At the request of the Prime Minister, the Educational Policy Committee have been considering the possibility of a forward drive in education.

2. The Butler Act envisaged such a drive as long ago as 1944. But no one foresaw a bulge in the birth rate requiring school places and teachers for two million extra children between 1947 and 1961, or the extent to which post-war housing policy would involve the building of new schools.

3. The result is that the great post-war expansion of the education service has disappointed the hopes raised in 1944. In the main, we have been "running like mad just to stand still." And, as my paper C. (58) 149 shows, we still need many more teachers merely to carry out present policies.

4. At the same time we have substantial achievements to our credit in maintaining and even improving standards. There is also a steadily increasing public interest in education and a growing belief in its value. This shows itself, on the one hand, in complaints about the 11+ examination and the continued use of bad school buildings and, on the other, in the remarkable increase in voluntary stopping on at school after the age of 15.

5. We ought to swim with this tide of opinion. If we act quickly, we can do so without spending much more money than will be spent simply to continue existing policies. The point is that the number of pupils in the secondary schools will fall by about 250,000 between 1961 and 1965, and this gives us a great opportunity to reinforce by positive action an improvement in standards which will take place anyway. If we are seen to be taking such action, the general public will give us credit for the whole of what could be a quite spectacular raising of the educational standards of our school leavers within a few years.

6. My colleagues and I are convinced, both on educational and on political grounds, that we should if possible seize this opportunity to fulfil the promise of the Education Act of 1944 by making a reality as quickly as we can of secondary education for all.

7. To do this, we should need to adopt a school building policy which would:

(a) complete the reorganisation in both town and country of the remaining "all age" schools. They still contain about 150,000 pupils of secondary school age;

(b) improve or replace out of date secondary schools, starting with the grammar and technical schools which prepare pupils for the more advanced forms of education, and going on to the modern schools.

(c) provide for all the pupils who want to stop on after 15. The number may be doubled by 1964.
8. At the same time we ought to get rid of over-large classes. We are not likely to have enough teachers by 1965 to eliminate secondary school classes with more than 30 pupils, let alone to reduce from 40 to 30 the maximum size of classes in primary schools. But we ought to go as far as we can to get rid of over-large classes in secondary schools and to get primary school classes at least down to 40.

9. We should also be ready to replace or drastically improve the really bad primary school buildings. There are many more primary schools at which we could make worth while improvements at no great cost by an increased programme of 'minor works.'

10. These measures would require a building programme for primary and secondary schools of some £60 millions rising eventually to £75 millions a year as compared with the present £50 millions. To regain the confidence of the educational world it is important that we should make it clear that we intend to operate a continuous policy. The best way of doing this would be to announce a five-year programme covering the period 1960–65. This technique has been highly successful with the technical college building programme. I should, of course, discuss the actual figures with the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the context of the investment review.

11. The Churches will want to take part. But they cannot be expected to do so without more help, and we shall therefore need to consider improving the capital grants made for voluntary school building. This raises difficult and complicated issues which are set out in Appendix B. Briefly, I propose that we should increase the maximum rate of grant from 50 per cent. to 60 per cent. (possibly even to 65 per cent.) and that we should consider extending grant aid to certain new denominational secondary schools.

Further Education

12. The current five-year plan of capital expenditure for technical education, which is at present running at the rate of £15 millions a year, extends to 1960–61. It is clear that a further instalment will be required. We need, for example, to increase the provision for technologists by strengthening the colleges of advanced technology; make better provision for technicians; and provide more and better part-time day courses for craft apprentices. I shall be discussing more specific proposals with my colleagues later on. Meantime in order that my colleagues may judge my proposals in the round I am assuming that we shall want to continue capital expenditure for these purposes at roughly the current rate of £15 millions a year.

Estimate of Cost

13. If current policies were allowed to continue without any new impetus (except the minimum necessary expansion of the teacher training programme) current expenditure on education would inevitably rise steeply between now and 1964. There will be more children staying on in the secondary schools, more teachers, more students taking further education, more university awards, and so on. On this basis, I estimate that the total annual expenditure of local education authorities in England and Wales would change roughly as follows (assuming current wage and price levels):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1958</th>
<th>1964</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary and secondary schools (direct expenditure on staffing and maintenance of schools)</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further education (direct expenditure on staffing and maintenance of colleges, &amp;c.)</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other expenditure (including loan charges)</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>586</td>
<td>780</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. The proposals in this paper would not increase the 1964 total by more than about £10 millions, because they would have little effect except on loan charges in respect of the increased building investment. Including minor works and other...
smaller programmes this would rise from the present level of about £90 millions (falling to about £81 millions in 1959-60) to about £100 millions in 1961-62 and possibly to about £110 millions eventually.

15. Assuming the present distribution between rates and taxes, the Exchequer share of the figures in the table would rise from £362 millions this year to about £484 millions in 1964 without a forward drive, and to £490 millions if we seize the opportunities which I have described.

Timing and Presentation

16. If we are to gain the greatest credit from these proposals and if we are not to appear to have them wrung out of us by either the pressures or the promises of our opponents we should announce them in the autumn. This would have the practical advantage that it would give time for the proper planning of the jobs to be undertaken in the first part of the five-year period 1960-65. It would also be the best possible corrective of the widespread suspicion—increased by last year’s building cuts and by the inclusion of education in the general grant—that a Conservative Government is not really interested in the public system of education.

17. The public presentation of the drive will be of crucial importance. Appendix A shows the outline of a White Paper designed to put across the main theme of giving a real secondary education to every child.

18. The Labour Party propose to establish a more or less universal system of comprehensive schools. This would mean the end of the grammar schools as we know them and there are many supporters of the Labour Party who are worried by this. My proposals, by contrast, offer scope for local initiative and experiment. They are realistic. They would lead to worth while and visible results within a few years, and by raising the quality of all secondary schools we would give all boys and girls the opportunity to develop their talents to the full. We should thus take the sting out of the 11+ examination and, by offering opportunities rather than by compulsion, we should reconcile national need with individual choice and achievement.

19. Legislation will be needed to give more help to the churches, but not for any of the other proposals made in this paper.

20. I recognise that it is not possible to reach final decisions in advance of the general review of investment. But it would help me to have at this stage an indication of the Cabinet’s general view of my proposals.

G. L.

Ministry of Education, W. I,
11th July, 1958.
OUTLINE OF A WHITE PAPER TO ANNOUNCE A FORWARD DRIVE IN EDUCATION

1. The Butler Act paved the way for reconstruction of the public system of education.

2. On the schools side a great deal has been done—school-leaving age raised by a year; 4,000 new schools; 86,000 more teachers (50 per cent. increase); primary and secondary school class sizes reduced; number of children staying on beyond 15 increased by about 100,000 (60 per cent.); growth in the number of General Certificate of Education candidates.

3. But the main effort has had to be devoted to providing the school places and teachers needed for 2,000,000 extra children and in new towns and housing estates.

4. Much, therefore, remains to be done, especially if proper advantage is to be taken of increased facilities for advanced education in technical colleges and in the universities.

5. Main needs are smaller classes; completion of reorganisation; reconstruction or drastic alteration of the many bad school buildings; and better opportunities for the boys and girls who are keen enough. Secondary education for all not yet a reality. Hence parents' anxieties about the 11+ examination.

6. These anxieties reflect feeling on the part of many parents that their children are not getting proper opportunities or fair chance in life. They are also in effect a tribute to the grammar school, which is generally recognised as providing the best education leading on to the best careers. That is one reason why Labour Party's policy of "comprehensive schools for all" is never likely to be widely accepted, quite apart from other objections to it.

7. The sound policy is rather to improve all secondary schools, whatever their special character or label, and to see that they all have good staffs, small classes and good buildings; then not to compel all boys and girls to go to the same school at the age of 11, but to encourage them to go to the school best suited to their abilities and ambitions; and to make it easy for them to transfer late from school to school, if their later development makes this desirable.

8. Selection at 11 ("the 11+") will then serve the useful purpose of giving boys and girls a secondary education suited to them as individuals; at the same time it will not be final and will be seen not to be final. In any secondary school, boys and girls will have the chance of developing themselves to the full and of going on to such further and later education or training as may be within their capacities.

9. To make a reality of secondary education for all within the quickest possible time, the Government therefore propose to adopt and carry through a policy of maximum effort in the recruitment of teachers and in school building.

10. First, teachers. The training colleges are being expanded. More graduates will be recruited, especially for the modern schools. But quality is just as important as quantity. The three-year course to be introduced in 1960.

11. Second, school buildings. A five-year programme to ensure continuity of policy. First part, covering 1960-61 and 1961-62, to be compiled at once. Size to increase from present £50 millions annually to £60 millions immediately and £75 millions by end of five-year period. Programme will include completion of reorganisation, replacement of slum schools, better facilities for science, &c., &c.

12. More help for Churches so that they can play their part in forward drive.


15. University and other awards. Recently increased and improved. Now the Anderson Committee.

16. Finance. Amount of general grant will reflect forward drive in education.


APPENDIX B

DENOMINATIONAL SCHOOLS

Introduction

1. Church schools, apart from those which replace existing schools, are provided by the denominations and maintained by the local education authorities. The only expenditure which falls on the denominations after a school is built is half the cost of alterations and external repairs to the buildings of aided and special agreement schools, the other half being paid by the Exchequer. Special agreement schools are schools proposed under the Education Act, 1936, to provide for seniors in all-age schools in preparation for the raising of the school-leaving age, towards which local education authorities were empowered to pay a grant of not less than 50 per cent. or more than 75 per cent.

2. What the churches gain by these arrangements is control of the religious instruction and the appointment of teachers whom they consider suitable. If they cannot find the money for their share of the alterations and external repairs to an existing church school, it becomes controlled. The local education authority then pays the whole cost and in return appoints a majority of the Managers; denominational instruction is given only to children whose parents ask for it; and only one teacher in five can be vetted for fitness to give denominational religious instruction. 4,400 Church of England schools out of 8,200 are now controlled. The Roman Catholics do not regard these conditions as acceptable, and all their schools are aided or special agreement.

3. The Roman Catholics are asking that the rate of Exchequer grant should be increased from 50 per cent. to 75 per cent. and should cover the provision of all new schools. The Anglicans would like the maximum rate of grant to be increased to 75 per cent. but they have not asked for grant on the provision of new schools. This is partly because their main concern is to put their existing schools to rights but also because they do not want to antagonise the Free Churches.

4. The questions that arise are—

(a) should grant be paid on new as distinct from existing schools?

(b) if the rate of grant is to be increased, what should the new rate of grant be?

(c) from what date should the new arrangements apply?

Should Grant be Paid on New as distinct from Existing Schools?

5. The Roman Catholics want this because about one-third of their children are not in Roman Catholic schools, because their numbers are rising through natural increase and immigration, and because their aim is to get every Catholic child into a Catholic school. They are afraid of falling behind local education authorities in school building, particularly in the building of grammar and technical schools since, as the law now stands, such proposals seldom attract grant.

6. The chief arguments for restricting capital grants to existing schools or schools to take the place of existing schools are:

(a) It is in line with the policy of 1944 which was reaffirmed in 1953.

(b) It would attract the least opposition. The Free Churches have been traditionally opposed to an extension of denominational education on general grounds; the teachers because they dislike an increase in the
number of teaching posts to which denominational tests apply; the local education authorities because they wish to avoid duplication of provision and increased running expenditure; and some other (mainly, though not exclusively, Left wing) sections of opinion because they favour a secular system.

(c) Our immediate concern is to put existing schools to rights. We do not want to do anything to make it easier for the Roman Catholics to propose the building of new schools before they have made all the improvements needed in existing schools.

(d) In particular we do not want to encourage proposals for schools too small for efficient and economical running, or schools which duplicate County schools already existing (or both).

(e) It is easier on this plan to give the Church of England what they want.

7. The chief arguments on the other side are:

(a) Opinions have changed and the traditional arguments may not have the appeal they used to.

(b) Under Section 13 of the 1944 Act, the Minister's approval is required to the establishment of new schools. This is the proper way of preventing duplication or inefficient organisation.

(c) The existing law does not cover all the cases in which it would be reasonable to help denominational school building. For example, where population has increased, it would cost no more, and possibly less, to build a new voluntary school or enlarge an existing one than to build a County school. But it is difficult to devise a limited extension without adding to the administrative complications.

(d) The present system of grants is extremely complicated and difficult to administer and in practice the distinction of principle between "existing" and "new" is often unreal. In the end it would be swept away as indefensible and we should be committed to a higher rate of grant than would have been justified if we had contemplated from the beginning that the distinction should be abandoned.

8. The problem is as much social and political as educational. The fires of controversy may be burning low, but it would be unwise to assume either that they are dying or that they could not be fanned into fresh life. Despite the practical objections just mentioned I propose that we should begin negotiations on the basis of maintaining in principle the distinction between "existing" and "new" and that we should not depart from the 1944 settlement so far as to contemplate grant for every new denominational school. But during the negotiations and when we have been able to test opinion, we should feel our way towards a solution, analogous to, but not exactly parallel with that of the 1936 Act, which would enable us to pay capital grant on the building of new "aided" denominational schools needed to provide proper secondary educational facilities to match existing voluntary primary school facilities of the same denomination. The aim would be to cover secondary school building needed in areas where children of the denomination concerned are already in the main attending voluntary schools (even though, numerically, this would involve some extension of the denominational school system), and in particular to cover the provision of grammar and technical schools where this could be justified from the point of view of size and efficient organisation.

If the Rate of Grant is to be Increased, what should the New Rate be?

9. Should the grant be 75 per cent., as the Churches are asking, or some lower figure, e.g., 60 per cent.?

10. The arguments for 75 per cent. are that the Anglicans and the Roman Catholics are both agreed on it, and it could be held that it would scarcely be worth reopening the 1944 settlement for anything less, and that (particularly if we were not to aid the provision of any new schools) the offer of anything less would intensify the Roman Catholics' sense of grievance.

11. The arguments for 60 per cent., besides the fact that it would cost the tax-payer less and avoid possible repercussions on Northern Ireland, are that once the grant was raised to 75 per cent. it would be impossible ever to lower it, even if
later it were extended to the building of entirely new schools; every widening of the
gap between new and existing places adds to the controversy as to whether any
given place is new or existing and the easier we make it for the Anglicans to secure
and retain aided status for their schools, the more we should depreciate for them
the value of controlled status. As it is, many more Anglican schools are aided than
was expected in 1944.

12. If, as suggested in paragraph 8, we are prepared to envisage aiding the
provision of some new secondary schools, it should be sufficient to increase the grant
to 60 per cent. (with the possibility of an extension to 65 per cent. if need be).

13. The cost to the Exchequer of raising the rate of grant to 60 per cent, is not
likely to average more than half a million pounds a year over the next twenty years.
The cost of the concession suggested in paragraph 8 would probably be about the
same. In the next five years the cost would be higher, if my proposals for an advance
in education are adopted. In addition, there may be a small increase in the loans
from the Exchequer available to the denominations under Section 105 of the
Education Act, 1944.

From what Date should the New Arrangements Apply?

14. Once we disclosed our willingness to increase the grant there might be a
tendency for the denominations to go slow with their school building projects in
order to obtain the higher rate of grant. Alternatively there might be a demand, as
there was in 1953, for the new arrangements to be applied retrospectively. I
consider that any such demand should be resisted and that the new arrangements
should be timed to come into operation in such a way as to be definitely linked with
the implementation of the forward drive.

15. If the drive can be launched early in the autumn of this year I propose that
I should then enter into immediate discussions with the interested parties and aim
to complete them in time to pass the necessary amending legislation by the end of
the summer of 1959.

Summary

16. To sum up, on the assumption that we decide on a forward drive in
education, and accepting that this would entail some increase in the existing grants
to denominational schools, I propose that we should enter into negotiations on the
basis that the rate of grant should be increased to 60 per cent. (with the idea of
conceding not more than 65 per cent. if pressed during the negotiations), that we
should be prepared to consider aiding the establishment of some new secondary
schools to the extent indicated in paragraph 8, but should not otherwise assist the
provision of new denominational schools.