

SECTION ONE: THE BRITISH COMMON-WEALTH OF NATIONS

19 *The Evolution of English Democracy*

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 1215 King John was forced to sign the Magna Charta. This document has often been described as the birth certificate of English democracy. Actually, it was in large part a confirmation of "good and ancient customs" which the royal power had failed to respect. It was a typical feudal document, extracted from the king by the baronage, an assertion of the medieval belief that the royal power was subject to the law and not above it. It had little to do with the rights of the common people. Nevertheless, it proved a useful precedent in the later struggle to curb royal power; it was conveniently referred to and reinterpreted in the seventeenth century. From the Magna Charta may be said to have gradually evolved the fundamental English principle of no taxation without representation.

Out of the continued struggles of the thirteenth century between the Crown and the baronage grew the rudiments of the parliamentary institution. The so-called Model Parliament, summoned in 1295 by Edward I, had in it two knights from the shires and two burgesses from the towns. This body had little influence in law making at first, its main task being the appropriation of money for the royal treasury; in fact representation was considered a burden to be avoided if possible rather than a privilege to be sought. It is nevertheless out of the use of the power of the purse that the original body evolved into the all powerful Parliament of today. Similar institutions existed across the Channel, in France, and it is all the more interesting to contrast the steadily growing power of the English Parliament with the decline of the French Estates General, especially from the beginning of the seventeenth century onward.

With the advent of the Tudors to the throne and the restoration of order after the turmoil of the fifteenth century, royal power in England came close to being absolute. Both Henry VIII and Elizabeth, however, able and skilful rulers, were more interested in the substance than in the formal trappings of power. Moreover, they were in tune with their time and enjoyed a large measure of support from the rising commercial class. Consequently, they did not seek to interfere with Parliament which proved generally amenable to their wishes.

It was otherwise with the Stuarts. James I (1603–1625) described by his brother king, Henry IV of France, as “the wisest fool in Christendom,” was a better theologian than ruler. He asserted the divine right of kings and sought to rule without Parliament. The struggle between Crown and Parliament, complicated by the religious situation, continued under his son Charles I (1625–1649). The Petition of Rights which he granted in 1628 was not lived up to by him. His arbitrariness in matters both religious and financial caused the constitutional struggle to degenerate into civil war, the outcome of which was the defeat of the king and his execution in 1649. This was the very time when in France began the reign of the sun-king, Louis XIV, who was to give utterance to the most sweeping expression of the theory and practice of absolute monarchy with his famous: *L’État, c’est moi*.

The triumph of Parliament was short-lived, for, as is often the case with violent revolutions, power was soon concentrated in the hands of a small minority. The Instrument of Government, first instance in modern times of a written constitution, was an enlightened document providing for a unicameral legislature. England was in effect a constitutional monarchy, Cromwell, the Lord Protector, being appointed to rule for life. But in practice it was governed by a military dictatorship; even Parliament had to be dismissed. Not unpopular at first, because of its military successes and its commercial policies, the diminishing basis of support for Cromwell’s rule led to a revulsion of feeling which, shortly after his death, caused the restoration of the “legitimate” ruler in the person of Charles II.

Experience and exile had taught Charles nothing save craft. If anything, his residence at the French court had strengthened

his belief in the divine right of kings. He sought to bolster his position through a secret alliance with Louis XIV; he was also suspected of Catholic leanings. His skill and personal charm enabled him to end his days on the throne, but the struggle broke out anew under his Catholic brother and successor, James II. In 1688, Parliament called in to rule James' daughter Mary and her husband William of Orange. Deprived of support, James fled, leaving Parliament triumphant.

The significance of the Glorious Revolution lay in the fact that it was a successful assertion of the right of Parliament to dominate the Crown to the extent of regulating the succession. The new rulers derived their right to rule, not from divine appointment, but from the will of Parliament, however unrepresentative that body may have been at the time by comparison with present day standards of universal suffrage. Their recognition of the Bill of Rights¹ in 1689 marks the definite triumph of constitutionalism in England.

The first two Hanoverian kings (1714-1760), unversed and uninterested in English affairs, were content to let Whigs and Tories contend for supremacy within Parliament, and the modern cabinet system began to take shape. When George III came to the throne, the system was so firmly entrenched that his attempts at personal rule could not threaten its hold on the country, a hold which has remained unbroken to the present.

SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF BRITISH POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Out of the situation just described there grew an impressive body of political thought which rationalized and expounded the principles of constitutional government. To be sure, England too has had her philosophers of absolutism. Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) wrote as early as 1651 in his famous *Leviathan* that "The only way to erect . . . a Common Power . . . is, to conferre all their power and strength upon one Man, upon one Assembly of men, that they may reduce all their wills, by plurality of voices, unto one Will . . . in such manner, as if every man should say

¹ This Bill of Rights asserted freedom of debate in Parliament, freedom of petition and elections. The king could no longer suspend laws, levy taxes, or maintain armed forces without parliamentary consent.

to every man, I Authorize and give up my Right of Governing myself to this Man, or to this Assembly of men, on this condition, that thou give up thy Right to him, and Authorize his Actions in like manner. This done, the Multitude, so united in one Person, is called a Common-wealth, in latine Civitas. . . ."¹

But Hobbes' life covered the Commonwealth and the latter part of the Stuart rule. However, the trend of political development, striving away from absolutism, was best reflected in the thinking of the great John Locke, in the unconventional criticism of the sceptical David Hume, in the liberal utilitarianism of John Stuart Mill, in the philosophy of liberty of Thomas Paine. It would far exceed the scope of this chapter to analyze the teaching of these men but a few words should be said about John Locke (1632-1704) whose importance in giving shape to the British conception of state, society, and education may almost be compared with the influence of Hegel on the development of German and Italian totalitarianism. Locke, more than any other English writer, has clarified political liberalism and tolerance. If one may speak of a British "ideology," his influence has helped to shape it, as it has helped to awaken the social and political conscience of the world outside the British Isles.

Locke based his tolerance mainly on the belief that man is imperfect, full of frailties, and thus incapable of being right even if he thinks he is. Man has no innate understanding. He acquires knowledge through experience, which is a doubtful method. How then could there exist a "state of equality, wherein all the power and jurisdiction is reciprocal, no one having more than another . . . ?"² Hobbes would have answered that, if one could not trust human beings because of their innate frailties, authority should be established once and for all. Locke was more generous. His state, made up of humans who were born with a "blank mind" and had nothing but education and experience to cope with life, was to be a "state of liberty yet it is not a state of license; though man in that state have an uncontrollable liberty to dispose of his person or possessions, yet he has not liberty to destroy himself. . . .

¹ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Everyman's Library, New York, 1914, p. 89.

² John Locke, *Two Treatises of Civil Government*, Everyman's Library, New York, 1924, p. 118.

The state of Nature has a law of Nature to govern it, which obliges everyone, and reason, which is that law, teaches all mankind who will but consult it, that being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty or possessions. . . ."¹

Holding such a view of human nature, Locke advocated the restriction of authority rather than its enhancement. He proposed to limit legislative power by putting it "into the hands of divers persons who, duly assembled, have by themselves, or jointly with others, a power to make laws, which when they have done, being separated again, they are themselves subject to the laws they have made. . . ."² While one may discern in his philosophy the beginnings of political democracy, he did not recognize economic equality. He stressed the obligations of the government or the ruler to protect property and to abide by its "contract" with the people, failing which the latter would be relieved of their duty to obey. Here then was the beginning of the revolutionary theories which justified the Glorious Revolution in England and were taken over and extended by the American and French revolutions.

Since man is born with a mind as blank as a *tabula rasa*, his education becomes of necessity extremely important. In his treatises *Thoughts on Education* and *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Locke suggested new methods of rearing young English gentlemen and training their minds. Liberal in politics, Locke prescribed severe mental drill in order to achieve the three major aims of education: vigor of the body, good breeding, wisdom of conduct, and mental power. He enumerated the four virtues of a gentleman: first stood virtue itself with its characteristics of self-control, self-denial, and a religious well-tempered soul. Second was wisdom with a knowledge of the world, prudence, foresight, and an ability in affairs without ever becoming tricky. Third should be good breeding, with a regard for the rights and the failures of others as gained from early examples and constant practice throughout the educational process. Lastly came learning which remained secondary to other accomplishments, for a virtuous or wise man was more valuable than a great scholar. Such was, indeed, the pat-

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 119.

² *Ibid.*, p. 190.

tern of English education as it used to be practiced in the formal discipline of public schools which endeavored to train a sound mind and a sound body. Sense impression and experience, Locke believed, were the raw materials which, through the application of reasoning, would produce knowledge.

Locke's philosophy of individual liberty led to the conception of popular sovereignty and constitutionalism, built on the foundation of an education that would develop self-controlled and responsible men. It has furnished a firm basis for the growth of a British democratic ideology. No wonder that the French liberals of the eighteenth century and later those of many other countries turned to Locke's liberalism for guidance. For all its shortcomings, its essential spirit remains alive and capable of adaptation to changed conditions. "Let us . . . read Locke again, and read him more penetratingly," wrote an American scholar. "We shall find in his pages much to ponder and much to apply to the problems of modern society. We shall discover, perhaps to our surprise, that Locke sought not liberty for the strong, the favored, and the fortunate alone, but liberty for every man regardless of his circumstances in life; and that he looked upon government as a necessary and proper agency of the majority to secure and conserve the liberty of all."¹

GROWTH OF THE CLASS STATE AND ECONOMIC LAISSEZ FAIRE

Who then were the men representing this philosophy of liberty and what sort of rule did they give to the country where these ideas first originated?

The British parliament—England and Scotland became united in 1707—was regarded by the British people as the safeguard and the symbol of growing political liberty. But this parliament was not as yet representative of all classes. Aristocracy and higher clergy united in the House of Lords; the House of Commons consisted of the lower nobility (landowners whose titles were inseparably connected with their estates) and of the increasingly wealthy middle class whose views were almost identical with those of the

¹ Chester C. Macey, *Political Philosophies*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1938, p. 264.

nobility. The revolutions of the seventeenth century were essentially a successful bid for power on the part of this commercial class whose strength began to grow with the Commercial Revolution of the preceding century. In alliance with the royal power against the feudal nobility at first, by the seventeenth century the mercantile class had grown strong enough to challenge the crown itself. Thus, taken together, the two houses represented a block of interests which were not those of the lower classes.

The Industrial Revolution, the first phase of which occurred between 1760 and 1815, marked the transformation of a mercantilistic economy into a new system of industry and commerce growing out of technological progress. The Industrial Revolution also resulted in a different distribution of a growing population, thus emphasizing the misrepresentation in elections. In the industrial areas, a few wealthy industrialists for all practical purposes ruled a mass of workers whose living and working conditions were appalling. But economic liberalism, as preached by Adam Smith in *The Wealth of Nations*, was incapable of remedying this situation. For this liberalism was rooted in the fatalistic belief in a God-ordained system of free and unrestricted competition. In other words, freedom existed for people to get rich and conserve or augment their wealth by every means within the legal frame; people were also at liberty to starve or pauperize others on hunger wages. Charity was not a concern of the state, not even of the communities, but of religious and private organizations. The age of economic liberalism created conditions unknown to the so-called Dark Ages during which the guilds and corporations acknowledged a responsibility for the welfare of their members. It took a long time until, during the nineteenth century, society began to correct the worst defects of this laissez-faire attitude; it may be the task of the twentieth century to complete the reform.

The beginning of the nineteenth century saw the end of the Napoleonic wars and a slump in economic life resulting in a depression of the first order. As yet, the working people had no possibility of expressing their will by voting. Their spontaneous but unorganized and often blind manifestations of anger were ruthlessly suppressed. Robert Owen's attempt to lead the newly created trade unions and the Chartist agitation both failed, but marked

the beginning of a British labor-union movement. None of those whose sympathy was with the masses could as yet hope to be elected to parliament. However, a few concessions began to be made in the field of education, and working conditions were slightly bettered for women and children. A small beginning was the Factory Act of 1819 forbidding the employment of children under nine; in 1833 work was limited for youthful workers under eighteen; and from 1847 on employers were not to force women to work more than ten hours a day. From 1850, Sunday was to be at least a half holiday.

The reform movement of 1830 and 1832 was a distinctively middle-class movement. When Lord Grey could not at first induce parliament to accept his reform plan, he dissolved parliament and gained an electoral victory for the Whigs. The Tories, outraged not only by a reform plan which showed a definite middle-class influence but also by the suggested electoral revisions enlarging the influence of people with average means, tried their utmost to block Lord Grey's propositions. Finally, Lord Grey resigned and then was asked to come back. He accepted, on the understanding that the king would, if necessary, create enough new peers to put through the reform. The threat was sufficient to ensure the passage of the bill, which was by no means revolutionary. The more radical programs of the Chartists¹ and of Robert Owen² were rejected. Liberalism and free trade remained victorious in the expanding empire which reached the zenith of its power in the Victorian age.

Parliamentary life and elections became a contest between the older established landed aristocracy and the rising wealthy manufacturing class, although it must be borne in mind that the two groups overlapped and tended to fuse with the passage of time. In so far as one can generalize, it may be said that the new class advocated a wider franchise (e.g., the Reform Bill of 1832) while the older was politically more conservative but at the same time more willing to enact certain social, if paternalistic, reforms. In the second half of the century, after the repeal of the Corn Laws—a definite triumph of free trade and the manufacturing class—the resulting lowering of prices served to improve somewhat the

¹ See above, p. 254.

² See above, pp. 253–254.

still appalling lot of the lower classes, especially of the city proletariat.

In 1867, the conservative Prime Minister Disraeli, stealing a page from the opposition, gave the city proletariat the right to vote. Gladstone did the same for farm labor in 1884. It was also about this time that a moderate socialist party began to appear on the political scene.

The Victorian era of a British imperialism which had been developed by private enterprise had, indeed, created an empire on which the sun never set. England, as Great Britain and her empire are often called throughout the world, became rich and saturated; the pride of empire, not always devoid of arrogance, created in the outside world a varying mixture of admiration, envy, and dislike, and not a little misunderstanding.

The British Empire with its 500,000,000 subjects had become the richest realm on earth—yet there were still very many slums. Britain had become a firmly established constitutional monarchy—yet it was still a class state. The social stratification was reflected in the discriminations of the educational system, which, especially until the First World War, tended to perpetuate the privileges of the ruling classes. At the same time, there existed less political radicalism in Britain than on the European continent. The opposition, even when coming from labor, was “loyal.” To a surprising degree, the lower classes had accepted their standing; the majority approved and were proud of the empire.

The effects of the First World War went deeper than the aftermath of the Napoleonic wars. As the Liberal Party declined, the new Labor Party increasingly filled its place. In 1924 the first Labor government in British history came into power. None of the parties however, conservative or progressive, was able to remedy the grave economic slump which has troubled Britain ever since the end of the last war. Concurrently, a redefinition of imperial relations had become inevitable. The reform had its inception in a transformation of the empire into the British Commonwealth of Nations, a unique political conception, typical of British mentality which so extraordinarily connects rationalism and emotionalism under a coordinating mask of tranquillity and self-control.

FROM THE EMPIRE TO THE COMMONWEALTH

An empire, as Sir Norman Angell once said, is a form of political organization in which subject provinces or territories are ruled from a governing center. These territories are subject to laws not determined by themselves but by their foreign masters. It is the interest of the ruling power which is decisive and not that of the ruled territories. Following the unfortunate experience of the revolt and loss of the American colonies, Britain took to heart the lesson of the futility of trying to enforce controls from London upon unwilling dependencies which had become capable of managing their own affairs. The recommendations of the famous Durham Report of 1839, and the creation of the Dominion of Canada in 1867, are milestones along the road of liberalization of British imperial policy. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, there originated the practice of holding "colonial conferences," called "Imperial Conferences" from 1907 on, meetings of the prime ministers of the United Kingdom and the dominions for the purpose of discussing matters of common interest to the various members of the empire.

The First World War accelerated the pace of change. During the Imperial Conference of 1911, Sir Edward Grey had spoken of "assent" and "approval" of British foreign policy to be secured from the conferees, as if the dominions were sovereign states. During the war, the dominions were entirely loyal to the mother country; they put their resources at her disposal, and participated in war cabinets. But, at the same time, while constitutional issues were shelved during the war, the dominions set forth demands for absolute political independence. For the first time, in the twentieth century the term "Commonwealth" was used. The dominions were then represented at the Peace Conference, they became independent members of the League of Nations, and likewise ratified the peace treaties on a par with other sovereign states.

Gradually, the dominions built up their own diplomatic organizations and, from then on, played an important role in international relations. The evolution of the empire into a commonwealth became clearly defined at the Imperial Conference of 1926.

In a report of this meeting, held under the chairmanship of Lord Balfour, one reads that the idea of a constitution for the empire was not believed to be feasible because its "widely scattered parts have very different characteristics, very different histories, and are at very different stages of evolution. . . ." ¹ The report then goes on to make one of the most important statements of British political thought on imperial policies. The self-governing communities, consisting of Great Britain and the dominions, are "*autonomous Communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations.*" ²

The report explains that "every self-governing member of the Empire is now the master of its destiny . . . and is subject to no compulsion whatever. . . . Free institutions are its life-blood. Free cooperation is its instrument. . . ." ³ The proclamation of the Statute of Westminster of 1931 amounted to a declaration of independence for six nations. The "Third British Empire," as some historians call the Commonwealth of Nations, had taken another step toward deimperialization: "no act passed after 1931 by the Parliament of the United Kingdom will be deemed to extend to a Dominion." The dominions are described as "autonomous communities"; in fact, they are independent states with their own governments, diplomatic corps, tariffs, immigration laws, and, as in the case of Australia, have their own colonies or dependencies. The only visible and symbolic bond with the motherland is the Crown. But, the king of England does not "rule" as king of England in Canada, Australia, or any other dominion. He is king of Canada in the affairs of that country as he is king of Australia or king of the Union of South Africa in those dominions. His representative, the governor general, is selected by the individual dominion and not by the British government in Britain.

India has a unique position in the Third British Empire. Pres-

¹ Committee Report of the Imperial Conference of 1926, London

² *Ibid.* Italics are in the original

³ *Ibid.* The report is quoted by Sir Alfred Zimmern in his booklet, *From the British Empire to the British Commonwealth*, Longmans, Green and Company, London, 1941, pp. 48-49

ent indications would seem to point to the achievement of dominion status for her. It is planned to have elected groups work out a constitution for an Indian union of states as the basis for home rule. India would then have the same status as dominions like Canada or Australia. Theoretically she would be pledged to remain loyal to the crown but in fact she would be free to act with complete independence to the extent of seceding from the Commonwealth if she chose to do so. Sir Stafford Cripps, when he visited India in the spring of 1942, made this explicitly clear. His attempt to bring about an agreement between the main Indian parties and Britain failed because, during the war, Britain refused to change India's status and wanted to reserve the right to control the defense of the country against possible Japanese aggression.¹

India's problems have always been complex and delicate, and the position of Britain has been greatly misjudged and misunderstood. Without exonerating the tactics of imperialism, it should be kept in mind that the British conquered India in much the same way as other European imperialist powers conquered other parts of the world. With the rise of a tendency to question the ethics of imperialism, especially after the First World War, opinion in Britain has become increasingly willing to widen the sphere of Indian self-rule, until the prospect of India's eventual independence has become widely accepted.

It is interesting to consider the share of Britain in the import and export trade of the rest of the empire. The following chart shows that, while Britain has the greatest share of trade of any single nation with her dominions and dependencies, that share is very far from constituting a monopoly.²

As Britain does not now exert economic domination over her dominions, her political influence on them is correspondingly limited. The Statute of Westminster in 1931 was merely the formal recognition in law of a situation already existing in fact, as the movement toward independence increasingly dissociated the dominions from the political aspirations of the mother country. Yet the Crown still remains a unifying symbol, and so does the con-

¹ See R. Coupland, *The Cripps Mission*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1942.

² Sir Norman Angell, "Who Owns the British Empire?" *The Survey Graphic*, May, 1941.

mon language, the acceptance of the same cultural background, and the belief in unity of action, whenever the existence of the Commonwealth is endangered.

The strength of this essentially spiritual bond between motherland and dominions is a factor often difficult for outsiders to understand, particularly since Britain has "no proprietary rights what-

From whom does the Empire buy?

17.5%	from United Kingdom	Canada	82.5%	from rest of the world
41.6%	" " "	Australia	58.4%	" " " " "
43.3%	" " "	South Africa	56.7%	" " " " "
47.8%	" " "	New Zealand	52.2%	" " " " "
31.4%	" " "	India	68.6%	" " " " "
26.6%	" " "	{ Colonies and } { Protectorates }	73.4%	" " " " "
26.7%	" " "	Mandates	73.3%	" " " " "

To whom does the Empire sell?

39.1%	to United Kingdom	Canada	60.9%	to rest of the world
54.5%	" " "	Australia	45.5%	" " " " "
38.1%	" " "	South Africa	61.9%	" " " " "
84.5%	" " "	New Zealand	15.5%	" " " " "
34.2%	" " "	India	65.8%	" " " " "
35.4%	" " "	{ Colonies and } { Protectorates }	64.6%	" " " " "
37.5%	" " "	Mandates	62.5%	" " " " "

ever in Canada, or Australia, or South Africa, or New Zealand, or Newfoundland, or Ireland" and "draws no tribute at all from them or from any colony whatever. On the contrary, the British taxpayer is often taxed for the defense and the development of the overseas territories."¹

Britain's movement toward economic and social reforms is bound to affect her empire policy deeply, but there is no reason to look for the disintegration of the Commonwealth; if anything, the voluntary nature of the association is an added source of strength. In a future of international cooperation, there is no doubt that the survival of the Commonwealth will be to the benefit of its members. The dominions may of course make certain adjustments in both their foreign and economic policies, if their interests re-

¹ Angell, *op. cit.*

quire it, without regard for the preferences of Great Britain. Thus, for example, one may expect to see a much closer cooperation between the United States and the dominions of Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

Culturally, the dominions are very close to Britain whose governmental system they have adopted, modifying it according to local needs.

BRITISH GOVERNMENT

There does not exist in the classic land of parliamentary government a written constitution. The charters accumulated during the course of English history constitute the legal basis for Britain's constitutional and democratic monarchy. The Magna Charta, the Bill of Rights, the Great Reform Act, and the Statute of Westminster are some of the most important legal documents that take the place of a constitution. The need for a written constitution was never really felt, particularly since, from 1689 on, the practice as well as the theory of constitutional government has been firmly entrenched.

Few people in Britain have missed a constitution. The majority, clinging to time-honored traditions, would probably endorse Benjamin Disraeli's dislike for a written constitution when he wrote, in 1835: "Free government cannot be scribbled down—this great invention—in a morning on the envelope of a letter by some charter-concocting monarch, or sketched with ludicrous facility in the conceited commonplace book of a utilitarian sage."¹ However, the problems arising in a government where the distribution of power is subject to legal interpretation rather than to codified constitutional law are manifold and delicate. A deep sense of historic tradition, respect for the rule of law, and a general acceptance of certain ideas on the nature of government are responsible for the success of the constitutional evolution of Britain. No wonder that customs and usages are of great importance although they have never become a written law of the land.

Who, then, rules Britain? The king? The cabinet? Parliament? The king's oath at the time of his coronation leaves no doubt of

¹ Quoted by W. I. Jennings, "Disraeli and the Constitution," *Journal of Comparative Legislation and International Law*, Series 3, XIII, 1931, p. 182.

his position: he is, like every Briton, subject to the law and obliged to honor the statutes of parliament. As a guardian of constitutional rights, the king has come to be accepted by all classes, including the laboring class. The Labor Party, through its representatives, stated that "there can be no question among thoughtful people that the monarchy plays a large part in holding the British Empire together; loyalty to the king, both at home and in the Dominions, is a more religious than political attitude. . . . Nothing could be more false than an assertion that Republicanism is necessarily synonymous with democracy. . . ." ¹ The power of the king depends on his influence rather than on his rights. As Walter Bagshot put it, the king has the right to be consulted, to encourage, and to warn. The measure of tact an English king is able to muster will determine the measure of his influence. Yet legally and financially he is dependent upon parliament. His salary, the so-called civil list, must be approved by parliament annually.

The king's advisory body is the Privy Council. Since the original duties of this body have been taken over by the cabinet, its role is more ceremonial than political. Its advisory function is more or less theoretical. The most important man in the government is the prime minister who is named by the king to form a cabinet and who, in turn, chooses the cabinet ministers. The cabinet is responsible to parliament and can be overthrown by an expression of non-confidence. It is the most influential and powerful part of the government. Customarily, the cabinet will resign as a unit if its proposals are rejected by parliament. It works on the basis of a traditional understanding of its functions which are not written in law. The prime minister, being a party leader, will naturally constitute his cabinet in accordance with this fact. Members of the cabinet are usually members of the parliamentary parties.

British civil servants are chosen under special laws according to which candidates have to pass examinations of various grades and classes, but not specialized ones as in America. Permanent tenure for all employees has achieved a considerable stability. Cabinets come and go but permanent civil servants continue to rule. In fact, ministers have often been mouthpieces of their subordinate ex-

¹ J. H. Thomas, *When Labor Rules*, Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York, 1921, pp. 45-47; as quoted by N. L. Hill and H. W. Stoke, *The Background of European Governments*, Farrar & Rinehart, Inc., New York, 1935, pp. 25-26.

perts whose opinions they express, for civil servants are professionals while ministers may be amateurs.

Parliament has two houses, the House of Lords and the House of Commons. Members of the House of Lords are peers of the realm. Membership is hereditary since peerages are inherited by primogeniture. The legislative importance of the Lords as a check on the lower house has been steadily decreasing.

Like the French Senate, the House of Lords has often been attacked. Peers in England have not only privileges; they also suffer from certain disabilities. They cannot vote at parliamentary elections, nor are they eligible for membership in the House of Commons. If, for example, the son of a peer is a member of the Commons and succeeds to his father's title upon the latter's death, he automatically must give up his seat in the lower house. The speaker of the Lords is the Lord Chancellor, nominated by the cabinet but appointed by the king. The rules of procedure are extremely liberal.

The House of Lords may introduce or reject any bills except those concerning finances.¹ The House of Commons alone has the power of handling financial problems. It is conceivable that conflicts arising out of different views between the two houses may further restrict the influence of the Lords, and a reform of the House of Lords is not out of the question during the postwar years when Britain as a whole may well undergo basic changes in its political and social system. But this does not mean that the bicameral system of parliament will be given up easily.

The House of Commons, the lower house, is one of the most powerful and most efficiently functioning legislative bodies of the world. The speaker, usually elected without many formalities, does not speak *to* the house but *for* it. He must be neutral and cannot represent any party so long as he is in office. Rules for parliamentary procedure are rigidly fixed; even speaking time is limited to a definite period. One hour of questions is reserved for every session. (A certain similarity may be noticed between the "questions" in the House of Commons and the "interpellations" in the French Chamber of Deputies.) Legislative work is done mainly in the special committees, the most important of which is the cabinet itself.

¹ Lords have only suspensory power of veto over financial bills passed by Commons.

The history of Parliament's electoral reforms is the history of the growth of British democracy. The Great Reform Act of 1832 initiated the most revolutionary change and the continuing reform movement produced the Second Reform Act introduced by Disraeli in 1867. Further agitation for liberalization of suffrage, including suffrage for women, came to an end when, in 1918, the Representation of the People Act was accepted. This act terminated the distinction between borough and county votes and proclaimed the right to vote for every male citizen over twenty-one and for women over thirty. Exactly ten years later the age limit for women was lowered to twenty-one. For national elections, there is now no discrimination except against "criminals, idiots, aliens, paupers, and peers." (Paupers are regarded as having no address.) However, in municipal elections there is still discrimination against all those who have no "ownership or occupancy" of some property.

There are two more fields of significance and importance in the British system of government: the courts of law and the institution of local government. "In the entire history of mankind there have been only two great systems of law, the civil law of Rome and the common law of England."¹ This common law has shaped the life of Anglo-Saxon countries, namely, England, the major part of the overseas dominions, and the United States (not Scotland, curiously enough). Common law has been developed in the courts of law through experience and in response to practical needs. Unwritten at the beginning, it grew later through an accumulation of the written decisions of the judges. Gradually, these decisions were regarded as establishing precedents and became law. Common law is more flexible and thus, to a certain extent, more democratic than Roman law. Its great advantage over Roman law consists in that it "represents the survival of the fittest among the various legal customs and rules which successive generations of men have tried."²

There is no court exercising judicial authority over the whole of Britain or the Commonwealth. The legal system of England and Wales is different from that of Scotland, North Ireland, or Canada.

¹ William B. Munro, *The Governments of Europe*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1931, p. 270.

² *Ibid.*, p. 274.

The nearest thing to a Supreme Court for the United Kingdom is the House of Lords. The judicial committee of the Privy Council is the supreme court for cases from India, the dominions, and the colonies. However, this committee is not exactly a court in that it cannot make final decisions; it can only recommend to the king what it believes to be right, an advice which is always followed.

The legal profession in Britain stands on a high level. Judges are appointed for life by the crown. There is no spoils system. The ethical and social standing of lawyers (called "solicitors" and "barristers") in England is higher than in America. The speed of legal procedure is greater and the question of constitutionality is hardly ever raised.

Local government is one of the most democratic aspects of British institutions. Reaching far back into history, developing without specific plan or preconceived organization, it presented a picture of chaos until it was reformed at least three times during the nineteenth century. The eight spheres of local government in England and Wales illustrate the results of this development: County Councils, County Borough Councils, Non-County Borough Councils, Metropolitan Borough Councils, Urban District Councils, Rural District Councils, Parish Councils, and Parish Meetings. The administrative body of city employees has tenure of office. No spoils system exists; hence the officials and their subordinates are completely familiar with their work and become experts of long standing in their fields. They remain in office so long as their work and their behavior are satisfactory.

The principle of local government is deeply entrenched in the minds and hearts of all Britons. The intervention of the national government which found it necessary to loan money to localities and, naturally, saw to it that the money was well spent, did not lead to centralized control, for the value of the decentralization of local self-government has been recognized and accepted.¹ The local leaders are duly elected by all classes participating on an equal basis. Many localities are under Labor rule. Mayors or borough presidents may originate from every class and they never become local tyrants as does a political boss in an American community.

¹ During the periods of severe air raids over London, decentralization of city government proved most beneficial. Damage remained localized and the paralyzation of one district did not affect the others.

BRITISH DEMOCRACY AND BRITISH CLASSES

Britain's social structure is characterized by rigid class distinction and yet British society functions with a minimum of friction between the classes, the existence of which has, to a remarkable degree, become an accepted tradition. In many ways, Britain is more markedly a class state than many other nations—yet she has produced some of the greatest documents and thinkers of democracy. She may pride herself on being among the pioneers and having remained a foremost exponent of religious and political freedom to our own time.

The strange and extraordinary thing is that all these different classes are united by what one may call "Commonwealth ideology" which seems to be a part of every British subject, no matter to what class he may belong. Out of traditional, systematized thinking, certain common and fundamental elements have emerged. Such are the consciousness of personal freedom combined with a deep feeling for legality; the spirit of fair play and good sport; a general tendency toward compromise; a certain distrust of intellectualism in favor of a practical utilitarianism. Geographical and political isolation, together with success, have bred a certain fatalism which finds expression in muddling-through and wait-and-see slogans and outlook.

In a sense, the evolution of the empire may be said to have reflected the conceptions of British society. So long as the empire was truly imperialistic, the British Isles played the role of an aristocracy toward the middle class of the dominions and the lower class of the colonies. Parallel with the growth of democratic practice at home, the empire evolved into the Commonwealth of Nations. One may thus envisage the existence of a democratic union of independent British nations on the imperial plane, and simultaneously expect the breakdown of former social classes, or at least, a limitation of class differences that would bring about their eventual dissolution. There is only one institution which might well be preserved from the days of the class state: the monarchy. The king as a symbol of imperial unity will remain the expression of a voluntary union of free states on the basis of British institutions.

Class differences have been reflected in a great inequality in the distribution of wealth. However, for years, directly and through inheritance taxes, the government has taxed the great estates, Britain's stronghold of aristocracy, so heavily that most of them have already been divided, thus undermining one basis of the political power of the aristocracy. Income taxes have been extremely high since the First World War and have tended to hamper the concentration of wealth. The Second World War has accelerated the process of dividing up the great fortunes. Hand in hand with this development, there has been a great expansion of social services. The nineteenth-century liberal view that the state should refrain as much as possible from interfering with the free workings of society, dominated Britain's domestic policy for a long time, but has been gradually revised during the turmoils in the first part of the twentieth century. New British conceptions of the state's responsibility for the welfare of the people have become increasingly noticeable since the depression that followed the First World War.

Postwar reconstruction planning by the British government, as announced in the years 1943 and 1944, includes a democratization of education, a scheme for universal medical insurance and vastly improved housing. The realization of the Beveridge Plan may yet ensure a minimum of decent living to everyone. But social services alone are no sign of democracy at work. Totalitarian countries, too, offer social welfare to their citizens. Should it then be the object of democracy to strive for the "building up a new kind of State, a new sort of machinery of government, one of whose aims will be to serve its citizens in all the fields where individual and voluntary action is not enough, while at the same time giving them real freedom and real equality of opportunity . . . ?"¹

Change in Britain may be expected to be less abrupt than elsewhere. The British people have learned to value their political freedom as a matter of tradition. Moreover, their deep rooted tendency either to conserve conditions or to modify them gradually, the hold of ancient customs in both government and community life, have affected the lower middle classes and a great many workers. This is the reason why no revolution has been seriously attempted ever since constitutional government was established and

¹ Julian Huxley, *Democracy Marches*, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1941, p. 35.

parliament was permitted to function freely. The Marxian conception of the class struggle never gained a foothold in Britain. The British Labor Party, while representing the interests of the working people, has been essentially conservative in its methods. Unlike the Marxists, it shares with the Conservatives the fundamental British attachment to evolutionary gradualness. This is one reason why the Labor Party has outlawed communists in its ranks. Typical of Labor's adherence in principle to British institutions was the remark of a labor leader that in the event Britain became a republic, the workers would elect the king as president.

The present British class structure is essentially that which developed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and became consolidated during the Victorian period. Even the First World War, far reaching as its effects were, did not cause fundamental changes. It should perhaps be stressed that the British have, on the whole, thought of democracy primarily as a political system of constitutionalism and parliamentarism. In other words, political democracy has been considered sufficient by the majority of the British people; economic democracy is a very new conception which has slowly come to the attention of the masses.

Ernest Bevin, Britain's foremost Labor leader and member of the British war cabinet, stated: "We must not confuse democracy with the maintenance of a particular form of economic or financial system, rather is it a condition which allows for change of the system itself and provides for such adaptation as the change in public need and opinion demands. Hence if the system is incapable of adequately providing the people with food, shelter, and the necessary amenities and opportunities for full development, democracy can by the act of election of those who favor another system, or modification of a given system, provide an opportunity for so doing."¹

On another occasion, Mr. Bevin summarized his belief in democratic ethics in even broader terms when he suggested with much idealism,

1. that we accept democracy as our guiding article of faith;
2. that we seek at all costs to maintain it, be ever ready to defend it both

¹The Rt. Hon. Ernest Bevin, *The Balance Sheet of the Future*, Robert M. McBride & Company, New York, 1941, pp. 176-177.

- within and without, and develop a great comradeship with the democracies and those who are striving for liberty throughout the world;
3. that we use the opportunities it provides to adapt our social system to secure social justice and opportunity for everyone,
 4. that we use the whole of our democratic strength to contribute to progress and the establishment of a world order;
 5. that we strive not to make giants, but to elevate the human race.¹

To be sure, these are the words of a British cabinet minister rather than of a Labor leader who used to denounce "monopolization, trustification and financial domination of the people" as preventing the achievement of equal opportunities. When he made the latter statement, Mr. Bevin held that the nation was divided into three social groups: the upper classes, the working classes actually at work, and the submerged classes on poor relief. On behalf of the poor, he rebuked parliament for balancing the budget rather than helping suffering humanity. He chided Britain's educational system for depriving the working people of its opportunities. He claimed that British class distinction was maintained by the English system of education and that it was this system which stubbornly preserved the *status quo*, despite frequent attempts to break down its rigid traditions after the end of the First World War.

Mr. Bevin is only one of the many critics of the British class system who believe that the educational system of England is to blame for the tenacity with which Britain has clung to its social injustices.

BRITISH EDUCATION UNTIL 1939

In order to understand the nature of the British social structure as it existed at the outbreak of the war in 1939, one must survey its educational system and trends. One can hardly speak of a well-defined educational philosophy unless the very lack of system be considered a philosophy. Every child was to be given a fixed minimum of training to satisfy the requirements of the state, but it was left to individual families to enrich such schooling according to their abilities and tastes in either public or private schools.

True, an increasing number of "free places" were given to intelligent children whose parents would not have been able to send them to higher schools; but the fundamental concept of education

¹ Bevin, *op. cit.*, p. 190.

was based upon the perpetuation of the social status of parents, some exceptions notwithstanding.¹

In contrast to France where education throughout the country remained under the strict supervision of a centralized agency, English education is decentralized within the framework of local self-government. The state's task is "to enforce education under the best possible conditions," and it "accordingly refrains from prescribing the details of what shall be taught, but through the conditions underlying the distribution of grants for education sets up general standards which are concerned mainly with the *externa*—all those factors that make an efficient educative process possible."² In other words, the state leaves the formulation of curricula to be dictated by local conditions and the opinions of individual headmasters. It only suggests broad outlines without systematizing them into a rigid organization.

There is, however, one aim which has been uppermost in the mind of English educators for centuries: the training of moral character. For this goal, John Locke made suggestions which have left their imprint upon English schools. His recommendations for mental and physical discipline still stand even though they have been modified. Corporal punishment is still recognized as a necessary means of character formation. The British ideas of how character can be molded into the ideal of a gentleman determine the curriculum and teaching methods. Spartan living is combined with suspicion of too individualistic an intelligence. G. B. Shaw once remarked that an Englishman thinks he is moral when he is uncomfortable. Less jestingly, Macaulay warned of the "union of high intelligence with desires," implying that a mediocre person with accepted moral standards is more valuable than an exceptional individual with unorthodox views. He thereby expressed the average Englishman's slight condescension for the "high-brow" and typi-

¹ The educational system discussed in the following paragraphs pertains to England and Wales. It is not necessarily typical of education in all parts of Britain; Scottish education, for example, inspired by John Knox's demand for a large degree of equality of opportunities in education, is less class-bound than English education. The percentage of university students in Scotland is higher than in any other European country. However, in view of the dominant position of England in determining the political fortunes of Great Britain, the discussion is limited to English education proper.

² I. L. Kandel, *Comparative Education*, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1933, p. 58.

fied popular distrust of persons who are outstanding enough to disregard traditions and go their own way. There can be no doubt that English character training has produced men who have helped build the empire, but there can also be no doubt that the strange mixture of formal discipline and hidden anti-intellectualism has become unsuitable for modern England.

Between the two world wars, three major reform attempts were made, all of them influential but not conclusive. The *Fisher Act* of 1918 tried to broaden educational opportunities for the children of the masses. Its provisions were well meant but insufficient; however, its philosophy contributed heavily toward educational emancipation. Some of its practical provisions, especially the introduction of part-time continuation schooling of vocational character, were approved but never fully executed.

The famous *Hadow Report*¹ was only a semiofficial document submitted to the Board of Education; its recommendations never became law. Yet its influence, particularly upon middle-school development, was considerable. Hadow advocated that elementary education be divided into primary and higher primary levels: primary education to be made available for all children from five to eleven, the senior level to be made compulsory for all children up to fifteen years of age and to offer a large variety of schools. The latter would include secondary education of a classical and scientific nature. This meant the organization of a unified primary school for all children and the opening of educational opportunities to children after eleven according to their abilities. It also meant that the compulsory school age should be raised to fifteen instead of fourteen. The latter point was incorporated in the *Edwards Act* of 1937. As a result of this report, middle schools (the so-called Central Schools and modern Senior schools) were fostered by many local authorities and encouraged by the Board of Education. The report also advocated a considerable addition of vocational elements in secondary curriculums. While the war of 1939 interrupted this development, it may well be continued in years to come and help break down class education.

Equal in importance to the Hadow Report of 1926 was the

¹ Prepared in 1926 by the Advisory Committee of the Board of Education under the chairmanship of Sir W. H. Hadow.

Spens Report of 1938, which proposed a further democratization of secondary education and the organization of three types of secondary schools, thus clarifying the whole structure of English post-elementary education.

The educational process, before the war, began with nursery schools for children between two and five. They were noncompulsory institutions of growing popularity but hampered by financial limitations. Compulsory school attendance started at the age of five, in certain cases six, depending upon local laws. No adolescent was permitted to leave school before the age of fourteen. Theoretically, elementary courses were divided into three phases distinguishing junior, middle, and senior grades. However, this arrangement was not compulsory. The division into infant and elementary stages, for children from five to seven and eight to fourteen respectively, was much more common. The question of coeducation was left to the discretion of the local authorities. Elementary-school graduates between fourteen and eighteen were required to participate in part-time continuation schooling. However, the execution of this decree has never been fully enforced.¹

Elementary-school pupils had the opportunity of being transferred to either the Senior or the Central schools (middle schools of utilitarian character), both of them free of charge. The Senior schools were merely an extension of the Junior schools and no entrance examination was required. They were compulsory for all those who did not pass an entrance examination to either the Central or Grammar (Secondary) schools. In order to be admitted to middle schooling, candidates, aged eleven, had to pass a "free-place examination." Those who passed were given the opportunity of being transferred to a secondary school in preparation for university study. Since the number of free places was limited to about 50 per cent of the candidates, the examinations were rather rigid. Boys and girls studying in middle schools would be trained for "utilitarian" purposes although one cannot exactly say that these schools had a definite vocational character. They stressed industrial and commercial training and offered home economics courses for girls. Adolescents were graduated at the age of fifteen or sixteen.

¹ Kandel, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

Secondary schools were predominantly nonvocational and dedicated to the liberal arts as instruments of character training and mental discipline. They had two divisions, for students from twelve to sixteen and for those from sixteen to eighteen. After the first four years, an examination had to be passed; and another "higher" examination before final graduation. Some graduates would then be transferred to universities or university colleges which were maintained from incomes of endowments and state contributions. A number of scholarships were provided for gifted students without means. Except the elementary and senior schools, all other institutions of learning charged fees. The number of free places, especially for secondary schools, increased considerably between the two wars; however, the school system as such was not free.

For students who were unsuited to academic or secondary training, there was a variety of vocational full-time schools. Most of them charged tuition but they also offered a number of free places for vocationally gifted students. A few of the junior technical schools provided by local authorities were free, being subsidized by local communities and the Board of Education. Vocational training in Britain came into its own between the two wars; the postwar reconstruction program will further enhance this development in accordance with the requirements of planning.¹

The system of private education, famous and significant for Britain, and one of the most attacked of British institutions, is scheduled for the most fundamental changes during the postwar reconstruction. With only a few free places for exceptionally gifted children, it became the privilege of those families who were willing and able to pay a high price to secure for their children the privilege of a high-class education which would in practice determine their careers to the best advantage. There existed a vast choice of private schools, from the kindergarten to the "public schools." Parents were not forbidden to have their children educated at home in preparation for one of these (secondary level) boarding schools if they so chose. Otherwise, there were specialized preparatories of more or less exclusive character. The most famous "public schools" for boys were Eton, Harrow, Rugby, and Winchester.

¹ See below, pp. 403 ff.

Ironically, the "public schools" originated as institutions for poor students and were then really public. Somehow, they developed into the most exclusive type of aristocratic boarding school existing in Britain. Their graduates have contributed heavily, one could almost say exclusively, to Britain's leadership; they preserve an *esprit de corps* throughout life. The schools are class schools *par excellence* and hence most open to attack and reform. They have remained the stronghold of tradition and conservatism.

The fundamental grievances against this educational system are aptly summarized by the Master of Balliol College, Oxford, in the following four points: (1) There is still, on the whole, one system of education for the poor and another for the rich. (2) For the poor, education ends at too early an age. (3) The conditions under which boys from the primary schools can climb the educational ladder to the universities are such that we are paying for a great blessing, democracy in the universities, with a new curse—the production of an intelligentsia in the worst sense of that term. (4) The excessive specialization of our higher secondary and university education is producing the same effect.¹

On the other hand, the author remarks that the English educational system offers the advantage of greater variety and adaptability which, as we may well add, pertained especially to progressive educational methodology and very modern experimental schools. The English educational system, decentralized as it grew up, developed its character just as haphazardly as the British constitution and the English common law. Yet it would be a mistake to assume that eager reformers might want to regiment education in the one-sided way some continental European nations chose to do. They would not consider variety an evil in itself. They would, however, refuse to accept the fact that the "decision as to which boys should go to which schools, or be trained in which system, depends not on ability or fitness, but on wealth and class."²

Adult education has been developed on a much larger scale in England than in the United States. While in Britain it was coordinated by a special Advisory Committee on Adult Education

¹ See A. D. Lindsay, "A Plan for Education," *Picture Post*, London, January 4, 1941.

² *Ibid.*

at the Board of Education, it is, in America, a stepchild of Congress and has very little money for its development.

Adult education in Britain is entirely cultural. It developed in the University Extension movement and its offspring, the Workers' Educational Association. The W.E.A., founded in 1903, has become an important institution. Artistic activities are fostered by the British Institute of Adult Education. The British Broadcasting Corporation has been helpful for "listening groups," and the Women's Institutes were especially interested in providing education for women. The activities are, for the most, of a cultural-artistic nature. Music, drama, and literature are extremely popular. In the purely educational fields, there are, in addition to the university extension courses, the People's Colleges and educational settlements. The London Working Men's College, one of the oldest, was founded in 1854 and is still well attended. In other places, for example in Sheffield, such a college was absorbed by the local university. Attempts were made to organize "a network of local colleges" which would be, at the same time, a "meeting place" and a center of educational activities. During the war, the public libraries, which offer an excellent system of library service in all towns and cities, have increasingly assisted adult-education work.

Except for the Boy Scouts, there were, up to the outbreak of war in 1939, no youth movements to speak of in Britain. Since then, a number of such organizations have been founded, mainly for the purpose of organizing all available help for the war effort. It is to be expected that these movements, if continued in one form or another, will be vastly different from any totalitarian youth movement, in fact, may offer the example of a perfect antithesis between a boy scout and a Hitler youth.

BRITISH EDUCATION AFTER 1939: THE NEW EDUCATION BILL

The British system of education has, between the two wars, striven to democratize itself. But it was only after the hardships of the war reached the shores of the British isles that the central government as well as the county and municipal authorities opened the way for a comprehensive and immediate educational reform, freeing the British people at last from the shackles of class educa-

tion, and introducing a thoroughly democratic educational philosophy.

Before the war, this tendency toward democratization had expressed itself through an increasing number of "free places" and scholarships in schools and universities. It could also be seen in the growing attention the government paid to the development of better vocational schools. It went hand in hand with the attempt to better the health of the country's youth by distributing free milk and free lunches. It meant that every student in teacher-training institutions received financial aid from the state.

As far as the war and the effects of the bombings permitted, this policy was expanded after 1939.¹ It has found its climax in the new Education Bill which the Churchill government introduced in 1943 and which was passed by Parliament in 1944, with the understanding that the proposed reforms will be postponed until, after the end of the war, enough teachers, buildings, and equipment are available.

The new Education Bill is indeed a radical change of policy when contrasted with the slow, half-hearted development of education in Britain during the past century. First of all it raises the school-leaving age from fourteen to fifteen and will further raise it to sixteen as soon as educational facilities are available. This, however, does not mean that fifteen- or sixteen-year-old youths are through with education: there will be so-called Young People's Colleges, a new type of part-time continuation training, compulsory for all who have not completed their secondary training, up to eighteen years of age.

There will be no fees for elementary and secondary education in Britain when the new bill is in force. In Scotland, faithful to tradition, all forms of post-primary education are free; England and Wales will now follow this practice. Instead of an education system which was classified into elementary, middle (vocational), secondary, and "public-school" strata, there will be one unified school system, divided into (1) elementary, (2) secondary, and (3) further education. Elementary courses will be for children up to eleven; all children willing and able may then continue to avail

¹ Cf. Walter Kotschnig, *Slaves Need No Leaders*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1943, pp. 11-19; 220-236.

themselves of secondary education and choose from a variety of academic or vocational secondary schools, which will be free of charge.

While greater stress than before will be given to religious instruction, the control of the state over religious schools—which constitute a considerable part of English schools—will be strengthened. Church authorities must conform in order to receive state subsidies. Such denominational schools which wish to remain private (as will, no doubt, the Catholic schools in Britain), must conform to the prescribed high standard of physical school requirements. In general, the system of state inspection of private schools will be compulsory instead of being left as formerly to the discretion of local authorities and the consent of the private institutions to be inspected. Youth services, particularly those introduced during the war, will be retained and developed further, including medical care, extracurricular and recreational activities, etc.

This reform will unquestionably democratize education in England to a degree hitherto unknown. The effect on the new generations is bound to be deep. There is only one gap left to fill: the future of the “public schools.” It may be expected, however, that the revolutionizing of England’s education is bound to decrease gradually the historic importance of the “school tie” and cause the famous schools like Eton, Winchester, Harrow, Rugby, and others to adapt themselves to the democratic state system of education.

Together with the plan for socializing medicine throughout the United Kingdom, the new Education Bill is certainly one of the most progressive actions Britain has taken during her entire history. It may well be indicative of a change of attitude in the mentality of the British people.¹

¹ *Educational Reconstruction*, presented by the Board of Education to Parliament in July, 1943, H. M. Stationery Office, London, 1943.

Basically, England’s policy of educational decentralization has not been changed in the new Education Bill. The interpretation of educational policies is still left to the local authorities.