised training should be postgraduate'.<sup>4</sup> In working out the implications of the resolution, Tawney played an important but not the leading part. The task was hastened and made easier by the submission to the Advisory Committee by the National Union of Teachers of its resolutions

1. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. May 31st 1923.
2. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. June 28th 1923. In the end, Greenwood did not appear before the Committee. Instead the W.E.A. forwarded a memorandum. Tawney appeared before the Committee with Mrs. Drake and Chuter Ede to present the evidence of the Joint Research and Information Department of the T.U.C. and Labour Party.
3. M.G. January 15th 1924 'The Training of Teachers'
4. L.P. - A.C.E. November 8th 1920.

on the training of teachers.<sup>1</sup> The first steps taken were to send 'a questionnaire on teacher training to those with experience', and to examine closely the N.U.T. resolutions. Whilst Tawney was engaged in writing 'Secondary Education For All', Ellis began the process of sifting through the replies to the questionnaire in preparation for compiling a pamphlet on teacher training.

Ellis co-operated with Tawney in producing a section on teacher training for 'Secondary Education For All',<sup>2</sup> and Tawney assisted Ellis in expanding the section into a memorandum to place before the Advisory Committee. The memorandum after revision following discussions within the Committee,<sup>3</sup> was forwarded to the Party's Executive and formed the basis of the evidence submitted the following year to the Departmental Committee on the Training of Teachers. Tawney was asked to give evidence to the Departmental Committee on behalf of the Labour Party, though Chuter Ede was to be the principal witness with Tawney and Spikes speaking in support.<sup>4</sup>

The memorandum deplored the fact that nearly thirty per cent of the teachers in schools in England and Wales had no certificate of professional competency, and that, of that number many thousands were women supplementary teachers 'whose general education had been inadequate'. The problem confronting the profession was as much that of status as remuneration. The matter of status, though involving the issue of salaries, was equally inseparable from the question of the teachers' own education and training. 'Let the nation be convinced that the teachers are its natural leaders in civilisation and the humanities, that they are well equipped in broadness of vision and in technical ability to lead, and it will

1. L.P. - A.C.E. November 30th 1920
2. See p. 181 of this work.
3. L.P. - A.C.E. May 2nd 1922.
4. L.P. - A.C.E. June 19th 1923. The content of a letter submitted to the Advisory Committee by the Joint Research and Information Department of the Labour Party and T.U.C.

accord them, in spite of the false and mercenary standards which today prevail, the respect which is due to those who serve the highest interests of the race'.<sup>1</sup> In pursuance of this ideal, the Memorandum proposed firstly to end the introduction of 'supplementary' teachers into primary schools, to give 'adequate facilities for non-certificated teachers' to improve their educational and professional qualifications' and to press upon the Government the need to estimate the staffing needs of schools in order that 'all schools may ultimately be staffed by a sufficiency of trained University graduates'.<sup>2</sup>

The memorandum considered the arguments against the training college system then in existence. The most forcible argument against it was that it segregated intending teachers from those of their own age who intended to enter other professions. This segregation was particularly acute in residential colleges and in sectarian single-sex institutions.<sup>3</sup> A second disadvantage of existing training colleges was the overloading of the curriculum by a wide range of cultural subjects. What mattered was more 'the width of outlook' of the University rather than the width of curriculum of the secondary school. The training college course was 'too academic, leaving the student in comparative ignorance of technical and industrial questions'.<sup>4</sup> Even in an extended and improved form, the training college system, a survival from the times when there were only three Universities in the country, was not an acceptable method of advance to either Tawney or the Advisory Committee over which he presided.

The alternative put forward in the memorandum was that of

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1. L.P. - A.C.E. Memorandum 61c 'The Education and Training of Teachers' p.1.
  2. p.19.
  3. p.8 and p.9
  4. p.11.

'a new university faculty'. As the cost of a university education was scarcely more than that of a training at a training college, then it was well worth 'a small additional annual expenditure to give all teachers the benefit of a University experience'.<sup>1</sup> Any additional cost would partly be offset by administrative economies, although it was recognised that a student would stay at a university for three years in the place of the existing two year system at training colleges. Such a step would involve internal reorganisation within the Universities. The student would be attached to one of the existing faculties in order to study 'one aspect of knowledge intensively but the rest of the University course' may be with reason devoted to a more general study of life and things' and give contact with such subjects as psychology, and physiology which are 'indispensable to the teaching craft'.<sup>2</sup> Whilst the majority of intending teachers would give intensive and prolonged attention to these subjects, others 'reasonably will seek to acquire their elements in a more general way'. No mention was made of courses involving a consideration of teaching methods, although it was recognised that 'a University Training Department is permitted to delegate the training of its students in the actual practice of teaching to the staff of an approved school'.<sup>3</sup>

This scheme of training was accepted by the W.E.A. largely on the advice of Tawney. The Association's statement of policy on education, published in the same year as the Advisory Committee's memorandum was drafted, urged the 'gradual elimination of all supplementary and uncertificated teachers. All boys and girls

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1. p.12.

2. p.14

3. p.17.

entering the teaching profession should receive a University Education'.<sup>1</sup> Tawney produced a confidential memorandum on the subject<sup>2</sup> in which he criticised training college students as 'absorbers and reproducers of textbooks' and spoke out against 'the segregation of intending teachers in special institutions'. There was need for 'a gradual and progressive movement in the direction of securing a university education for a larger number of intending teachers. He believed the two year training college course should be discouraged, and in its place there should be firstly a general education at a university followed by professional training. He appears to have failed to consider the idea of concurrent training. At the end of the memorandum he granted the concession that though training was best undertaken at a university it could still take place, at least temporarily, at training colleges which had been given better standards of staffing and amenities. In a leader in the Manchester Guardian<sup>3</sup> early in 1924, he was more concerned that all teachers should receive some form of professional training than with the particular institutions in which the training should take place. His only comment on the latter seemed to run counter to the general tenor of his confidential memorandum. He urged, somewhat surprisingly, that the training of secondary school teachers should be distinguished from that of primary school teachers; that of the former should consist of 'university training and an additional year of teacher training, that of the latter should be a course of unspecified duration in a training college.' From his comments in 'Education - the Socialist Policy'<sup>4</sup> written a few months later, it appears that his immediate concern was to ensure that 'the existing system worked to its full capacity'. 'As long as the existing training college system exists,

1. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. December 14 1922.

2. 'Private and Confidential Memorandum on Teachers' Qualification' (L.S.E. papers).

3. M.G. January 18th 1924.

4. p.40.

room must be found in it for all those desiring training'. The ultimate goal was that laid down in the memorandum prepared largely by G.S.M. Ellis in 1922.

In 'Education - the Socialist Policy', Tawney repeated, in a large measure verbatim, the substance of the Memorandum of 1922, though he made an additional suggestion for the transition from a training college to a university scheme of training. Training colleges in close proximity to universities should be brought into formal relations with them. They should become colleges of the university and their students should increasingly follow a degree course under university teachers.<sup>1</sup> During the Summer of 1924 whilst in the United States, he reiterated his belief that 'a larger proportion of the teachers in primary schools, instead of receiving as 85 per cent of them do now, a two-year course in a training college which attempts the impossible task of combining simultaneously general education with professional training, (should) graduate in Universities and prepare themselves for their profession in a year of specialised post-graduate work'.<sup>2</sup> The statement of policy by the Labour Party in 1926 recognised 'that time must elapse before all intending teachers could receive a full university goal',<sup>3</sup> but reaffirmed the belief that all should ultimately receive a university education 'which should precede and be distinct from any training course'.

The Report of the Departmental Committee on the Training of Teachers, published in 1925, accepted most but not all of the proposals but forward by the W.E.A. and Labour Party in their evidence. It agreed that the ultimate objective should be the recognition by the Board of none but the certificated teacher. No further supplementary

1. p.43.

2. 'The British Labor Movement' p.133-p.134.

3. 'From Nursery School to University' p.57. Tawney was on the subcommittee which drew up this statement of policy.



teachers should be employed in schools and the existing Certificate Examination for acting teachers should be discontinued.<sup>1</sup> The emphasis placed by the Departmental Committee upon the extension of existing Secondary School accommodation for intending teachers was greatly welcomed by the educational bodies with which Farnley was associated. However the Departmental Committee regarded the idea of 'university degrees for all teachers' as beyond 'the region of practical politics',<sup>2</sup> although it was in favour of a much larger number of graduate teachers in elementary schools. It believed that if all teacher training took place within the universities then the autonomy of the universities would be put in jeopardy and the balance of their courses upset. Furthermore, a longer course of training for teachers would make the supply of teachers less easy to adjust at short notice to the changing conditions of demand. The report thus came down in favour of the training college system.

The report urged the reform of existing training colleges in order that they could 'become more professional'.<sup>3</sup> Existing courses suffered from 'an undesirable distraction of aim', largely because of the bias toward the academic work. Reforms were necessary in order to ensure that 'the essential function of training students to become effective teachers (was) .... their main consideration', but such reforms involved no radically new departure. Professional work should be given more time and academic work lightened. Steps should be taken to reduce 'the overcrowded course' of many colleges. Included in the list of reforms suggested by the Departmental Committee were a number designed to bring the training colleges and universities

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1. Report of The Departmental Committee on the Training of Teachers for Public Elementary Schools p.157.
  2. p. 78.
  3. p.90.

into a closer relationship.<sup>1</sup> To examine students of a training college or a group of training colleges, an examination board including 'representatives of universities and the Governing Bodies of Training Colleges' should be created. Students undertaking third year work for such courses as 'Diploma courses' should be encouraged to enter universities for this purpose and 'eminent university teachers' should be given the opportunity of delivering lectures at training colleges. University representation on the Governing Bodies of Training Colleges should be encouraged and conferences between university representatives and representatives from the training colleges and local education authorities should be fostered. These recommendations stopped far short of the proposals made by Tawney for the universities taking complete charge of teacher training. However he could find some comfort in the note of dissent signed by Miss Conway of the N.U.T, and others which argued in favour of 'places of professional training, content to leave academic studies to academic institutions and to devote themselves with a single eye to the important task of teaching recruits how to teach'.<sup>2</sup> In their view, a training college course<sup>3</sup> which was 'strictly professional' should follow an academic education which should be 'completed .... to an increasing extent in universities'.<sup>4</sup>

The Report of the Departmental Committee was accepted by the Consultative Committee of the Board when it began its inquiry into 'courses of study suitable for children (other than children in Infant's Departments) up to the age of 11 in Elementary Schools, with special reference to the needs of children in rural areas'.<sup>5</sup> As a

1. Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations p.163-14.
2. p. 178.
3. Miss Conway was not in agreement that this should be of one year's duration for all intending teachers.
4. p.179
5. 'The Primary School' p.iv.

member of the Consultative Committee, Tawney had the opportunity to voice any reservations which he had about the proposed scheme of teacher training but none was made. The Report, signed in November 1930, had little to say about teacher training, except to endorse the recommendations of the Departmental Committee and to express the hope<sup>1</sup> that since 'the training colleges have now been associated with the universities for the purposes of the final certificate examination .... it is hoped that some method will be found for securing a just balance between the academic and professional sides of the courses for the training of teachers'. None of the organisations with which Tawney was associated and which submitted evidence to the Consultative Committee made reference to teacher training. The W.E.A, in its evidence, merely commented that, 'only fully trained teachers should be employed because individual methods demanded more from a teacher'.<sup>2</sup> Thereafter, neither Tawney nor the W.E.A. had much to say on the subject of teacher training except to deplore reductions at times of economic crisis of the number of teachers being trained.<sup>3</sup> During the Second World War, the Association showed that it had still not lost sight of its ideal of an all-graduate teaching profession. It urged Butler to restore the normal facilities for training teachers as soon as possible and to take steps to raise 'the educational standard of the teaching profession', which meant first and foremost the possession of a university degree.<sup>4</sup>

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1. p.108. A consideration of the implications of their recommendations for teacher training was, of course, outside of the terms of reference of the Committee.
  2. P.R.O. ED 10/148 W.E.A. Evidence Paper No. S 38. The evidence of the N.U.T. and T.U.C. is to be found in Papers S 12 (27) and S 12 (25) respectively.
  3. e.g. M.G. May 24th and 25th 1933.
  4. Notes on the Education Bill p.7.

#### 4. From Elementary to Primary Education

In 'Secondary Education For All' (1922), Tawney put forward a proposal for the abolition of the parallel system of elementary and secondary education. In their place, he recommended that education up to the age of 16 should be organised as two distinct and continuous stages of a single process with a break between the primary and secondary stage at 11+. He was more concerned to end class differentiation in education than he was to redefine the role of primary education. Elementary education, conceived as a utilitarian and cheap form of education for the children of labouring poor, was by definition limited and by implication inferior. It had thus no place in a social system which, in Tawney's view, aimed ultimately at a cultural synthesis.

If, however, Tawney was rejecting a very narrow concept of education, he was in danger of embracing another concept of primary education which also had distinct limitations. 'The Labour Party is convinced that the only policy which is at once educationally sound and suited to a democratic community is one under which primary education and secondary education are organised as two stages in a single continuous process; secondary education being the education of the adolescent and primary education being education preparatory thereto'.<sup>1</sup> The first stage of the system was measured solely by the degree to which it acted as a preparation for the second. In 1924 Tawney reiterated his belief in 'the preparatory tradition'. 'Elementary education must, in short, become preparatory education'.<sup>2</sup> Each stage of education was conceived only as a preparation for the next. The Labour Party statement of policy, 'From Nursery School to University' accepted this concept of primary education.<sup>3</sup>

1. 'Secondary Education For All' p.7. (The author's underlining).
2. 'Education - The Socialist Policy' p.15.
3. p. 16.

It was not until the Consultative Committee turned to examine primary education in November 1928 that there was any development in Tawney's attitude. In October of that year, there were several suggestions for the next reference for the Committee. Abbott suggested an investigation into commercial education; Miss Hawtrey favoured 'an examination into the organisation of the infant's school'.<sup>1</sup> Tawney made no suggestions. It was Barker's proposal for 'a consideration of the organisation and curriculum of courses of study suitable for children attending public elementary schools up to the age of eleven' which formed the basis of the Committee's reference which followed its most famous on adolescent education.

As a member of the Consultative Committee,<sup>2</sup> Tawney could not present the evidence of the W.E.A. to it. However, he was involved in the Association's deliberations on primary education from the time when it received the invitation to submit a memorandum in December 1928. Three members of the Association's Finance and General Purpose Committee each drew up a memorandum under Tawney's guidance,<sup>3</sup> and in February 1929<sup>4</sup> he expressed his willingness to condense the memoranda into one document. He quickly completed this task and the evidence of the Association was forwarded to the Committee by the end of February. The document began by denouncing the idea that Tawney had previously held; 'Primary education should not be regarded merely or primarily as a preparation for later education. It should be regarded as a distinctive phase of education, <sup>5</sup> designed for a specific period of life with its own outlook and methods'.

1. P.R.O. Ed 24 1226.

2. Tawney was reappointed when the Committee was reconstituted in October 1928.

3. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. January 17th 1929

4. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. February 21st 1929

5. W.E.A. Evidence. Resolution 2.

The N.U.T. and T.U.C., which acted in close co-operation with the W.E.A., began their evidence by making the same point. The N.U.T. was against the term 'preparatory' because it could involve confusion with schools outside the national system and might also suggest that the main object of elementary or primary school classes would be 'to have regard to the academic or other requirements of the succeeding stage'.<sup>1</sup> The T.U.C., using much the same terminology as the W.E.A., began by asserting that primary education should be regarded as 'a distinct phase in the development of children, with well defined characteristics of its own'. Primary education should be related 'more closely to the needs of the Primary School age'.

Having renounced the notion of primary education as 'simply preparatory education', Tawney, in the W.E.A. evidence, went on briefly to examine the question of the curriculum. In the infant department the child should learn 'the mechanical side of writing and reading; in the 'junior elementary school' he should be thoroughly at home with his own language. At that stage, children 'were filled with curiosity and had considerable powers of imagination'. To cultivate these qualities, it was necessary to abandon 'the mass methods forced on the teacher by overcrowded classes'. Classes should be small enough for individual work 'on Dalton lines'. There should be an adequate supply of well-written and up to date books with sufficient classroom accommodation to allow for individual work. Emphasis should be given to handwork, physical education and games, with adequate equipment, suitable shoes and clothing and grass playing fields. The primary school should be freed from the pressure of the free-place examination. 'It matters much more that the child should learn how to use his mind and his hands than that he should acquire any particular piece of knowledge'.<sup>2</sup> Somewhat surprisingly, Tawney

1. N.U.T. Evidence Resolution 1.

2. W.E.A. Evidence. Resolution VI.

omitted a point that the N.U.T. stressed, that means should be made available to enable teachers to discover easily the latest research and experiments in matters of curricula. The N.U.T. recognised, however, that 'the present reference to the Consultative Committee offered a channel through which the most recent discoveries might be made more widely and easily accessible' but also added that there was need for a more fully developed system of local inspectors and refresher courses. However, Tawney agreed with the recommendations of the N.U.T. that there should be no 'arbitrary division of subjects at the infant stage' and that there should be 'an elasticity of timetable'. Tawney did not feel himself sufficiently competent to enter into details of curricula, and did not venture to comment even upon how history could be taught or approached in the primary school. The latter task was left to such persons as Elsa Nunn, the daughter of Percy Nunn, who had just completed research on the subject.<sup>1</sup>

Tawney's membership of the Consultative Committee was extended from July to November 1930 to enable him to sign the report. This he did without reservation, thus implicitly either accepting its recommendations or not disagreeing with them sufficiently to weaken the Report by adding a note of reservation. It is probable that the former was the case. Tawney identified himself with the progressive idiom and with the developmental tradition<sup>2</sup> which based its principles upon those of child development. The report took its stand squarely on the developmental tradition. In its introduction, the report made it clear that 'the primary school is not a mere interlude between

1. Unfortunately Miss Nunn's evidence was written and thus she was unable to measure the reaction of Tawney to it. (Letter from Miss E. Nunn to the author 1st October 1973).
2. For an analysis of the emergence and meaning of this tradition see W.A.L. Blyth 'English Primary Education' p.35-43. See also R.J.W. Selleck 'English Primary Education and the Progressives 1914-1939' Chapter 4.

the infant school and the later stages of education, nor is its quality to be judged by its success in preparing children to proceed to the latter .... just as each phase of life has its special characteristics, so the primary school has its special opportunities, problems and difficulties .... Its criterion must above all be the requirements of its pupils during the years when they are in its charge, not the exigencies of examinations or the demands of the schools and occupations which they will eventually enter'.<sup>1</sup> To ascertain these requirements was principally the work of those with a knowledge of the physical, mental and emotional development of young children, and to this end Burt, Cholmeley and Nunn were co-opted on to the Consultative Committee. It was an area of expertise alien to Tawney and many of the other members of the Committee, but one whose importance was fully realised by them and many of the bodies, including the W.E.A. which had submitted evidence. There was little call upon Tawney's sociological knowledge. His greatest contribution appears to have been made on the Drafting Committee which was under the chairmanship of W.A.Brockington.

Many of the recommendations of the Report were in keeping with the general tenor of the evidence of the W.E.A., and were reiterated by Tawney in his speeches to educational bodies in the thirties and forties.<sup>2</sup> The Report accepted the idea of a break at 11+ between primary and secondary education, and urged 'a well-defined line of demarcation in the former' between pupils below the age of seven and those above. It concentrated its attention on the upper age range of the primary school and aimed at dissolving the formal curriculum, relaxing discipline, reducing competition, increasing the time given to 'aesthetic subjects', and making the child the centre of the educational process. Greater freedom of movement and 'plenty of

1. Report p. xv - xvi.

2. These speeches are to be found among his private papers at the London School of Economics.



change' during lessons was urged; less emphasis upon 'routine work' and 'mechanical memory' was recommended with a more important place being given to reasoning and understanding, 'constructive imagination', and with a greater appeal to the child's curiosity and 'his desire to handle or to shape something which is new'.<sup>1</sup> In its specific recommendations concerning curriculum, it recommended the cultivation of the children's aesthetic sensibility through drawing, craft-work and music and the development of manual skills. The 'curriculum of the primary school is to be thought of in terms of activity and experience, rather than of knowledge to be acquired and facts to be stored'.<sup>2</sup> The traditional practice of dividing 'the matter of primary instruction into separate subjects taught in distinct lessons, should be reconsidered. The treatment of a series of central topics which have relations with many subjects, may be a useful alternative. In many ways, the report on 'The Primary School' was more progressive than that on 'The Education of the Adolescent'. It would appear that the retention of the existing secondary or grammar schools, advocated in the latter report, militated against the reforms urged in the former report for their retention threw a heavy weight of emphasis upon the '11+ examination', which greatly affected the curricula of the primary schools.

In the years immediately following the publication of the report, Tawney continued to identify himself closely with the developmental tradition and to campaign for improvements in primary education which would enable the recommendations of the Consultative Committee to be implemented. References to primary education were given a more prominent position in his general campaigns against economies in educational expenditure,<sup>3</sup> and in his speeches to

1. Summary of Principal Conclusions and Recommendations, p.135.
2. Recommendation 30, p.139.
3. e.g. M.G. May 10th 1932 and November 18th 1932.

educational bodies. For example in his lecture to the New Education Fellowship<sup>1</sup> in 1933 and 1934<sup>2</sup>, he argued that 'the business of the Primary School is not to impart the accomplishments or formulae thought desirable by adults but to enable them when they are children to be healthy, alert minded and if possible happy children'.<sup>3</sup> As such the 'elementary tradition' should be rejected, which was 'primarily a discipline aiming on its intellectual side, at the attainment of a minimum standard of proficiency in the 3 R's and on its social side, at the production of an orderly, and civil and not inconveniently restive population'.

Tawney did not underestimate the task of gaining widespread acceptance for the ideas of the report. Much ignorance surrounded the subject of primary schools. 'Having listened to witnesses before the Board, I came to the conclusion that most of those who are not in the business suppose that schools and children are what they were in their youth'.<sup>4</sup> Many were unaware that individual work played a larger part in primary schools and collective teaching a smaller part. 'Activity is emphasised as much or more than, instruction'. The primary consideration of the educationalist 'is and should be not what children will become but what in fact they are; he serves their future best who refuses to allow their present to be sacrificed to it',<sup>5</sup> Yet in some areas, primary education was still haunted by the ghost of its disreputable past. In the Sidney Ball Memorial Lecture at Oxford in 1934 and in a lecture on 'The Finance and Economics of Public

1. The New Education Fellowship, represented before the Consultative Committee by F. Burridge and H.C. Dent, played a leading part in publicising the ideas of the progressives. Sellick Op.Cit. p.25, 27, 45-6, 47, 61, 64, 75, 101, 119, 125, 127, 156.
2. To be found in his personal papers at the L.S.E. Box labelled 'Educational Memoranda'.
3. Lecture 11 p.20
4. p.21
5. p.24.

Education' at Cambridge in 1935,<sup>1</sup> he reaffirmed his belief in the developmental concept of primary education.

After 1935 Tawney became once more engrossed in the problems of adolescent education and the issue of exemptions from full time attendance. It was not until discussions on postwar reconstruction began in 1942, that he returned to the subject of primary education. As President of the W.E.A. and Chairman of the Council for Educational Advance he endorsed their demand that most of the primary schools should be 'rebuilt and re-equipped and that all were to be staffed so that there are no classes of more than thirty'.<sup>2</sup> He expressed regret that no specific mention was made in Butler's Education Bill of such matters as size of classes.<sup>3</sup> In general, however, the W.E.A. and C.E.A. gave little attention to the education of those between the ages of seven and eleven and concentrated more upon nursery, adolescent and adult education. His only major statement on primary education was the section which he contributed to an abortive Labour Party report in 1943.<sup>4</sup>

In this report Tawney attributed advances made in primary education since the publication of the Consultative Committee document in 1930 to the initiative of teachers and the activities of enlightened local authorities. The Board had done little to remove the obstacles in the way of realising the concept of education laid down by the Consultative Committee. Even if action on them had been feeble, the principles were clear. 'Education, like other arts must start from the facts. At the primary stage the essential facts are neither information to be imparted nor accomplishments to be

1. L.S.E. Papers, Box labelled 'Educational Memoranda'
2. C.E.A. Education Leaflet No.2. 'The New Britain and the Children'
3. Notes on the Education Bill p.5.
4. For the history of this report see p.301

conferred but the needs and possibilities of the children themselves. ....The most obvious characteristic of a child is that it is not passive but active, and that its activities are not aimless but experiments by which it grows. Every child gives some account to itself of the material objects about it, wishes to exercise its limits, play games and run about .... These activities are the process by which growth takes place. Therefore they are its education'.<sup>1</sup> The task of the school was not repress them but to provide an environment in which they can unfold, to foster them by wise encouragement. The function of the primary school is 'not to force the pace in an excessive though natural solicitude for the future of children, still less to prepare them for examinations further education or employment. It is to enable them to make the most of the present.'<sup>2</sup>

Tawney's analysis of 'the practical conclusions' which followed from these premises followed much the same lines as the Report of the Consultative Committee. It was necessary to avoid 'over-intellectualism' and a central place should be given to games, singing, dancing, drawing and acting. 'The importance of cultivating the imagination, of appealing to the emotions, and of fostering the social spirit - those things are highly emphasised'.<sup>3</sup> Physical education, ample opportunities for individual and group work with 'children finding making and doing more stimulating than listening'; school gardening and caring for animals should be included in the curriculum. The tools of knowledge reading, writing and simple conceptions of quantity and number, are more easily mastered when seen to be related to the 'life of the small society of which children

1. 'Primary Education' p.2. Section of an unnamed typescript from a box labelled 'The Labour Party and Education' (L.S.E. Papers).
2. p.3.
3. Ibid.

are members and to the simple tasks on which they are engaged'.<sup>1</sup>  
 But such questions of curriculum were essentially a matter for the teacher but the means by which the ideal could be fully achieved was a matter for all political parties. Their material structure, their equipment and not infrequently their whole environment must be improved'.<sup>2</sup> The changes required were not revolutionary except in their effects upon the welfare of children.

Tawney gave priority to an increase in the number and quality of school buildings. Over nine-tenths of the primary schools were forty years or more old. If many of the schools were factories there would be grounds for prosecution. In many dilapidated schools there was a listlessness among pupils and a despair of improving educational methods. It was obviously absurd to labour physical culture in schools which were badly lighted with primitive sanitary arrangements and where the only playground was a square of asphalt. It was equally impossible to arouse 'a sense of beauty in children whose surroundings were a lesson in frightfulness'<sup>3</sup> or to emphasise the value of practical work when no craftrooms were available. Tawney's answer to the problems was 'to destroy remorselessly and rebuild on the right lines. A more gradual process of replacement will not do'.<sup>4</sup> Under existing conditions 'education tends to be depersonalised and dehumanised'. Schools should be carefully sited and well equipped.

Yet despite the importance which Tawney apparently attached to the need to make adequate provisions for primary education as a distinct phase, he began the third section of his report for the Labour Party with the statement, 'Primary education is preparatory education'<sup>5</sup> In discussing Labour policy for adolescent education, he saw primary education largely as a preparation for the secondary

1. Ibid.

2. p.4.

3. p.5.

4. p.6.

5. Section III Unnamed typescript from a box labelled 'The Labour Party and Education' in the Tawney collection of private papers (L.S.E.)

stage. His argument was concerned with raising the school leaving age and to justify the measure he argued that it was financially wasteful to provide a preparatory education if that for which it was preparatory lasted but a short time. To gain the full value of primary education it was thus necessary to lengthen the period of secondary education.

Between 1922 and 1928 Tawney had upheld the preparatory tradition largely because he was concerned to emphasise the unitary nature of the educational process in which one stage led to another. During these years he was more concerned to attack the elementary tradition in education than he was to work out precisely the nature of primary education in a new educational structure. In 1928, he began his first close examination of the primary stage and the stress which he had always put on the need to foster individual talents and capacities led him to embrace a child-centred theory of primary education from which he rarely departed thereafter.

##### 5. Nursery-Infant Education

Before the Consultative Committee had completed its investigation into primary education, its chairman, Hadow reported to the Secretary of the Board that 'certain members of the committee are anxious to be allowed to take 'The education of the children under seven' as the next subject. This subject was suggested by Miss Hawtrey and Mr. Tawney'.<sup>1</sup> Hadow was apparently in a dilemma. 'Tawney has already suggested that we do this, and has, I believe, prepared a private report on the matter. Percy Jackson has proposed that we ask to take the training of teachers next'.<sup>2</sup> The matter was

1. P.R.O. Ed 24 1226 letter of 13th December 1929 from Hadow to Symonds, Secretary of the Board.
2. Teacher Training had been the subject of a Departmental Committee inquiry which reported in 1925.

finally resolved by allowing an ad hoc body to investigate the latter, and by giving 'the nursery reference' to the Consultative Committee.<sup>1</sup> When the Committee was reconstituted in February 1931, before beginning its investigation into nursery education, Tawney's membership was not renewed. This was not, however, the end of his interest in nursery education. The lasting influence over him of Margaret McMillan ensured that.<sup>2</sup>

Margaret McMillan had served on the Executive Committee of the W.E.A. before the Great War, and was a member of the Advisory Committee on Education of the Labour Party from its inception in the spring of 1918. She had ensured that the W.E.A. statement of educational policy during the Great War made reference to the need for provision of nursery schools and had pressed the Advisory Committee to include the subject in its first list of memoranda.<sup>3</sup> Tawney was given the task of drafting the Advisory Committee's memorandum on nursery education, using materials provided by Margaret McMillan, and thus began his first venture into a sphere of education with which he had little or no direct contact. Thereafter Margaret McMillan's lead and Tawney's support ensured that nursery education had the sympathy of the Labour Party and the W.E.A. In its statement on education policy in October 1922, the Executive Committee of the W.E.A. recommended an increase in the number of free nursery schools staffed with teachers with special qualifications. Their aim was to 'cultivate good physical habits and bodily health' with the emphasis upon 'open-air buildings'.<sup>4</sup> The Nursery School Association<sup>5</sup> founded by McMillan the

1. Letter from Hadow to Symonds 20th January 1930.
2. At a conference of the Nursery School Association in the forties Tawney admitted, 'I was converted to nursery schooling long ago by an old and valued friend, Margaret McMillan and I have long been involved in the work of this area'. (L.S.E. Papers 'Various Speeches').
3. See p.132 of this work. For a full examination of the ideas and activities of Margaret McMillan consult 'Margaret McMillan, Prophet and Pioneer' by A. Mansbridge (1932) also M. McMillan 'The Nursery School' (1919).
4. W.E.A. - E.C. October 29th 1922.
5. For a brief history of the N.S.A. see N. Whitbread's 'The Evolution of the Nursery-Infant School', Chapter 5.

following year, gained the instant recognition and support of the Association.<sup>1</sup> Throughout the twenties and thirties the W.E.A. supported its resolutions. In 1934, for example the Association gave the N.S.A. its support in its campaign for the reservation of sites for nursery schools on all new housing estates.

Tawney's sympathy for the nursery school movement was reflected in the Labour Party's statements of policy which he helped to prepare. His early support was based largely on medical and social rather than educational grounds. In 'Education - The Socialist Policy' his discussion of nursery schools took place under the general heading of 'Health and The School'. He urged, 'A wide development of nursery schools with a view to ensuring that children are not crippled in health before their life in the elementary school begins'.<sup>2</sup> It was on the grounds that attendance at nursery schools enabled early diagnosis and treatment of disease that he urged the first Labour Government of 1924 to increase the number of such schools from the existing 27;<sup>3</sup> in his speeches in the United States in the summer of that year,<sup>4</sup> he stated that the Labour Party gave its full support to the idea of open-air nursery schools, a fact borne out by the emphasis which they were given in 1926 in the Party statement of policy, 'From Nursery School to University'.

This report is the fullest account of the position of the Party and Tawney on the issue of nursery schools in the twenties. Like most other statements it was chiefly the work of Margaret and Rachel McMillan. It drew attention to the powers which local authorities had under the Fisher Act of 1918 to make arrangements for 'supplying or aiding the supply of nursery schools for children over

1. The resolutions of the N.S.A. were constantly supported by the W.E.A., e.g. W.E.A.- F.G.P.C. September 16th 1927. 'It be recommended to the Executive to approve the Nursery School Association resolution for compulsory Nursery Schools'.
2. 'Education - The Socialist Policy' p.5.
3. p.15
4. 'The British Labor Movement' p.24.



two and under five'.<sup>1</sup> Emphasis was placed upon their contribution to the physical welfare of this age group. Their provision was also seen as a measure of social justice, 'to add to the latter (the poor) something which the children of the rich have always had and those of the poor always lacked'. The report was against compelling parents to send children under five to school but believed that all parents should be given the opportunity. When a certain number of parents<sup>2</sup> gave formal notice of their desire for the provision of nursery education, it should then become obligatory on the Local Education Authority to make that provision.

Nursery schools should be constructed 'on open-air lines' for the 'child's worst foes .... are germs'. Plenty of space must be provided for free movement. The principal parts of the school should be its garden, lawn, little terraced pathways and hillocks. Each group of no more than forty children would be provided with shelter. Such schools could be built at a comparatively low cost. Teachers should be 'fully trained certificated nursery school teachers with special qualifications for the work'; a teacher of such standing should be placed in charge of each 'shelter'. Staffing ratios should be liberal, one assistant to each group of six three year old children. If a 'class exceeded ten or twelve the venture would be likely to be a failure. A doctor should visit the schools 'at frequent and regular intervals' and the services of a trained nurse should be readily available, a nurse being permanently attached to large schools. Regular meals, and proper facilities for bathing and rest should be provided. Such organisation and facilities should also be provided for the infant departments in elementary schools.

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1. 'From Nursery School to University' p.12.
  2. 'Of about thirty children' (p.13)

Though Tawney rarely, if ever, went into such detail on matters of organisation it was this kind of nursery school arrangement which he had in mind when he demanded the extension of nursery schooling in his 'Manchester Guardian' leaders,<sup>1</sup> and in his public speeches. Nor did he cease reminding the Labour Party of its own pledges. In 1929, he informed the Labour Government<sup>2</sup> that progress in the provision of nursery schools over the previous decade had been negligible, 'only eleven by local authorities and fifteen by voluntary committees'. The steps to be taken were clear. The Education Act of 1921 should be amended to make it a duty for local education authorities to establish open-air nursery schools. The Labour Government should send circulars to local authorities reminding them of their powers and informing them that the Board of Education regarded the establishment of such schools in over crowded areas as a matter of great importance. Local authorities should then be instructed to submit, at once, proposals for a progressive scheme of nursery school provision to be implemented over the following three years. The nursery schools should be removed from the category of special services and placed under a special code of regulations. Wherever possible existing infant schools should be reconstructed on nursery school lines and both nursery and infant schools should receive a special grant of seventy five per cent of the maintenance costs. The Labour Government took heed, and issued a joint circular in 1929 urging local authorities to provide open air nursery schools. Within a year a further nine nursery schools were established and by the spring of 1931 the total reached forty four. This limited expansion encouraged experiments in new types of joint nursery and

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1. e.g. M.G. May 24th 1926.

2. Part Two of an unnamed typescript in a box entitled 'Memorandum of Education and Educational Policy' (Tawney papers).

infant schools.<sup>1</sup> Tawney was thus spurred on to request that the Consultative Committee make the education of children under seven the subject of its next reference.<sup>2</sup> He also gave a greater priority to nursery and infant education in his revisions of the W.E.A. statements of educational policy and in his campaigns against economies in educational expenditure.

Though Tawney was no longer an official member of the Consultative Committee, he gave as much assistance as his recent appointment as Professor of Economic History would allow. He appeared before the Committee as an individual witness<sup>3</sup> and was co-opted to the Drafting Sub Committee in March 1932, thus placing at 'its disposal his wide knowledge and sound judgment'.<sup>4</sup> In his evidence, he identified himself with the progressive idiom and accepted the principal conclusions and recommendations of the report. He endorsed the emphasis given to the detection of signs of retardation, physical defects and dietary deficiency. He had long waged a campaign in favour of the provision of school meals and milk to assist in correcting the latter. The provision of nursery and infant schools of open air design<sup>5</sup> with plenty of opportunities for healthy exercise and rest, which was an important recommendation of the report, had been demanded in the memorandum which he had helped to prepare in 1918. Children should be surrounded with objects and materials, affording scope for experimentation and exploration. This recommendation underlined a principle of the 'Report on the Primary

1. Whitbread Op.Cit. p.77-78.

2. See p.p. 412-413.

3. The evidence he gave is referred to in the W.E.A. Executive Committee Minutes 16th July 1931.

4. Report of the Consultative Committee on Infant and Nursery Schools, p.xi.

5. p. 179.

Schools' that 'the curriculum is to be thought of in terms of activity and experience rather than of knowledge to be acquired and facts to be stored'. Its implications in terms of the provision of facilities for music, 'game songs', 'constructive work', and other forms of individual work was made clear, and the need for an 'elastic timetable' underlined. Only on the lack of decisiveness in the statement that 'a nursery school should, if possible, be provided' did he find room for disagreement.<sup>1</sup>

The ideas in the report were publicised by Tawney in his press articles<sup>2</sup> and speeches. He summed up the progressive attitude of the Consultative Committee in a lecture in 1934 to the 'New Education Fellowship'.<sup>3</sup> 'At that age (nursery) and later, education should be interpreted not as instruction but as the provision of opportunities for activity and the formation of sound habits in a healthful environment'. However the existing division of responsibilities between the Ministry of Health and the Board of Education resulted in totally inadequate provision of the right kind of buildings and facilities for that type of nursery education. In most cases, children after the age of two had no contact with the Public Health Services and less than fourteen per cent of the two to five age group were in the infant departments of elementary schools. Tawney's answer to the problem was that the years under two should be the province of the Public Health Service and those over two that of 'the Education Service'. Education Authorities should regard 'the whole period below seven as forming a distinct stage' and make full provision

1. Tawney shared the opinion of the N.U.T. (P.R.O. Ed 10 148 paper T 11-11) that nursery schools should not be 'confined to slum areas or thickly populated artisan districts'. There was need for their widescale introduction throughout the country.
2. M.G. May 10th 1932; November 28th 1932; May 24th and 25th 1933.
3. 'The Public and Education' (January 1934) p.9.

for the kind of education and educational arrangements recommended by the Consultative Committee.

Though Tawney made intermittent references to nursery and infant education in the period from 1934 to 1939, it was not until public interest focused upon the issue during the Second World War that he gave it a high priority. He did not, however, raise the subject in any of his deputations to the Board. The 'Green Book' of June 1941 spoke of 'room for a wide expansion in .... provision'<sup>1</sup> for those under the age of five, and the W.E.A. and C.E.A. in October 1942, welcomed the proposal in the White Paper on Educational Reconstruction, issued the preceding June, for 'the high priority given to the extension of nursery schools'.<sup>2</sup> As president and chairman respectively of these bodies, he endorsed their support for Butler's proposed reforms, though his main concern was the raising of the school leaving age. One reason for his hailing the bill as 'A Great Bill'<sup>3</sup> was the provision which it made for the extension of nursery schools. He did not, however feel that he had the time or sufficient knowledge of the subject to write the chapter on 'Nursery Schools' for the ill fated Labour Party Report of 1943. This was left to Barbara Drake.<sup>4</sup> By the end of the war he was recommending the creation of a Ministry of Childhood with specific powers to develop nursery education<sup>5</sup> but after 1945 he rarely returned to the subject in his speeches. Yet nursery education remained an interest

1. p.34.

2. Notes on the Education Bill p.1; 'A Statement on the White Paper on Educational Reconstruction' (C.E.A.) p.3; 'Council for Education Advance - Aims' p.2; Education Leaflet: No.6. (C.E.A.) p.2; see also minutes of the meetings of the C.E.A. for September 24th 1942.

3. M.G. 30th November 1943.

4. Letter from Philipps to Tawney March 23rd 1943.

5. Speech at the Annual Conference of The Nursery School Association

to the end of his life. In 1960,<sup>1</sup> when it was suggested by his close friends that he should accept some form of financial assistance from them, he answered, 'I should at once refuse such an offer' or forward any cheque to 'the W.E.A. or Nursery Schools Association though I don't know as much about the latter as I should'.

#### 6. The Welfare of the School Child

Tawney's support for the extension of nursery schooling reflects a tradition of concern within the Labour movement for the physical wellbeing of the school child. A principal reason for the demand for an increased provision of nursery schools was that they could lead to the early detection and treatment of disease. Though he realised that the medical services and school feeding had a particularly important part to play in the everyday life of the nursery school, he was a constant advocate of the extension of such services through all stages of education. Such a belief stemmed from his concept of education. 'If the aim of education is to assist growth, its first care must be the physical well being of the children'.<sup>2</sup> Medical services and school feeding were not ancillary or what the Board termed 'special' services; they were central to the educational process. The priority which he gave to such services was not solely a consequence of his theory of education. It had historical roots. He first came to the subject of the reform of education as a member of the W.E.A. Executive Committee from 1905 onwards<sup>3</sup> when the provision of school meals and the establishment of a School Medical Service were live political issues. His prior and

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1. Tawney to Creech Jones, December 1st 1960.

2. 'Education - The Socialist Policy', p.7.

3. See p. 18 of this study.

subsequent social work<sup>1</sup> confirmed his belief in the value of such services. Furthermore their advocacy involved no deep consideration of such complex matters as curricula and organisation. They were essentially 'practical issues' whose merits were obvious to one who at that time had no grounding in educational theory. It was thus not surprising that the first<sup>2</sup> of over one hundred and seventy articles or leaders which he wrote for the Manchester Guardian should deal with 'School Clinics', or that the W.E.A. statement of general educational policy, which he helped to draft in 1913,<sup>3</sup> should include a reference to the need for an extension of the medical services.

The demand for a 'more generous provision of school meals and the compulsory provision of school clinics by local education authorities' grew louder during the First World War; the war revealed, more than any other event, the poor physical condition of large sections of the working class. The W.E.A., largely on Tawney's insistence, included a lengthy section on 'The Health of Children and Young Persons' in its list of proposed amendments to Fisher's Second Education Bill. It argued that the nation should draw a lesson 'from the thousands of recruits rejected (from the army) on account of physical defects which ought to have been treated long ago'.<sup>4</sup> The Bill should be amended to make it compulsory, instead of merely permissive for all Local Education Authorities to set up and maintain such a medical and dental service as will secure adequate inspection and treatment for all scholars attending schools within the area of their respective authorities; in addition, there should be 'an

1. See Chapter two.
2. Manchester Guardian (M.G.) 1st May 1912.
3. W.E.A. Annual General Meeting October 17-19, 1913. A report of the meeting is contained in the W.E.A. Executive Committee Minute Book for that year.
4. 'The Choice Before the Nation. Some Amendments to the Education Bill' (W.E.A.) p.10.

extension and improvement in the system of school meals; and .... the provision of greater facilities for physical training, including the organisation of games and the use of simple equipment, and also bathing and swimming where possible'. Medical inspection was but a means to an end, the removal by treatment of the ailments revealed by inspection. In 1917, only 58 per cent of the children shown by inspection to need treatment did, in fact, receive it. Drawing on the reports of Sir George Newman, the Association underlined the inadequacy of provision. Less than half of the authorities made any attempt to provide dental treatment. There were still 100 authorities which had done nothing to deal with minor ailments or defective vision; more than 200 had done nothing to cure diseases of the ear and of the throat. The first step to improve the situation was simple. Clause eighteen of the Bill should be amended to make it compulsory for Local Education Authorities to maintain the necessary medical and dental service. Clause seventeen of the Bill should require and not merely empower local authorities, to provide playing fields and swimming pools.<sup>1</sup>

For the first time in its history, the Association also voiced the demand for 'further provision of suitable accommodation for blind children, including partially blind; deaf children, including partially deaf; mentally defective and epileptic children and physically defective children, including delicate children for whom an open-air school is desired'.<sup>2</sup> Irrespective of the degree of incapacity, there should be proper accommodation, equipment and the provision of school meals. In the statement of policy which Tawney

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1. 'How to Get the Best Out of the Education Act' p.3. Tawney also ensured that these amendments were also included in those suggested by the Education Advisory Committee of the Labour Party.

2. W.E.A. - E.C. October 29th 1922.



drafted for the Association in 1922, these demands were reiterated. The threat which the recommendations of the Geddes Committee posed to the provision of adequate welfare facilities was brought to the nation's attention by Tawney in his 'Manchester Guardian' leaders and headed articles.<sup>1</sup>

Tawney did a great deal to publicise the work of those within the Labour movement, or with close associations with it, who were investigating deficiencies in the provision of welfare facilities within the school. Dr. Kerr produced a series of memoranda on medical inspection and special schools<sup>2</sup> for the Labour Party's Advisory Committee on Education. Margaret McMillan<sup>3</sup> and Tawney gave highly effective publicity to Kerr's finding that 'the curve showing the height and weight of children appears to vary inversely with the curve of infantile mortality, children born in a year in which infantile mortality is high being, when of school age, smaller and weaker than those born in a year when it is low'.<sup>4</sup> The Annual Reports of the Chief Medical Officer of the Board of Education also provided Tawney with evidence of the poor physical condition of many elementary school children, and of the need for the generous provision of medical services, of school meals and of special schools.

Tawney expressed the requirements of the 'rising generation' in a forceful manner. The task of the educationalist 'is to aid the rising generation to equip itself for life, not merely to furnish it with certain literary accomplishments and the attempt to ignore these gross physical facts, to limit education to instruction and then to

1. M.G. 21st February 1922 'Geddes Report on Education I'  
M.G. 22nd February 1922 'Geddes Report on Education II'.
2. L.P. - A.C.E. Mem. 119 The Medical Inspection of Schools.  
L.P. - A.C.E. Mem. 120 and 120a Special Schools.
3. Margaret McMillan 'Labour and Childhood'
4. R.H. Tawney 'Education the Socialist Policy' p.7.

pour instruction into children with defective vision and aching teeth is recognised today for what it always was - a piece of inhuman pedantry of which no man would be guilty in dealing with children of his own'. In 1924,<sup>1</sup> he went into some detail for the first time on the measures which were immediately necessary to deal with the problem. There was need for a wide development of nursery schools, of special schools to accommodate all 'defective' children and of special classes for children who, without being defective, were mentally retarded. Open air schools should be given a high priority but should not be regarded merely 'as educational hospitals'. Suitable playgrounds, the general development of school journeys, the adequate provision of school meals<sup>2</sup> and the universal provision of medical inspection and of facilities for treating defects and ailments had all an important part to play in raising the general level of health of elementary school children. The Labour Government had, at hand, a programme of reform but would it be willing or able to implement it? The appointment, in that year, of the Wood Committee to examine 'the educational provision for feeble minded children' tended to hinder immediate progress in the development of special schools. Local authorities were unwilling to take any action during the five years that it conducted its survey.<sup>3</sup> The economic and political climate in 1924 seemed scarcely more favourable to the implementation of the other reforms which Tawney advocated.

During Labour's period of opposition from 1924 until 1929, the party developed its policies concerning medical inspection, special schools and school feeding. A subcommittee of the Advisory Committee

1. 'Education, The Socialist Policy' Chapter 2, 'Health and the School'. See also 'The British Labor Movement', Lecture V 'The Labor Movement and Education' and 'Advice for the Labour Government' (L.S.E. Papers).
2. There was no suggestion that they should necessarily be free in 'Education - The Socialist Policy' but in 'Advice For the Labour Government' he urged 'the abandonment of the limited grant on free school meals'.
3. D.M. Pritchard 'Education and the Handicapped' p.188-189.

on Education was set up in July 1925<sup>1</sup> to produce 'An Outline of Educational Policy'<sup>2</sup>. The memorandum was to devote a chapter to each of the 'special services'. Tawney, who served on the sub-committee, helped to draft these chapters, which were ready for discussion by the whole committee in January 1926.<sup>3</sup> The chapter on 'Medical Inspection and Treatment' touched on 'the comparative new growth of medical inspection in places of higher education' but concentrated on the 'the problem of leakage' in the elementary school. 'Leakage' was defined as the difference 'between the number of children who were inspected and referred for medical treatment and the number who got it'.<sup>4</sup> The problem of leakage was said to have reached serious proportions, especially in the case of dental treatment. London provided an insight into the scale of the problem. About eighty per cent of the children referred for forms of treatment in London, other than dental, received it. In the case of dental treatment, the figure was only about fifty per cent, although most of the serious cases received treatment. 'A truly preventative scheme would require that the very slight cases should receive more consideration than the advanced cases'. The school medical service, in general, was open to the criticism of being too much restricted to the picking out of obviously defective children'.

The defects in medical provision were the results of a lack of suitably trained and qualified staff, a lack of proper facilities and a reliance upon private practitioners who<sup>often</sup> did not wish to treat cases for such a small fee and upon already overburdened outpatient departments of hospitals. To remedy the defects the

1. L.P. - A.C.E. July 13th 1925.
2. The memorandum was published under the title 'From Nursery School to University'.
3. Memorandum No. 133 'An Outline of Educational Policy' January, 1926.
4. Chapter XV p.1. (Each of the chapters of the memorandum begins with page one).

memorandum suggested the separate appointment of a school medical officer who was to lead a team of 'whole-time experienced men and women recruited from the ablest of the school doctors'.<sup>1</sup> The more routine work of inspection was to be carried on by part-time practitioners and the secretarial duties carried on by the school nurse, thus freeing the school doctor 'to carry out interview work on small groups of children'. To assist the school doctor to carry out his duties effectively every school should have 'available a medical room suitably equipped and properly lighted and heated'. Above all, the arrangements for medical treatment should be under the direct control of the local education authority, which should provide its services free.

The logic of the demand for free medical services in the sphere of elementary education was simple. 'If the State accepts the duty of educating its future citizens, and if disease can be shown, as it certainly can, to interfere with the efficiency of this education, it is surely the duty of the State to accept full responsibility for the removal of this disability, and to allow no financial consideration to interfere with the efficient education of its future citizens'.<sup>2</sup>

The sub committee took the question of 'school feeding' to mean more than the provision of a midday meal. The problem of malnutrition could not simply be met by providing only a midday meal, although such a meal was of great importance. Authorities should also be required to provide additional milk meals 'when the school doctor advised it or the parents claimed it'. However the memorandum did not advocate that such meals should be universally free. Where the cost could be recovered without hardship, then a charge should be imposed. It was estimated that about ten per cent of children would be supplied with free meals. Even the cost of half a pint of milk should 'be recovered where payment would not deprive the family of other necessities'. The document was far from being of a radical nature.

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1. p.4.

2. p.6.

The memorandum estimated that there were over 120,000 defective children who were not provided for 'in special schools or in institutions other than ordinary elementary schools'.<sup>1</sup> Of that number about 14,500 were classed as mentally defective. Over 11,000 mentally defective children were taught in ordinary elementary schools. Another large group for whom no special provision was made was that of 'delicate children'. It was clear, therefore that there was an urgent need for a greatly increased number of places in special schools.

The subcommittee suggested a variety of education provision according to the particular handicap. Children who were blind were best provided for in day schools which were 'not segregated from the general life of the community'. 'Myopic children' should be educated as far as possible in ordinary schools. Children who were 'hard of hearing' should be provided for in ordinary schools where they would spend part of their day in 'ordinary classes'. The memorandum was strongly against the total segregation of blind and deaf children from their fellows and urged that all steps should be taken wherever possible, to provide for such 'defective children' in ordinary schools under the supervision of a doctor. Only in the case of a severe handicap was segregation supported and then always with the proviso that this should not be total or complete.

Open-air recovery schools for those pupils with tubercular tendencies, 'nervous affections' malnutrition or debility received the strong support of the subcommittee. The often tragic case of mentally defective children was highlighted in the memorandum. Such children were often left to roam the streets. Special provision was necessary but 'backward or slightly abnormal children should be segregated' from those who showed a marked defectiveness. To overcome the problems of special provision, authorities should co-operate, and

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1. Chapter XVI, p.2.

transport should be provided to enable children to attend special schools run jointly by authorities.

The progressive thinking of the memorandum ran contrary to the policy of the Conservative Government. Circular 1388, issued by the Board in February 1927, caused Tawney to make his most vehement attack upon Eustace Percy, the President of the Board, for the circular prevented any progress in the directions indicated by the memorandum. The circular advised local authorities that 'save in exceptional circumstances it would not seem prudent to incur heavy expenditure at the present moment on new schools for feeble-minded children or on enlarging of existing schools'. It also recommended drastic reductions in expenditure on welfare services. With the recommendation of the Advisory Committee fresh in his mind, Tawney used the columns of the 'Manchester Guardian' to denounce the circular.<sup>1</sup> He also joined Trevelyan and other members of the Advisory Committee on a subcommittee to examine the circular and to frame questions to be raised in the House by Labour members.<sup>2</sup>

Tawney also saw the investigation of primary education by the Consultative Committee as a means of publicising current progressive thinking on 'the welfare of the school child' and of underlining the retrograde attitude of the Conservative Government.<sup>3</sup> Though a full examination of the provision of school meals and medical services was seen generally to fall outside the Committee's terms of reference, the report gave its support to the demand for adequate facilities within the primary school for school meals and medical inspection.<sup>4</sup> On the question of provision for 'retarded children' the thinking of the

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1. M.G. 15th February 1927, 'Circular 1388'  
M.G. 5th March 1927.
  2. L.P. - A.C.E. February 14th 1927 and April 4th 1927.
  3. When it was published in 1930 it also showed the inadequacies of Labour's efforts.
  4. 'Report of the Consultative Committee on The Primary School'  
P.117.

Consultative Committee was in keeping with that of the Advisory Committee.<sup>1</sup> It did not, however, make any recommendations concerning the education of the blind or deaf child. These matters were wisely left to other committees which made four enquiries between 1930 and 1938,<sup>2</sup> though Tawney made no reference to them despite the progressive spirit of their recommendations. Medical inspection and supervision, and the provision of school meals were dealt with in the 'Report of the Consultative Committee on Infant and Nursery Schools', which Tawney helped to draft.

If the thirties produced a spate of reports which examined the welfare of the school child, it took a second world war to translate their recommendations into generally acceptable programmes of reform. Despite its other shortcomings, the 'Green Book' on 'Education After the War', issued in 1941, served to focus public attention on 'The Health and Physical Well-Being of the Child'.<sup>3</sup> There was much in the Green Book which was in keeping with proposals of the reports which Tawney had helped to draft in the inter-war period. Increased provision for medical treatment in elementary and higher education was recommended.<sup>4</sup> The extension of the responsibility of the local education authorities for children aged two to five years was advocated.<sup>5</sup> The Green Book gave its greatest attention to the care and education of handicapped children, urging the increased responsibility of local authorities for handicapped children over the age of 16 and the increased provision of accommodation for those below that age. On the subject of the provision of school meals, it recommended a development of the service, supported the idea that 'midday dinners should be regarded as an integral part of full time education' and regarded with favour the view that they

1. p.88-9-. In its thinking on this issue the Consultative Committee was influenced by the Departmental Report on Mental Deficiency published in 1929.
2. Pritchard, Op. Cit. Chapter 15.
3. The title of Chapter 6 of the 'Green Book'.
4. p.32.
5. p.35.

should be provided free. If, however, a charge had to be made it was 'possible that the solution to the problem of cost lies rather in the introduction of some system of allowances than in the remission of cost of meals on the basis of parental income'.<sup>1</sup>

In its comments on the White Paper and the Education Bill, the W.E.A., reflecting the ideas of its President, welcomed the proposal for the provision of free medical treatment for all at school up to the age of 18.<sup>2</sup> It also regarded as important advances the stipulation that the provision of milk and meals was to become a duty of local authorities,<sup>3</sup> and that they were to have the power to provide clothing where necessary<sup>4</sup> as well as the cost of transport. However, the Association was concerned that the matter of whether or not meals should be provided free was being left until the question of family allowances had been settled. It also urged the amendment of the phrase 'medical inspection at appropriate intervals' to 'at least every two years'.<sup>5</sup> It made no reservations about the proposals concerning special schools and handicapped children.<sup>6</sup> No child who could be educated within the school system was to be certified as mentally defective. Local education authorities were to have the duty of providing for all handicapped children either in ordinary or special schools. Provision was to be made for discovering, as early as possible, which children needed special treatment.

Tawney presided over the meetings of the Council for Educational Advance, and led its deputations to Butler. Though the Council was more interested in the timetable for reform and the more controversial matters concerning secondary education, it argued in

1. p.39

2. Section 46 of the Bill.

3. Section 47.

4. Section 49.

5. 'A Statement on the White Paper on Educational Reconstruction' p.6. Notes on the Education Bill, p.8.

6. Sections 31-32 of the Bill.



favour of 'free medical services and school meals'.<sup>1</sup> In the House of Commons, some members urged the adoption of this proposal. They demanded that the meals and milk service, like the medical service, should be provided free.<sup>2</sup> Butler's answer was that which he had given the W.E.A. The Government would, in due course, announce its policy on the matter of social security. It was necessary that the policy of the Ministry of Education fit in with the policy concerning family allowances. The Family Allowances Act, which came into operation in August 1946, made school milk free. School meals were not provided free to all children. Free medical inspection and treatment was granted.

The W.E.A. and C.E.A. had good reason to be satisfied with those sections of the Act which dealt with special educational treatment. The local education authority were given the duty of ascertaining what children in their area were in need of such treatment. However, there was room for concern in the wording of section 33 of the Act. The latitude which was allowed in the statement, 'The arrangements made by a local education authority for the special educational treatment of pupils .... shall, so far as is practicable,<sup>3</sup> provide for the education of pupils in whose case the disability is serious in special schools', caused consternation ~~within~~ the Commons<sup>4</sup> and without. Chuter Ede's promise to consider alternative wording produced no amendment to the clause. The local authorities, however, showed no tendency to evade the obligation.

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1. Council For Educational Advance. Leaflet 1 'Aims' item 5.  
Also C.E.A. minutes Oct. 24th item 5 and the report of a deputation to Butler (Jan. 22nd 1943) 'Other Reforms'.
  2. H.C. Dent 'The Education Act 1944' p.54.
  3. My underlining.
  4. Dent Op.Cit. p.38.

## CHAPTER NINE

### WORKING CLASS ADULT EDUCATION

1. The W.E.A. - Growth and its Dangers
2. The W.E.A. and The Trade Unions
3. Democracy on the Defensive
4. 'Embalming Aged Mummies'
5. Post War Introspection

In September 1914, without any indication of his impending enlistment in the forces, Tawney informed Jenkyns, organiser of the Longton class of his intentions for the forthcoming tutorial-class session. "My subject is English Political and Economic History down to 1850 before Christmas, and after 1850 after Christmas with an introductory talk on 'The War and its Deeper Causes'."<sup>1</sup> The preliminary address proved to be his last regular commitment as a tutor not only in the Potteries but within the W.E.A. movement as a whole. The War altered the direction of his work within adult education. He virtually ceased to be a tutor<sup>2</sup> and much to the loss of people at Stoke, Longton and Wrexham, was seduced into work of an advisory and administrative nature. This was understandable. Having chartered the rapids for the tutorial class movement, he was anxious that others should plot a similar course with as much assistance as possible. He did not cease to be the missionary; there was merely a shift in the nature of his missionary work. He became less a missionary in the field and more of a missionary whose task it was to ensure adequate financial and administrative arrangements for others to spread the Oxford gospel among the working classes.

Tawney's work for the Ministry of Reconstruction on its Committee on Adult Education has already been examined.<sup>3</sup> Virtually at the same time as he was appointed to that Committee, he was invited to become Honorary Secretary of the Central Joint Advisory Committee on Tutorial Classes, whose function it was 'to further the interests

1. Longton Tutorial Class Papers. Box 1. (Kewley House, Oxford).
2. He continued to participate in Summer School and to act as occasional tutor to classes such as that held at Woolwich in the session 1918/1919.
3. See Chapter 3 Section 3 p.p. 85-91.
4. Tawney replaced Winifred Beaton who was Acting Honorary Secretary and succeeded Mansbridge who had acted as Honorary Secretary since the C.J.A.C. produced its first Annual Report in 1910. As 'the first tutor the movement possessed and to whom it owes a very great debt' (Eighth Annual Report 1916/1917 p.7). Tawney was invited to become Honorary Secretary in July 1917.

of the Tutorial Class Movement in every way possible and to afford opportunity to the Universities of Great Britain to meet on one Committee to discuss any problems which may arise. In his role as Honorary Secretary from 1917 to 1928, as a co-opted member 1929 to 1930 and representative of the W.E.A. from 1931 to 1945, Tawney played a full part in the work of the C.J.A.C. Often he was engaged in those kinds of activity which, firstly as a vice president and then as president, he was involved on a lesser scale within the W.E.A. The Annual Reports of the C.J.A.C. record a host of meetings which he attended dealing with negotiations with the Board, the administration of educational trusts, the training of tutors, the arranging of summer schools, consultations with local education committees, the appointment of officers to the Committee and the expansion of classes and supply of tutors.

In addition, Tawney served on numerous other bodies concerned with adult education, including the British Institute of Adult Education of which he was an advisory member of the Research Committee with Cole and Laski, and Ruskin College for which he was an Academic Adviser from 1919 until his death. The movement in adult education with which his name is inextricably linked, is and always will be the Workers' Educational Association, of which he was Vice-President from 1920 to 1928 and President from 1928-1944. During the years when he was contemplating giving up the Presidency of the Association, he confided<sup>1</sup> to his close friend Creech-Jones, 'I can't help feeling that I should have influenced more people to think sensibly about educational and social things if I'd spent on writing, the time which the W.E.A. required me to spend on committees, memoranda, interviews, deputations and so on'. Few who know of his work for the Association in the interwar period and during the Second World War would deny the great amount of his time and energies which it absorbed but equally few who have read his writings on education would deny the debt which they owe

1. Letter dated 1st May 1942 and written from the British Embassy, Washington

to the W.E.A. Cut off from the inspiration which the W.E.A. gave to him, he would never have written so effectively or convincingly. On the other hand, the W.E.A. owes as great a debt to Tawney as Tawney owes to the W.E.A.

1. The W.E.A. - Growth and Its Dangers

The growth of the Workers' Educational Association during the vice presidency and presidency of Tawney was impressive, if not altogether uniform. His presidential addresses, which he became increasingly to regard as a burden upon himself and his audience, bore witness to this growth.<sup>1</sup> In the twelve years from 1920, when he was first appointed as a vice president until 1932, when the Association was increasingly feeling the effects of economic depression, the number of its three-year tutorial classes <sup>grew</sup> from 229 to 620 and its shorter classes from 320 to 1,929. In the five years prior to 1932, the number of students increased by 40 per cent or 22,530 to reach 53,538. After a slight fall, the number reached 54,569 in 1935, and by the following year the Association could boast an increase of seventy five per cent in the number of classes and students over the figures for 1927/1928. Though Tawney was never satisfied with the membership figures for the Association, which stood at two out of every five of the grant-earning students, he welcomed the increase in the number of affiliations to the Association, especially that of the trades unions, which by 1937 stood at forty per cent of the T.U.C. membership. Even the second world war failed to hamper this growth. In his last presidential address, in November 1944, he regarded the increase of membership to one fifth above that of the last prewar year as the most salient feature of the war years.

1. The following figures are taken from the presidential addresses which he delivered at the Association's Annual Conferences in 1928, 1932, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1937, 1943 and 1944. They are also to be found in the Association's Annual Reports.

It is obviously very difficult to distinguish the factors underlying this growth and even more difficult to assess its consequences. Characteristically, Tawney claimed no credit for promoting the conditions in which expansion could take place. Surprisingly, the official history<sup>1</sup> scarcely mentions his work in this direction, which is fully recorded in the minute books of the Association's Executive and Central Committees, but above all, in those of its Finance and General Purposes Committee. With other members of these committees, including MacTavish, Cole and later Green and Shearman, he undertook a host of mundane yet time-consuming tasks, including the drawing up of memoranda for the Royal Commission on Oxford and Cambridge,<sup>2</sup> campaigning against economies in expenditure on adult education,<sup>3</sup> negotiating with the Board,<sup>4</sup> administering bequests and trusts,<sup>5</sup> advising on the provision and training of tutors,<sup>6</sup> and appointing permanent staff.<sup>7</sup> At the same time, he was ever wary of irregularities in administration which could disguise the nature of the Association's growth. It was on his advice<sup>8</sup> that an article

1. 'The Workers' Educational Association: The First Fifty Years' - M. Stocks.
2. The final draft, which was also used by the Labour Party's Advisory Committee on Education gave full details of the extra-mural work done by the Universities and the methods of extending it.
3. e.g. W.E.A.- E.C. Jan. 28th 1922, in which he attacked the Geddes proposals and W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. 25th June 1932, when he denounced the cuts advocated by the National Government.
4. Tawney led several deputations to the Board on the question of grants though he was not a member of the Board's Adult Education Committee.
5. Education trusts were willing to give the W.E.A. money for specific purposes; the grants from the Gilchrist Trust, the Thomas Wall Trust, the Carnegie Trust and the Cassel Trust involved the Central Office in a great deal of administrative work.
6. This matter became an increasing preoccupation of Tawney's after 1945.
7. Tawney was concerned in drawing up contracts for permanent staff as well as in their selection. He was also greatly concerned with the welfare of the staff, arranging for them to enter hospital and for the provision of pensions. An example of the latter is the pension arrangement which he made with MacTavish, the Association's General Secretary (W.E.A.- E.C. July 2nd 1928) who because of 'his increasing resort to alcoholic stimulants was replaced by Muir.
8. W.E.A. - E.C. April 2nd 1935.

entitled 'This Grant-Grabbing Racket' was published in the March edition of 'The Highway' in 1935. The article suggested that attendance figures at classes were inflated to qualify for grants, though a committee which Tawney set up to investigate the matter showed that this accusation was exaggerated.<sup>1</sup>

Tawney constantly warned the Association's Annual Conferences of 'the perils of success'. Such gatherings ought not to be occasions for self congratulation or pious generalities but for surveying the Association's position as preparation for a fresh advance. 'When a movement comes to enumerate its successes, the time has come to ask whether those successes were the ones which it set out to achieve'.<sup>2</sup> The figures showing the increase in the numbers of students and classes concealed several dangers to the movement, all of which could affect its 'spirit'. 'Educational history was full of the ghosts of movements which began as crusades and ended as cliques of cultured persons'.<sup>3</sup> Movements decayed from within as they grew and became marked not by vitality and dynamism but by servile torpor, conventionality, smug complacency and formalism. There was danger of the loss of missionary zeal if the membership left 'to be done by officials what ought to be done by itself'.<sup>4</sup> Each member ought to become an active worker. What was particularly disturbing in the annual statistics was the disparity in numbers between those who attended the classes and those who were members. Only 54 out of every 100 students were members of the Association. Its result was not simply that there was a rapidly growing superstructure on too narrow a financial basis. The moral strength of the Association was compromised. The spirit of the movement had made possible its success. This

1. Stocks Op.Cit. p.107.

2. Presidential Address, 1934.

3. 'The Education of the Citizen' Presidential Address, March 1932, p.4.

4. Presidential Address November 1929, p.7.

spirit was now in danger. Each student should be a missionary.

But from where should the new members be recruited?

Tawney's answer was clear. The Association was not concerned with adult education in general, but with the education of the working class adult. Though he was anxious not to 'place a narrow definition' on the term 'worker',<sup>1</sup> and realised that many members of working class families were not manual workers,<sup>2</sup> his warning to the Association on reviewing the increase in its membership was that the proportion of manual workers was falling.<sup>3</sup> It was a dangerous error for the movement to regard 'an addition to the Association's classes as an addition to the Association's vitality'.<sup>4</sup> There was an increasing temptation to offer classes to those who were most easily attracted, and these persons were not always or predominantly members of the working class. If this temptation were not resisted the Association would be in danger of 'transmitting a conventional culture', instead of strengthening the intellectual independence of the working people to enable them to supercede it. The result would be that the Association would cut its contacts with the soil and die from the roots upward. As education was the child not of the intellect alone but of a union between thought and experience, it was the function of the Association, as in its early years to harness 'the experience of the rough realities of common life' to the intellectual experiences gained within the movement and so create a new culture. This new culture, which alone the working class could create and propagate, could not be substituted by 'an intellectual polish' or an education given in the classes to the intellectually sophisticated. It drew its materials from the experience and outlook on life not of the leisured

1. 'The Education of the Citizen' p. 4.

2. Presidential Address 1935 p.12.

3. Ibid.

4. Presidential Address 1934 p.7.



minority but of the mass of people.

The Association must draw into its classes those whom it was founded to serve. It should be less concerned with the visible signs of growth, the number of classes, and more actively involved in propaganda. Drawing upon his early tutorial class experiences, he concluded, 'we must go to them'. But was the tutorial class the right means of creating and fostering the new culture? On occasions, Tawney doubted this. He was against the idea that growth consisted in doing more and more of what was already done. Such a concept of growth was a peculiar kind of conservation. 'Originality which lasts for twenty-five years is no originality'.<sup>1</sup> The branches of the movement were too concerned in establishing classes. Classes ought to be but one activity in a wide range. This implied no relaxing of standards, but the branches ought to look outward to the society around them. It was necessary to attract those who were 'chilled' by educational work. This could be done by the Association broadening its local foundation through such activities as arranging housing exhibitions, and debating or discussing topics of local interest including the provision of nursery education, co-education, and library facilities.

## 2. The W.E.A. and the Trade Unions

The shift in emphasis in Tawney's attitude to tutorial classes was partly the result of his idea that if the W.E.A. was to retain its spiritual vitality it must appeal to the working class especially within the trade unions, and partly to counteract the criticisms made by the Flebs League. To the latter group, the tutorial class was the visible taint of a university or elitist education which diverted the working class from its revolutionary

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1. Presidential Address 1935, p.7.

mission. It was, in short, what Tawney had termed in a letter to Lansbury 'a capitalist conspiracy'.<sup>1</sup> Needless to say Tawney rejected the conspiracy theory and its Marxist basis. However, in the twenties and thirties he gave added weight to the 'social motive' behind the work of the W.E.A. Its classes were 'not only a means of developing individual character and capacities but an equipment for the exercise of social rights and responsibilities'.<sup>2</sup> The most serious educational movements had been the products of other than intellectual or individual interests. They had been the expression in one sphere of activity of some view of human nature, of some distinctive conception of what relationship a man should have with his fellows and of the kind of society in which he should live. The Association served, not betrayed the interests of the working class. Whilst the reasons why men and women had joined the movement were varied, the most powerful had been the social motive. Education was seen by them as not merely a hobby or means of self advancement but as a dynamic for social transformation. It was thus necessary to propagate within 'the central organs of working class aspirations' the idea that 'the promotion of study was of vital importance to the causes for which they stood'.<sup>3</sup> The Association should thus not be satisfied until the majority of working class bodies stood side by side with it to promote educational progress.

Tawney thus gave his full support to the Workers' Educational Trade Union Committee.<sup>4</sup> No class, he argued, was good enough to do its thinking for another. If the workers within the trades unions were to be effective in action they must first be independent in mind.

1. Tawney to Lansbury, December 9th 1910 (Lansbury Collection Vol.V)
2. 'The Education of the Citizen' Presidential Address 1932, p.4.
3. Ibid.
4. A detailed study of this Committee is to be found in 'Epoch in Workers' Education. A History of the Workers' Educational Trade Union Committee' by A.J. Corfield (W.E.A. 1973). Its origins and development are also described by Stocks (p.83-92).

They must master doctrines that were the current coin of controversy but must not be mastered by them. In this, the W.E.A. had a vital role to play. Only an educated membership with grasp of economic realities and of 'the possibilities of the working class movement... 'would enable the trade unions to play a full part in the building of a better civilisation'.<sup>1</sup> It was the duty of the W.E.A. to foster schemes for providing education for trade unionists.

Tawney's words were matched by deeds. He had not been present at the birth of the W.E.T.U.C. in October 1919 - Pugh of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation and MacTavish, General Secretary of the W.E.A. had acted as midwives - but he played a part in providing suitable conditions for its growth and in attempts to gain a foster parent for it, the T.U.C. In 1919, the W.E.T.U.C. was a partnership between the W.E.A., represented on the Committee by Cole,<sup>2</sup> and the Confederation, which provided its chairman, Pugh. The Confederation contributed funds for the education of its members and the W.E.A. provided educational and secretarial services. However, it was intended that as many unions as possible should be brought into the scheme and that ultimately it should have the official support of the T.U.C. To facilitate this development Pugh convened a conference of trade union representatives and a resolution was passed calling upon the trade-union movement to provide for the educational needs of its members and agreed to set up a committee to report on the most effective means of doing this. The T.U.C. viewed the report sympathetically, despite opposition by the Plebs League and Labour College to the 'university-tainted' W.E.T.U.C.

In conjunction with the W.E.T.U.C., the Trade Union Education Enquiry Committee began its survey of the educational needs of trade

1. Presidential Address 1934, p.7.
2. Greenwood, a vice president of the W.E.A. acted as its vice-chairman.

unionists. Greenwood, Tawney and Richardson met the Committee in May 1922,<sup>1</sup> to present the Association's view on the matter. Tawney was anxious that the T.U.C. give full recognition to the W.E.T.U.C. and moved a resolution to that effect in the Association's Finance and General Purposes Committee, the following December. He was well pleased when in 1923, the T.U.C. created an educational fund to assist education bodies providing education for the working class. In the era of the Geddes Axe, this appeared as a striking achievement. The drive for educational unity within the trade union movement appeared to have taken a significant step forward. Within the W.E.A., Cole and Tawney drew up a memorandum on the relationship of the Association to the trade union movement and Tawney called a special meeting of the Association's Executive Committee 'to discuss the matter because the interest of the trade union movement in working class education had grown considerably'.<sup>2</sup> It was clear to him that any redefinition of the relationship between the Association and trade unions would probably imply a revision of the Association's constitution. The successful nomination of its Secretary, Fred Bramley for the presidency of the Association by the T.U.C. made this revision a certainty in 1924.

In 1924, a Trades Union Congress Educational Advisory Committee came into existence. In July 1924, Tawney backed the proposal that the W.E.A. should have two representatives on the Committee and, in return, the T.U.C. was to have representation on the executive of the Association. Two months later, the Association set up a sub committee including Tawney, Cole and Mallon to report on the best means of giving effect to the decision 'to link up the work of the W.E.A. more closely with the educational needs of the organised working class movement'.<sup>3</sup> Whilst the sub committee was undertaking its

1. W.E.A. - E.C. July 21st 1922.

2. W.E.A. - E.C. June 14th 1924.

3. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. September 11th 1924.

investigations into the constitutional implications of the closer relationship, Tawney drew up a manifesto, which was signed by leading trade unionists, and which was a visible expression of support for the movement towards educational unity. In addition, the Association agreed to set up a Central Trade Union Propaganda Committee 'to mobilise the trade union and Labour movement on the side of the W.E.A.'<sup>1</sup> Tawney directed its efforts.

Before the final statement of policy on constitutional revision was announced, the W.E.A. took further steps to tie its work more closely to the educational needs of the organised working class movements. Tawney, Greenwood and Mallon met members of the Co-operative Union to discuss future relations. Tawney also joined with H. Smith, A.J. Cook and Lowth in promoting Miners' Welfare Educational Schemes. Such was the pace of negotiations going on with various working class bodies between 1924 and 1926 that the Central Council of the Association found it necessary to reassure Local Education Authorities who were threatening to discontinue grant aid to W.E.A. classes that such negotiations involved no change in principle or policy for the Association.<sup>1</sup>

The statement of policy on W.E.A. relations with the T.U.C. issued in May 1925 had done nothing to allay the fears of the local authorities and was to result in the Edinburgh Branch seceding from the movement on the grounds that the W.E.A. had prejudiced its own independence and departed from its non-political principles. Tawney denied this but somewhat unconvincingly. The objects of the co-operation between the W.E.A. and T.U.C. were stated to be the provision of working class education 'in order to enable workers to develop their capacities and to equip them for their Trade Union,

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1. W.E.A. - C.C. January 23rd 1926. Tawney always claimed that the Association had no party alignment but recognised that it engaged in political activities 'in the larger sense of mobilising intelligence and good will to remove by collective action evils against which as individuals we are powerless and to win is association victories for civilisation which as isolated units we cannot hope to achieve'.

Labour and Co-operative activities generally, in the work of securing social and industrial emancipation'.<sup>1</sup> The machinery to realise these objectives was to be a national committee of educational bodies under the auspices of the T.U.C. Its duties were to avoid conflicts between the various bodies in giving effect to the educational policy of the T.U.C., to exchange information on educational work in progress or being contemplated and to undertake joint educational action whenever possible. The General Council of the T.U.C. was to be represented on the governing councils of the W.E.A.

A new era in the history of the W.E.A. seemed to be beginning but opposition to the scheme was crystallising. It focused on the Easton Lodge project, to which the W.E.A. had given its support. The National Central Labour College opposed the expenditure on Easton Lodge, a gift by the Countess of Warwick, which would have given the W.E.T.U.C. a residential college. This opposition to the Easton Lodge project and to the more general schemes for a co-ordinated educational system within the trade union movement was strong within the T.U. Congress held at Bournemouth in 1926. Despite the support which its chairman and president of the W.E.A., Arthur Pugh gave to the schemes, the educational proposals were referred back by the Congress by a majority of nearly one million votes. Tawney's hopes and those of the other W.E.T.U.C. and W.E.A. officials were dashed and the cause of a co-ordinated trade union system of education was set back by over thirty years.

Tawney pressed on with his support of the W.E.T.U.C. In April 1926 he became its vice president, and when he succeeded Pugh to the presidency of the W.E.A. in 1928 he gave it every encouragement. In many ways, his support was vital during these years, for the head office of the W.E.A., which provided the secretarial staff of the W.E.T.U.C., was facing many difficulties. With the increasing

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1. W.E.A. - C.C. May 16th 1925.

incapacity of MacTavish, as General Secretary, to undertake his duties because of alcoholism, with the illness of his successor, Muir, and the departure of Cole for the Extra Mural Department of London University, Tawney provided the mainstay of support within the W.E.A., until Ernest Green took over administrative responsibility in 1929.<sup>1</sup> Green shared Tawney's belief in the need for long-term systematic classwork and high educational standards. Despite Tawney's insistence that the tutorial class should in many ways be superseded by other forms of educational provision, he continued to measure the success of the movement partly by the number of three year tutorial classes which the W.E.T.U.C. provided. High standards and tutorial classes went hand in hand. It was both difficult to set and measure standards in the other kinds of provision.<sup>2</sup>

In his 1932 presidential address, Tawney regarded the W.E.T.U.C. as one of 'the most significant and successful departures of the last decade'.<sup>3</sup> He took great care to give publicity to it whenever possible. In 1937, he emphasised that of the 154 new affiliations in the previous two years, 74 had come from trade unions and trades councils, thus bringing the affiliated membership of the W.E.A. and W.E.T.U.C. to just under two million. In the preceding year,<sup>4</sup> he had urged the Association's Executive Committee to give added publicity to the W.E.T.U.C. by publishing its annual reports in those of the Association. The drive to expand the W.E.T.U.C. though steady was not always successful. Despite the glowing picture of expansion which Tawney gave in his presidential address, the year

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1. Corfield (p.65-71) gives a full analysis of Green's contribution to the development of the W.E.T.U.C.
  2. See p.464
  3. Presidential Address 1932, 'The Education of the Citizen'.
  4. W.E.A. - E.C. 16th July 1936.

1938 saw a sharp drop in the number of classes of all kinds from 209 to 171. The Munich crisis of that year had a disturbing effect on trade-union education. To Tawney this was a grave set back. The education of the working class had an important part in creating a strong body of conviction in the democratic system, without which armed resistance to the European dictators was useless.

### 3. Democracy on the Defensive

Tawney stood out against the Tory policy of 'no risks in any circumstances' and in a letter to Creech Jones in September 1938 concluded, 'I fear we have presented Hitler with another diplomatic victory at the expense of the unhappy Czechs'.<sup>1</sup> Two years earlier when Hitler's troops had marched into the demilitarised Rhineland and Mussolini's forces were over-running Abyssinia, Tawney had maintained that the most formidable threat to democracy came not from the contraction of its territories but from the internal weakness of the lack of a body of resolute conviction in the democratic system of government. Britain was not ideologically prepared to resist the aggression of the dictators. If her external dangers were grave, her internal dangers were incomparably graver.

In his presidential address to the W.E.A. in 1936, Tawney quoted with approval the statement made by G.K. Chesterton that 'the most important event in England in the nineteenth century was the revolution that did not occur'.<sup>2</sup> In the transition to political democracy, England underwent no inner conversion. She accepted such a system of government as a matter of convenience in the same way as she accepted an improved system of telephones. She 'did not dedicate herself to it as the expression of a moral ideal of comradeship or equality'.<sup>3</sup> She changed her political garb but not her heart, thus

1. Tawney to Creech Jones, September 30th 1938.

2. Presidential Address (1936) p.2.

3. p.3.



carrying into the democratic era of the twentieth century not only the institutions but the social habits and mentality of the era of the landed classes. Money was seen as identical with political wisdom and the nation 'went to the ballot boxes touching her hat'. The capacity of the nation to hold simultaneously two sets of contradictory beliefs was considerable.

Effective action against the European dictators was unlikely whilst an unstable equilibrium existed between two conceptions of human life and society, between a political doctrine which rested on the assumption of the dignity and responsibility of common men and a social order which effectively denied such an ideal and which descended from an age which overtly denied it. Thus Tawney concluded that 'democracy is unstable as a political system as long as it remains a political system and nothing more, instead of being as it should be, not only a political system but a form of society and a manner of life.'<sup>1</sup> To effect that next step was within the nation's power but if democracy fell it would be because resolution to effect that step was too weak and class interests too strong. If democracy survived, it would be because the ordinary man and woman within the nation wanted it to survive and undertook the task of broadening its foundation.

The educational aspects of that task were for Tawney relevant to the work of the W.E.A. The broad lines of England's educational system were drawn in an era of strong social stratification, and had left a legacy of inequalities which still had to be removed. The Association should thus fight against inequalities in the provision of adolescent education, and the length of school life. The struggle would be long and bitter because those who decided upon the length and quality of working-class education did not send their own children to state schools. Yet opposition to the development of working class education was short sighted because ultimately the future of democracy in the face of external threats depended on 'the muddled soul of

Henry Dubb', not upon eminent notabilities. It was the task of the Association to ensure that 'Dubb' and his children had their chance. In urging the reform of the educational system on the lines of the Hadow proposals, the Association was demanding equal educational opportunities for all working class children.

In providing for the education of the working class adult, especially through increased co-operation with the trade unions, it was strengthening belief in political democracy through the encouragement of students to choose their own subjects and tutors, and to discuss freely contemporary issues. In contrast to the Central Labour College founded in 1909 to teach the Marxist materialist conception of history, the W.E.A. held that no system of ideas was sacrosanct. Tawney believed that the common sense of the working class would ultimately result in the acceptance of the democratic ideal but the task of the tutor was to impart a critical ability to his students. It was necessary, therefore, to make the working class aware of the facilities which the Association offered. His constant warnings about 'the perils of success', of the temptation to follow the line of least resistance and to attract into the movement only those who were most easily attracted were not just empty rhetoric. The attraction into the movement of the working class was not just important to the vitality of the Association, it was essential to the well-being of the nation and to the future of the political system. Though Tawney, like many educationalists, can be accused of exaggerating the importance of certain educational movements and reforms, few can doubt the sincerity of his motive. The first service to the nation was to keep open the channels through which the democratic spirit flowed.

After war broke out in September 1939, Tawney's belief that the future of democracy was safe only in the hands of an educated working class was held even more strongly. His wartime experiences

confirmed his belief in the mission of the Association to reform the national system of education and the private sector, and to extend working-class adult education. The increased ties of Tawney with the trade union movement as the result of his involvement in the W.E.T.U.C. made him an obvious choice for the post of 'Adviser on Social and Politico-Economic Affairs' in the United States, though he admitted to close friend, Arthur Creech-Jones, a colleague in the W.E.A., that such 'an awful mouthful' was 'calculated to put up the backs of Labour people in the United States'.<sup>1</sup> The contact with the British Embassy staff in Washington into which this post brought him in 1941 and 1942, resulted in a stinging criticism of its personnel and their selection.

With a letter of introduction from Bevin to show that he was 'reasonably sound from the Labour point of view' and dressed in a baggy old suit bought from a pawnbroker's because his own lay on the bed of the Atlantic thanks to a German 'U' boat, Tawney arrived at the British Embassy in Washington in August 1941. He had taken care to collect up to date details of the way in which British industry was being organised for the war, and the part which the trade unions played in such organisation and the relationship of the unions to the government. On arriving he found that 'the staffs of embassies know as little about such matters as he did about astronomy nor did it appear that they wanted to know anything about them.'

The embassy staff were seen 'as gentlemanly amateurs who know little of the life of their own country or of those in which they serve and who, being selected from a small well-to-do class cannot learn much'.<sup>2</sup> The result was that the people of the United States

1. Tawney to Creech Jones, August 16th 1941.

2. Tawney to Creech Jones, September 25th 1942. (Written on his return).

started with a predisposition to 'believe that we are a nation of snobs', and agreed that the young men of Eton and Christ Church had no idea how to establish friendly relationships with ordinary people. The representatives of British industry and labour ought to be able to answer all questions addressed to them, and to supply regular information about corresponding subjects in America to the British Government. What was needed was a competent man and a body of assistants with Ministry of Labour experience. On the larger issue of the overall improvement in the quality of staffs, he concluded, 'Until there is serious educational reform the public schools and older universities will always have a pull in securing appointments to the Civil Service'.<sup>1</sup> It was vital that the Foreign Office was recruited without anything but reference to the quality of the candidates as shown in the Civil Service Examination. For successful candidates there should be a better training to prepare them for 'serious professional work, not merely for polite social intercourse'.

Tawney's belief that the working class was the only safe guardian of democracy was confirmed. In his pamphlet 'Can Democracy Survive?', he recognised that the situation since he delivered his address in 1932 on 'The Education of the Citizen' had changed. The function of the W.E.A. was no longer simply to prepare men to exercise the rights of citizenship, but to aid them to preserve those rights. Returning in the pamphlet to the theme of his 1936 presidential address, he argued that the equipoise between political democracy in England and a high degree of social and economic inequality was too precarious to last much longer. The war had made the equilibrium unstable but at the same time had fostered conditions favourable to the creation of a sound democratic system by throwing into relief the 'inequalities of

1. Ibid.

economic condition and educational opportunities.' Measures to remove such inequalities were vital to the future well-being of the nation. These were a matter for the working class. 'The intelligence, the conviction, the resolution, on which the issue depends cannot be exercised by delegation. They must be supplied by ordinary men and women, who are conscious of their responsibilities and have prepared themselves to rise to them'.<sup>1</sup>

Such qualities would not be available unless they were cultivated. It was the task of the W.E.A. to assist in this task, not by trying to inculcate doctrines but by helping the working class adult to make up his mind with greater confidence for himself. Its task was not merely to impart knowledge but to confer the power to use it, 'to shatter the easy-going acquiescence in venerable fallacies, to foster an attitude of mental initiative and independence, and thus to prepare men to meet without dismay the problems confronting them, because, before they encounter them in practical life, they have already grappled with them in thought'.<sup>2</sup> Out of the welter of war, the Association should help to build 'a real democracy' and 'a new civilisation'. A new civilisation would not be secured simply by victories on battlefields. It could come only through the power which education could provide.

Tawney, as chairman for the Council for Education Advance and president of the W.E.A., welcomed government proposals for the extension of adult education after the war. He recognised as 'important and necessary' the recognition in the White Paper published by Butler in 1943, that 'without provision for adult education, the national system must be incomplete'.<sup>3</sup> The clauses of the Education

1. 'Can Democracy Survive?', p.3-4.

2. p.4.

3. A statement on the White Paper on Educational Reconstruction.

Bill dealing with adult-education were non-controversial. The local education authorities had the duty, not merely the power 'to secure the provision of adequate facilities for further education and were required to prepare schemes for further education for submission to the Minister. In doing so they had to 'have regard to any facilities . . . . provided . . . . by universities, educational associations and other bodies, and shall consult such bodies'. Adequate financial provision was to be made. He welcomed the erection of 'a comprehensive system of educational service', with a flourish declared 'The Board is dead. Long live the Ministry' and directed his blast of criticism against the vagueness of the timetable for reform, the proposals for raising the leaving age and the likelihood of the retention of fees in some secondary schools.

#### 4. 'Embalming Aged Mummies'

There were several common themes which ran through Tawney's statements to the Association on 'the points of success', on the extension and unification of educational facilities for trade unionists, and on the need to create an informed working class opinion in the face of the threat to democracy. One of these was that the effectiveness of the Association's work depended not only on the loyalty and working-class roots of its members but also on the quality of the administration and organisation. To maintain and improve upon the quality it was necessary to attract 'new blood' into the movement at all levels including that of the central administration. Recalling a scripture lesson of his youth, Tawney drew a moral for the movement from how Jeshurun 'had waxed fat and kicked'.<sup>1</sup> If the Association was to retain its vitality, and not to suffer the decay which success could bring, it too must be 'kicked' by introducing into its organisation young people with new ideas. By the excessive veneration of those who

1. Presidential Address 1932, p.2.

had taken part in building up the movement, there was the danger that it would become 'respectable' and 'complacent', becoming enslaved to the system which it was ostensibly struggling to overthrow. 'Embalming aged mummies' was no guarantee of the future success of the movement.

Tawney urged that more intimate relationships be developed between Branches, Districts and the Centre. In pressing for a high quality of staff at the Central Office, he was not arguing for a higher degree of centralisation but for a more effective system whereby the federal structure of the Association could show its true worth. A key officer within the movement was its General Secretary. When MacTavish proved himself to be no longer suited to hold that post, Tawney played a leading part in 'removing' him from the position. With Mallon,<sup>1</sup> Tawney drafted an agreement with MacTavish whereby the latter was to receive twelve months leave of absence and if his health was restored<sup>2</sup> he would be offered suitable work with the Association or a retiring life pension of £300 per annum. It was a somewhat tragic end to a person who had served the Association well. Muir replaced him as General Secretary in 1929. Tawney's first year as president had had more than its fair share of difficulties.

The routine matters which have a bearing on Tawney's aim during his presidency to safeguard the movement from senility do not always make the most interesting reading. Often his main contributions to the development of the W.E.A. lie in the least publicised areas of domestic reform, which are meaningful only to those who know the movement from within. He encouraged Muir in his reorganisation of the office. Muir brought fresh experience and a new vigour into the Central Office, having started out as a Clydeside shop steward, and having become a Clydeside M.P. In July 1930, Tawney made arrangements

1. W.E.A. - E.C. 7th July 1928.

2. See p. 444.

for him to enter Guys but he never recovered from a dangerous operation. The Association was once again robbed of a General Secretary in tragic circumstances. Muir was succeeded by Firth but during the period of Muir's secretaryship and that of Firth, the future General Secretary, Ernest Green, who was to carry out vital educational work during the second world war, was gaining experience as organising secretary at the Central Office. Green had the full backing of Tawney and the other leading members of the Executive Committee when he became General Secretary in 1934.<sup>1</sup>

During the thirties, the 'Highway', the journal of the Association, experienced a golden age under the control of W.E. Williams; it was, however, the appointment of an Educational Officer which was perhaps the most significant advance made by the Association under the presidency of Tawney. In 1933 Tawney was expressing doubts about the suitability of R.S. Lambert<sup>2</sup> for the post. Writing to Creech-Jones<sup>3</sup> he expressed his belief that Lambert thought that the 'W.E.A.'s day was over'. However 'it is essential to get some much younger people interested in the movement'. Williams was also regarded as a person who could possibly prove suitable for the post and by 1935, the choice appeared to have been between Williams and 'Edwards of Leeds'. Tawney's feelings on the matter were divided. 'Edwards is a good man. But Williams has at present the broader outlook and a better knowledge of the intricacies of the movement. Green .... would I suspect prefer Edwards'.<sup>4</sup> Williams was the favoured candidate. However neither was appointed, probably because neither wanted the post.

1. Ernest Green's work for the W.E.T.U.C. is described by Corfield. Op.Cit. p.56-84.
2. Lambert had edited the Highway in the late twenties but gave up this post when he was transferred from London University's extra mural department to the B.B.C.
3. Tawney to Creech-Jones, November 13th 1933.
4. Tawney to Creech-Jones, March 9th 1935.



Harold Shearman was appointed Educational Officer<sup>1</sup>, thus freeing Ernest Green to give more attention to the development of the W.E.T.U.C. The following year four full time youth organisers were appointed to develop non-vocational educational work among young people of eighteen to twenty five, a move strongly supported by Tawney in his desire to bring new blood into the movement. He also gave his support to the appointment of Mrs. Simeon, who had assisted in establishing the ill-fated Public Education Bureau, and drew up the terms of her contract.<sup>2</sup>

When Tawney was in the United States during the Second World War he gave serious thought to the question of his retirement from the presidency of the Association, of which he had given the movement warning in September 1941.<sup>3</sup> As there was a galaxy of vice presidents, including Creech-Jones, Clay and Lady Simon upon which to draw for a successor, he had little doubt that the presidency would be in good hands. Tawney admitted that his reasons for retiring were partly 'selfish', although selfishness to him meant 'freedom to do other work - in wartime - public work if any causes want me.' He believed that non-attendance at the Finance and General Purposes Committee, which had drawn greatly on his energies, was no real alternative to retirement, though Green had been pressing him to stay. Above all, he argued 'a change would do good for the W.E.A.' It would demonstrate that the movement was in favour of change at all levels. The future of the W.E.A. 'depends on its getting able young men to work for it before they become known. It does not seem to me to be attracting them. If it does not do so it will inevitably go down hill. Hence my dislike of embalming aged mummies which I gather is contemplated in my case'.<sup>4</sup>

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1. W.E.A. - E.C. 22nd June 1935.

2. Tawney to Creech-Jones, December 5th 1935.

3. W.E.A. - F.G.P.C. September 30th 1941. Letter from Tawney to the Committee.

4. Tawney to Creech-Jones, September 25th 1943.

The future health of the Association depended also on a reconsideration of the office of president. Tawney was adamant that 'the W.E.A. ought not to ask any busy person with other duties to give as much time to it as in recent years is demanded of the president'. His first thoughts on the reform of the presidency were that the real Executive Committee of the Association was its Finance and General Purposes Committee, for it was there that principles were inevitably decided in the course of business. The president ought therefore to attend only the latter Committee and attend others only on extraordinary occasions. In addition, the president should not be chairman of the Council for Educational Advance, nor, if he lives in London, be invited to attend meetings at a distance from the capital. A deputy president should be appointed to share the work from the vice presidents and the vice presidents should undertake more duties for example, the reading and commenting upon memoranda. Whatever reorganisation took place, he would retire. 'I have always regarded it as a mistake for old people to cling to office' he declared.<sup>1</sup>

Many of these suggested reforms sprang from Tawney's own interpretation of the office of presidency. To some extent, he had overburdened himself as president when the delegation of duties was a natural step to take. It has been suggested for example<sup>2</sup> that he combined the role of policy-maker and chairman at the Association's meetings thus adding to his duties and hindering an early statement of policy. In fact, of course, Tawney had delegated many duties, especially to the Education Officer and to the Education Advisory Committee whose meetings he rarely attended. Yet he still drove himself hard and may well have benefited by 'telling the W.E.A. more

1. Tawney to Creech-Jones, May 1st 1944.

2. I am grateful to My Lady Stocks for an insight into this side of Tawney's activities.

often to go to hell'.<sup>1</sup> In such an event, the structure which he suggested in his letter to Creech-Jones would have evolved naturally.

In November 1944, Tawney delivered his last presidential address in which he reiterated his warning to the Association of the 'perils of success' and of the need to attract more young people into the movement. Thereafter, the task was given to Harold Clay, who continued the line of male presidents. Tawney remained in the Association as a vice president; on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary<sup>2</sup> he found an opportunity to return yet once again to the themes of his presidential addresses of the thirties: the dangers of success, respectability and complacency, the need 'to awaken the interests of the working class' and of the strenuous efforts needed to avoid the W.E.A. becoming an instrument of propaganda.

##### 5. Post-War Introspection

The warnings which Tawney gave to the Association during his presidency and earlier stemmed from a body of religious conviction shared by its founder, Mansbridge, and its first President, Temple. As a result he gave the term 'reform' a distinctive meaning when he applied it to the kind of adult education which the Association offered. Reform in most branches of education meant for him a change in the assumptions and presuppositions upon which a system was based as well as a change in the framework. The most obvious examples of this are to be found in his attitude to elementary and secondary education. Reform in this context, meant a movement away from the social purposes for which the systems were originally created. Reform, in relation to the W.E.A., had a religious meaning akin to the term 'reformation' when used by the leaders of the sixteenth-century Protestant Churches.

1. Tawney to Creech-Jones, May 1st 1944.
2. His lecture was published as a pamphlet by the W.E.A. and was reprinted on his suggestion in R.H. Tawney 'The Radical Tradition'.

It implied the return to original aims and the removal or reduction of overgrowth which obscured those aims. Thus Clay, Tawney's successor to the presidency, was able to repeat Tawney's words in his fourth presidential address, 'there is only one speech on adult education but many different ways of presenting it'.<sup>1</sup>

Clay repeated these words at the Association's Annual Conference in 1949 when Tawney was re-elected as a vice president for the last time. In that year also a book by S.G. Raybould, bearing an introduction by Tawney, was published.<sup>2</sup> It raised questions which increasingly occupied the attention of the Association. To what extent had the Association relaxed its earlier ideals and practice? Was it possible or even desirable for the movement to continue to strive to realise the ideals of its founders? Had not changes within the Association and without during the war years and after deflected the movement so far from its original course that it was no longer practical or desirable to return to it? These were questions which confronted Tawney during the five years of his vice presidency, from 1945 and 1950, and after, and challenged the meaning which he gave to the term reform. Gill, a member of Tawney's pioneering tutorial classes in 1908, posed these questions in a manner perhaps more appropriate to the thinking of his mentor.<sup>3</sup> Has the W.E.A., like some churches, become too respectable and 'established' an institution to appeal to common folk? Has the W.E.A. ceased to be the 'Salvation Army' of the working class educational movement; no longer prepared to go out into the highways and byways to preach its gospel?

The introspective mood of the Association in the immediate post war years, sadly not recorded in the official history of the

1. Presidential Address, The Highway, November 1949, p.8.
2. S.G. Raybould 'The W.E.A. The Next Phase'. The author was a vice president of the Association along with Tawney, Lady Simon of Wythenshawe, A. Creech-Jones, Shearman and Lord Lindsay of Birker.
3. The Highway, October 1949, p.256.

movement, found a focus with the publication of Raybould's book, 'The W.E.A. The Next Phase'. The trends which his statistical tables, despite their inadequacies,<sup>1</sup> revealed gave grounds for thought but not for pessimism about the future. The old guard of the Association, including Tawney, had long recognised the declining proportion of manual workers in W.E.A. classes, the fall in the percentage of tutorial class students and the fading quality of the tutorial classes. Were these signs that the days of the Association were over? Had the extension of secondary and university education and the increased provision for adult education made by local authorities and the universities resulted in making the traditional functions of the Association obsolete? Tawney believed not.

At the end of the war, Tawney expressed his unqualified faith in the future of the Association. It was in the nature of human institutions for principles and practice to drift apart, especially in time of war. The war, however, had demonstrated that there was only one hero 'the common peoples of the United Nations, with the British people at their head'.<sup>2</sup> The first peacetime election which had given the Labour party an overall majority for the first time was another victory for the working class which had shown that it had reached a new stage in its political consciousness. It was the task of the Association to foster that consciousness through its

1. An appendix showing the actual numbers of employed manual workers in the country say in 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930 and 1949 and the proportion they have at each date to the total of employed persons would have been of value to show if the decline of manual workers in W.E.A. classes was less striking than appeared. It was possible of course that the larger number of women in the classes helped this decline. It would perhaps have been interesting to see the proportion of male manual workers as a proportion of all male students.

Probably it would have been better to divide the students over the three tables instead of two, separating short courses from tutorial and one-year classes.

2. 'Some Thoughts On The Election', p.2. The Highway, October 1945.

traditional approach to issues of the day. Its aim was not to instill political opinion but to ensure that 'opinion whatever they may be, should be based on a genuine attempt to ascertain the facts, and to reach, in the light of reading and discussion, conclusions which can stand fire. It may be possible to plan a reasonably efficient collectivism from above, without enlisting the co-operation of the mass of the population. To make democracy a reality in economic as well as in political life is a subtler process. It involves action and interaction; a two-way traffic in proposals and criticisms; a free and continuous interchange of ideas and comments, suggestions and counter-suggestions, between administrators, organisations representing producers and consumers, and the great body of lay opinion'.<sup>1</sup> There was no finer statement of methods.

Such a task meant giving increased attention to such subjects as economics and social studies. The decline in the percentage of classes in these subjects since 1931 gave little room for comfort but Tawney believed that closer ties with trade unions would correct the balance although he had no wish to exclude other areas such as literature. After all, it was the students who, by a democratic process, chose the subjects which they studied. The unanimous choice for the Presidency of Harold Clay, General Secretary to the Transport and General Workers' Union was, in Tawney's view a good omen for the future. Tawney backed the campaign directed to the rank and file of the trade union movement initiated by the first post-war W.E.A. annual conference. He thus underlined the simple fact, 'the tasks confronting us remain in all essentials what they were, the environment in which these tasks must be discharged has been substantially modified' in his introductory speech to the 'Programme for Action'.<sup>2</sup> The drive

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1. Ibid p.4.

2. 'Programme for Action': A Speech delivered to the Annual Conference 1947, p.3. The Highway, November 1947.

for increased union support was underway and met with a considerable measure of success.<sup>1</sup>

In 1949, Tawney presided over a conference on 'Education to Meet the Modern Needs of Trade Unions' and delivered an opening address. He recommended the need for thought, reading and discussion not as a substitute for experience but as a valuable commentary on and supplement to it. The Association could provide such preparation which 'would diminish the risk that we shall be swept off our feet by mere claptrap'. Education of the kind envisaged by the W.E.A. was necessary to citizens to enable them to 'maintain their independence against the stream of interested propaganda'. It was necessary to members of organisations created for 'the protection of common economic interests and for the creation of a juster social order'. Whilst Tawney avoided touching on the forms that education for the trade unionist could take, he stressed that its object should be the 'raising of the quality of service which, as a result of it, he is able to render to the movements and causes commanding his allegiance'. The emphasis was still upon service and responsibility. The object was not merely social and economic emancipation; these were only a prelude to greater economic and social responsibility. The mere multiplication of classes was not the object. The main concern was education for social responsibility. The transformation of institutions was not enough. It was necessary also that men, including trade unionists, changed the values by which they lived. Towards the end of his life he expressed doubts whether this had been accomplished despite the growth of the W.E.T.U.C. in the immediate post war years. Rita Hinden reported to Creech-Jones<sup>2</sup> that, 'He is in a great state about the party, tremendously critical of the 'New Statesmen', and of the way the trade unions are behaving, of all the seekers after place and power'.

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1. Stocks Op.Cit. p.148-149.

2. Hinden to Creech-Jones 7th December 1960.

Whilst it is likely that Tawney gave support to Raybould's suggestions for the encouragement of social studies, it is certain that he supported the latter's ideas for increasing the number and raising the quality of tutorial classes. In his Jubilee address to the Association in 1953 he urged the movement to shorten its front. The war had produced a change in the educational pattern of the movement. It was inevitable that, during the war, education for adults should take the form of short courses and classes with a comparative stagnation of the more continuous and intensive kinds of work. The consideration of post war problems demanded more of the latter kind of class. The three-year tutorial class was the most valuable. Tawney was not willing to accept the argument that provided the teacher possessed University qualifications the duration of a class was of minor importance. 'I shall take such statements seriously when British Universities award degrees at the end of twelve months instead of three years'.<sup>1</sup> Tawney's faith in the tutorial class was absolute. It was as relevant to the study of contemporary problems in the era following the Second World War as it was in the era which preceded the First World War. The Association should shorten its front; it had attempted to hold too long a line. Though its educational work varied, inevitably and properly, in type and continuity the three year tutorial class should be made the core of the Association's activities.

The composition of classes was a vital issue upon which there was much soul-searching within the Association in the post war years and earlier. Who were the 'workers' with whose education the W.E.A. should particularly be concerned? What proportion of the class should they be? What guidelines on these matters could be drawn from the early tutorial classes? As the first tutor of the early classes

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1. 'The Moral of it All', p.246. The Highway, April 1953.



Tawney seemed to be in a good position to answer these crucial questions.<sup>1</sup> The 1948 Annual Conference accepted the definition of 'worker' as 'the educationally under privileged'; those for whom full time schooling ceased at the minimum school leaving age or shortly after. Tawney accepted this as part of but not the whole of a satisfactory definition. Restricting the definition, if it ever had been, to the manual worker was not acceptable. Thus in his Jubilee address he stated his belief that, "Its mission, therefore, is not general, to all and sundry, but specific. It is, in the first place, to the 'educationally under-privileged majority' of the nation who cease their full time schooling at or near fifteen to enter some form of employment."<sup>2</sup> He accepted also Raybould's view that the most effective means of reaching such people was through increased propaganda within the trade union movement. He did not, however, go to the same lengths as Raybould in examining the problems of attracting such persons into the movement. For Tawney it was almost a matter of faith that they would join the W.E.A., instead he directed his attention to other matters which could not be reduced to statistical form.

In the year prior to that in which the Association accepted the definition of 'worker' as the 'educationally underprivileged', Tawney adopted a more catholic definition. "We have not interpreted the word 'worker' in any narrow sense. We have meant by it all those, whether in factory, mine, office or home, who render useful service to their fellows." These were God's children and Tawney believed that first and foremost among them were the educationally underprivileged. What bound them together was not that they were the horny-handed sons of toil but an ideal or attitude. Therein lay the early unity of the movement and its missionary zeal. Their unity was one not so much

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1. One may, however, doubt the value and fairness of comparing the virtues of a single class with defects evident in several thousand as Tawney was inclined to do.
  2. 'The Moral of It All' p.242.

of what they were but of what they intended to do. Their cry was not 'we are the horny-handed', nor 'we have no education' but 'we mean to end oppression and to build a responsible society based on Fellowship'. Whether Tawney's belief that chief among those people in future would be the educationally underprivileged was wellfounded is open to doubt. However for him a working-class outlook was more a matter of attitude of mind than occupation or educational deprivation. Those who made the early classes into going concerns were not always the manual worker or educationally underprivileged. Fellowship in an ideal was the overriding bond. If the W.E.A. was to become increasingly a religious force in the postwar world, its members like their predecessors, should come from different homes, different schools and study both literature and economics in the fellowship of their common social purpose, thus creating a force which would bring men from all societies, but predominantly that of the working class to education.

The issues raised in Raybould's book were, of course, by no means new to Tawney. They had formed the basis of his presidential addresses in the interwar period. However his assessment of the book reveals the extent to which he upheld his previous views. He read the book in type-script form and stated his opinion of it in a letter to the author in September 1948. He agreed 'with its main conclusions' and urged Raybould to include 'a summary of the main conclusions and recommendations' at the beginning of the book not as in official reports at the end.<sup>1</sup> This would help to counteract 'the capacity of people to evade unpleasant facts, however clearly stated'.

Tawney, whose most important work for adult education was the setting and maintaining of genuinely high standards of teaching and study, urged Raybould to underline three important points. The first was that in its eagerness to increase the number of classes and students, the movement had steadily relaxed the demands which it made upon them.

1. Tawney to Raybould, September 29th 1948.

There was 'much too much of running classes for all and sundry and of begging people to join them whether they mean business or not ....

On any sensible interpretation of the word *academic*, it is not too academic **if it is not academic enough**'.<sup>1</sup> Tawney stood out against a graded system of classes through which students could pass from the easier to the more arduous. His second point of emphasis was that it was much better 'to start with a tutorial class, in which demands on students are pitched high and help the lame dogs when they are in the tutorial class'. Short or preparation classes had in fact become a substitute for tutorial classes in many areas.

However the decline in standards also resulted from within the universities themselves, some of which appeared to be indifferent to 'extramural work of a university standard'. Thus the ideal of the W.E.A. was being undermined from without as well as from within, with the result that the claim to special treatment by the Ministry was becoming untenable. As his third point, Tawney thus emphasised the need to impress upon the universities the demand for 'making work of a university quality'. However, in general, Raybould's book was 'in accordance with (his) own prejudice'.

Tawney's last official message to the Association concerned neither composition nor academic standards. He urged that all who attended the Association's classes to become members of the movement.<sup>2</sup> Only when each class member was a missionary for it was its future really secure.

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1. p.2.

2. 'A Personal Message From Two Friends' *The Highway*, April 1950 p.125.

CHAPTER TEN

THE UNIVERSITIES

1. The Older Universities
2. The Newer Universities
3. Keele

1. The Older Universities

Tawney had taken an interest in the reform of the older universities shortly after leaving Balliol.<sup>1</sup> His involvement in establishing the first tutorial classes for the W.E.A.<sup>2</sup> had given a greater sense of urgency to his demands. In the trenches of the Somme he found different reasons for their reform<sup>3</sup> and thus recommended to Lloyd George the need for giving greater opportunities for 'youthful ability' to rise into the officer class which hitherto was monopolised by Oxbridge graduates. The controversy over the clauses on continued education of the Fisher Act delayed further consideration of university reform. In 1918,<sup>4</sup> the Labour Party's Advisory Committee on Education deferred the matter for later discussion. Early in 1919, it was agreed by the Advisory Committee that J.L. Stocks and Dalton should prepare memoranda on the reform of Oxford and Cambridge, whilst Tawney, in addition to drafting a memorandum on the needs of the modern universities, would communicate with the Party's N.E.C. to urge the importance of the adequate representation of Labour on any Royal Commission. The N.E.C.<sup>5</sup> gave Henderson the task of campaigning for the increased representation of Labour on the Commission, and of keeping in close contact with the Advisory Committee through Tawney in the preparation of memoranda and in the choice of witnesses. The fact that Labour was under represented with only one person serving on the Royal Commission on the universities and with no representation on the Royal Commission on the older universities was a constant source of concern to Tawney and to the rest of the Committee.

1. See p.p.19-23. Tawney took the opportunity in 1920, of summarising the main moves in the attempts to secure the appointment of a Royal Commission in the chapter which he contributed to Mrs. S.A. Barnett's biography of her husband, Canon Barnett.
2. See p.p. 29-41
3. See p. 76. Also Thomas Jones 'Whitehall Diary Vo.1' p.4. item III
4. L.P. - A.C.E. November 21st 1918.
5. L.P. - N.E.C. February 9th 1920.

The months from March to June 1920 were taken up with the drafting of memoranda for the Royal Commission. The Executive Committee of the W.E.A. also set to work to produce its evidence to put before the Commission. Tawney as a member of both Committees drafted a private memorandum to clarify and systematise his own thinking. Oxford and Cambridge were for him, as for many within the Labour Movement, 'the most conspicuous example of the way in which English education (was) .... still organised upon lines of class'.<sup>1</sup> Their reform offered a unique opportunity of democratising education at and from the top, and of ensuring that they served the whole community instead of a small wealthy class. Their main defects were three. They were too exclusive because they were too expensive; their resources were not used in the most economical manner, and their government was inefficient.

In view of the ambiguity in the terms of reference of the Royal Commission Tawney thought that it was essential to interpret them so as to include points of vital interest to Labour. They must include the means to make the Colleges and Universities much more accessible to students of small means, the cost of living in colleges and methods of reducing it, the number, value and terms of scholarships and exhibitions, the provision for teaching and increasing the number of non-collegiate students, the position of women in the universities, and, a matter of paramount interest to the W.E.A., the methods for extending extra-mural work.

The second section of his memorandum dealt with the collecting of relevant information probably in the face of obstruction by the older universities. The returns should include an analysis of the schools from which undergraduates were drawn, the amount received

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1. Memorandum on the Royal Commission on Oxford and Cambridge,  
p.1.

by the colleges from undergraduates in 'butfels', that is college bills, the rents paid for rooms, and the cost of residence and education. Each college should provide details of the number and salaries of college servants, its number of resident undergraduates and the number of undergraduates living out of college. The salary paid to its head, its other sources of income including land, investments and trust funds, and the number and value of scholarships. As witnesses for the Labour Party, Tawney suggested Stocks of St. John's College, Oxford, a bursar with practical experience of college administration, Cartwright and Pateman.

In the fourth section of his memorandum, Tawney presented the 'general points to watch'. These included ways to reduce the cost of living in colleges by the use of such means as bed sitting rooms, the need for qualified bursars in the place of 'amateurs', the need for co-operation by colleges in purchasing goods and a drastic change in the relation between colleges and the universities. He also called for more efficient management of college estates, more representative governing bodies and the overhaul of the system of scholarships and exhibitions. Above all, to assist the process of democratisation a percentage of free places for pupils<sup>1</sup> from public secondary schools should be set aside. These were the points upon which he hoped to elaborate in subsequent memoranda. The memoranda produced by the W.E.A. and Advisory Committee drew upon these ideas.

It was to be expected that the Advisory Committee and the

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1. Tawney uses the term 'boys' but in view of his insistence on the need for more women undergraduates he probably did not attach much weight to the term.

Association's Executive Committee<sup>1</sup> would produce similar memoranda in view of the similarity in outlook of their members and the fact that they had quite a substantial common membership. Evidence of Tawney's thinking and style of writing are to be found in both memoranda; in fact, in many ways, neither went much beyond his initial memorandum. The W.E. disclaimed any 'expert or detailed knowledge of questions of finance and administration',<sup>2</sup> and thus produced only general schemes of reform. In failing to gather detailed information on the aspects of financial and administrative arrangements which Tawney had listed in a questionnaire, which he had appended to his earlier memorandum, and in failing to utilise the wide range of contacts which the Association had within the older universities to gather such information, the Association missed the opportunity of presenting its case effectively. The Advisory Committee also failed to make its demands precise. It too missed the opportunity of laying down clear guide lines on matters of finance, administration and representation for those whose task it would be to effect reform if it was agreed upon.

The underlying principles of the two memoranda were in agreement. The reform of the universities was a question of social justice, first and foremost which meant the removal of inequalities which prevented the working class from attending Oxford and Cambridge. These inequalities had several forms. There were educational inequalities in earlier stages of education which placed the working class at a grave disadvantage so that only one in every thousand elementary school children<sup>3</sup> entered Oxford or Cambridge. Only by the reform of secondary

1. A subcommittee of the Executive Committee was set up to draft the memorandum late in 1919. By June 1920, the evidence was ready for Temple and Greenwood to present to the Royal Commission. Tawney also assisted in drafting the memorandum of Labour's Advisory Committee which was ready a few months earlier.
2. 'Memorandum For the Royal Commission on the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge', p.1.
3. W.E.A. Memorandum, p.3; Advisory Committee memorandum, p.7. The two memoranda came before the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party in June 1920 and gained its approval.



education and by the instituting of an entrance examination through which ability could manifest itself could such an inequality be overcome. However even if a working-class candidate were successful, in an entrance examination without reforms to reduce and meet the cost of an education at the older universities, it was unlikely that the ratio of working class to 'well-to-do' students would alter greatly.

Thus the major part of the memoranda was concerned with ways to meet and to reduce the cost of an education at the older universities. The Association devoted more attention to the administrative structure necessary to bring about a reduction in costs, whilst the Advisory Committee concentrated upon particular items upon which cost could be reduced. The Association took as its starting point a belief that, 'Economy is not merely a matter of goodwill; it is a matter of knowledge'.<sup>1</sup> It advocated the creation of a representative central authority whose business it was to institute a system of comparative costing between Colleges, and to press upon those whose costs seem needlessly high, steps to reduce them. In the absence of full and regular information about the items making up the costs in all Colleges, the individual College had no standard by which to work. The Central Authority would, if necessary, have the power of compulsion to make colleges reduce costs. In the Association's view, 'The guarantees of economy (were), in short, publicity, inspection and when necessary interference, by a body armed with powers of compulsion'.<sup>2</sup>

Tawney's insistence that every college or large college should employ a special financial officer in the place of an 'amateur bursar' was echoed in both memoranda. In the reduction of the cost of living in the colleges, there was 'large scope for experiment in many directions'.<sup>3</sup> Only a person with special training could undertake

1. W.E.A. Memorandum, p.6.

2. Ibid.

3. Advisory Committee Memorandum, p.7.

such a task effectively. It was a mistake to suppose that general intelligence and hard work without special knowledge would produce economic administration. The co-operative buying of food and stores and disposal of waste products was a matter for a person experienced in hotel or boarding house administration. Such a person could also undertake the revision of internal arrangements within colleges to reduce services wherever possible by such means as the establishment of bed-sitting rooms, common meals, the sharing of sitting rooms and the most economical methods of heating and cooking.<sup>1</sup>

To the authors of both memoranda, it was clear that however much the cost of living in college was reduced it was still necessary to offer special assistance to poor students if the walls of privilege were to be breached and ultimately removed. An obvious target for the reformer was the prevailing scholarship system in which the majority of scholarships were distributed without regard to the financial needs of those receiving them. Though the Advisory Committee went further than the Association in expressing its ideal that 'university education no less than secondary education should be free', both agreed on the immediate steps for the reform of the scholarship system. Its primary function ought to be to ensure that no one is debarred by poverty from obtaining a university education. Thus success in the scholarship examination should carry with it the existing honorary distinction but no money award. 'Money should be granted only after an enquiry into the financial circumstances and needs of the candidates .... (and) the amount granted should be proportioned to need'.<sup>2</sup> The means test was to be introduced but for the Labour Party only as a step on the road to free university education.

The Association called for the reform of the scholarship examination to reduce the prominence given to the classics and to ensure 'that more scholarships were available for candidates who

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1. Ibid. p.8.

2. W.E.A. Memorandum, p.8.

are proficient in subjects other than Latin and Greek'. Tawney was concerned to ensure that the road by which he had travelled to Oxford was not the only or necessarily the most important or most favoured one. He was anxious to end the close association between the older universities and the great public schools which had operated to the virtual exclusion of the secondary and above all the elementary school pupil. The two committees called for the reservation of twenty-five per cent free places in colleges for 'secondary school pupils' before any grant from public funds was made to the universities.<sup>1</sup> Such candidates should be maintained by local authorities and all costs should be met out of public funds, with the existing County Council Scholarships merged into such a system and the gradual increase in the proportion of free places until university education was made free. Such a system also demanded that the older universities should play a part in university expansion to cater for the growing number of working class students. This expansion could be achieved in three ways, by an increase in the number of students at existing colleges, by the foundation of new colleges and by the inclusion of a number of non-collegiate students.

The W.E.A. placed more emphasis in its memorandum on the need for more generous provision for extra mural teaching. The Advisory Committee devoted more attention to the need for providing one year courses for working-class students. Both bodies, however, emphasised that greater access to a university education, whether full or part time, would not lead to the lowering of intellectual standards. Tawney's hand is apparent behind the statement that, 'Except on the assumption that the intellectually capable are identical with the

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1. Such a figure was based on the number of free places advocated for secondary schools, and was a somewhat arbitrary though commonly accepted figure. It made the proportion of free places in secondary school look hopelessly inadequate. If at the apex of the structure twenty five per cent free places were to be set aside it would suggest the need for more generous provision lower down.

richer classes and that the working classes are intellectually inferior, the probability would appear to be that ability and character are more or less equally distributed over the whole population'.<sup>1</sup> If upper class students who treated the older universities as a social club rather than as a place for serious study were excluded, and the pass degrees which catered for their inferior abilities abolished, 'except in the case of music and agricultural science', intellectual standards would be raised. There was agreement between the memoranda that 'as a general rule, admitting however of exceptions in particular cases, undergraduates should be required to read for honours, and that with a view to excluding undergraduates who are not engaged in serious study a system of superannuation should be introduced and should be strictly administered'.<sup>2</sup> No system should be allowed which operated in favour of one class or one sex<sup>3</sup>. Ability to profit by a university education should be the sole criteria for admittance to courses.

If such a criteria were to become and remain operative, certain constitutional and administrative reforms were necessary. To overcome the great degree of financial independence which each college had, and which operated to the detriment of the university, it was necessary that the funds of all the bodies composing the universities should 'be administered with an eye to the efficiency of the whole even if this involves diminishing the peculiar distinction of some of the parts'. This was a measure of reform which Tawney had urged in his newspaper articles in 1906, and had added to the demand for a more effective and representative governing and

1. W.E.A. Memorandum p.4. Compare the phraseology of this statement with that of statements in the 'Manchester Guardian' and 'Secondary Education For All' in the years 1921 and 1922. See p.178 of this study.
2. Ibid. p.11.
3. The W.E.A. and the Advisory Committee agreed that 'the exclusion of women from degrees and from other privileges of university life is both unfair to them and contrary to the best interests of education'.

administrative body. He interpreted the term 'representative' in the same manner as the Labour Party and W.E.A. It was necessary to 'bring into close contact with the administration of the Universities, men who have experience of the educational needs and aspirations of different sections of the community'. Also in view of the proposal to grant public money to the universities it was necessary to make any governing bodies more representative, not just of the educational world but of the community in general. On the latter point, however, the W.E.A. was vague. It urged that 'a considerable proportion of the seats of the administrative bodies of the two Universities should be filled by the Board of Education, and that care should be taken by the Board to include among those nominated persons representing the principal organisations and movements, including those of work people, interested in education'.<sup>1</sup> It appeared to be more interested in securing more representation for itself than for the community in general.

In general, the committees were concerned with giving greater access to the older universities for the working class rather than to appraise the quality of the education which was offered. Certainly, Tawney did not contemplate any radical reappraisal of the kind of education which he had received at Balliol. The W.E.A. refrained even from making any detailed suggestions about 'placing the teaching of economics, now gravely neglected at Oxford, upon a proper basis ....'<sup>2</sup> It assumed that the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge could be reorganised to meet the needs of the whole community without any alterations in curricula or the type of education that was offered.

In the Commons,<sup>3</sup> Fisher had announced that 'if Oxford and

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1. W.E.A. Memorandum p.15.

2. p.18.

3. 5th series Vol. 116 (1919) Col. 1708.

Cambridge desire further financial assistance from the state on a large scale, a comprehensive enquiry into the resources of the universities and colleges and the use made of them will be necessary'. A Royal Commission was duly set up which included Mansbridge and Henderson among its members. The latter, however, resigned and was replaced by William Graham who added a note of reservation to the final report, much in keeping with Tawney's thinking.

The report argued in favour of reducing living costs at Oxford and Cambridge by such means as developing a 'system of bed-sitting rooms',<sup>1</sup> experimenting with 'Colony' lodging houses with meals in common<sup>rooms</sup> and economising on domestic service. On the matter of catering arrangement, the report went some way towards the acceptance of the idea of economies in purchases through 'a uniform system of internal control'.<sup>2</sup> Graham objected that the proposals were not sufficiently radical, for colleges were still 'left free to continue the present system'. He urged the need for a stronger means of making colleges practise economies for it was possible for them to reject the advice of a catering and buying expert who was to be appointed. Tawney was in agreement with his view that there should be either a University Catering Board or an 'expert' with powers to require Colleges to adopt economic methods. If the ultimate object was to reduce costs to enable more working class students to attend the older universities, then these matters were so crucial that powers of compulsion to impose economies ought to be recommended. Also, in order to ensure the economic administration of college estates, Graham proposed the creation of a central university office.

Tawney gave support to Graham's recommendation that parliament ought to pass legislation granting full membership of the

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1. Report of the Royal Commission on Oxford and Cambridge (1922)  
p.45, para. 163.
  2. p. 150.

universities to women on equal terms with men. Graham believed that the report had been too cautious in its recommendations for increased access of women to the universities, especially Cambridge where the struggle was likely to be greatest. The ending of class privilege through the extension of local and state scholarships and the imposition of 'a rigid condition of entrance', the University Entrance Examination, was generally welcomed.

The report led to the Oxford and Cambridge Act of 1923 which put into effect some of the reforms urged by the Labour Party and the W.E.A. The Statutory Commissions helped to restore authority to the central administrative bodies and make available more scholarships for students of limited means. However, after this Act direct governmental interference with the older universities virtually ended. Henceforth relations between the state and the older universities were conducted largely through the University Grants Committee, which had been established in 1919. Tawney's attention was turned away from the older universities and towards the newer universities and the U.G.C.

## 2. The Newer Universities

Before the First World War, Tawney had also begun to consider the future of the newer universities. The vigorous growth of the University of London and the provincial universities and university colleges during the first decade of the twentieth century<sup>1</sup> led to the realisation that some kind of overall state policy for the universities was necessary. Tawney's was no detached interest. In 1909, he

1. Following the creation of the University of London as a teaching university in 1900 there was a rush by several university colleges to gain university charters: Birmingham (1900), Manchester and Liverpool (1903), Leeds (1904), Sheffield (1905) and Bristol (1906). Exeter in 1901 and Southampton in 1902 became university colleges.

had joined the staff of Manchester University and four years later became Director of the Ratan Tata Foundation at the London School of Economics. In 1911, he moved a resolution at the Annual Meeting of the W.E.A., urging the Prime Minister to appoint a commission of enquiry into university education in general, and into the endowments of the older universities in particular. Anticipating the success of his resolution, he had drawn up a memorandum for submission to the President of the Board of Education. This memorandum laid down the guidelines of all Tawney's later thinking on the reform of the newer universities.

The second part of the memorandum<sup>1</sup> dealt with 'the reform of the newer universities and university colleges other than Oxford and Cambridge'. Tawney opposed the idea of separate commissions for the individual universities. The time was ripe 'for the consideration of University education in England as a whole'. However the memorandum laid down no radical guidelines for a commission of enquiry. It made no plea for an increase in the number of universities. As yet the idea of a university in the Potteries was not given serious attention.<sup>2</sup> It was largely concerned with adequate financial provision for existing universities and university colleges.

The functions of universities were two fold, 'to spread knowledge by providing opportunities for advanced study to all whose natural ability and previous education will enable them to profit by it and to increase knowledge by providing ample facilities for research.' This was by no means a demand for university education for all, or even, judging by the emphasis upon 'previous education', for a rapid expansion in the number of university students. The apparently liberal demands for 'freedom of access to all Universities and University

1. The document bears no overall title but was said by Tawney to have 'been drawn up sometime between 1908 and 1911'.  
(Temple House Collection).

2. The early history of the idea is given in the following section.



Colleges (for) talented persons, whatever their social position' was rapidly qualified by the statement 'provided that they satisfy an intellectual test arranged in the best interests of national education'. The fear of a lowering of standards was continually present, even though it was not openly expressed.

The memorandum underlined the growing interest of the working-class in education. The expansion of secondary education, the provision of scholarships by 'co-operators' in aid of secondary and university education, the Working Men's College in London, the educational work of the Co-operative Union and Ruskin College, the Club and Institute Union, the W.E.A., and above all the development of university tutorial classes bore witness to the working class demand. Though religious tests in universities had been abolished, 'a system which excluded a student because his parents' means are small was indistinguishable from one which excluded him because his parents are Roman Catholics or Non Conformists'.<sup>1</sup>

The demand could only be met by the increased provision of scholarships and an increase in the 'financial resources of the newer universities'.<sup>2</sup> The comparative poverty of the newer universities had several extremely unfortunate results. It meant that they found it difficult to meet 'the needs of the new classes of students'. If 'workpeople' were to obtain the benefits of a university education then 'the resources of the newer universities must be sufficient to enable them to supply teachers for the increased number of students'. There was need for 'a generous system of maintenance scholarships' to help provide the necessary staff.

There was need also for an increased income 'to carry on

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1. Ibid. p.2.

2. Ibid. p.5.

properly the work of research' especially in matters 'which vitally concerns the welfare of the whole community'. Tawney demanded that research be undertaken into 'social and economic questions', thus assisting in 'the removal of many of the evils and injustices of our present social system'. The universities would thus take a lead in the work of social reconstruction. Money devoted to research would have a distinctly utilitarian purpose, 'to ensure that new discoveries and inventions are turned to the benefit of the public'. He had in mind the kind of investigations which, as Director of the Ratan Tata Foundation he was to undertake at the London School of Economics.<sup>1</sup>

The third area of suggested additional expenditure was upon 'the extremely low salaries' of lecturers and assistants. Lecturers' salaries were often as little as £150, and were not always counterbalanced by any prospects of promotion to better paid positions. If the nation took 'university education seriously it would pay those engaged in it salaries sufficient to secure them at least as good a livelihood as equally gifted men can obtain in other occupations'.<sup>2</sup>

The increased finance should come from public funds, not from 'private munificence'. A Commission should be set up to examine the method of allocating the Treasury grant, of increasing it and of increasing support from local authorities.<sup>3</sup>

Certain administrative and constitutional proposals were also made. Tawney recommended that 'the Governing bodies of the newer universities be made more representative of all sections of society'. Bristol had set the lead in this direction by including on its Governing body representatives of Labour. Any Commission of Enquiry should thus include in its terms of reference 'an investigation

1. In his inaugural lecture he outlined the proposed plan of social investigation. The problem of poverty was essentially an industrial one and thus his social study would begin with the framework of industrial organisation. (Industrial Lecture October 22nd 1913).

2. Ibid. p.6.

3. Ibid.

of the best methods of so reorganising their Governing bodies so as to secure that representatives of Labour had a seat upon them'.

The memorandum also proposed the creation of a National Universities Council. The functions of the body were advisory, to distribute the national grant to universities and advise on financial needs, to issue reports on matters relating to university education and to facilitate co-operation between schools and universities and between different universities. This body, very much on the lines of the University Grants Committee which was established in 1919, was to consist of 'men eminent in education'.

The war wrought no change in Tawney's attitudes, and once the flurry of royal commissions was over in the early twenties, he gave little attention to university reform. His 'Manchester Guardian' leaders and articles are a useful barometer of his educational interests. Not one in the inter-war period was devoted solely to the future of the universities, and, in general, the universities were only mentioned when he was attacking economies in education or urging increased provision for adult education<sup>1</sup> and the training of teachers. He was more concerned with broadening the base of the educational pyramid. Improved primary schools and the universal provision of secondary education were given priority by Tawney and by the bodies with which he was associated.

In 1924, in 'Education - The Socialist Policy' and 'The British Labour Movement', Tawney demanded increased public assistance to enable the working class child to enter university. Though the number of students in the universities had grown considerably since prewar days, it was 'still lamentably small compared with those in

1. Tawney reflected the emphasis of the W.E.A. His concern was adequate provision for tutorial classes. For example, in 1927, he served on a subcommittee with Moberly, Hutchinson, Lindsay, Miers, Cranage and Mansbridge to consider the relation of University Boards to the C.J.A.C. (W.E.A.- E.C. March 26th 1927).

Scottish Universities'. If the number of students per 1,000 of the population reached the same level in England as in Scotland it would give a student population of 75,000. Even by such a modest standard the existing student population of 30,000 was small.<sup>1</sup> Economic barriers had replaced the former religious barriers to university. The result was that able men were kept out by poverty and 'stupid men (were) admitted by wealth'.<sup>2</sup> Talent was sterilised by lack of opportunity.

The system of university scholarships needed overhauling. It was 'a medley of things very old and very new, national and local, rational and ridiculous'.<sup>3</sup> The Conservative Government had axed the system of state scholarships which had been established in 1920. The system should at once be re-established and extended. Scholarships provided by Local Education Authorities should be increased, and a standard of minimum provision according to the population of an area ought to be introduced. A new and steadily growing clientele was knocking at the doors of the universities and it was the duty of the state and local authorities to ensure that no one was refused admittance because his or her parents were without the means to pay the expenses of a university education.

In addition to the increase in the number and the amount of scholarships, Tawney advocated two further lines of advance to cater for the rising demand for a university education. Firstly, new universities ought to be established. Although he did not develop this idea in his outline of a socialist education policy in 1924, it was likely that, as he was resident tutor in the Potteries for tutorial classes at the time that he drafted the policy statement,

1. 'Education - The Socialist Policy', p.49.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid. p.50

he was thinking of the establishment of one of the universities in the Potteries.<sup>1</sup> Secondly, existing universities ought to be enlarged. Again, he did not examine the implications of his argument although as a member of staff of the London School of Economics since 1920, he had a first hand knowledge of the problems of expansion in terms of accommodation and development of curriculum.<sup>2</sup>

Tawney also helped to draft the Labour Party's outline of educational policy, which was completed in January 1926,<sup>3</sup> and subsequently published under the title 'From Nursery School to University'. Chapter five of the memorandum dealt with the problem of access to university. The hand of Tawney is evident throughout. It brought developments in university education up to date. 'Education - the Socialist Policy' had relied largely on the statistics available for 1921/1922. The 'Outline of Educational Policy' was able to include subsequent advances made under the first Labour Government, especially the revival of the state scholarship system. Yet the basic picture had remained largely unaltered. The university system was still 'a stunted and lopsided growth' in that the proportion of working class children in universities was still small compared with the children of the wealthier classes. The method of granting university scholarship was still regarded as 'a medley of things very old and very new, national and local, rational and sometimes, perhaps, the reverse'.<sup>4</sup> The variation in the number and amount of scholarships given by local authorities was given particular attention.

The memorandum laid down the general lines of advance.

The age of entry to universities should normally be eighteen or later.

1. See p.488 of the following section.
2. Tawney joined the part-time staff of the L.S.E. a year after his brother-in-law, William Beveridge became its director. He took part in the discussions about the development of the social science courses. (Holmes-Laski Papers Vol. II p. 889)
3. L.P. - A.C.E. Memorandum No.133
4. Chapter V (The pages are unnumbered).

A standard of attainment roughly equivalent to the Intermediate Examination for a degree should be expected of candidates before entry. Conversely, the successful conclusion of a secondary school course, as evidenced by the passing of the Second School Examination, the Intermediate Examination, or its equivalent should be evidence of suitability for full time university work. The examination system would, however, need to be modified and given a broader base to provide a suitable guide for entry. As a general principle a free place should be granted to all who reach such a standard and wish to proceed to university.

To compensate for the inadequacies of existing secondary schools, supplementary awards should be given to candidates who show high ability. Only 698 of the 1481 secondary schools entered pupils for the Second School Examination, and thus many pupils for organisational reasons were deprived of opportunities to qualify for entrance to university. The memorandum found certain merits in attaching scholarships to individual schools to overcome the problem. In addition, as an immediate objective, local authorities should be required to offer at least one free place at a university for every fifty secondary school places.

However, the provision of a free place without maintenance did not make the universities accessible to the majority of able working class children. All scholarships to universities should carry with them not only a free place but the necessary maintenance to cover all expenses. The local authorities should be compelled to investigate individual cases of hardship and to provide grants according to at least 'the minimum requirements of a national scheme'. The state should also increase its provision of state scholarships. Thus the ultimate objective of 'a system where university fees would be abolished' was largely realised. The future problem was to

make sufficient provision for the demand for university education as the secondary school system expanded.

In keeping with Tawney's earlier statement, the memorandum demanded that, 'Every region should have its own university but in order to economise univerities should be encouraged to develop a predominant bias which may be expected to vary with local opportunities for study and research'. This proposal anticipated Lindsay's scheme for a university of North Staffordshire, which gained Tawney's fullest support, but in the interwar period only one new university, the University of Reading, was created.

The memorandum also demanded that the title 'scholar' or 'exhibitioner' should not carry money grants, that women be admitted to universities on the same terms as men, that adult education should be extended and that the U.G.C. should be more closely related to the Board of Education so that the latter could champion more effectively the university cause in the House of Commons and make the demands for increased expenditure on universities more widely known.

Tawney also served on the Universities Sub Committee of the Labour Party's Advisory Committee on Education in the period from July 1926 to October 1927.<sup>1</sup> The subcommittee drew up various isolated memoranda which were summarised in a memorandum entitled 'Discussions and Recommendations of the University Sub Committee<sup>1a</sup>'. The memorandum took up the point of the earlier statement on educational policy, concerning regional specialisation. It argued that the distinction between cultural and vocational was 'imaginary' and that the trend of modern university colleges to specialise along certain lines which

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1. On March 15th 1926 Tawney was also elected to a subcommittee which included Drake and Lachord. This subcommittee examined a memorandum submitted by Professor Levy

1a. L.P. - A.C.E. Mem. 175.

met the needs of their regions was not necessarily a 'deplorable economy'.<sup>1</sup> Such a matter, however, was less urgent than the adequate provision of scholarships for those who had passed the necessary examinations qualifying for entrance to a University.

A preceding memorandum<sup>2</sup> urged that 'the standard of entry to universities should be higher than at present existing' but that any candidate who had reached the standard should be entitled to free tuition and maintenance. The final memorandum of November 1927 endorsed this view. On such matters as the standardisation of degrees and the value of lectures 'as the chief instrument of university education' the memorandum was naturally more cautious. However it agreed with the lines of argument of earlier memoranda<sup>3</sup> that standardisation was desirable provided that it did not limit the scope of university teaching and that there was a danger in over lecturing.

The Labour Party under pressure from Tawney, Ellis and others had long urged that a university education was essential to all intending teachers.<sup>4</sup> The November memorandum underlined the merits of a graduate teaching profession but came down heavily against 'the present system of combining academic and professional work'.<sup>5</sup> All professional training should be postgraduate and 'of one or two years duration according to the future sphere of activities of the intending teacher'.<sup>6</sup> The post graduate training of teachers was however but one of the post graduate activities of a university. In Memorandum 152, the subcommittee argued in favour of a guaranteed 'supply of highly trained individuals for work in science and industry' and the provision of a highly specialised training in technique for those who

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1. Ibid. p.3.

2. L.P. - A.C.E. Mem. 134.

3. L.P. - A.C.E. Mem. 162.

4. See p.p. 392-401

5. L.P. - A.C.E. Mem. 175 (November 1927) p.4.

6. Ibid. p.5.



undertake the higher administrative work of government departments. To attract the right kind of staff to provide such post graduate courses there should be a great increase in the scaled salaries of university staff.<sup>1</sup>

During the late twenties and thirties, Tawney had nothing further to say on the development of the universities even though the number of full-time students at universities showed no marked increase.<sup>2</sup> Restrictions on expenditure during the depression had scarcely been lifted before Britain found itself in the shadow of war. His period as Adviser on Social and Politico-Economic Affairs at the British Embassy, Washington, during the Second World War convinced him of the need for a further expansion of the newer universities to end the hold which the older universities had upon the staffing of our overseas embassies.<sup>3</sup> Shortly after his return in 1942, he joined the University Grants Committee and the Council for Educational Advance pressed for increased expenditure on the universities. The vagueness of the provisions in Butler's Education Bill for increased access to Universities was discussed within the C.E.A., but apart from the general demand for additional expenditure, little was done to put pressure on the Minister to make the provisions more effective. It was on the University Grants Committee that Tawney found the greatest opportunity to encourage university expansion, especially in the founding of a university in North Staffordshire.

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1. L.P. - A.C.E. Mem. 155.

2. In the year 1935-36 the number of full time students was 50,529. In the year 1938-1939 there was actually a small decrease to 50,002 (U.G.C. Report 1935-1947, p.13).

3. Tawney to Creech-Jones September 25th 1942.

3. Keele

In February 1948, when the scheme for 'a new University College in North Staffordshire' received Treasury approval, Miss Gladys Malbon, who had played an important part in the negotiations,<sup>1</sup> wrote to Horwood,<sup>2</sup> an equally important figure

'I hope, Vicar we can find some way of showing our gratitude to Tawney and Cartwright. I don't forget it was they, and particularly Tawney, who first started us on this road and I do think we should show we recognise this'.<sup>3</sup>

Eight years later as a tribute to the part which Tawney played in founding the University of Keele and to commemorate his contribution to the development of adult education in North Staffordshire, he was invited to open the 'R.H. Tawney Building' at Keele. However despite the tributes no full analysis has yet appeared<sup>4</sup> of his part in bringing to fruition a plan which was suggested in the early nineteenth century, and which was voiced seriously for the first time whilst he was at Rugby and Balliol.

1. Miss Malbon came to the Potteries as a full-time tutor in 1939 on the staff of the Oxford Tutorial Classes Committee and to assist with the work of the W.E.A. I am very grateful to Miss Malbon, now Mrs. Harris, for her account of the events leading to the founding of Keele, based on her own recollections and a diary which she kept at the time.
2. The Reverend Thomas Horwood, was leader of the Stoke-on-Trent City Council at the time when Tawney, in 1945, suggested that the time was opportune for raising the matter of a university for N. Staffs.
3. Malbon to Horwood 12th February 1948.
4. Of the general accounts concerning the negotiations which led to the founding of Keele, the following are the most valuable. I am grateful to the authors of the first two works cited for their advice in compiling this section of my thesis. Lady D. Scott, 'A.D. Lindsay: A Biography' (Oxford 1971). Sir James Mountford, 'Keele: An Historical Critique' (Routledge 1972).  
R.A. Lowe 'The Development of Adult Education in the Potteries with Special Reference to the Founding of a University in the Area'. Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Keele 1966.  
R.A. Lowe, 'Determinants of a University's Curriculum'.  
British Journ. of Educational Studies Vol. XVII.No.1. Feb. 1969.  
For the following account, I also owe a debt to Mr. J. Bosworth, who worked as research assistant to Sir James Mountford and who had the opportunity of studying the U.G.C. records for the period and to Mr. Harry Taylor who was Town Clerk in Stoke-on-Trent during the period of negotiations.

As early as 1814, there had been a suggestion for a 'new university .... in the County of Stafford'<sup>1</sup> but it was not until the 1890's that the idea received serious attention. In 1899, the year that Tawney left Rugby for Balliol, Turner, Director of Technical Instruction to the Staffordshire County Council, urged further provision for higher education in the region.<sup>2</sup> However, it was not until Tawney began his tutorial class work in the Potteries from 1908 onwards that he became involved in the movement. At first, it was not a specific commitment. His writings and speeches before the First World War<sup>3</sup> were concerned with the more general issues of the 'democratisation of higher education' and the creation of a university system which was a centre for moral revival. As yet he was more interested in the reform of the old than the creation of the new. Although it is likely that he discussed plans for a university in N. Staffordshire, he was a pragmatist concerned more with the extension of existing facilities for adult education. In 1911, a letter from Cartwright to Jenkins which mentioned the possibility of creating a University College of Stoke on Trent, indicated that Tawney's chief interest was 'in having a regular paid organiser' for adult education, 'whole time if possible, part time to start with if not'.<sup>4</sup>

In 1919, Tawney returned to the theme of 'the wider diffusion of higher education in order .... (not) to make people better machines but to make them better men' in a talk given at Tunstall and reported in the 'Staffordshire Sentinel'.<sup>5</sup> His period as

1. C. Kelsall 'Phantasm of an University' London 1814 p.170
2. The early history of the idea is given in Lowe's thesis p.213-244 and in Mountford's book p.25-36.
3. In neither his 'Commonplace Book' nor 'An Experiment in Democratic Education' (Radical Tradition p.70-81) did he refer to any universities other than Oxford and Cambridge.
4. Letter from Stuart Cartwright to Harry Jenkins 20th May 1911 (Bewley House Papers).
5. Staffordshire Sentinel 23rd June, 1919.

resident tutor in North Staffordshire for the Oxford Joint Tutorial Classes Committee<sup>1</sup> led him to consider more deeply the arguments for a university in the area. However the opportune moment had not yet arrived for raising the matter in official circles, but progress of another kind was being made. Many of those who were later to lead the cause were clarifying their thinking under Tawney's guidance. In his tutorial classes in the early twenties were people such as Miss F.A. Farmer, who was to be first Lady Mayor of Stoke, and Mr. Harry Taylor, who was to play an important part in later negotiations as Town Clerk of Stoke-on-Trent. The latter has explained how 'as a young man back from service in the navy' he attended a class run by Tawney.<sup>2</sup> 'I remember that Tawney appeared in old khaki trousers, shirt, collar and black tie and I think appealed to us for his familiar type of mess as an ex-service man. His audience was very receptive and he made his subject live. He was my inspiration to devote my career to Local Government'. Though Tawney, Lindsay and others kept the demand for a university alive and were influencing the views of the next generation of local government officials, no definite advances were made until 1945. However, it should be noted that in the thirties, Tawney was 'preaching the doctrine that provincial universities ought to develop their own specialities instead of hopelessly trying a general imitation of Oxbridge'.<sup>3</sup> In this, he foreshadowed much of the thinking of the Exploratory Committee which began the negotiations for the creation of Keele.

Discussions about the future of the universities began

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1. From 1919 to 1923.
  2. Letter from Harry Taylor to the author 25th April 1974.
  3. From an article on W.G. Hoskins by Geoffrey Moorhouse 'The Guardian' 10th July 1968.

long before the Second World War was over.<sup>1</sup> Tawney gave publicity to the debate in the 'Manchester Guardian'. In 1944, in a review of Ernest Simon's book 'The Development of British Universities',<sup>2</sup> he argued that 'no talent must miss the highest education of which it is capable .... numbers must be increased and more money must be found'. In January 1945,<sup>3</sup> when the University Grants Committee, of which he had been a member since December 1943,<sup>4</sup> was about to submit its report to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he urged the nation to take the international lead in devising an audacious and determined plan for university expansion. However in neither of these articles, nor in that of June 27th 1945, did he mention the need for a university in North Staffordshire. The demand, he believed should come from the locality not from the leading articles of the national press.

Tawney set about restimulating favourable opinion in the Potteries. Miss Malbon, now Mrs. Harris, has recalled his initiative. 'It was R.H. Tawney who first raised the suggestion of a University College in N. Staffs. in 1945 (may even have been a little before). He did it through Ald. Arthur Hollins, Secretary of the Pottery Workers' Society and President of the N. Staffs. W.E.A. (who was elderly and did not pursue the idea) and E.S. Cartwright who did.'<sup>5</sup> The minutes of the North Staffordshire W.E.A. state that 'A letter from Tawney was read in which he raised the question of a University College in Stoke-on-Trent. It was resolved that the Secretary and the Chairman should make further enquiries'. Tawney, Cartwright and Gladys Malbon gained the support of Horwood, Harry Taylor, the Town

1. The lines of the discussion which took place during the war are given in Lowe's M.A. Thesis, Chapter IX 'The Renewal of the Demand For a University, 1945-46'.
2. M.G. March 14th 1944, 'The Universities'.
3. M.G. January 9th 1945.
4. In 1943, the practice of excluding from the committee's membership men and women who were engaged in university teaching was ended. This enabled Tawney to become a member for the next quinquennium.
5. Letter to the author dated 13th May 1974.

Clerk of Stoke, J.F. Carr, the Director of Education for Stoke-on-Trent, and of Dr. Stross, M.P. for Hanley. Lindsay readily gave his assistance. Thus in these early months when the campaign for establishing a university was getting on its feet, Tawney was very much in the forefront. His role is best summarised in a letter from Stross to Malbon. 'If you told the truth you would say that Alderman Horwood led the way, inspired and stimulated by Alderman B. Stross M.P., who was inspired and stimulated by Miss Gladys Malbon who was inspired and stimulated by R.H. Tawney'.<sup>1</sup> Miss Malbon rightly added, 'E.S. Cartwright .... should come between Tawney and myself'.

Thereafter, however Tawney did not play such a prominent part. He was never a member of the Stoke Exploratory Committee which formulated the proposals to put before the U.G.C., nor, as a member of the latter body could he have been. He was not involved in the preparation of documents dealing with academic policy or details of curriculum. 'He was more of a father figure and elder statesman with a close local knowledge of the area',<sup>2</sup> and a principal voice on the U.G.C. in favour of letting 'Stoke have a go'.<sup>3</sup> The U.G.C. records for the period show him 'generally sympathetic to the idea of founding a new college in North Staffordshire but not closely involved in the detailed planning'.<sup>4</sup>

The U.G.C. Report for the period 1935 to 1947 states, 'In the early part of 1946, we were approached by a group of persons

1. Quoted by Lady Scott p.314.
2. Harry Taylor to author 25th April 1974.
3. The words used by Sir Peter Noble, a member of the U.G.C.
4. J. Bosworth to author 15th May 1974. Mr. Bosworth was fortunate enough to receive permission to consult the U.G.C. records whilst assisting Sir James Mountford in the preparation of his book on Keele.

representing educational and other interests in North Staffordshire, who inquired whether financial support might be made available in respect of the establishment of a new University College at Stoke-on-Trent'.<sup>1</sup> The first meeting took place on 27th March 1946. Sir Walter Moberly, Chairman of the U.G.C., H.A. De Montmorency, its Secretary, and Tawney met the Stoke representatives, Carr, Miss Malbon, Stross and Ellis Smith.<sup>2</sup> Miss Malbon suggested in a memorandum, that the University College should restrict its curriculum, probably to the study of ceramics in co-operation with local industries, and the subjects taught in the Tutorial Classes - history, sociology and economics. Moberly was favourable but pointed out that a lot would depend on how much money could be raised locally.

Tawney's attitude was clear. The opportunity to establish the University College must not be allowed to slip by. He was thus flexible about the means by which it could be accomplished. Miss Malbon had not taken to the idea of establishing a University College 'very quickly, being rather concerned about the prospect of promoting more external London degrees'.<sup>3</sup> There was obviously a strong feeling amongst the members of the Stoke Exploratory Committee that the new institution should award its own degrees. Tawney had doubts. Miss Malbon recalls these doubts. 'At one point only did he doubt our ways - whether we had any chance of getting the sponsoring universities and it might be better to temporarily seek an ordinary External London University degree'.<sup>4</sup> Sir Walter Moberly also argued the advantages of some arrangement whereby London University might accept the proposed courses and give a degree'.<sup>5</sup> It is, however, an

1. 'University Development from 1935 to 1947' p.10.
2. For some unexplained reason, Lindsay was not present.
3. G. Harris to Author, 4th May 1974.
4. Ibid.
5. Minutes of the meeting with representatives of the U.G.C. 19th November 1946 (Keele University Records).

exaggeration to argue that Tawney 'never grasped the point that the new institution must award its own degrees if it was to be free to evolve a liberalising curriculum'.<sup>1</sup> Though the idea of awarding an external London degree was heresy to the people of Stoke, it was a concession which Tawney was willing to contemplate temporarily to get the scheme started.

On another occasion, Tawney was willing to embrace an idea which many considered 'wild'.<sup>2</sup> On June 2nd 1946, Tawney argued in favour of the new University College somehow growing out of the Stoke Technical College. It was an idea which was supported by the Staffordshire Sentinel as the only 'reasonable prospect', and which was to be voiced by the Report of the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee in December 1946. However Miss Malbon persuaded Tawney to give up the idea at the June meeting.

Though Tawney favoured the social science proposals,<sup>3</sup> he did not involve himself in the new philosophy of university education or in the construction of a new curriculum. The final scheme for Keele, as recent studies have shown,<sup>4</sup> was the outcome of much 'give and take and of many modifications of early ideas'.<sup>5</sup> Tawney took no major official part in the discussions on curriculum or sponsorship. His main interest was to give support in the U.G.C. to the proposals which the Exploratory Committee put forward.

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1. Mountford to author 4th May 1974.
  2. This term is used by Mountford in the above letter.
  3. Tawney as a member of the U.G.C. Sub-Committee on Social Sciences was greatly interested in the development and extension teaching in the social sciences. Lady Scott has underlined his interest in this part of the Keele plan (p.321) 'R.H. Tawney liked the social studies proposals; he pointed out that nowhere except at the London School of Economics could a degree be taken in Social Science'.
  4. Scott Op. Cit; Lowe Op. Cit; Mountford Op. Cit;
  5. Letter from Mountford to author 4th May 1974.



Though it is likely that the Exploratory Committee sought and received Tawney's advice on many topics during the protracted period of negotiations, little evidence of this has survived after June 1946.<sup>1</sup> It is probable after that date that his main contribution to discussions was within the U.G.C. The Stoke delegation consisting of Lindsay, Dr. Stross, Kemp, Miss Malbon and Carr met Moberly, Tawney and four other U.G.C. representatives on 28th July 1946. Miss Malbon with Carr's collaboration, produced a memorandum which suggested the appointment of a Principal in 1947 and the opening of the College in 1948. These proposals were very much in line with Tawney's view of the need for urgency in establishing the new University College. On the matter of the principalship, it is doubtful whether he had any definite views 'on the right person for the job'. When Lindsay, Master of Balliol College and a close friend of Tawney, accepted the principalship in September 1947, Tawney was delighted. In 1946, however, there were more immediate problems to be considered. These centred upon the size of the proposed new university college, facilities for teacher training and the question of sponsorship. A meeting between the Stoke deputation and representatives of the U.G.C. in November 1946 produced a sympathetic response from the latter on some of these issues.

There was much in the document which Lindsay, Fulton, Carr and Miss Malbon had drawn up for the November meeting<sup>2</sup> which was

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1. The only evidence is that of Mrs. Harris who has acknowledged that 'Tawney's willingness to contribute and to help was a great strength - one was drawing on a vast experience and a great independence and gaining all the time in respect for his view and a confidence in one's own because he respected what seemed to him genuine and sensible thought - though (was) impatient of what was woolly or impractical!'. (Letter from Mrs. Harris to the author June 13th 1974).
  2. Memorandum to the U.G.C. on the proposal for a University in North Staffordshire 11th December 1946.

likely to meet with Tawney's approval. The new institution was intended to provide a centre for all higher and adult education in the area. The experimental nature of the intended courses and the central position given to the social sciences was regarded as a major argument for the creation of a new university. On neither of these points did Tawney make any reservations, though he recognised that modifications to the courses were needed to attract students who intended to enter the teaching profession. Though the memorandum pressed the need for the university to grant its own degree, Tawney was not as firm in his support of this demand as were the members of the Stoke delegation. However, he shared the general belief of the delegation that whatever arrangements were made in regard to either the degree or the recruitment for the teaching profession there would be no lowering of standards. When Innes, for the U.G.C., objected that this could result from making provision for adult students, Tawney shared Lindsay's view that this was contrary to the experience of those tutors involved in university tutorial classes. The region had been noted for the high standard of 'many tutorial class students who had never been to a University at all'.

The full University Grants Committee examined the proposals on 3rd December 1946. Moberly was in the chair and with Tawney's support he steered through the Committee a resolution which expressed a favourable attitude to the scheme.

'The Committee would consider sympathetically an application for financial assistance in respect of a new University College in North Staffordshire provided that the basis of studies in Science and Arts be adequately broadened. If the scheme is to include the conferment of degrees by the College, the Committee will wish to be satisfied that adequate arrangements have been made for sponsorship by a university or universities and that the proposal can be brought

into line with university policy for the country as a whole'.<sup>1</sup> Tawney played no recorded part in the discussions over sponsorship and the broadening of the curriculum.

In 1947 Tawney's support on the U.G.C. for the scheme was more vital than ever for it was a year of many disappointments. The Vice Chancellor's Committee was hostile to the Stoke plan, believing that existing universities could cater for the expansion of the student population, and that the proposals for a new university were more appropriate for a new kind of Technical College.<sup>2</sup> Problems had also arisen over the principalship when J.S. Fulton declined the post on the grounds that he had already decided to accept the post of Principal at the University College of Swansea. Sponsorship also raised further and more difficult problems.<sup>3</sup> Lindsay hoped that the U.G.C. would take a lead in the solution of the former and latter problems,<sup>4</sup> and thus Tawney's position on the U.G.C. took on a greater importance.

In January 1948, an informal discussion took place between three U.G.C. representatives, Moberly, Tawney and the Principal of Ruskin College, and a strong Stoke delegation. Moberly was somewhat pessimistic about the future of the new institution because of the sponsorship problems and the opposition of the Vice Chancellors.<sup>5</sup> Lindsay pointed out that the national policy for universities was a matter for the U.G.C. not for the Vice Chancellors and it must therefore take the lead. For a while Tawney listened to the arguments put forward by Lindsay concerning the broadened curriculum and the

1. This resolution was conveyed to Harry Taylor by Montmorency, the U.G.C. Secretary on 6th December 1946. The above is an extract from the letter.
2. Mountford Op.Cit. p.58.
3. The details of these complex problems and discussions to resolve them are given in Lowe Chapter X, Negotiations and Modifications 1946-1950, and Mountford Chapter III 'The Founding of a College'.
4. Lowe, Op.Cit. p.293.
5. Minutes of a meeting with the representatives of the U.G.C. 5th January 1948.

availability of a building, Keele Hall, to start the project. After Lindsay's powerful and emotional speech, Tawney asked a question which enabled many who were present to express their support. Knowing what the answer would be, he asked the Stoke Committee if it would be willing to postpone the proposals for five years until university policy in general had been decided.<sup>1</sup> A resounding 'no' came from the deputation which caused Moberly to be more hopeful about future prospects. It was a tense emotional moment, possibly one which was crucial to the future success of the scheme for a new university.

At the U.G.C. meeting in February 1948, Moberly expressed the view that the experiment ought to be allowed to proceed. Tawney had good reason to be delighted with the obvious warmth which the chairman now showed to the Stoke proposals. All but one of the Committee members agreed to a resolution for the establishment of a new University College in North Staffordshire with the power of granting a B.A.<sup>2</sup> Cripps, the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave the proposal his blessing on February 12th. The main barrier had been removed though the questions of sponsorship and a Charter had yet to be dealt with. In December 1948 Tawney resigned from the U.G.C. The following year, at the age of sixty-nine he left the London School of Economics to begin a period of retirement which lasted until 1962.

During his retirement, Tawney kept a close contact with the university which he had helped to create. He visited Keele several times. In 1956, he opened the buildings which had been named after him. In 1960 he delivered a speech there at the age of eighty.<sup>3</sup>

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1. Lowe has taken Tawney's question to suggest that Tawney was 'equivocal'. However for Tawney, who had always urged the need to take action whilst the time was opportune, the question was rhetorical. It was a question which enabled the Stoke deputation to demonstrate their overwhelming support for Lindsay.
  2. Mountford Op.Cit. p.65.
  3. This speech is to be found amongst his private papers at the London School of Economics.

In 1961,<sup>1</sup> at the age of eighty-one, he was still complaining of 'a rush of work' which had prevented him from replying to a letter from Mrs. Lindsay. Recalling his first two visits to Keele shortly after its opening, he wrote, 'My first two visits to Keele made me feel that with you and (your husband) at the helm the new educational venture in which I was keenly interested could not fail to be a success'.<sup>2</sup> Modesty prevented Tawney from mentioning the important part which he had played.

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1. Tawney to Mrs. Lindsay, January 31st 1961.

2. Ibid. p.2.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

'TAWNEY'S HALF-CENTURY'

As a tribute to Tawney's pioneering work in economic history the years from 1540 to 1640 have been called 'Tawney's century'. With equal justice, the last fifty years of English education could be termed 'Tawney's half-century' for few, even Presidents of the Board of Education, exercised such an important and prolonged influence over the broad range of educational developments since the nineteenth century. To many of those who attended Tawney's eightieth birthday celebrations in the House of Commons in 1960, this would not have appeared an exaggerated claim. At the time, Lady Simon recognised that any survey of his achievements in education 'could very well turn out to be a history of the last fifty years of education'.<sup>1</sup> However, this was an insight confined largely to his close friends for the evidence of his broad educational influence lay in official documents then closed to public inspection, in unlisted and unsigned newspaper articles, in obscure memoranda and minute books, in long-forgotten pamphlets and in the untidy piles of his papers at the London School of Economics. This study has done little more than to gather this evidence in order to make plain the extent of his educational influence, the means by which he exerted political pressure over a long period to achieve educational reform, and the underlying consistency of his educational thinking.

Histories of education, which cover the last half century, link Tawney with advances in adult and adolescent education without recognising the full extent or duration of his influence over reform within these and other areas. Shortly after leaving Balliol, he became involved in the campaign for the reform of the older universities which merged into the movement for establishing university tutorial classes and later developed into a concern for the expansion of the newer universities and an increase in their number. Also during the

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1. Letter from Lady Simon to Creech-Jones 14th May 1959.

Edwardian era he became interested in the reform of adolescent education. This interest led not only to his best known work in education 'Secondary Education For All', but also to a host of lesser known pamphlets, memoranda and articles over a period which spanned two world wars. It reached a climax with the deputations which he led to Butler between 1942 and 1945. In the interwar years, under the influence of people such as Margaret McMillan and G.S.M. Ellis, and on such committees as Labour's Advisory Committee on Education, education committees of the W.E.A. and the Consultative Committee, he was fostering the cause of nursery and primary education, demanding adequate medical services, and urging the need for special provision for handicapped children. Whilst many reformers had a greater impact upon educational developments within each of these areas, none could claim to have assisted the educational advance over such a wide area and in so many influential places.

Even such a brief summary of the range of Tawney's educational interests raises certain questions about his political methods and his educational thinking. He appears to be radical in his social theory yet conservative in his approach to reform. He seems to assert the claims of the individual and yet in his theory of social responsibility exaggerate the claims of society. The former paradox is more easily resolved than the latter.

To people on both the Left and Right it has often been a matter of surprise that Tawney combined patient and prolonged political campaigning with a radical socialist philosophy, which demanded the entire reorganisation of the nation's economic and social life. Writing in 1952<sup>1</sup> when most of his educational campaigns were over, he explained that he had never shared 'Marx's mid Victorian conviction of the inevitability of progress', nor did he regard 'social development

1. 'British Socialism Today' The Socialist Commentary June 1952.



as an automatically ascending spiral with Socialism as its climax. On the contrary, .... in the absence of sustained and strenuous efforts, the way is as likely to lead down hill as up .... Socialism, if achieved will be the creation, not of any mystical historical necessities, but of the energy of human minds and wills'. It was a view which he had expressed forty years earlier in his *Commonplace Book* when he had combined his attack on revolutionary Marxism with a denunciation of the more moderate political strategies of the Fabians and Labour Party. The First World War led to a change of attitude about the latter and he became a master of the arts of 'permeation' within the Labour Party and without. He believed that the acceptance of the social and educational goals which he advocated would come only through an 'inner conversion'. Such a process would take a long time because English people still had 'a sneaking respect for wealth and privilege'. They still went to the 'ballot-box touching (their) hats'.<sup>1</sup> Even many of the so-called social reformers were 'intellectually enslaved to the very principles and order of ideas they (were) struggling to overthrow'.<sup>2</sup> Yet few of Tawney's writings on education were aimed at the masses whose cause he championed. Though he claimed to be 'an unrepentant Dubbite' in 'the interminable case of *Dubb v. Superior Persons and Co.*,' he was himself a Superior Person and addressed his writings exclusively to Superior Persons. Not one of his newspaper articles was to be found in the newspapers read by Henry Dubb. He did little to bring about the inner conversion of the mass of the people in over fifty years of campaigning. As Lady Simon has remarked, 'Committee work was not his best milieu'; that was informal discussion with Ministers, civil servants and members of committees'.<sup>3</sup> The

1. 'The Realities of Democracy' Presidential Address.
2. 'Fragment on Education' Public Lecture in Chicago 1939.
3. (R.H. Tawney' *The Universities Quarterly* March 1972.

way to change in education lay in persuading the governing classes of its value. This was a more realistic aim than that of converting the masses, yet it left Tawney with a dilemma. If change came it would not be the result of the universal inner conversion which he considered a precondition for it. If Tawney had such an influence over educational progress it was because he shared the 'effortless superiority' which came from a public school education and which gave him access to privileged circles.

That which sustained Tawney's educational activities over two generations was a concept of equality, which owed much to his own education. The key to his life as a thinker and teacher, as A.V. Judges rightly maintains, "must be the element of consistency everywhere evident in what he said about the true life and ends of man in society. It was a creed most fully stated in 'Equality' (1931) and in the lectures and pamphlets about educational planning published at intervals over many years".<sup>1</sup> The true end was neither parity of incomes nor equality of opportunity to enable the able few to rise but 'equality of esteem' as the basis for a 'socialism of fellowship'.

Equality was not to be measured simply in terms of equality of incomes or material goods. Tawney, who spent most of his life in a squalor which alarmed and amazed his friends, had little respect for those 'who scrutinised farthings through microscopes'. The Labour Party, he believed, had an obsession with material trappings. A few years before his death, he urged the Labour Party to consider closely the true ends of political action or it would be 'unable to produce' an effective fighting programme behind which people can rally' or to understand the importance of educational reform.<sup>2</sup> 'The effect,'

1. A.V. Judges. 'R.H. Tawney' Universities Quarterly March 1962.
2. Tawney to Creech-Jones, September 11th 1954. Also undated speech of the fifties to the 'British Socialist Movement'.

he concluded, 'may be both to postpone the return of a Labour Government and to weaken it when it arrives'. Yet he knew many within the Labour Movement were not in sympathy with a concept of equality which gave a low priority to parity of incomes and a high priority to 'the eradication of contrasts between the civilisation of different classes'. He asked Rita Hinden, a close friend, 'What are these Labour chaps up to?'<sup>1</sup> and considered using the occasion of his eightieth birthday celebrations to outline once again the central thesis of 'Equality'.<sup>2</sup> The party had neglected a consideration of broad political principles and long term schemes of gradual reform, a criticism<sup>3</sup> which has been reiterated recently.

Tawney also rejected the definition of equality as the equalisation of opportunities to rise. In 1952,<sup>4</sup> he restated the view which he had first expressed thirty years earlier in an unpublished memorandum which accompanied 'Secondary Education For All', that his concern was not vertical mobility. 'The opportunities which it is desired to equalise', he argued, 'may be opportunities to rise; to get on; to exchange one position for a succession of others; to climb, in the conventional metaphor, the educational or economic ladder. Or they may be opportunities to lead a good life, in all senses of the term whether one 'rises' or not'. Whereas the aim of the former was the establishment of conditions which offered the maximum scope for individual self-advancement, the emphasis of the latter was upon solidarity. The society sought by it is 'one in which, while individuals are free to follow the best of their talents or tastes, the impulse to seek a new position is not sharpened by exasperation at unnecessary disabilities attaching to that already held and in which the majority of

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1. Rita Hinden to Creech-Jones 21st July 1960.
  2. Tawney revised 'Equality' in 1952 and added a new chapter.
  3. R. Barker 'The Educational Policies of the Labour Party 1900-1961', Ph.D. thesis 1968.
  4. 'British Socialism Today' The Radical Tradition p.178.

men are happy to continue in familiar surroundings because they enjoy in them, not only economic security but the dignity, the social contacts and, if they wish, the intellectual interests and culture which human nature demands.'

Tawney's concept of equality of esteem was based upon a belief in the equal worth of all people. Every one was entitled to make the best use of such powers as they possessed.<sup>1</sup> Hitherto, society had been so organised that the majority of people, including children, were denied this opportunity and had been treated as 'tools' in the service of a capitalist economy. Equality, then, implied not parity of incomes for in the realisation of individual capacities not all had the same financial needs, but equality of access to the means by which differences of individual personality could be fostered and expressed. Thus equality implied not identity or uniformity but diversity.<sup>2</sup> It was in this light that Tawney viewed the Education Act of 1944. In one of his last articles on education in 'The Manchester Guardian'<sup>3</sup> he urged the nation 'to renew its strength to grapple with the duties imposed on it (by the Education Act) by lifting its eyes to the horizons disclosed by those masters of an earlier age, whose view of the role of education in national life was widest and most profound.' Matthew Arnold had revealed the goal, 'the humanising, the bringing into one harmonious and truly humane life, of the whole of English society'.

1. Tawney did not regard the violent criminal as of equal worth and did not suggest that anti-social activities should be allowed to flourish.
2. Since this paragraph was written A.L. Rowse has made the claim that Tawney's 'ideas have done more harm than good' (Sunday Telegraph August 25th 1974). He cited as his reasons the alleged results of a concept of equality which Tawney did not hold. 'The emphasis on equality has been bad (a) for work - in undermining the incentive to work; (b) for character - in disseminating slackness and releasing envy throughout society and (c) for culture in every respect'.
3. M.G. January 16th 1951 'Arnold and Education'.

Culture was not 'an addition or background' but the medium in which the development of the individual took place.

Tawney was not simply a latter-day Arnold. The strength of his concept of equality lay in the historically informed social and economic analysis upon which it was based, and the comprehensive nature of the recommendations for the total reorganisation of the nation's industrial and social life, which far surpassed anything which Arnold suggested. Inspired largely by his tutorial class experience and early social investigations, he realised the impossibility of creating an effective common culture when adults worked long hours and youth provided a constant source of cheap labour. Advances in education could not be separated from reforms in the economic life of the nation.

Tawney was never open to the criticism which was levelled at Nunn<sup>1</sup> that he leant too far in the direction of individualism and ignored the social functions of education. His educational theory was largely the result of his early involvement in an educational movement which had distinct social objectives. He constantly emphasised that 'educational theory is and always will be social theory' and expressed a contempt for books on education which dealt with 'an abstract or shapeless individualism'. He shared with Dewey a belief in the need in a democratic society for 'a type of education which gives individuals a personal interest in social relationships and control, and the habits of mind which secure social changes without introducing disorder'.<sup>2</sup> His theory of personal value and of the development of personality did not imply the denial of external educational objectives. He always maintained that the development of individual personality was a necessary precondition for the creation

1. e.g. Professor Campagnac 'Society and Solitude' and Fred Clarke 'Essays in Politics'.
2. 'Democracy and Education' p.115.

of an alert, socialist citizenship.

In outlook, Tawney was closer to Nunn's successor at the London Institute of Education, Fred Clarke, than he was to Nunn. In 1944, Clarke was working on a prospectus for a History of Western Education and sent Tawney a copy of the draft scheme. In a letter to Clarke,<sup>1</sup> Tawney commented on the excellence of the prospectus and added, "I am very much in agreement with the treatment of education as 'a Function of Community', or rather - since not all societies can be called communities - of society". He went on to emphasise the importance of 'starting from a basis of social history and building education upon it'. Highly generalised discussions of 'freedom' and 'individualism' in education without reference to the social and economic context should be studiously avoided. To Clarke, who, four years earlier in 'Education and Social Change', had pointed out the folly of those in 'advanced' circles of English education who pursued the cult of 'Freedom' and 'swallowed whole the great mass of the facts of social determination',<sup>2</sup> Tawney's words needed little reiteration. The underlying social and economic attitudes which educational institutions reflected was a vital and proper study for the educationalist. 'Books on education, as such, belong to a type of literature which, I am sorry to say, I can not read', Tawney told a W.E.A. audience on the last occasion on which he addressed the movement.<sup>3</sup>

Thus for fifty years Tawney concerned himself with the lines of re-adaptation of the whole structure of education. On occasions, the reforms which he suggested appeared so conservative that he was

1. Tawney to Clarke, 10th July 1944.
2. 'Education and Social Change', p.8.
3. 'The Workers' Educational Association and Adult Education', Athlone Press, p.3.

wrongly identified by Fred Clarke with those who were pursuing a less radical goal than that of a secondary education for all. On other occasions, even the gradual reforms which he proposed appeared to some so radical as to be impractical, and Eustace Percy was sent scurrying to the Ministry of Labour for evidence of their impracticality. Tawney regarded Percy as a representative of the business interest which used 'the argument of impracticality' to deny to most children the educational opportunities which it had bought for its own sons. For half a century, he used his knowledge of blue books on all aspects of education and their statistics to attack those who were willing to sacrifice the nation's children to the claims of national economy and profit. He believed that all were entitled as individuals and as future citizens to the fullest education by which they could profit.

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