Major Reforms of the Swedish Education System
1950-1975

This paper reviews the nature of the extensive educational reforms that have taken place in Sweden, and explores their causes and consequences. The study is part of a project on Educational Reform (671-19), which is coordinated by John Simmons, Policy Planning Division.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Summary</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>II. THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL BACKGROUND FOR THE REFORMS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Economic Change and the Evolution of Swedish School Provisions</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Political Interests and the Reform Process</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>III. THE COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL REFORM</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. The Reform Cornerstone: The Nine-Year Comprehensive Schools</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Experimentation and Research</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Reform Implementation</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Local Government Amalgamation and School Reform</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Class and Sex Correlates of Student Choice</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Participation in School and Classroom</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IV. LINKING THE FIRST AND SECOND REFORM STAGES: GOALS AND MEANS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. How the Old Gymnasium School was Transformed</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Fitting Educational Demand to Manpower Needs</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Rolling Reform and Decentralization</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Reducing Regional Disparities in Educational Provision</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. The Role of Adult Education and Vocational Training</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>V. THE RESTRUCTURING OF SWEDISH HIGHER EDUCATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. The Universities’ Expansion Problems</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Recruitment to &quot;Prestige&quot; and Other Faculties</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. The Production and Employment of Professionals</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. The U-68 University Restructuring Proposals</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. U-68 Reform Deliberations and Enactment</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>VI. CONCLUSION</strong></td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FOOTNOTES</strong></td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BIBLIOGRAPHY</strong></td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ia. Introduction

Why has Sweden's educational system in recent decades drawn more international attention than that of most other nations its size? We can identify three major reasons. In a regional context Sweden can be identified as the West European country that has gone furthest in disassembling traditional education institutions developed in the 19th century. In so doing, it has developed new structures of mass education which are more akin to some developed earlier in the United States and the "Socialist" countries. The Swedish case is also relatively unique in a sequential context because the component reforms were instituted in stages, starting from the lower and culminating in the highest educational levels, in a process that was systematically pursued over a 25-year period. But the most universal object of foreign interest is probably Sweden's attempt to maximize both the goals of equality and efficiency in the design of its new schools and universities. In the social-economic context, the Swedish reforms stand out because of their overt attempt to achieve social equalization of educational recruitment and the dismantling of social inequalities due to educational differentiation, while also placing strong emphasis on achieving a close fit between the credential-bearers produced by the schools, and the qualification-bearers demanded by the labor market.
EDUCATIONAL AND IDEOLOGICAL ROOTS OF THE REFORM INITIATIVES

Its record of high economic growth was a necessary, but not a sufficient, pre-condition for Sweden's choice to maximize educational expansion and reform efforts. Comparable societies, like that of West Germany, have in recent decades maintained equal or higher growth rates while not giving education similar priority. The "causes" of the greater Swedish commitment are probably the result of a complex interweaving of economic, political, social, and ideological factors. As the Western country with the best long-term record of economic growth, Sweden produced resources which Social Democratic leaders were inclined to channel heavily into public sector services. Their party, perhaps more than any other within Social Democracy, had cumulated reformist policy rewards without encountering deep societal crisis. Its leaders were thus especially strongly committed to rationalist and reformist goals. At the same time they were also committed to modifying the stratification patterns of which the credentials bestowed by a hierarchical education system were the most pervasive indicators. The party congress in 1944 drew up a post-war reform program which gave education a much higher priority than in the 1930's when labor market policy and employment had top priority. By expanding and re-shaping post-primary education they could simultaneously erode the "privileges of the few" and enlarge the "opportunities of the many". By moving to enlarge and diversify the educational population, Swedish political leaders could manifest "confidence that schooling produces desirable effects upon the growing generation and serves as a means for much-desired social progress and economic growth". 1/
As it evolved from the 1940s, the educational reform was extremely well-suited to serve as an issue which both the ideological leaders of the class-conscious workers and the pragmatic technocrats of the growth-conscious bureaucracy could agree to support as a priority effort of the Social Democratic party. The elimination of "educational privileges" constituted goals within a conflict paradigm that filled traditional mobilization needs of the labor movement. For this clientele the educational reforms were mainly rationalized in terms of the priority of social equality goals. As comprehensivization showed that working-class children benefitted from late differentiation, it brought visible proof that reforms could work their way through the bureaucracies to affect the lives of ordinary families.

At the same time reform advocacy was also forthcoming from bureaucrats and managers who perceived advantages from the perspective of an optimization model. These planners of an advanced technological society supported the dismantlement of traditional barriers as a way of utilizing the latent reserves of ability which had previously gone under-developed. The new school models—the comprehensive school, the amalgamated gymnasium school and the university oriented toward professional training—were viewed by this group as instruments for increasing the efficiency with which the educational system served the needs of the society. For them, attention was not limited to bringing about changes in school organization curricula, but extended to seeking to improve how other agencies in the society could effectively utilize the kinds of graduates that the schools turned out.
REFORM STEPS AND THE NATURE OF CONFLICTS

This study focuses on the major structural reforms implemented during the 195-1975 period, with a particular focus on what impact the increase in the number of secondary and university graduates had both on other structures within the educational system, and on the labor markets, particularly in the public sector. The most important reforms discussed can be schematically presented in the following manner:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Level</th>
<th>Reform Goals</th>
<th>Date Initiated</th>
<th>Date Concluded</th>
<th>New Situation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary and</td>
<td>Integration of all types of schools</td>
<td>1950</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>9-year Grundskola sole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Secondary</td>
<td>through 9th grade</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>school model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Secondary</td>
<td>Amalgamation of academic and vocational schools</td>
<td>1960s</td>
<td>early 1970s</td>
<td>Amalgamated Gymnasieskola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University High School</td>
<td>Rationalization, Vocationalization, Reorganization</td>
<td>early</td>
<td>late</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1960s</td>
<td>1970s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among the costs engendered by these reforms were the greatly enlarged financial expenditures engendered by the expansion of educational plants and personnel, and the handling of conflicts. The reformers were favored by the fact that educational decision-making in Sweden was highly centralized at the national level. Since teacher and other interest groups were primarily organized on the national level, and focused their major efforts there, political battles and negotiations fought out at the national level did not have to be repeated at the regional or local level, as they
did more in other countries. The fact that the great bulk of additional 
expenditures incurred by the reforms were covered by the national budget, 
also reduced the efforts needed to win the acquiescence of local governments 
to the necessary tax increases.

As elsewhere, Swedish secondary school teachers vigorously resisted 
the introduction of the comprehensivization reforms, and won the support of 
other cultural elites for their argument that the quality of education would 
be diluted if early differentiation according to scholastic aptitude were 
sacrificed. But characteristics of the Swedish interest group and party 
systems limited their ability to organize pro-status quo coalitions. Thus 
the fact that working-class and lower middle-class interests were as well, 
or better, organized than middle-class ones allowed the former to effec-
tively join in the "battle against institutionalized privilege," to quote 
one of the slogans from the 1950s. Inexorably the logic of numbers prevailed 
over that of claimed expertise, as mass organizations particularly the 
labor unions utilized their numerous positions of influence to build a 
majority consensus behind the reform thrust of the government. Thus by the 
time the comprehensivization decision was finalized in 1962, even most of the 
non-Socialist parliamentarians felt constrained to vote affirmatively.

The teacher and other providers most directly affected by the 
subsequent reforms at the upper secondary and university level, although 
outspoken in their criticisms, realized the futility of an interest group 
confrontation on the political level which would be perceived as one of 
elites against the masses. Hence they tried to utilize their stronger 
positions on the labor-relations tier, with the result that conflicts
between the public employers and the professional unions became unusually intense during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Thus dissatisfaction with loss of status became transposed into conflicts over salary levels in a period when the relative incomes of the more highly educated suffered a relative decline.

SOME EFFECTS OF THE REFORMS

The rapidity of change in the Swedish social and economic environment impedes the analytical attempts to show how "causes" in the educational system induced "effects" in the social and economic system. Effects of changes in one school sector on the utilization of opportunities in a higher one are more clear-cut, and are developed more intensively in this study. Here the Swedish case offers exceptionally rich data on the conditions under which student interest in gaining additional educational credentials can oscillate sharply over the short-term. In the mid-1960s Swedish education planners were appalled that the students coming out of the comprehensivized schools were opting for the "academic" upper secondary and university programs to a much higher degree than anticipated. Eight years later these same study courses in the Gymnasieskolan and the universities for some years had a rapidly declining number of students. Changes in job market prospects had dissuaded many students from utilizing opportunities to which they were entitled. Many of these "aborted matriculants" were of working class origin, thus for some time undercutting the government's goal of equalizing social recruitment to higher education.
The processes through which "macro" societal goals—such as the expansion of the educated population and the "need" for more scientists—are translatable into decisions at the "micro" level, where the individual student decides to go to upper secondary school, which "line" to choose there, and which university faculties to try to gain admission, can assume varying forms. In societies where selection and cooptation are mandated from above, the linkage operates through official quotas and candidate assignments. Sweden presents a case where the student retains considerable individual choice, but is faced by a highly rationalized set of alternative school routes, through which planners try to "steer" him into an option which will have not immutable, but highly probable, consequences on career choices a few years later. In most Western countries the career prospects implicit in educational choices loom much more prominently for youth in the mid-1970s than they did a few years ago. But in Sweden educational planners and the choice-making youth have been engaged in a particularly exquisite set of counter-gyrations as symbols and options were changed to reflect changes in values and prospective occupational openings.

Fitting the matrices of individual choice to projections of societal needs for trained manpower has been the focus of Swedish efforts at educational planning and social engineering. Its public policy can be seen as experimenting with how societal incentives can be substituted for family background determinants of crucial choice-making. Most Swedish students from working-class backgrounds now can choose among a larger number of options at the lower selection points than was the case earlier. Most children from middle-class families now probably have fewer options at the later selection points than they used to have. The overall effects of the reforms has probably been
to increase most students' options at the lower levels, but to decrease effective choices at the higher levels. It was partly to attempt to alleviate the second situation that the higher education reforms of the 1970 have stressed greater emphasis on "continuing education" and on new "sandwich" combinations of work and education experiences. This adaptation is clearly also intended to provide additional vent-holes which can allow students to alter the direction of earlier choices, and employers and planners to correct mistaken projections of what kind of skills would be required when.

THE SCOPE OF THE REFORMS AND THEIR IMPLEMENTATION

What is the most unusual about the Swedish educational reform efforts of the 1950-1975 period is the timing and pace with which they were moved from planning to implementation stage, and the continuity of the reform effort. Qualitatively, countries like the United States were ahead of Sweden in adopting the comprehensive school model. Quantitatively, Sweden was among European leaders in expanding post-primary education. Countries like France and West Germany were also expanding their university systems at high rates in the 1960s. But in these countries, periods of intensive efforts at structural reform tended to be concentrated in medium-term periods of some five years, during which attention was focused on one or two educational levels. Afterwards education was displaced at least temporarily by other policy concerns as a prime area of political and public concern. In Sweden, by contrast, education remained continuously near the very top of the political agenda for almost three decades; only in Sweden was the slippery post of education minister a stepping-stone to the prime ministers' job, as in the cases of Tage Erlander and Olof Palme. Consequently the entire Swedish school system was systematically reshaped within a single generation.
A hallmark of the Swedish educational reorganization is how the expansion at all post-primary levels was fairly consistently carried forward in line with the following principles:

(i) The abolition of postponement of structural differentiation: Keeping children of varying social backgrounds and ability levels together longer in the same school, the same program, or even the same class was pursued with the intention of equalizing the chances of their school types, the integration of upper-secondary schools, the discouragement or even prohibition of practices like streaming and tracking, and the postponement of student choices.

(ii) The discouragement of invidious distinctions between types of schools and their pupils: Utilizing changes in the official nomenclature as well as powers of school reorganization, authorities have striven successfully to erase such traditional distinctions as those between "academic" and "vocational" education and to a lesser extent those between "theoretical" and "practical" training. This goal was furthered in 1968 by the abolition of the studentexamen the traditional matriculation exam for university entrance, the passing of which had distinguished "academic" achievers from those holding sub-academic credentials. This thrust has also been implicit in recent efforts to make access to prestigious advanced education courses conditional not only on high school grades, but also on records of work experience.
(iii) The attempt to increase flexibility in the educational system, despite a highly centralized system of administration: In this context considerations of social equity, based on the calculation that longer periods of open options favored students from the lower strata, has to contend with pressures for rationalization. The avoidance of sharp distinctions between general academic and vocational programs meant that few opportunities were definitively foreclosed. But the penchant for planning meant that incentives and permutations were frequently changed as bureaucrats reacted to student decisions on whether and how to continue their education— as manifested in choice among numerous further study options.

The rapidity with which Sweden transformed itself into an industrialized, urbanized society during the first half of the 20th century particularly after 1940 was unparalleled in Europe, and over this period its economic growth was matched only by that of Japan. But where Japan had gradually broadened its educational pyramid to encompass larger proportions of its age groups, the expansion initiated in the late 1940s and early 1950s in Sweden is projected to radically change the educational profile of the population during the final quarter of the century. As Table I-2 illustrates, the length of schooling at different kinds of schools is affecting successive age cohorts. The proportion of the population who had no more than a six or seven year elementary education and some vocational schooling amounted to more than 85 percent of those 60 to 64 years old in 1965, 75 percent of those 40-44 years old, and about 50 percent of the 20-24 year olds. By 1990, these proportions are expected to gradually decline to 75 percent of the 60-64 year
olds, 30 percent of the 40-44 year olds, and nearly zero for the age groups under 35 years of age. By contrast the proportion going on to secondary gymnasium schooling is expanding very rapidly for the middle and younger-age groups in the last third of the century. Finally the proportion completing university level education is expanding from only 2-3 percent of the older age groups in 1964, to some 20-25 percent of the middle-aged by 1990.

Diagram I-1

Swedish Educational Composition Classified by Age and Level of Education from 1965 to 1990

- Fullständig examen från universitet eller högskola
- Gymnasium, fackskola, nya gymnasieskolor samt ev. yrkesutbildning
- Grundskola, realskola, flickskola, folkhögskola samt ev. yrkesutbildning
- Folksskola, fortsättningsskola samt ev. yrkesutbildning
CHAPTER II: THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL BACKGROUND FOR THE REFORMS


There was little in earlier Swedish educational or cultural development which would have led observers to anticipate that it would become a prime focus of world educational attention from the mid-20th century. For in the 19th century Sweden was not only very much on the cultural periphery of Europe, but its educational models were largely imported from the larger European societies. German influence was strong after 1870 particularly as regards secondary and university education. Partly for that reason Swedish school reforms in the 19th and early 20th centuries had often come later than those of Denmark and Norway.

At the turn of the 20th century, the proportion of the Swedish work force in the industrial sector expanded more rapidly than in Denmark and Norway. Where in 1870 Sweden had the most agriculture-based economy, by 1930 it had the least primary-based employment as compared to Norway and Denmark. In these two generations the industrial proportion of the work force tripled—from 13 percent to 39 percent. Most of these workers were graduates of the compulsory elementary schools which had been introduced in 1842. But by the turn of the century pressure to break down the class-based barriers which separated the elementary from the more advanced secondary schools was mounting. Employment in the service sector had stayed static and not kept pace with the doubling of industrial sector employment between 1870 and 1900. This caused Sweden to lag in terms of the division of labor prerequisite for economic development, especially when compared to the other Scandinavian countries which had moved more quickly to open up educational opportunities.
that would allow more young people to move into official and private service jobs. 2/ "Big industry ... has during the past generation swept down with the speed of a hurricane upon the country," declared the Director General of the Board of Education in 1918 as he called for "the nation and individuals to acquire technical knowledge." 3/

The question of how far pupils from different classes should gather that new knowledge in the same classrooms had come to be settled in organizational rearrangements over the preceding 25 years. In 1894 pupils who had attended the first three years of elementary school could enter the grammar schools. This constituted the first small link between the previously completely separate academic and general education systems. However, in 1904 middle-class pressure persuaded the Riksdag to create a 6-year realskola which was organizationally separate from, and built on the first three years of, the folkskola. This trend toward differentiation was further developed in 1918 with the creation of new trade schools which provided two-step vocational continuation courses for male students who had completed the folkskola. Around these new school forms developed a modern Swedish version of the standard European tripartite educational system. A proposal to continue compulsory joint education until age 13 failed to win acceptance in the 1920s. Instead the crucial selection came to be made already at the beginning of the fifth school year. Thus most pupils were launched at age 12 or 13 into one of three distinct school tracks which led to credentials of sharply different social value. 4/ Table I presents the enrollment figures for the five kinds of schools in the primary and secondary sectors in the period between 1900 and 1970:
Table II-1: Enrollments in Swedish School Types, 1900-1970
(in Thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period or Year</th>
<th>Children in 7-14 year Age Range</th>
<th>Folkskola (later Grundskola)</th>
<th>Middle School</th>
<th>Real- skola</th>
<th>Higher Real- skola</th>
<th>Gymnasia (later Integrated Gymnasi Skola)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901/05</td>
<td>858.1</td>
<td>752.9</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906/10</td>
<td>882.3</td>
<td>778.1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911/14</td>
<td>912.2</td>
<td>804.8</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916/20</td>
<td>939.6</td>
<td>734.0</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921/25</td>
<td>906.7</td>
<td>775.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926/30</td>
<td>872.0</td>
<td>807.4</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931/35</td>
<td>834.1</td>
<td>813.2</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936/40</td>
<td>(730.0)</td>
<td>716.0</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>664.8</td>
<td>615.6</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>777.5</td>
<td>665.7</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>74.2</td>
<td>20.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>965.0</td>
<td>900.3</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>37.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>934.5</td>
<td>837.4</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>124.0</td>
<td>71.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>861.0</td>
<td>867.7</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>113.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>858.3</td>
<td>935.7</td>
<td>-9</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>142.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Up to the 1950s industrialization in Sweden was accompanied with socio-demographic phenomena not too different from those in other countries. The urban population of the population doubled every four decades, from 12.9 percent in 1870 to 24.8 percent in 1910, to 47.5 percent in 1950. By 1950 industry accounted for twice the employment that agriculture did, and the proportion accounted for by the latter was to sink to less than 5 percent in the 1970s. One economist generalizes about the economic developments during the century in which Sweden climbed to the top rank in per capita GNP among Western countries that: "Growth and industrialization in Sweden during the last one hundred years is an example of successful export-led, or 'export-based'
growth in the context of a private enterprise economy with a remarkable innovative capacity of private entrepreneurs and with a rather "liberal", market-oriented economic policy—combined with an elaborate, publicly operated infrastructure in transportation, education, health, etc.,—and later on a rather comprehensive social security system". 5/

Sweden's most distinct economic system characteristic is that in four decades of Social Democratic rule an expanding public sector has not significantly infringed on the private ownership of industry, which has remained to 94 percent in private hands. A high degree of ownership concentration in industry came to be supplemented by tight organization of all larger employers, which however came to bargain increasingly peacefully with an equally centralized union movement. In this context Sweden made a successful transition from a situation in which in 1950 two-thirds of its labor force were employed in the primary and secondary sectors, to one in which by 1975 a majority of the work force was employed in the provision of services. Most marked in the latter have been the differences in the growth rates of private and public sector employment. While employment in trade and other private services increased modestly by some 20-30 percent, employment in public services increased by about 160 percent. Thus the proportion of output produced in the public sector gradually increased from 15 to close to 25 percent between 1950 and 1975. Various economic functions have been quite differently nationalized in the Swedish setting. Thus production is nationalized to only about 25 percent, resource use to about 30 percent, but income directing * had by 1970 been nationalized to about 51 percent. 6/

* I.e., the portion of GNP taken up by public consumption, public investment, transfer payments, and financial savings.
Under the Social Democratic influence income directing has been oriented with an egalitarian emphasis. Traditionally income inequalities in Sweden had been as marked in the public as in the private sectors. Thus in the 1880s cabinet members had incomes thirty-five times greater than rural school teachers, whose income was also outranked by that of university professors by 10:1. These income differences were partly linked to differences in educational credentials. Thus even by the 1950s the Social Democrats found that due to credential-linked differentials in public employment salaries, income inequalities did not increase during a period of rapid public sector employment growth in the 1950s and 1960s.

Ideological pressures to attempt to reshape a selective and class-biased educational system in line with its general aims of social and economic equalization were among the factors which caused the Swedish Social Democrats to give increasing priority to educational reform. Critical comments from an article by a left-wing British writer published in 1961 bring the issue into focus:

"Now the stark fact is that social mobility in Sweden, after 28 years of Social Democratic government, is as limited as in the self-proclaimed capitalist countries .... A 'one-third--one level' development is the rule there as elsewhere; that is, only one-third of working-class sons get white-collar jobs, the rest do the same work as their fathers. The full scandal of SAP indifference to social equality appears if one look sat university recruitment figures; for in our societies universities are the notorious single draw-bridge to the fastness of managerial and professional position... In 1956/7, only 14.3 percent of all freshmen came from working-class families..
The present situation points to the existence of deep, congealed social divisions in Sweden which Social Democratic policy has scarcely even begun to disturb." 7/

IIb. Political Interests and the Reform Process

How should a dominant political party form coalitions with interest groups so as to assure the broader acceptance of a controversial school reform program? Sweden's experience is of special interest to the governments of many "new states," because like many of them and more so than any other Western countries, its central government had been continuously under the leadership of the same party--the Social Democratic party. Four other parties have energetically competed in elections, but looking at important parliamentary votes in the 1950s and 1960s, one finds none of them voting cohesively against any of the major reform proposals. Some observers have therefore concluded that the government party had somehow achieved unanimous concensual acceptance of its program. But Wilhelm Sjostrand, a leading academic critic of the reforms, correctly points out that "Nothing can be more misleading. The development in Sweden has been conditioned by political forces, with the Social Democratic party being supported by the Centre Party and radical members of the Liberal party...." He points out that the less influential parties had been persuaded to compromise, even though "among a considerable number of the secondary school teachers there has been a strong negative opinion towards some of the reforms." 8/

The Social Democratic successes in the Swedish Riksdag would not have been possible if reliance had been only on party whip pressure for mindless support of the party line. Nor would the made-to-order exhortations
of party ideologists alone have sufficed to influence a critical public opinion, vulnerable to influence by the other side. Rather, the Social Democrats persevered because their nine-year comprehensive school was projected as the culmination of a long struggle to bridge the gulfs within the traditional school system. The Social Democrats did not take interest in school reforms until 1918. Before that the Liberal Party was the main proponent. Fridtjuv Berg was Minister of Education in 1905-09 and 1911-14. His program for decades structured a see-saw battle between those who wanted to "up-grade" the primary school, and those who sought to protect the elite symnasium. Reform forces succeeded for the first time in 1894 by making possible student transfer from the public elementary to the academic secondary school. A decade later they suffered a setback when the tripartite system was completed with the creation of the realskola at the lower secondary level. \[9/\] Thus for decades to come the lower secondary area was the embattled ground of the forces of reform and the status quo.

The Swedish school commissions and education ministers of the 1940s and 50s were able to count on strong allies among the elementary school teachers and the larger union federations. The political climate after 1945 gave the elementary teacher associations an advantage over the realskola and gymnasium teachers, and their support of the 1948 reform proposals was strong. The former had a vested interest in the abolition of transfer from elementary to secondary already after grade 4 to 5.

The elementary teachers were ideologically and organizationally well placed to help mobilize a powerful supportive coalition. They were traditionally well represented in both national and local legislatures, and there were even town councils in which the chairman and both vice-chairman, drawn
from three different parties, were elementary teachers. A strong constituent union of the Central Organization of Salaried Employees (TCO; 500,000 members), they were able to influence a numerous voting bloc of Liberals and Social Democrats. Their links to the popular movements, as represented by the large Cooperative Society and the powerful Trade Union Federation, were built on a mutual interest in the "battle against institutionalized privilege". Their attitude in favor of reform was reinforced by the realization that the establishment of a common lower secondary cycle would open the way for "a partial reduction of dualism in the two teacher levels, more favorable conditions of advancement... and for the long-cherished goal of achieving parity of prestige and training with the elite corps of university-trained secondary school teachers." 

The white-collar federation to which the elementary teachers belonged, TCO, was exceptionally successful in having its members distributed within the parliamentary parties. In 1963, it could count 59 members in the Parliament, compared to 24 for the Professional federation, SACO, and 75 for LO, the manual union federation. But whereas the SACO and LO members were concentrated to over 90 percent respectively on the non-Socialist and Social Democratic sides, TCO representatives were more evenly distributed, with 38 on the Social Democratic and 21 on the non-Socialist party benches. Thus as successive school reforms came before parliament, TCO representatives were able to ally on most questions with LO representatives to promote the reforms not only within the Social Democratic, but also especially within the Liberal and Farmer (later Center) parties, which often left the Conservative (later Moderate) party the only one to be responsive to the voices urging resistance to the reforms.
The interest group party linkage was also important in regard to the composition of the school committees which worked out the reform drafts. Starting in the 1950s the school commissions differed from preceding ones in that they were predominantly made up of educational bureaucrats and party politicians. Representatives of the teacher organizations were more seldom included than they had been in the 1940s. In the case of the 1957 school commission, which prepared the ground for the 1962 decision to adopt the comprehensive school as the general model, an attempt of the secondary teachers union, to be represented on the committee was rebuffed. That committee was composed of three Social Democratic and three non-Social Democratic parliamentarians, and one each representatives from LO, the employers' association and the Ministry. After the committee's report was endorsed by most of the large organizations, the secondary school teachers could only resort to public protests, which in the end swayed only some of the Conservatives to vote against the reform. That party disavowed the compromise which its representatives on the committee had agreed to, and proved responsive to teacher criticism. As the party chairman, Gunnar Heckscher, declared: "Teacher protests made it clear to us that if we simply went along and accepted the Visby compromise, teachers would have looked upon this as more or less treason to principles which we, so to speak, might be expected to defend." 12/.

The Swedish Secondary School teacher organization (LR) thus was not successful in retarding the reform movement once the rest of "Organization Sweden" had begun to move toward a pro-reform consensus. The peak professional association to which they belonged, SACO, was rather isolated, and banked on the hope that the research findings based on the comprehensive
school models would bear out their dire warnings and lead to a reversal of policy. Instead, they were swamped with research findings which demonstrated that achievement losses were minimal, and were compensated for by numerous social and learning gains for the majority. After the 1962 act finalized the nine-year comprehensive school, the secondary teachers decided to collaborate more positively in planning the revision of the upper secondary cycle.

But what about the bureaucratic personnel whose task it was to implement the successive reform steps? Up to the end of the 1950s the National School Board bureaucracy had remained strongly divided, with senior staff members often at odds with the pro-comprehensive board director. It was said that the divisions were even manifested in the board lunchroom, where the factions sat at differing tables. Finally in the 1960s personnel changes brought the pro-reform bureaucratic group into clear dominance. The executive secretary and driving force of the 1957 school committee, Jonas Orring, was appointed in 1962 deputy director and later director general of the Board. The department heads under him were changed, with two of them recruited from outside the board. At the next lower level, eleven of the seventeen division heads were changed, with eight of the new appointees coming from outside the agency. "The end result, aside from a new lunchroom seating arrangement, was an agency of 'progressively minded' officials, that is, officials committed to the philosophy behind the reform." 13/
CHAPTER III: THE COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL REFORM

IIIa. The Reform Cornerstone: The Nine-Year Comprehensive School

The blueprint for the first large step in Swedish educational reforms was submitted in 1948 by the 1946 School Commission. (In Sweden, committees are tagged by the year in which they were established; a point to keep in mind when we later refer, for instance, to how the U-(19)68 commission submitted proposals in 1973, which were embodied in legislation passed in 1975.) Its proposals called for the creation of a nine-year comprehensive school (Enhetsskola), which was to "originally integrate" and replace all previous schools catering to pupils in age range from seven to sixteen. It would thus replace not only the previous elementary school (Folkskola), but also the Realskola (lower secondary school) as well as various educational schools covering this age range.

The scope of the proposal was ambitious in several respects, including that of cost, since it presupposed the construction of many new and larger school buildings. In terms of selection processes, its crucial and radical aspect rested on the proposal that the first six grades of the school would bar "streaming" or other forms of differentiation, and that the school would remain organizationally undifferentiated even during the 7th and 8th grades. Although electives could be chosen beginning with the 7th grade, it was only in the 9th grade that clear divisions into three different "lines" was projected.

Perhaps the Swedes chose to channel much of their resources into so large and extensive a cornerstone for the new system, partly because they display a general penchant toward equating being "modern" with largeness and
inclusiveness. But the idea of keeping pupils together for a full eight or nine years was rooted in an alternative educational model which had been vying for recognition for a long time. This model particularly challenged the conception that most pupils had either "theoretical" or "practical" learning potentials. It rejected the early "creaming off" of the most gifted because this would deprive the "practical occupations" of talented people, but also because it would inhibit the maturation of the potentials constituting theoretical abilities. 14/ Finally, the politics of reform implementation and planning buttressed the case for a broad reform thrust which would unsettle many established interests. By uprooting the boundary lines between primary and secondary education, the reformers opened the door to a large-scale restructuring of interest group attachments, which was very important in a highly organized society.

IIIb. Experimentation and Research

Parliamentary acceptance in 1950 of a set of guidelines for the development of the school system came without intense party confrontation, mainly because its sponsors pursued the tactic of not asking for a fixed commitment to the comprehensive mode, but rather acceptance of a ten-year program of experimentation in which the new school model could be tried out in practice. Those who maintained attachments to traditional concepts such as "a fixed reservoir of talent," and the "necessity of early differentiation," could accept this compromise in the hope that the experimentation phase would reveal the weaknesses of the reform model. The adulterated wording of the motion stated that comprehensive schools were only to be introduced "according to the extent the planned experimental activities prove its suitability." 15/
A large-scale testing of cognitive development under the new and the traditional school types, conducted in Stockholm in the late 1950s, served to undermine the notion that the "talented few" would necessarily suffer from longer participation in an undifferentiated system. An elaborate arrangement within the Stockholm school system permitted the comparison of knowledge levels of sixth to ninth-year classes in non-differentiated schools, with those of equivalent class levels in "positively" and "negatively" selected classes. After allowing for differences in social and intellectual background, the results showed that by and large students who stayed on in the undifferentiated classes did not have lower achievement. By contrast some students of working-class background improved by staying in the "comprehensivized" groups. These research reports, which were almost too good to be true, were published shortly before parliament voted on changing the comprehensive school from an experimental to a standard school model. They had the effect of depriving reform critics of their chief weapons, and also served to calm the fears of the uncommitted. 16/

Also influential during the final discussion on the comprehensive model was a study which investigated the relationship between student age and the development of individual ability and interest profiles. Findings on the spread between different ability factors within the same individuals tended to argue against grouping students homogenously on the basis of general ability. Similarly, the profile spread between different areas of interest showed a consistent increase of intra-individual differences by age. The implication was that, if the comprehensive school could offer a more individualized choice of subjects and programs, student interests could be maintained even within a more heterogenous group setting. 17/
Other studies conducted during the 1950-1962 period, when comprehensive schools in some districts coexisted with selective systems elsewhere, determined whether the academic ambitions of pupils were raised more in either of the settings. Thus, as part of the continuing follow-up study of the effects of the reforms, a stratified 10 percent random sample of pupils born in 1948 were asked in the sixth grade whether they intended at age 19 to take the examination which would qualify them for entrance to the university. In the "parallel" school systems only sixteen percent answered affirmatively, while in the comprehensive schools 27 percent did so. Students' choices were still predominantly affected by their family background; however, in the comprehensive school districts the gaps between the aspirations of the children of professional parents, and those of farmer and manual worker parents, were somewhat reduced. 18/

By and large the Swedish education research findings of the late 1950s and early 1960s lent support to those who viewed the impact of the proposed reforms optimistically. They suggested that the price that had to be paid for the achievement of social integration was rather modest, and that a coordinated program of further research and planning could cope with problems engendered by the reform at the level of the individual and the classroom.
IIlc. **Implementing the Reforms**

It would lie outside the scope of this paper to attempt to characterize the recommendations of each of the education policy committees which were active in the reform development. However, the diagram below indicates when their reports were published, how they related to ensuing parliamentary resolutions, and how the comprehensive school reform came to be linked to the reform of upper secondary education.

**Figure III-1**

*Study Commission Reports and Parliamentary Decisions Relating to Swedish School Reforms 1944-1964*

- 1940 School Committee
  - SOU 1944:20
- 1946 School Commission
  - SOU 1948:27
  - Prop. 1950:70
  - 1950 Parliament votes experimental comprehensive school
- 1957 Preparatory Committee
  - SOU 1961:30
  - Prop. 1962:54
  - 1962 Parliament votes 9-year compulsory school
- 9-year compulsory school curriculum (SO 1962)
- Decision on reform 1953
- 1960 Preparatory Committee for the academic-lines high school
- 1962 Prep. Committee for continuation school
- SOU 1963:42
  - Prop. 1964:71
- SOU 1963:50
- Academic-lines high school curriculum (SO 1964 a)
- Continuation school curriculum (SO 1964 b)
Table I-4 presents the data which illustrate the spread of the comprehensive school model and its gradual replacement of its predecessors: the *Folkskola* and the lower secondary schools. It indicates how gradually increasing proportions of the students were enrolled in integrated classrooms within districts that participated in the growing experimental program. By the time that Parliament agreed to accept the comprehensive school as the standard model in 1962, the number of pupils in the *Enhetsskola* already exceeded those still enrolled within the "old" *Folkskola*. At this time it was decided to adopt the *Grundskola* name for the new school, partly to distinguish the final apothesis from the *Enhetsskola* label associated with the experimental period. 19/

The diffusion of the new school model proceeded very rapidly during the 1960s, leading up to its universal implementation by 1971.
Table III-1

The Development of the Enhetsskola/Grundskola from 1950 to 1970

A. "Experimental" Phase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Experimental Districts</th>
<th>Experimental Classes (Total)</th>
<th>Number of Enhet/Grund-</th>
<th>Pupils in 'Old' Folkskola Classes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1949/50</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>2,483</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955/56</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>3,394</td>
<td>84,941</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958/59</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>8,036</td>
<td>194,175</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961/62</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>18,665</td>
<td>436,595</td>
<td>399,658</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. "Universalization" Phase

| Year  | | | |
|-------|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1963/64 | | | 603,249 | 252,774 |
| 1966/67 | | | 829,968 | 61,155 |
| 1968/69 | | | 903,885 | 7,489 |
| 1970/71 | | | 954,038 | 445 |

IIIId. Local Government Amalgamation and School Reform

One of the achievements attributed to comprehensivization lay in making secondary school opportunities more uniform throughout the country. Realization of this goal involved two crucial steps; firstly, the elimination of earlier regional, and particularly urban-rural differences in school provision; and secondly the reorganization of local governments so that they would be in a position to cope with the financial and administrative problems of operating the enlarged comprehensive schools, and in many cases, also the gymnasium schools.

Earlier Swedish national reforms had often run into implementation problems, because the often rather small communities could not raise the financial means to carry out what the law ordained. Thus in 1936 the Riksdag
had decided that a seven-year instead of six-year primary school should be compulsory throughout the country. But in 1946, ten years later, over 40 percent of the pupils in rural districts were still attending six-year schools, while in the more well-to-do towns 40 percent of the pupils were attending eight-year schools. More communities were able to better provide for their pupils as the result of an initial amalgamation wave which eliminated 1500 small communes by reducing the number of Swedish communes from some 2,500 in 1951 to about 1,000 in the late 1940s. But when the nine-year comprehensive schools, with their standard size of 1,200 pupils, were adopted as a standard in 1962, there were still numerous small communes which had as few as 200 pupils within their boundaries.

The ability to provide schools of more similar size and resources was greatly aided by a second commune amalgamation wave which was ordained by the Riksdag in 1964, or shortly after the nine-year schools were finalized. This time, the issue of number of pupils was in the forefront of planning considerations, which eventually lead to a decision to encourage communes to fuse into commune blocks having a minimum population of 8,000 inhabitants. These amalgamations came to be implemented in the course of the next decade, and were essentially concluded by 1975. The enlarged communes were intended to have both the population and financial resources to maintain larger schools. This plan was successful insofar as by 1975 all enlarged communes were running at least nine-year comprehensive schools, while about half were also operating full-scale gymnasium schools.

In 1972, a commission on the State, the School and the Municipalities was constituted to reconsider the division of responsibilities in the education sector. It was charged with seeking the best balance between the need
for central regulation and scope for local initiatives. Like other commissions which were simultaneously considering the greater devolution of power to sub-national levels, its deliberations were somewhat polarized between the Social Democratic defense of central authority and the non-socialist parties' attempt to push for greater local powers. The latter's ability to take the offensive was somewhat limited by the fact that their natural allies, the secondary school teachers association, were opposed to an expansion of the hiring powers of county and local school boards. Their experience had shown that, since the 1958 reform had removed principals from schools board membership, the boards had shown increasing tendencies to select new principals from among teachers in their own school system, and not to give due consideration to applicants from elsewhere.

IIIe. Class and Sex Correlates of Student Choice

The fast growth in demand for further education, fed by the broader recognition of educational opportunities that came with the reforms, proved difficult to channel into the targeted openings. By the mid-1960s vastly larger proportions of parents, including working-class parents, wanted their children to go on to secondary and university education. In line with this orientation, pupils in the 1960s vastly over-enrolled in the "pre-gymnasium" courses of the ninth year of comprehensive school, and greatly under-enrolled in many of the eight other 'lines' which were to lead to vocational and continuation schools. Thus in 1968-69, 43 percent of ninth-graders were enrolled in the 'pre-gymnasium' line, meaning that many of them could not be accepted when they applied to gymnasium. Furthermore, acceptance tended to be skewed in favor of middle-class children—in one area 62 percent of the applicants came from social group one, 32 percent from social group...
two, and only 17 percent from social group three were eventually accepted. 21/
Scrutiny of student enrollment data at this stage led a German scholar to con-
clude that "The distribution of the pupils for the various lines shows clearly
that we are not dealing with a selection based on specialized interest . . .
Rather they justify the supposition that the selections were mostly based on
social status and the prestige calculations of the parents." 22/

In the long-term perspective one of the challenges facing the designers
of the school reforms was whether they would be able to bring about not only
changes in the class basis, but also in the sex basis, of occupational re-
cruitment. Swedish girls and women had been liberated from cultural role
stereotypes well before most had the opportunity to eclipse sex roles in
occupations. When the school reforms were being implemented, Swedish women
did not have significantly greater representation in predominantly male
occupations than they did elsewhere in Europe. In 1960 more than 95 percent
of all Swedish telephone operators, nurses and clothing workers were women,
while less than 5 percent of managers or technical personnel in manufacturing
were females. 23/ Professions like those of pharmacists were nearly wholly
female, while those linked to engineering and other technical jobs included
only minute representation of women. Women's incomes were more predominantly
affected by being employed in the less-well paid industries, or in lower level
jobs in other industries. Hourly earnings of women were on average only some
70-75 percent those of men workers. 24/ In 1966, 80 percent of all fully
employed men in the 24-64 age group were earning more than Skr 20,000, while
70 percent of all fully employed women were earning less than that amount. 25/
The educational system was harnessed to the task of reducing the unequal position of women on the labor market. Included in the 1962 comprehensive curriculum guidelines was the provision that "girls should be made aware that female labor can also make considerable contributions in those sectors which are approached by technical and mathematical-scientific studies. Girls whose interests in this direction should be encouraged to cultivate them." Increased energy has been devoted to vocational counseling in the eighth grade, when students with the assistance of their parents begin to elect certain areas of study, so that the traditional role patterns will not be reinforced. A Parliamentary revision of the elementary school curriculum in 1968 made both home economics and handicraft classes obligatory for both sexes up to and including the sixth grade. Also, a revision of textbooks and teaching materials that maintain typical notions of male and female work has been undertaken by the Swedish Women's Labor Market Board.

Attempts to encourage employers to hire women for previously "male" jobs met with some success. The National Labor Market Board conducted a survey of 146 large and medium-size industrial firms and discovered that between 1960 and 1965 women had been recruited to almost 100 previously "male" jobs. The leaders in this movement were the metal and engineering industries, lathe operating, drilling, machining, welding, metal-pressing and casting, foundry works. Women had been employed as truck drivers, crane operators, sprayers, works carpenters, painters, inspectors, assembly workers, and stockroom and warehouse workers. Over one-half of the firms employing women in these new positions stated that they planned to employ more women, implying their satisfaction with the results of women workers. The number of women employed as bus drivers, ticket collectors, train conductors and taxi drivers
increased in these years. But a shortage of men applicants is the probable main reason. Even with these beginning changes in the overall labor market structure, by 1972 women still seldom chose vocational school, except in the area of nursing and in the art trade schools, where they represent nearly half of the total number of students. Teacher-training for kindergartens and the lowest grades of the comprehensive have remained dominated by women, and in the former continuation school, 95 percent of the students in the technical stream were men, while 75 percent of the students in the social stream were women. 27/

IIIf. Participation in School and Classroom

The need to present changed curricular contents to class groups whose composition also changed greatly in the course of the reforms, sharply challenged the adaptive capacity of Swedish teachers, especially at the lower secondary level. After new school structures were legislated, complex curricular reforms tested and adopted, and revised instructions issued down the educational hierarchy, it was still the teacher's relationship with the pupils in his class which was most crucial to the learning process. At this level, many foreign observers of the goals and techniques of Swedish school reforms have detected a particular gap between aims and achievements.

The fact that a child's motivation toward cognitive achievement declines as he proceeds from the initial school year to the higher stages is a widely noted phenomenon. Swedish educational reformers have not been unaware of the attendant psychological problems, and indeed numerous teaching plans which would place greater stress on techniques like group instruction and cooperative learning have been worked out. But the inability of training programs to adequately convey these techniques to teachers has been the
recurrent bureaucratic justification for why they have been slow to be put into practice. At any rate the International Educational Achievement comparative school studies in the early 1970s showed that Swedish secondary students were at least as ready as their peers in other continental European countries to express a lack of affect, or even dislike for the general school setting. 28/

In 1962 a Canadian teacher observing elementary schools noted that, while the parliament had approved a "pupil-centered program . . . the present program appears to be highly teacher-centered. Schedules, methods and present programs are all arranged so that teaching is more relaxed and easier . . . If we consider study skills, we see that neither materials nor method are geared to the development of a broad range of skills . . . The pupils are given a specific text, the contents of which they are responsible for on the examination . . . The teacher and the text must be accepted as the truth at this stage . . . Swedish teachers, accustomed to the lecture method, have little preparation for the new task outlined by the School Committee for Reform. Many see it as impossible and outside their capabilities." 29/

A study of pupils' activities during grade 7 English instruction in Stockholm schools found a disparity between the 88 percent devoted to 'teacher's time' compared to the 12 percent of 'pupil's time.' Pupils were found to spend only 5.7 percent of class time in speaking, 4.1 percent in writing, and 2.5 percent in silent reading. 30/ An intensive study of pupil and teacher adjustment to the curricular goals set forth for the academic lines of the gymnasieskola conducted in the late 1960s also showed teacher predominance within the classroom. Pupils initiated only 8 percent of the
"moves" in the classroom setting and the "predominant part of the pupil's answers are predictable from the questions by the teacher." Teachers of classes having a high proportion of pupils in the 10-25 percentile range of ability scales were found to be better able to follow the plan for achieving teaching goals, but in many classes they had to make adjustments where their teaching experience did not agree with the planning sequence. Particularly the teachers of civics (36 percent) and English (42 percent) found themselves forced to lower the goals for set for their classes. 31/

In 1970 a group of West German educators conducted an extensive survey as part of a joint commission which had been established at the behest of the two government leaders, Willy Brandt and Olof Palme. They duly noted that the construction, layout and physical equipment of Swedish schools would rank high in any international comparison and could not help but impress foreign visitors. They were also impressed by the availability of audio-visual equipment, including video-recorders and film-projectors, and noted that these were not only more plentiful but also more evenly distributed than in Germany. They admired the artfully decorated lunchrooms and cafeterias, and the well-designed play areas. They found also that the pupil-teacher ratios which were long-term goals in Germany had been achieved in Sweden, where the ratio had declined from 22:1 in 1950 to 16:1 in 1970. They also found that there were about five or six times as many librarians and school psychologists in Swedish as in German schools. The plentitude of both teaching personnel and equipment, they thought, contributed to social relationships which were less pressured and conflict-laden than those at home, because the resources available stood in a better relationship to the teaching and other tasks to be undertaken. 32/
The German visitors' admiration, however, did not extend to their observations of teachers' ability to participate in decision-making and teacher-pupil relationships in the classroom. The teachers felt far removed from the decision-making process. Conferences of the teaching staff occurred relatively rarely, were conducted by the school director in a very business-like manner, and seldom were marked by lively discussions. School relationships were highly formalized—with many issues handled through the committees of the teachers' unions, rather than through individual contacts. The school directors also tended to see their decision-making capacities as very limited since the important decisions on personnel, achievements standards, and financing were all made centrally. Both teachers and school directors had recently lost the representation on local school boards which they had long had. The visitors added that "some school directors attributed their limited influence to mistrust of the Social Democratic-influenced executive, and seemed to suffer very much from this." 33/

The German teachers also registered surprise at the extent to which teachers dominated Swedish classroom situations, as measured by the reliance on lecture style and their estimate that no less than 80 percent of the classroom talking was done by the teacher. Talking between pupils was observed rarely, and usually stopped by the teacher. Class groups which had been described as very disorderly seemed to them not to go beyond normal expectations. "We had the impression," they observed, "that Swedish teachers maintain a very low tolerance threshold toward deviant behavior." 34/ They seemed somewhat depressed by the degree to which almost all teacher behavior was characterized by routine derived from clearly defined roles. Some years later, the important SIA commission also noted that almost all teacher behavior was
psychologists and other specialists had caused "teacher's interest in pupil welfare to be pushed to one aside on the simple ground that 'that's somebody else's job.' In this way the unremarkable, simple, but important, everyday aspect of pupil welfare has tended to be eliminated from the duties of the teacher." 35/
CHAPTER IV: LINKING THE FIRST AND SECOND REFORM STAGES: GOALS AND MEANS

IVA. How the Old Gymnasium School was Transformed

The two chief characteristics which had traditionally distinguished academic secondary from other post-primary European education were both phased out in Sweden in the late 1960s and early 1970s, as the reform focus reached the upper secondary stage. The first of these was the crucial Abitur or bacallaureat or studentexamen matriculation exam at the conclusion of the gymnasium. Passing that barrier had not only entitled one to university matriculation, but in some systems had provided an entry ticket into officer training and to most prestigious civil service jobs. In Sweden the studentexamen was based on the results of written examinations in four or five subjects, and an oral exams in four subjects. Most European countries undertaking educational expansion and reforms, including France but also Communist countries like East Germany, have retained this crucial selection mechanism. In Sweden, however, it was abolished in 1968 and replaced by reliance on class grades, calibrated by standardized achievement tests conducted during the last two years.

The sharp distinction between gymnasium schools on the one hand, and vocational and technical schools on the other, was also phased out in Sweden in the early 1970s. Starting in 1971-72, the previously distinct vocational schools (yrkeskola) and continuation schools (fackskola) were merged with the gymnasium. The new gymnasiaskola inherited the prestigious label of what had been a highly selective school, but now obviously was no longer that. Clearly the old distinctions between "practical" and "theoretical" education were not extinguished overnight, and it remained
easy to distinguish among the 21 'lines' of the new gymnasium those which carried forward the more vocational, from those which perpetuated the more pre-university, lines of study. However, in its evolution the new gymnasiaskola is supposed to further increase the meshing of vocation-related schooling with that which would prepare for eligibility to further education. Thus pupils enrolled in one of the 13 vocational lines have the right to enroll for up to 12 hours a week in courses of the more theoretical lines. However, in the great majority of their classes, students are together only with pupils enrolled in their "line". Pupils of the N (natural science) line study algebra in classes distinct from those in which pupils in the H (humanities) of T (technical) lines are studying the same subject at a slower pace and with less ambitious aims.

The multiple functions assigned to the new combined gymnasiaskola are encompassed in the goals which the school is supposed to provide for its students. These include:

- basutbildning --------------------- basic general education
- yrkesinriktad utbildning ---------- vocational education
- närförberedelser --------------- training in techniques useful on the job market
- fjärrförberedelser --------------- training in techniques useful in further higher education

Curricular planning is aimed at devising new ways in which subjects related to these four skill goals can be variously combined in the different study lines.

The announced determination of leading Social Democratic politicians to eradicate the distinctions between "academic" and "non-academic" education found particular expression in legislation on the qualifying level of the
gymnasium school which was presented to parliament in 1972. It proposed that those who concluded one of the shorter "vocational" 2-year gymnasium lines should have the same rights to proceed to higher education as those who had gone through one of the five traditional three-year theoretical lines of study. Adults who had equivalent schooling in the folk high schools were also declared eligible for university admission. Even those who had failed at gymnasium school could become eligible for university admission by gaining points based on work experience. Through these changes, Sweden sought to achieve in a centralized system with fairly uniform standards, a degree of permeability which had long existed in the United States, but this was based on the acceptance of high school diplomas from institutions of vastly different standards as prerequisite for admission to colleges and universities which also maintained widely disparate standards.

IVb. Fitting Educational Demand to Manpower Needs

As school capacity was expanded, Swedish educational planning attempted to set and fill enrollment targets for the various secondary and post-secondary school options, in selecting among which parents and pupils have had varying degrees of choice. An example of such enrollment targets was the 1964 act which provided an interim answer to the problem of how the upper secondary system should be reorganized. It provided that the various kinds of pre-existing gymnasia be absorbed into a standard three-year gymnasium offering five areas of concentration or study lines. Targets were set both for overall gymnasium enrollment—which was to be limited to 30 percent of each age group, and for each of the five 'lines'. Thus the technology and economics lines were each supposed to train 22 percent of the pupils, while the humanities and social science lines were to train 26 percent, and the natural science lines 30 percent (in the targets for 1970).
In developing nations, Vaizey has noted, "the educational system derived from manpower targets characteristically has a larger higher education system, and above all a larger secondary system, than that which would be derived from the pressure of parents and politicians, which tends to be a more orthodox pyramid in shape". In Sweden the rapid pace of change in the education system, when combined with the rapid updating and diffusion of employment prospect information, has tended to produce greater convergence in how the two sets of influences interact. Parents are highly informed of manpower prospects, and so are pupils through forecasts distributed in schools. Still there tend to be cyclical variations in the manner in which parents and politicians follow, or at times fail to follow, the official signposts. In the late 1960s there were periods during which the manpower forecasts, particularly for the needs for professional skills, were widely discounted because of the publicity given errors in the immediate past. Warnings that many of the students choosing the more "theoretical" lines of gymnasium and university study would have difficulty finding suitable jobs were widely ignored.

Within the gymnasium student choices among the five lines were in the 1960s heavily oriented toward the more "academic" humanities, social science and natural science lines. Thus in 1966-67 the humanities and social sciences attracted 36 percent of the pupils, far more than the 26 percent recommended by the committee, while the economics and technology lines attracted only some 30-35 percent of the students, falling short of the 44 percent targeted by the committee for these lines. At a period when expanding public employment absorbed virtually all academically trained manpower regardless of area of training, the authorities lacked the control of incentives to
draw students toward the more technical lines of gymnasium and university study. Consequently enrollment in the liberal arts faculties increased much more rapidly than in other parts of the system. While the number of gymnasium graduates increased by 220 percent between 1960 and 1968, and the number of all university enrollments increased by 276 percent, the enrollments in liberal arts and social science faculties increased by 396 percent in the same period.

But when the labor market demand for people with more advanced education began to slacken noticeably in the late 1960s, Swedish student interest in both advanced secondary and university education temporarily diminished as rapidly as it had previously expanded. A cross-national survey which inquired into students' assessment of whether upper secondary studies would improve their job prospects found that Swedish students were especially pessimistic. The proportion of students who believed that their prospects would be "much better" after completion of upper secondary studies was only 32 percent among the Swedish sample, compared to 77 percent among the English, 74 percent among the German, 50 percent among the French, and 23 percent among the Italian samples. 37/

Enrollment in professionally oriented higher education lines quickly became much more attractive. This in turn affected options chosen in the following years at the gymnasium level, and these in turn influenced "lines" chosen at the hogstadium stage of the comprehensive school.

Inducements of employment prospects transmitted through the school system thus have in the 1970s had markedly greater success in getting students to select course programs along much more pragmatic lines. Whereas it proved difficult to attract girls to technical or mathematical lines of study, it
became more easy to shift many away from the humanities lines once it became clear that job openings in teaching would remain limited for the foreseeable future. The prestige traditionally associated with given lines of gymnasium study shifted rapidly, particularly for those more "academic" scientific and social scientific lines which led to university admission, but thereafter to dubious prospects of employment. "Pure" science and "fine" arts rapidly diminished in appeal, the more "applied" lines were enhanced.

These tendencies became marked among the preferences shown by students at age 17 as they chose gymnasiaskola study lines after finishing the nine-year comprehensive school. Thus in the four years between 1971 and 1975 the number of applicants for admission to the humanistic line declined by no less than 46 percent, while the applicants to formerly prestigious natural science lines also declined by 31 percent. The results in the humanities line were that, whereas in 1971 there were 42 percent more applicants than places, by 1975 only 93 percent of the available places were applied for. Available places in the natural science lines were reduced 20 percent as demand slackened, but even so in 1975, almost one out of six available places went unfilled. Two of the other lines, the "economic" and "social science" ones, held their own better. The rule that the students with better grades naturally opted for one of the five "theoretical" gymnasium lines held decreasingly true.
### Table IV-1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Applicants</th>
<th>Change from 1975 fr 1971</th>
<th>Places</th>
<th>Change from 1975 fr 1971</th>
<th>Applicants per 100 Places</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Technical</td>
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<td><strong>2-Year Pre-Vocational Lines</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
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<td>-49.2</td>
<td>4155</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>87</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
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<td>17790</td>
<td>-20.3</td>
<td>113</td>
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<td>373.7</td>
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</tr>
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<td>38587</td>
<td>24.8</td>
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<td><strong>Sum total</strong></td>
<td>89956</td>
<td>-6.6</td>
<td>85447</td>
<td>0.2</td>
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Some observers have tried to determine what effect the increased opportunities for participation in school policy-making have had on problems related to the various study lines and their curricula. Since the late 1960s students in the gymnasiskola (as well as in the senior grades of the grundskola) have been represented on "cooperative commissions" which discuss policy at the level of the school. It would appear that curricular and similar questions are not the subject of lively discussions in these commissions, primarily because they are perceived as being decided at the higher, national bureaucratic level. Thus Goldschmidt found that, "Participation as a means of effective cooperation between the groups represented at school becomes secondary to participation as an instrument of social engineering for balancing divergent interests and avoiding conflict. It therefore seems obvious that participation is limited mainly to transactions aiming at the well-being of the students and of the school community as a whole which do not have a direct bearing on the main raison d'être of schools, i.e., the objectives and processes of learning. Participation works inconspicuously within its limited frame of reference and produces only a modest contribution to school life as a whole." 38/ It remains to be seen whether most recent plans to also add high school student representatives to local school boards will significantly alter the picture.

IVc. Rolling Reform and Decentralization

What distinguishes Swedish educational planning from both other countries and other policy areas is the unusually well synchronized interaction between researchers and the innovational activities of planners, and policy makers. 38a/ The inherent nature of research, the need to use models based on scientific theories, and the tendency to assume a single-
direction objective can easily lead to the generation of information that becomes no longer relevant. On the other hand, the planning and administrative bureaucracies may define problems from a policy-oriented perspective and resist any inputs that may originate from outside of this stream. In Sweden the combination of the researcher's emphasis on validity and that of the planning and administrative bureaucracies on relevance, initially meshed better than elsewhere and in combination contributed a major dynamic in the innovation of educational policy.

In 1966, an OECD examining team anticipated that Sweden would "soon enter a new phase in educational planning, in which sweeping changes regarding instruction, content and methods of education which have characterized the reforms for the past decade will be replaced by the rolling reform, of constant, gradual self-correction, to be largely generated and directed by ... bureaucrats and professionals at the national/local level." This was seen as heralding a change in which initiative passed from "external" to "internal" influences, that is, from a wide variety of public and political groups to the bureaucracy. 39/

Within the Swedish bureaucratic network, the national agencies, such as the National Board of Education and the Office of the Chancellor of the University, were clearly the dominant forces overshadowing the roles of local government agencies and individual universities. The National Board of Education is very much the dominant factor vis-à-vis the school boards at the country and community level. Under the Swedish system, the Education Ministry is a small body of some 150 specialists engaged in policy-making and in preparing the national education budget. But policy implementation and supervision of administration is the concern of the Board of Education, which
is also in charge of curriculum development and R&D. Run by a very powerful director general, its powers of persuasion are greatly strengthened by the fact that it allocates some 60 percent of all educational finance. With regard to the construction of new comprehensive schools, for instance, the local school boards approach the Board with a list of construction and other needs for which they request subsidies. These are allocated in accordance with a very specific set of national regulations. National formulas determine how anticipated student numbers are translated into building space, and the local school boards must submit architectural drafts and cost estimates to the National Board before the national subsidies are approved.

There was some disagreement between the official Swedish spokesman and the foreign examiners as to whether the bureaucratic agencies would remain "change forces within the system." Skepticism was expressed as to "the possibility of guaranteeing the operation of a self-correcting system of rolling reform since . . . the participants would come to identify with their policies and would be disposed against making fundamental changes." 40/ Indeed the Board of Education has kept most research involving evaluation of school programs under its own control. When this was identified as paradoxical in the course of the 1970 parliamentary discussion, a Pedagogical Council composed mainly of parliamentarians was created with the aim of supervising the evaluation efforts. However, it did not succeed in establishing itself as an influential body, and bureaucratic predominance over the evaluation programs was not significantly diminished.

The scope and limits of the bureaucratically-dominated system of rolling reform can be further analyzed with reference to problems encountered
in the work of three study commissions or working parties which were simultaneously active in the mid-1970s. One of these, Skolans Inre Arbete (SIA), was concerned with the internal organization and work of the schools, with particular emphasis on the problems of student maladjustment during grades 7 to 9, the hogstadium level of the comprehensive school. Molbestämning och utvardering (MUT) was a working party within the National Board which was seeking to more clearly specify curricular objectives and evaluation processes. 1973 års betygsutredning (BU 73), whose report was submitted in 1977, dealt particularly with grading methods in the schools.

Some idea of the organizational relationships to which the commissions addressed themselves can be derived from diagram III-1 which identifies the numerous intermediaries that try to guide teachers in implementing the curriculum. Richmond speculates provocatively on how a British teacher would have reacted to the centralized curriculum determination of the Swedish kind: "Easy to imagine the furor that would be aroused if it were disclosed that a standardized course in a school subject was being concocted by a clique at the Institute of Education at X University, that a single author had been commissioned to write it, . . . and that sooner or later the course materials would be foisted on all teachers of the subject regardless of their having had little or no say in its preparation. Over their dead bodies!" 41/
Diagram IV-1

The Relation Between Curriculum and Teachers in Swedish Schools

In addition to having to select from among approved textbooks, Swedish teachers were also more continuously subject to guidance from inspectors, consultants and advisers than their British counterparts. But, "on the whole, the response has been disappointing. The inertia of conventional classroom procedure has not been overcome, and nine times out of ten it has been a case of 'business as usual.'" 42/ In this context the SIA Commission was established in 1970 to deal with the problems of those pupils who, because they were not able to utilize the opportunities created by previous reforms, were "laboring under special difficulties at school." It was mainly concerned with how class and school-related factors interacted with environmental ones to explain patterns of low achievement among various kinds of pupils. It sought to probe why the standardized rules and prescriptions had somehow failed to provide whatever was needed to stimulate many adolescents to meet the challenges of school work. 43/

The MUT committee was established within the School Board in 1972 to more closely identify the learning goals which curricula were supposed to help achieve. Its task was to develop a set of learning objectives and priorities which teachers could follow to determine which information would aid pupils to leave school in command of whatever was considered "basic" in the most important skills. The project embraced no fewer than 40 subject matter areas, and over 400 teachers, administrators, students and parents were involved in its advisory committees. These sought to define in some detail minimum criteria of achievement and basic knowledge, course by course, at all school levels. Apart from this vast task the project also sought to devise alternative curricula which might serve to keep alive the interest of the less intellectually inclined pupils.
The third commission, BU-73, was meanwhile developing a three-point grading scale for the 9th grade, which would establish criteria of 'basic,' average 'core' and 'advanced' content absorption, with expectations that centralized tests would standardize performance measurements more than hitherto.

By 1974 it became clear that there were incongruences between the plans and recommendations which the commissions were producing. SIA was seeking to solve some of its problems by decentralizing decisions. In the words of one of its Social Democratic members: "In place of the centralized school system, in which one attempts to assure goal achievement by means of nationwide identical, detailed instructions and regulations of school organization, SIA proposes a decentralized school system, within which goals will be more precisely defined, but greater freedom granted in the use of resources to allow schools to adjust their internal organization locally in order, for example, to help pupils in difficulty."

But those who wanted to continue to stress equalization goals were concerned that greater local discretion could be used to dilute the basic principles of comprehensive classes. Since more than a third of the pupils were already separated from their classmates part of the time through participation in remedial groups, critics were concerned that SIA not open the way to the "back door" reintroduction of de-facto streaming. Much depended therefore on the way learning goals were defined. But this depended on the work of the MUT commission, under the board's curriculum department director, Ake Isling. It seemed headed in the direction of a more standardized curriculum, necessitated by its definitions of the minimum knowledge and ability which students were to absorb, year after year, in order to graduate from comprehensive school.
The emphasis on standardization and decentralization had not only ideological, but also party-political correlations, since the non-Socialist parties strongly espoused decentralizing tendencies. The situation was further complicated by the fact that, whereas the SIA commission did include leading parliamentarians, the MUT commission did not. When both its procedures and orientation began to be publicly criticized in 1974, the Moderate party parliamentarians demanded that a parliamentary reference group be attached to MUT. This attempt to assert greater parliamentary controls on the bureaucrat-dominated commissions was also evident during the deliberations on the U-68 commission university reforms (see below).

The pressures generated in the course of both controversies led to collisions and forced compromises which seemed to indicate the political limits to the methods of rolling reform as they had been developed during the preceding 15 years. In February 1975 the Director of the Board of Education, Jonas Orring, sharply curtailed the activity of the MUT commission, largely because of "the criticism claiming that MUT implies central direction of the work in the school". The curriculum department director felt disavowed and resorted to public resignation and bitter counterattack, an incident without recent precedent at that level of Swedish bureaucratic politics. Both the tendencies toward somewhat increased local decision-making, and the signs of greater demands to allocate parliamentarians more than a "rubber-stamp" role, seemed to suggest that the processes of rolling reform would come to be significantly modified.
IVd. Reducing Regional Disparities in Educational Provision

One of the achievements of the post-war Swedish educational reforms has consisted of greatly reducing regional and local inequalities in school attendance. Even though compulsory elementary education had been enforced for over a century, by the 1940s disparities in educational provision were considerable, particularly as between the larger cities and the more thinly settled rural areas of the North and West. Thus, in many communities most children had only limited opportunity to pursue schooling past the six years or seven year Folkskola. These differences are still reflected in the 1970 census pertaining to educational levels of the total population between the ages of 16 and 59. Whereas in Stockholm 73 percent, and in Goteborg 63 percent of the population had at least a seven-year Folkskola education, the proportion in the northern county of Vasterbottens was 40 percent, or 14 percent below the national average. Similar variations are reflected in the proportions of the population that finished the (old) Gymnasium. In Uppsala they constituted 13 percent, in Stockholm 12 percent, but in the county of Gavleborgs only 4 percent of the population. Put another way, the average length of schooling of the population in the cities was about 2 years longer than in the rural areas.

The opportunity for extending education for youth in the rural areas and northern counties was greatly improved through the establishment of many additional comprehensive gymnasium schools and universities in these areas. In 1947, the proportion of enrolled youths of university age (20-24 years), was 1.4 percent in Norrland and 7.8 percent in Stockholm, a disparity of more than 5 to 1. By 1960, the proportions were 7.2 percent and 17 percent, and subsequently these disparities were still further reduced. By 1970, as the
maps in Table III-3 bear out, the establishment of a new university at Umea, and of colleges at places like Karlstad, had contributed to boosting the proportion of university entrants in some of the northern and western counties to a level above that achieved in some parts of central Sweden. Many of the promoters of the education reform movement, including key members of the school commissions who later occupied high posts in the National Board of Education, originally came from the north. Their belief that the working class youth would quickly avail themselves of the newly developed opportunities was not quickly borne out in some of the more traditional areas of Sweden, particularly the southwest. But on the northern periphery the new facilities were more abundantly utilized, especially by children of working class and farm families.
DIAGRAM IV-2

Regional Variations in Recruitment to Gymnasia and University Education

Proportions of University Entrants in Relation to Age Group, 1969-70

The Role of Adult Education and Vocational Training

For those members of the older generations who missed the opportunity for prolonged initial education which youths have recently been granted, an element of compensation has been provided by enlarged access to part-time or short-term adult education courses. Among the sponsors of various kinds of adult education and vocational re-training courses are voluntary educational organizations, municipal governments, the National Labor Market Board, as well as trade unions and employers. We can here only briefly characterize their variety of offerings. But it is important to recognize that it is a large sector, which draws more than ten percent of national education expenditures, and which has been deliberately expanded since the 1960s. In presenting the national education budget in the early 1970s, the Minister of Education indicated that regular school education had lower priority than adult education.

The largest adult education clientele is provided by the Workers' Education Association and nine other voluntary educational organizations, which annually attract some two million participants to 200,000 study circles. These organizations are part of the popular movements, trade unions, religious and temperance groups, etc. The circles meet semi-regularly for periods of a month or longer and draw participants -- the majority women -- into subjects ranging across the arts, crafts, and public affairs. Some try to cover material similar to that in the seventh to ninth grades of the comprehensive schools.

Municipal adult schools since 1966 have made an even more overt effort to allow adults to complete schooling equivalent to that being offered in the regular schools at both the grundskola and secondary school level.
These classes are usually taught by the same teachers who preside over the subject classes in the regular schools. About a third of some 150,000 students in the adult schools are enrolled in grundskola level courses, another third in gymnasium level courses, and the remainder in a variety of vocational subjects.

Most amply supported by national subsidies since the early 1960s is a third subsystem, that constituted by the labor market training system. At any one time anywhere from one to two percent of the Swedish work force is engaged in programs aimed at teaching them new vocational skills. Participants are paid subsistence allowances. These programs constitute an integral part of the full employment policy, and are aimed at those who have become unemployed, or who are employed in declining industries or firms. The size and location of the courses are determined by the National Labor Market Board, but they are administered by the National Board of Education at special centers. The courses vary in length, but can last up to two years. The relative priority of the three types of adult education is reflected in the financing system. The study circles have about half of their costs covered by national subsidies, but have derived some income from fees paid by participants. The municipal adult schools are even more heavily subsidized and provide free instruction. The labor training courses not only give participants free instruction, but also provide generous cost of living allowances, analogous to a wage.

The achievements of these programs cannot be evaluated in the context of this paper, but it is interesting to note that several have expanded their scope since the general educational reforms began to have their full impact in the 1960s. Thus the adult school administrators have come to apply
more active recruitment methods than was customary earlier. Techniques of
direct contact recruitment have been aimed at particular under-privileged
target groups, such as older people with only six or seven years of education.
Such workers were reached at their place of employment and offered opportuni-
ties to participate in specific study circles. Other special efforts have
been made to reach the physically handicapped, as well as the mentally
retarded. 45/
CHAPTER V: THE RESTRUCTURING OF SWEDISH HIGHER EDUCATION

Va. The Universities' Expansion Program

During the decade since the mid-1960s the Swedish universities were intensively preoccupied with endeavors to resolve dilemmas posed by the antitheses between quantity and quality, individual choice and manpower needs, university autonomy and "system" coordination, and hierarchy versus equality. In some ways their experiences were similar to those of other European universities. Thus the "trial by numbers" also occurred elsewhere, but student growth was more intensive in Sweden because the secondary school gates had been opened more widely. Then came the "participation wave," when in the course of the late 1960s students came to contend with bureaucrats and tenured faculty for influence on curricular and other vital university decisions. Finally in the 1970s there came what might be called the trial by simultaneous pressure from above and below, as both mass organizations representing the less educated, and bureaucrats who controlled rule-making and purse-strings used powerful levers to make the universities more responsive to the implications of the previous reform steps and outside views of how the universities should be concentrating their resources.

In some ways the problems of adjustment were similar to those faced in some developing countries, where initial university patterns had been shaped by the highly selective and elitist traditions of leading universities in the former colonizing country. In both situations, the majority of university graduates felt that completion of degrees created entitlements to public service positions, and insofar as this perception was honored it tended to create uncontrollable items in national budgets. But the older Swedish
universities differed from new universities of the Third World, in that a high commitment to research and advanced teaching was partly based on the perceived need to live up to a proud tradition of earlier scholarly accomplishment. Thus the University of Uppsala claimed to have created the first European chair in political science, while Linnaeus also made his path-breaking contributions to botany while a member of the Uppsala faculty. Then, too, it is Swedish academic juries which award Nobel prizes to their peers around the world. Would the "equalizing" redistribution of educational resources make it less likely that they would be able in the future to make awards to one of their Swedish fellow-academicians?

The problem of neutralizing favoritism in the award of academic positions is severe in a country where individuals in the social elite knew most of one another. As a country which was concerned both to maintain established standards of high scholarly achievement and to assure equity in the awarding of desirable university positions, Sweden and the other Scandinavian countries had striven hard to cope with "the problems of smallness." To counteract such tendencies Sweden institutionalized a system under which the qualifications of candidates for professorships and other higher academic appointments were subjected to a thorough scrutiny process which was both more public and more prolonged than elsewhere in Europe. Since most departments had only one professorship, in many fields the intensive competitions for a small number of senior appointments encouraged academics to prolong work on their doctoral theses, which were often not completed until scholars were around the age of forty. Thus, when the student expansion suddenly hit the universities in the 1960s, the number of teachers with full academic credentials was very limited. To place teachers in the crowded lecture-halls,
university departments had to make many appointments of untenured junior faculty who were far short of completion of their doctorates. Later some of these professionally insecure academics joined with students to put pressure on the small number of tenured professors and docents.

Overall responsibility for guiding university policies in the face of these challenges came to lie increasingly with the University Chancellor's Office. Until the mid-1960s, the Chancellor was elected by the chair-holders. Since then he has been appointed by the government. The reorganization implemented in the mid-1960s greatly increased the planning and administrative responsibility of the Office and made the Chancellor much more a "man of the government" than a "man of the universities." Thus the Chancellor's Office was endowed with many more of the centralized powers of the normal Swedish Board. The attempt to reshape the UKA's powers more after those of the National Board of Education was underscored by the fact that the first two appointees to the up-graded position were former School Board Director-Generals, whose whole careers were those of bureaucrats without significant personal ties to the university establishment. No sooner was the reorganized UKA established in December 1963 than the Riksdag accepted a government motion to authorize it to prepare proposals for a basic reorganization of curriculum and study lines within the philosophical faculties (see UKA, below). 46/ Whereas the old Chancellor's office had gotten along with some three administrators in 1948, their number grew to more than 150 by the time that the office was once again reorganized in 1976, as a result of the 1975 legislation.
By augmenting its administrative rule-making powers through its influence on budget allocations, the University Chancellor's Office rather quickly imposed a network of quantitative norms and guidelines on the previously rather unstructured university curricula. The resulting formulae, tying student eligibility to credit point-gathering, credit accumulation to advancement on the academic ladder, and both to the budget requests of departments, appear familiar to anyone acquainted with the bureaucratic usages developed within American state university systems. That these served as models is nowhere acknowledged in the Swedish university literature, perhaps because Swedish-American cultural relations were in such poor shape during this period which coincided with the American involvement in the Vietnam War. But a German observer like Fischer was transfixed by the process:

The tendency toward quantification even determines the form of examinations. These become ever more oriented to the knowledge control mechanisms of data processing machines. Knowledge shrinks to the ability to decide between set alternatives. Binary thought affects historical, social and linguistic forms of expression . . . .

Rationalization in the area of material production is imposed on the educational process: conditions and speed of work are exactly determined. The student is told not only which texts are to be read, but also which chapters, the sequence, and how they are to be read, . . . .

Whosoever has not accumulated 20 points to qualify for the introductory phase of a course of study, does not receive a student loan for the following semester . . . .

More prominently than even at American universities, did curricula and study courses come to be weighted in terms of points. These norms were based on the assumption that one point was the equivalent of one week of full-time study, 40 points the equivalent of a student work-load during the academic year.
Vb. **Recruitment to "Prestige" and Other Faculties**

In the 1960s the great student enrollment increases came to be distributed very unequally between the "open" and the "closed" faculties. For the "open" faculties of arts and sciences, law and theology, admission was contingent only upon completion of a three-year line of study in the gymnasiskola. But in medicine, engineering and the natural sciences a long-standing *numerus clausus* policy set specific limits on the number of student places. The number of admissions in the latter was increased at a much slower rate than the total number of entering students, as Table IV-1 bears out. It can be seen that the number of students enrolled in the social science faculties in 1969 exceeded the total student population nine years earlier.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Closed Faculties</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>13,149</td>
<td>30,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>3,316</td>
<td>6,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentistry</td>
<td>5,099</td>
<td>11,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Open Faculties</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>1,173</td>
<td>1,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>7,810</td>
<td>28,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Sciences</td>
<td>8,102</td>
<td>41,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Faculties</strong></td>
<td>23,436</td>
<td>91,300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Source:** UKA, *Högre utbildning och forskning* (Stockholm, 1970), p. 112.
Because of a highly centralized, uniform and transparent nature of
the Swedish system, the contrasting values of different kinds of university
education became more evident than in other countries. Thus admission to the
various faculties implied course programs of different length, which led to
degrees of differential prestige, which in turn were convertible into pro-
fessional positions with considerably disparate rates of annual income.
Table IV-2 makes some of these differences evident.

Table V-2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Duration of Training (Years)</th>
<th>Total Cost of Training (Crowns)</th>
<th>Average Annual Income of Graduate Practitioners (Crowns)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>140,000</td>
<td>98,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyers</td>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>68,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Engineers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>55,000</td>
<td>63,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject Teacher</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Workers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>42,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Supplemented by information from SACO.

The differential attraction posed by enrollment in the various
faculties was underscored by the projection of anticipated manpower needs.
In the 1960s the number of newly-credentialed professionals needed by
employers, particularly in the quickly enlarging public sector, increased
rapidly. Thus the professional manpower needs of the educational system
increased from 23,000 to 32,000 between the periods 1960-1965 and 1965-1970,
while those of the health system increased from 33,000 to 50,000. However
the projections for the 1970s forecast much slower rates of growth. As between the first and second half of that decade openings in the health system were still slated to increase by 12,000 positions, while those in the educational system were to increase by only 2,000 positions. 48/

The inter-professional differences in employment prospects, anticipated income levels and relative status reinforced a pronounced "step-ladder" pattern in the recruitment patterns to the various faculties and departments. Places in the entering classes of the "closed" study lines were, at least for students coming directly from gymnasiaskola, allocated strictly on the basis of grade point averages. The minimum grade point scores needed to enter the study lines varied much more by faculty or department, than by university. As Table IV-3 demonstrates, the admission patterns display distinct cut-off points, and gaps between admission criteria widened in the course of the 1970s. To be admitted to a medical school in January, 1975, applicants needed approximately a 4.75 average out of a possible 5.0 average, slightly more at Uppsala, slightly less at Umea. With a 4.1 average he could enter a dental college, but psychology or chemistry could be started with averages of only 2.5, or even less as these fields had become much less attractive since 1970, due to poorer job prospects. In the face of such patterns a bright student who was inclined to study law or history might feel that he could not "afford" to pass up medicine if his score entitled him to medical school admission.
Table V-3
Minimum Grade Averages Needed for Admission to Various Swedish Numerus Clausus Faculties (Out of Maximum 5.0 points)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty or Department</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>Minimum January, 1970</th>
<th>Minimum January, 1975</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>Uppsala</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>4.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>Lund</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>4.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>Stockholm</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>4.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>Göteborg</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>Umeå</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>4.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>Linkoping</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>4.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentistry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentistry</td>
<td>Lund</td>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentistry</td>
<td>Stockholm</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>4.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentistry</td>
<td>Göteborg</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>4.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentistry</td>
<td>Umeå</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>4.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>Stockholm</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>3.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>Göteborg</td>
<td>4.27</td>
<td>2.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>Umeå</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>2.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>Uppsala</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>2.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>Lund</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>2.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>Stockholm</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>2.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An officially sponsored study published in 1971 pointed out that differences in rewards tended to lead to a distinction between "prestige and high status" fields of university studies, largely leading through the "closed" faculties, and a more mundane set of educational opportunities obtainable through the "open" faculties. It ascertained that the increase in university places did not seem to be leading to a more broad-based recruitment to the "prestigious" professional fields. The proportion of medical students from Social Group I families (proprietors, professionals, managers and higher civil servants) held pretty steady at about 60 percent from 1959 to 1969; among engineering students the same held true at a level of about 45-50 percent. As the proportion of an age group which entered university study
quadrupled from 6 percent in 1955 to 23 percent in 1969, the proportion of students from Social Group III (working-class) backgrounds did increase from about 15 percent in 1956 to 21 percent in 1969. But in the latter year Social Group III students contributed only 11 percent of medical and dental students 12 percent of law students and 16 percent of economics students. By contrast they were overrepresented among students of lower-prestige occupations like social work and journalism. Put another way, the educational distribution of young Swedes who were 20 years old in 1968-69 still varied enormously by class. Of the 14,000 who belonged to Social Class I families, 15 percent were in "prestige" university lines, 64 percent were in "other" university lines. Of the 65,000 youths from Social Class III families, only one percent were in "prestige" university fields, eight percent were in "other" university fields, and 91 percent were not attending university at all. 49/

Vc. The Production and Employment of Professionals

At a time when planning should have culminated in proposals to handle the foreseeable university "bulge" of the late 1960s, Swedish higher education planners had to acknowledge repeated forecasting failures, partly due to an inability to calculate feedback effects of educational expansion. Several projections, published in 1958 and 1962, which forecast an imminent oversupply of teacher candidates in the humanities and social sciences, were grossly disproved by events. During the first part of the 960s, surplus tendencies were not apparent. The demand for university-educated technicians, statisticians and economists—not to mention qualified health personnel—was always much greater than the supply. Persons with degrees in the humanities, or even uncompleted degrees, had an easy time finding positions since employers were willing to employ academics with combinations of subjects which
were not ideal for them. The forecasting failures, an educational planner wrote, led to "an increasing disbelief in projections warning of oversupply in different categories. No one dares take a position on the extent to which the snow-balling stream of students to the social science fields will lead to inadequate employment opportunities." 50/

In 1968/69 the newly-vitalized University Chancellor Office made bold proposals for the rationalization of curricula in the philosophical faculties which came to be both heralded as the "university reform of the century" and highly embattled. Its recommendations called for the introduction of first 34, then 17, "lines" of study, under which students would have to follow required combinations of courses during the first two years, with limited course options only during the third year. Protests against the rigid and draconic nature of the rationalization effort led to some changes in the proposal, particularly ones which would allow students to change from one study course to another during the first year.

Much of the overall rationale of the reform was further demolished in the final negotiations. The university faculties were able to press their objections to some of its vital features, and were this time still able to maintain their strong influence. 50a/ Also significant was the 1968 French student revolt which momentarily threatened to inspire the Swedish student groups to unprecedented militancy. Under these conditions the relevant ministers, Education Minister Olof Palme and Minister Sven Moberg, decided to support the university demand that individualized study programs be accepted as an alternative option to the curricula of each of the 17 study-lines. This concession undid much of the intended rationalization of curricula. In subsequent years some 80 percent of students chose the "individualized" option, and only 20 percent followed the 17 set programs.
The Swedish Federation of Professional Employees, or Sveriges Akademikers Centralorganisation (SACO), the world's oldest and largest professional peak association, had by 1969 established itself as the recognized spokesman and bargaining agent for some 100,000 university educated professionals. In this role it occupied a position parallel to that of the Federation of Trade Unions (LO) (1.6 million members) and the Salaried Employees Federation (TCO) (530,000 members). Most members of its thirty constituent unions, such as the secondary teachers association (24,000 members), the physicians association (11,000 members) and the lawyers association (12,000 members), were predominantly in public employment. They had benefited greatly from the expansion of employment opportunities resulting from the great growth of public sector programs in the 1960s. But their status and salary privileges were criticized by spokesman for the equality policy through which the LO and the Social Democrats were seeking to narrow income gaps between occupation groups.

Primary concern with averting surpluses of academic manpower by fitting university courses as closely as possible to particular vocational goals led to SACO to advocate the conversion of all "open" into "closed" faculties. Warned of an anticipated oversupply of graduates from the philosophical faculties, SACO in 1963-1964 advocated the establishment of occupational education lines--such as those for the training of teachers, librarians and statisticians--within the philosophical faculties.

When unemployment became prevalent, SACO officials stated that "the academic explosion is a direct consequence of the major school reforms of the 1960s," and that "SACO was . . . the only organization which at an early stage realized in which direction the development pointed." SACO maintained that
low priority to higher education planning on the part of the universities contributed to a "general incapacity to think through the consequences of the underlying school reforms."

It was against this background that the 1971 salary negotiations between SACO and the public employers led to highly publicized strikes and lockouts of unprecedented scope. The governmental negotiators proved deaf to claims that their terms would reduce most SACO members' real after-tax income below their 1968 level. The struggle assumed class connotations when the large trade union federation unleashed propaganda attacks against the attempt of SACO to protect its members' salary differentials. When negotiations deadlocked and large-scale national work stoppages were imminent, many foreign television teams arrived in Sweden ready to dramatize this welfare state conflict.

Former Prime Minister Tage Erlander spelled out some of the political implications of the conflict in these terms:

We in Sweden have through joint efforts built an educational system, a civil service, a health system and a building program without counterparts in the whole world. This has provided many large and important tasks for people with academic education . . . I also made it possible for professionals to achieve a salary level which would scarcely have been achieved without this accelerated development of the public sector . . . . To most people the SACO conflict seemed totally unnecessary. Thousands of construction workers who became unemployed as the result of the conflict developed bitter feelings which spread to other workers . . . 51/

Then Prime Minister Palme introduced special legislation which enabled the government to outlaw strike actions during a six week cooling-off period. Resort to this legal coercion broke a thirty-year pattern of political non-interference in labor negotiations, thus lending unusual visibility to conflict between the public authorities and their most highly-educated employees.
The task of correcting the numerous imbalances within the university sector, and the many incongruences between universities, the lower educational institutions and the labor market, was assigned to a powerful Royal commission, the U-68 commission. Their study began in 1968, bore fruit in a report issued in 1973, and was incorporated in sweeping legislation adopted in 1975. Its broad charge consisted of examining the total area of higher education, except research and graduate training. It encompasses not only university-level institutions, but all "publicly provided education based on a higher level of schooling than the nine-year comprehensive." Unlike earlier Royal Commissions, U-68 was composed entirely of high officials in the national educational bureaucracy. Representatives of university educators, students and the academic professions could advise the commission through their positions on one of three reference groups; the other two, however, were primarily composed of representatives of political parties, trade unions, business and other social groups.

The problems which the commission felt empowered to tackle included the crucial one of the relationship between university credentials and professional careers, which had been illuminated by the SACO strike. Also unavoidable were the quantity-quality problems thrown up by the explosion of university enrollments from 3,000 new entrants in 1950 to 25,000 in 1970, and the ensuing decline to 15,000 full-time enrollees in the mid-1970s. Most crucial to its goals however was the need to adjust the higher educational sectors to the imperatives created by the reforms at the lower levels. As enunciated by Education Minister Bertil Zachrisson in 1975, this meant that, "The time has now come for the fulfillment of the comprehensive school and
upper secondary school reforms by the opening up even of higher education to new groups in society. Not only must the admission requirements of higher education be revised, but also its contents, organization and geographical location must be planned with new objectives in mind." 52/

The main thrusts of the U-68 proposals went in three directions: firstly, it followed up the previous dismantling of distinctions between "academic" and "practical" education by breaching the traditional university walls and incorporating within them many institutions which had previously been of sub- or extra-university status. Secondly, U-68 recommended a further tightening of the nexus between study courses and occupational goals, to the point of gearing all higher education towards vocational goals and reorganizing university faculties accordingly. Finally U-68 made proposals aimed at "assimilating" university populations more thoroughly within Swedish society. These ranged from introducing representatives of business and occupational life onto university ruling bodies, to emphasizing that opportunities to pursue higher education should become less the prerogative of a particular age group in their 20s, and more available through patterns of "recurrent" education.

More decisively than perhaps any other recent reform in Western countries, the U-68 proposals challenged the traditional view of regarding university training as the culminating part of a continuing educational experience for the young. Long, continuous periods of education, it was held, create problems in the relationship between education and working life, and the community at large. The report explicitly "questioned the wisdom" of accommodating trends toward lengthened continuous education early in life, and coupled this stance with one critical of the pursuit of general education
goals at the university level. It contended that the continuous education pattern "tends to assign a decisive importance to choices made by school-children." The strength of these parent-influenced choices was seen as creating a "distorted social distribution in the upper secondary school," which in turn determined that middle-class children maintained crucial advantages in seeking access to the more competitive and desirable lines of university study. By further opening admission preferences to those who had intermittent work experiences, the commission sought to influence both the social and intellectual mix of future Swedish university student bodies.

While conceding that it would be "ridiculous to deny that the system of life-long recurrent education contains emancipatory possibilities," critics like Fischer perceive continuing education mainly as an attempt in the capitalist society to tie the education system much more directly to the economic sector than was previously the case. Linking the "production of qualifications" to their conditions of utilization, makes life easier for educational administrators who have failed with previous techniques of seeking to achieve a balance between the supply and demand for educated manpower. He suggests that in terms of achieving "balance" between the supply and demand for trained manpower, the system can be expected to work in only one direction. "Well-intentioned appeals to the entrepreneurs to adjust their demand conditions to the existing supply of skilled labor must inevitably remain a pious hope." 53/

The down-grading of humanistic and general education goals was manifested both in the language of the U-68 report and in its proposals for the new basic organizational structure of Swedish universities. The report "starts from the premise that higher education is to prepare students for
subsequent occupational activities," which leads to the opinion that "working life should constitute an important source of renewal for education, at the same time an important source of renewal for education, at the same time as education should function as an important instrument for the development of working life . . . . When students are distributed over different sectors of higher education, one of the guiding factors should therefore be the chances of obtaining work in sectors where their training will be utilized." To facilitate this channelling the Commission proposed a restructuring of university departments and fields of study under five broad umbrella structures oriented toward providing students with (i) technological training, (ii) administrative and economic training, (iii) medical and social work training, (iv) teacher training, and (v) training for the cultural and informative occupations.

Many academics who believed that the preceding educational reforms were on balance a good thing, and who interpreted the rising educational aspirations as signs of a successful social movement, expressed strong reservations about the university reforms. For C. Arnold Anderson it led to the judgment that "U-68 seems to embody a yearning for 'coherence' and 'integration' that harks back to the old system of schools that Sweden had been displacing over the past quarter century. It seems very questionable whether a society can have an open system of elementary and secondary schools and then confront youth with an arbitrary system of pre-selected assignments and careers." He assessed the commission's proposals as "unwarrantably drastic" and its spirit as "incongruent with the philosophy animating the changes in Swedish education over the last half century." Many writers criticized the report's sole focus on Swedish developments, and its lack of
attention to the findings of comparative research on universities and their functions in other advanced countries. Torsten Husen was especially critical of the implications of the one-sided emphasis on occupation training for the nurture of students disinterested with broad intellectual problems. He suggested that it might be necessary to seek to pursue pure and advanced research in a group if distinct research institutions were organizationally separate from the universities. 56/ The bulk of professional opinion, as reflected in the faculty response to U-68 and through statements like those articulated by Professor Torgny Segerstedt, interpreted the decline of academic autonomy as a gain for bureaucratic power-holders and an impediment to the universities' attempts to produce unconventional forms of scholarship. 57/

The professors were joined in their criticism of many elements of the U-68 proposals by most Swedish student organizations, including the Swedish Student Organization (Sveriges Forenade Studentkarer; SFS). Earlier study commissions on university policy, such as the one reporting in 1963, had supposed that the interests of students, future employers and the state coincided in attempts to "increase the efficiency and perceived meaningfulness of higher education." This community of interests dissolved in the late 1960s, when the SFS was torn by conflicts, with a Marxist faction perceiving the state as an exploiter of a student proletariat. Government authorities reached by considering the further reduction of special student services and fringe benefits in the areas of housing and health, some of which had been administered through SFS. Even after the tide of student political loyalty had tilted most student senates more to the Right, SFS representatives complained openly that their requests were falling on deaf ears. Against this background of deteriorating relations, most leaders of student organizations expressed
intense opposition to U-68. Now student representatives of all political
coloration fought jointly with the professors against the attempts of the
government to give unions, local governments and other extra-university
bodies a voice in university decisions. "U-68, the dominant education policy
issue of the mid-1970s, united practically all the various political factions
within the student unions and SFS. . . . The bourgeois groups, the profes-
ionally oriented students, and representatives of the Left were all, albeit
with varying motives, united in their rejection of the main U-68 recommenda-
tions." 58/

Ve. U-68 Reform Deliberations and Enactment

Based on enrollment trends of the preceding years, at least one
official prognosis in 1969 projected that as many as 35,000 first-year
students would register at university-level institutions in 1972. But by
1972 the downward trend in registrations had actually caused a decline and
only about 20,000 new enrollees. The incumbent Minister of Education,
Ingvar Carlsson, introduced a bill which boosted university enrollment by
lowering admission requirements. The law subsequently enacted by the Riksdag
provided that it would no longer be necessary to complete a three-year
Gymnasiskola line in order to qualify for admission. Students who had only
completed one of the shorter two-year lines were also declared eligible,
provided they had an adequate command of Swedish and English. The pool of
potential university enrollees was further enlarged by the rule which declared
that adults who were at least 25 years old and had worked full-time for five
years or longer were entitled to enroll in certain courses.
Most of the new students admitted under these relaxed admission criteria pursued short-term or part-time studies. By the mid-1970s, the proportion of part-time students vastly increased in most departments, especially in the social sciences, humanities and other "free" faculties. New student enrollments in these faculties had dropped from 18,300 in 1970 to about 13-14,000 between 1972 and 1974. In the fall of 1975 there was once again a significant enrollment increase to about 16,000 and growth has been maintained since. But many of these students were intent on taking only a few courses, or on studying for only a few semesters before returning to up-graded jobs in which they might put their new skills to immediate use. Such students were reluctant to change their place of residence, causing the 1975 enrollment increases to be much more pronounced in urban universities, like Stockholm and Goteborg, than they were at the older universities like Uppsala and Lund. It was at the stage of Riksdag discussion that the drawback of not having any parliamentarians on the U-68 commission itself became most apparent. Although the professors and students got only partial support from organizations like SACO, they were able to develop support among the parliamentarians of all three non-Socialist parties. In order to help shape parliamentary opinion the government resorted to the unusual step of asking for the creation of a special "parliamentary U-68 committee," within which compromise discussions occurred. Since the Communists were opposed, it was necessary for the Social Democrats to attract the support of at least one of the three "bourgeois" parties. They succeeded in winning the support of the least "academically"-oriented one, the somewhat rurally-based Centre Party. Among the issues on which the government compromised was the nature of the local university boards and the degree of imposition of numerus clausus
on the "free" faculties. But the bulk of the major recommendations won the necessary parliamentary approval in 1975.

The 1975 law continued the 1972 rule change which made university admission possible not only for those who had finished the gymnasiskola, but also for those who had finished shorter secondary courses of study, or had dropped out and worked for a number of years. Thus the 1975 Higher Education Act established separate quotas within which applicants competed:

(1) Those with three years' gymnasium study;
(2) Those with less than three years' gymnasium study;
(3) Those over 25 years old with four years' work experience; and
(4) Foreign students.

This was totally rejected by SACO, which feared that admitting students without full gymnasium education would necessarily have negative effects on higher education. In the end, work experience was allowed to help balance poor secondary school grades. The formula adopted permitted an 0.1 score increase (on a 1 to 5 scale) for each three months of work experience.

Thus five years of work experience would boost a 1.5 to a 3.5 score -- although the trade unions had proposed an even more generous substitution scale. SACO supported the tendency to make university education more vocationally oriented, but opposed applying the same principle to secondary education. Its representatives wanted to maintain the clearer borderline between the two sectors, whereas the majority view finally embodied in legislation affirmed that "the line of demarcation between the upper secondary school and higher education cannot be determined once and for all but... must be subject to constant reappraisal."
Another controversial U-68 proposal, which vocal opposition by student and other organizations was able to modify somewhat, concerned the imposition of *numerus clausus* admission quotas to all fields of higher education, had been open to all qualified applicants with point scores of 2.3 and higher. "The choice," said the commission, "is between having, as at present, one free and one restricted sector of higher education, and introducing a limitation on basic higher education as a whole." It disclaimed the attempt to tie enrollments to manpower forecasts—which it characterized as "always very unreliable"—but argued that alternative ways of orienting study choice to labor market prospects and needs were "too resource intensive" as well as difficult to implement. "All in all, U-68 considers the chances of social distribution within the educational system to be more favorable if the total number of admissions is limited, than if both an open and closed sector were to be retained in the future." In the 1975 Riksdag, the government succeeded in sticking to the principle of an across-the-board imposition of *numerus clausus*. But the principle was dropped by the new non-Socialist government in the final legislation on higher education in 1977.

Most vocally criticized by faculty and students was the plan to upset traditional European patterns of university self-government by introducing a majority of non-university members into the Boards of Higher Education which would henceforth govern the restructured universities. One board will supervise all higher education institutions in each of the six regions. Within these regions the previously existing 71 institutions of post-secondary education will be concentrated into 19 consolidated *hogskolor*, each one centered in a town with a major existing or planned major institutions (except for Stockholm and Gothenburg which will have two
each). The public representatives on the regional boards are appointed by the government, after being nominated by the labor market organizations. This represented a compromise from the earlier proposal to place "public" representatives directly on the board of each of the institutions.
CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION

Sweden's example shows that an entire educational system can be radically transformed within a thirty-year period in a context that does not include radical political change in the larger political system or in the economic system. Whether the Swedish case exemplifies a "socialist," "Social Democratic" or "Socialist" example depends on the observer's classification system. It is clear that the reforms were accomplished during a period when Swedish industry remained 95 percent in private hands, while the share of the public sector as a proportion of GNP increased from 25 to 51 percent between 1950 and 1970.

One of the many reasons why most notations would find it difficult to replicate the Swedish reform development is that Swedish reformers commanded a variety of resources which are likely to remain beyond the command of reform forces in most other countries. These resources include an unusual level of wealth and economic growth which allowed Swedish governments to increase educational expenditures from 3.5 percent of the 1950 GNP to 7.9 percent of the GNP in 1975. Another important resource consisted of an experienced and incorrupt bureaucracy at both the national and local level, working in close liaison with the research apparatus. An even more important resource consisted in the ability of the main political reform instrument, the Social Democratic party, to maintain its electoral performance throughout the period in question. Finally the reformers could reckon with a highly consensus-oriented political life, which on the whole patiently adapted to numerous changes, and was indulgent toward the partial fulfillment of promises and some revisions of goals.
Decision-makers in political systems which command less of these resources can nevertheless learn from the Swedish experience what kinds of problems they can anticipate when they consider changing the contours of their educational system. Questions on which the Swedish experience seems particularly relevant include:

How far and how fast is it advisable to move toward "squarring educational pyramids" by expanding the capacity of the upper layers? What degree of "wobbling," in terms of enrollment fluctuations, must you anticipate, before the upper layers stabilize, and who will bear the costs of the settling-in process?

What amount of effort does it take to develop adequate congruence between educational planning and manpower need projections, in economies that are as much tied into the world economy as Sweden's? How feasible is detailed educational planning in systems which do not attempt comprehensive economic planning? Are Swedish techniques like the temporary expansion of "open faculty" enrollment, or the emphasis on continuous education, applicable also in other situations where the fit between planning efforts falls short of expectations?

What are the unintended consequences that are likely to occur when rapid expansion of the educational system is pursued simultaneously with rapid absolute and relative expansion of the public sector as a whole? What are the dangers that in this situation status differentials among professionals will become greater, and how can governments better utilize their multiple roles to obtain such developments?
Educational reform achieved prominence in Sweden in the 1950s because large voter groups, mobilized not only by the Social Democrats but also by the Agrarian and Liberal parties, could ideologically accept the reform arguments that the educational system be used to achieve both greater social equality and greater economic work. It may be that educational reform is a task in which political parties are not always adequately equipped to compete with bureaucracies and interest groups in influencing the flow of supports and resistances from service suppliers and clients. What the Swedish case shows is that they can effectively provide sustaining leadership under optimal conditions—that is, continuity in power, positive interaction with the bureaucracy and lack of socio-cultural obstacles. In Sweden, in the 1950s and 1960s, support from both the general public and the intellectual elites could be harnessed toward consistent approaches to the final goal.

The Swedish reforms allow an assessment of what degrees of equalization of educational opportunities are likely if prime emphasis is placed on system expansion, rather than the utilization of direct "positive" and "negative" quotas of the kind used in the United States and East European Peoples' Democracies, respectively. Evidently recruitment has been considerably equalized, though not uniformly throughout the system, and not nearly as widely as highly ideological reform advocates anticipated. The Swedish strategy of equalization has clearly been more expensive in financial terms than those which rely more directly on quotas, which may help to explain why there has been some shift toward quotas in the 1975 university legislation. An assessment twenty years hence will allow a fuller evaluation of the effects of the reforms.
Non-financial costs which the reforms have engendered in interim terms are most clearly at the level of individuals. The greatly increased competition for grades, which characterizes the system at its upper levels due to the expansion of students and the rationalization of admission procedures, is clearly an undesired and unanticipated consequence of the reform for some of the more idealist architects. The same result may by the same token be welcomed by the rationalizing bureaucrats who perceive it as a guarantee of increased efficiency. In any case the Swedish case seems to bear out that advocates of the equalization-via-expansion route must anticipate increased student competitiveness, which may be coupled with increased pressures toward conformity.

The question of what extent equalization-cum-expansion has contributed to the proverbial "decline of standards" is especially difficult to assess in a situation where both curriculum contents and methods of achievement testing have been changed as much as in the Swedish case. Some post-reform groups probably achieve lesser average proficiency than their selectively chosen predecessors, and the achievement aims of the most talented may have been lowered. But with the exception of certain fields, particularly the social sciences and the humanities, the decline in learning levels seems not to have attained critical proportions. In particular, developing countries might examine whether their resources will also allow them to contain pressures toward the devaluation of educational standards. Countries with a less efficient bureaucracy and less uniformly trained teacher corps may well find it difficult to assure that "more does not mean less."
A more avoidable cost incurred in the Swedish experience relates to how fluctuations in youths' educational ambitions affected how the universities are perceived as institutions. Particularly in the highly homogenous Swedish communication system, the expectations of school youth, as well as that of their parents, were allowed or encouraged to rise rapidly during one expansion phase, and then influenced toward decline in a subsequent phase. In the process it may well be that the symbolic demystification of particularly the universities proceeded at a pace which was harmful. Within little more than a decade the universities were transformed from "cathedrals of learning" into unadorned instruments of career advancement. Some observers may well welcome that affection and esteem have been transferred from the universities to other more socially responsible institutions. It is not clear what institutions may have benefitted from such a shift, but the diminution of the universities' research functions has been viewed with considerable alarm. Some Swedes have been disappointed that the reforms have not produced more rapid and radical changes in the social composition of university student bodies. These shortfalls should not be over-interpreted, for it is likely that even in Sweden fundamental reforms need a generation or so to demonstrate their influence on restructuring expectations and aspirations.

Some cross-national studies utilizing unorthodox indicators have suggested that high levels of educational growth may accentuate disparities between the most and the least educated members of national societies. Sweden's policies have obviously been aimed at finding a way of not being hung up on the horns of that dilemma. Anderson reexamines in this context above-cited data which showed that students from working-class families have not become much better represented within the "prestige" faculty, and that among
all male students, those from social class III increased only from 17 percent in 1956-57 to 22 percent in 1968-69. Applying statistical measures based on more realistic expectations about the diffusion of aspirations for the use of higher education—or what he calls the "epidemiology of university attendance"—he comes to results which show the "Sweden has been experiencing an impressive movement toward parity in utilization of post-secondary opportunities for education.... Sweden has not eliminated the effect of family status upon enrollment in higher education. But in broad terms I see the Swedish system as more meritocratic than socially discriminatory: ability outweighs social background." 60/

The relatively painless introduction of such sweeping changes over the total educational landscape can be attributed to an unusual level of cooperation between educational researchers and innovating bureaucratic and party decision-makers. It may be that the techniques for linking individual abilities and motivations to societal resources and needs are not as susceptible to standardized refinement as the Swedish reformers believe. Perhaps, "to score a Swedish point" may in the jargon of the educational planners of the year 2000 come to mean a misplaced search for quantified concreteness. If not all the Swedish experiments are successful, it may be because in educational policy Sweden is laboring under some "disadvantages of earliness," much as its economy in earlier periods benefitted from the "advantages of lateness." In any event, both other advanced industrialized societies, and developing countries seeking indirect guidance on how to match goals to resources, will continue to benefit from observing the Swedes tinker with their schools.
FOOTNOTES


4. Ibid., pp. 40-47.


6. Ibid., p. 9.


10. Ibid.


15. Ibid., p. 31.


38. Dietrich Goldschmidt, *op. cit.*


41. Richmond, *op. cit.*


43. The National Swedish Board of Education, *op. cit.*


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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Title of Paper</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>260</td>
<td>Meeting Basic Needs in Malaysia: A Summary of Findings</td>
<td>J. Meerman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>261</td>
<td>A Model for Estimating the Effects of Credit Pricing on Farm Level Employment and Income Distribution</td>
<td>T. Husain, R. Inman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>262</td>
<td>Commodity Price Stabilization and the Developing Countries: The Problem Choice</td>
<td>E. Brook, E. Grilli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>J. Waelbroeck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>263</td>
<td>Industrial Policy and Development in Korea</td>
<td>L. Westphal, Kwak Suk Lim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>264</td>
<td>The Incidence of Urban Property Taxation in Developing Countries: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis Applied to Colombia</td>
<td>J.F. Linn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>265</td>
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<td>R. Gulhati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>266</td>
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<td>P. Spain, D. Jamison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>E. McAnany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>267</td>
<td>Food Insecurity: Magnitude and Remedies</td>
<td>S. Reutlinger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>268</td>
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<td>J. Jallade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>269</td>
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<td>A. Choksi, A Meeraus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td>270</td>
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</tr>
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<td>L. Latham, M. Latham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>S. Basta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>M. Cernea, B. Tepping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>V. Thomas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>C. Feder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>TITLE OF PAPER</td>
<td>AUTHOR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>276</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>D. Mazumdar</td>
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<tr>
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<td>M. Ahluwalia, J. Wall</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>R. Cassen (consultant)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>280</td>
<td>Educational Effects of Class Size</td>
<td>W.D. Haddad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>281</td>
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<td>P.L. Watson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>E.P. Holland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>282</td>
<td>World Trade and the International Economy: Trends, Prospects and Policies</td>
<td>B. Balassa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>283</td>
<td>Urban Land Policy Issues and Opportunities</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>284</td>
<td>Pakistan: Forestry Sector Survey</td>
<td>S.A. Draper, A.J. Ewing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>285</td>
<td>The Leisure Cost of Electric Power Failures</td>
<td>M. Munasinghe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>286</td>
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<td>M. Munasinghe, J. Warford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>287</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Petroleum and Gas in Non-OPEC Developing Countries: 1976–1985</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>