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Magazine: "Blueprint," 72 pages

THE NEW DEMOCRAT

BLUEPRINT

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FALL 1999

IDEAS FOR A NEW CENTURY

education issue

adults vs. kids?

Schools are designed to serve the adults who run them, not the children who depend on them. We must change that. *by Paul Hill*

10 New Democratic reforms: The choice and accountability path *by Al From*

Teachers: Grow your own *by Paul Hutchinson and Louise Sundin (AFT)*

Plus: Daniel Yankelovich, James Traub, Isabel Sawhill & The Penn Poll on how we feel about our schools



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teachers

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1. In December 1998 the Government published its Green Paper *teachers: meeting the challenge of change*.

2. It gave four priorities - better leadership, better rewards, better training and better support. They are a package to help teachers and to restore teaching to its rightful place as one of our foremost professions. We have set aside up to a billion pounds over the next two years to implement our proposals - the vast majority for a new pay system which would bring substantial pay increases for highly effective teachers.

**"A world class education system is the indispensable condition for creating a fair and prosperous society for the next century."
Prime Minister's speech to NAHT Conference, Cardiff, 2 June 1999**

3. This leaflet lets you know the feedback from the consultation and explains how we are taking the proposals forward. We are committed to the principles of our proposals but want to ensure that they are manageable and practicable. Since the end of the consultation period we have considered your responses carefully and discussed them with representatives of teachers, governors, local authorities and churches. These discussions will continue. The close involvement of the profession in the reform process will be vital to its success.

4. An important next step will be the remit which David Blunkett gives the School Teachers' Review Body to consider new pay structures to come into place from September 2000. This leaflet sets out our approach. We will continue to refine the details in further discussions.

5. A timeline at the back of this leaflet sets out the main developments. Early in the autumn we will publish draft guidelines on the new performance management system and on the proposed threshold assessment so that schools and teachers can start to prepare. Training activities will come on stream from early 2000. We will invite teachers to apply to be assessed for the new higher pay range by May 2000, with assessments carrying on to the end of that year. Pay increases for successful applicants would begin from September 2000 at which point appraisal regulations underpinning effective new systems of performance management would take statutory effect.

Responses to the Consultation

6. The consultation was one of the most active ever undertaken by Government. By its close on 31 March a record 41,000 responses had been returned, including 36,000 on the Government's response form. They showed that:

- our wish to raise the status of the profession and support teachers in their work was widely welcomed
- the overwhelming majority of respondents agreed with the four priorities we identified for action
- respondents supported most of our specific proposals for strengthening

leadership, training and support

- about one third of respondents supported and one half opposed the specific proposals on pay and performance management.

7. A summary of responses is included in this leaflet. A fuller analysis and a set of statistical returns on the response forms have been sent to main responding organisations and placed in both libraries of the Houses of Parliament.

Better leadership

8. Effective leadership is critical to success in our schools. There was a widespread welcome for our proposal to establish a National College for School Leadership to give new coherence, direction and status to all aspects of leadership development. We have now issued a prospectus for the college, setting out our vision more fully and inviting partners to work with us in making this vision a reality. We shall shortly be advertising for a Founding Director to make sure the college is ready to start work in late 2000.

9. There was also support for our plans to establish a coherent national headship training framework giving aspiring, new and serving heads high quality, practical and professional support. The national college will, when established, oversee all headship training. We have recently commissioned Pat Collarbone of the Institute of Education to lead the next stage of development of the National Professional Qualification for Headship building on its strengths and successes to date.

10. In terms of pay structure:

- The new structure for heads' pay will be in place from this coming September. We will ask the STRB to review the pay and position of deputies who will play an important role in the new broader leadership group. We will also ask them to consider arrangements for senior managers to join the group at schools' discretion.
- Progression up individual pay ranges in the leadership group would be by performance: the key criteria for all leadership posts are likely to be their contribution to overall pupil progress at the school and to school leadership and management. From September 2000, we would expect governing bodies to use a suitably trained external adviser in reviewing the performance and pay of heads.

Better rewards

11. Our proposals entail a significant strengthening of performance management in schools. The extra billion pounds of investment on offer must lead to the establishment of proper systems for annual review and threshold assessment as outlined below. This has been a clear underlying principle of our proposals and remains so. The new investment is distinct from the annual pay award, and offers significant extra salary for teachers passing the performance threshold.

How will the new system reward effective teaching?

- Good teachers make a real difference to pupils' learning. The purpose of the new higher salaries is to recognise our best teachers whatever type of school they work in. It is right that evaluations of teachers' effectiveness should take account of the progress their pupils make.
- Performance management should help teachers improve their own effectiveness for their own benefit and the benefit of the children they teach. We want the arrangements to be fair and consistent, with a minimum of bureaucracy.
- Applying for threshold assessment will be entirely voluntary but those who succeed will have access both to a salary uplift of up to £2,000 and potential future salary increases dependent on performance. As we have frequently said, this is a huge opportunity for teachers and not a threat.

Pay Structure for Teachers

12. A key feature of our proposals is a performance threshold which would give access to a new higher range of pay for our most effective teachers. Most of the unions' responses envisaged an upper pay spine, albeit with varying views on how and when teachers should move on to it. We have in mind to ask the Review Body to recommend changes along the following lines:

- A new upper pay spine for teachers successful at a "performance threshold". All teachers with 9 points for experience/qualifications (currently just over £23,000) could put themselves forward for consideration, including those with extra points.
- We want to reward teachers who are giving something extra to the success of the school and its pupils. We believe that the existing contract allows this so do not propose to develop a new contract above the threshold.
- We propose new performance points of around £800-£1,000 beyond the threshold up to around £30,000. Separate management allowances could be paid to teachers below or above the threshold to recognise team management or curriculum leadership and could bring salaries of post-threshold teachers to over £35,000. The most effective teachers could earn up to £40,000 as Advanced Skills Teachers.
- The existing salary scale to continue for teachers who do not move to the new system. Both scales would be kept under review by the Review Body.

How will the threshold assessment work?

- Teachers would seek assessment using a straightforward application form. The national assessment standards must use soundly-based evidence of effective teaching and we have commissioned research from management consultants Hay McBer to help set those standards. We will publish clear criteria for the assessors who will work with heads to ensure fair and consistent judgements. All assessors must pass a national training programme. We will make the process of threshold assessment as non-bureaucratic as possible.

Performance Review and Pay Review

13. Performance management is central to our proposals and offers significant benefits to schools. Pupils will benefit because their teachers will have a more sharply focused picture of what, with encouragement, support and high expectations, pupils can achieve. Teachers have a right to expect that their performance will be regularly assessed and that they will have a proper

opportunity for professional discussion with their team leader about their work and their further professional development.

14. We agree with a number of respondents that there should be two distinct stages in performance management - performance review and pay review. Performance review would operate as follows:

- Annual performance review would be part of schools' normal operating procedures. It would involve team leaders discussing and agreeing work and development priorities with each of the teachers in their team. It would be intended to assess teachers' effectiveness and identify areas where it could be developed further.
- The agreeing of personal objectives would be a school-based process carried out in the context of the school's development plan and any departmental or team plans. The purpose of the objectives would be to identify key priorities for the teacher's work including pupil progress. They would of course need to take account of realistic expectations of what the pupils would achieve. Objectives could also include ways in which the teacher will contribute to team priorities and the teacher's own professional development.
- Monitoring should be a natural dimension of the school's work. A more formal discussion each year would review the teacher's effectiveness against the full range of their work. The performance review would look at the overall quality of teachers' work and its impact on children. The new research into characteristics of effective teaching would set a framework for assessment and for professional development.
- Annual reviews would identify competencies or subject areas which teachers would want to focus on to develop their professional expertise. Over time teachers would be able to use their reviews to build up a record of career and professional development to use for job applications, references and threshold applications.

How can pupil progress be fairly taken into account?

- Teachers should make a difference to pupils' learning. Any system of rewarding teacher effectiveness can not and should not ignore this contribution. That is one of the important aspects of both the performance threshold and performance-related promotion. Some teachers expressed concern that this might mean crude numerical targets unrelated to pupil prior achievement. The Green Paper made clear that objectives for pupil progress should take account of pupils' starting points and should be agreed between a teacher and team leader in the context of the school, those pupils and that teacher. Objectives might be focused on groups of students or on classes.

15. Decisions on pay and promotion would be informed by performance review. There would be three distinct phases:

- *Up to the performance threshold* teachers can expect an annual increment if they are performing satisfactorily. We have said that we expect annual progression. Double increments for exceptional performance would need to be justified by review outcomes. If annual review showed evidence that the teacher's overall performance was poor an increment could be held back - as in the present system.
- *Threshold assessment* would be a separate process assessed against national criteria as described above. Annual reviews would help teachers identify areas on which they needed to focus to meet threshold standards and in time provide the evidence needed for assessment.
- *Teachers above the threshold, Advanced Skills Teachers and teachers*

in the leadership group would all have the opportunity of gaining higher salaries for sustained high quality performance.

How will this system be managed?

- We have been developing a draft Performance Management Framework which will set out the key elements of the new system. Good management is a matter of practice rather than paperwork and should not be over-bureaucratic. We will offer model policies based on existing good practice to help schools identify how they can build on their existing systems for planning, monitoring and appraisal.

How will you ensure schools have the skills to implement these arrangements?

- It will be crucial that heads, teachers and governors have the skills to operate the new system. We will be developing a high quality training package which would offer schools significant support, training and advice. We will designate one of the training days in the next academic year for work on performance management. We will provide funding for every school for the introduction and operation of the new arrangements, including targeted provision for governor training.

School Performance Award Scheme

16. The first School Performance Awards will be made in the academic year 2000/01. They will enable schools to provide pay bonuses to all staff, teaching or non teaching, who have contributed to the school's achievement. Schools can choose in their pay policies whether to distribute the award on a flat rate basis, or differentiated. We expect perhaps a quarter of schools to benefit each year. Payments will recognise improvements as well as outstanding overall performance, with awards for successful special schools and schools coming quickly out of special measures.

Better training

17. There was broad support for effective professional development, support and training for teachers and school staff at all stages of their careers. We are providing very substantial support through the Standards Fund for professional development. It is important that heads and teachers are able to use funding flexibly to meet national and school training priorities as well as teachers' individual needs. We will review the funding mechanisms to see how this can be achieved.

18. We will pilot aspects of the fast track from this September to provide tailored training and support to excellent trainees and serving teachers and allow them to move rapidly through the new professional structure. It will boost the recruitment of the most highly talented to initial teacher training.

19. We have asked the TTA to take forward work on developing numeracy tests for trainee teachers in the summer of 2000 and tests in literacy and ICT for summer 2001.

Better support

20. We have increased numbers of teaching assistants by providing funding from this April for the equivalent of 2,000 Assistant Literacy Assistants. A total of £350m is being made available over this and the next two years to enable schools to recruit a further 18,000 full-time equivalents. A proportion of the

funds will provide training for new and existing assistants. Work has started to identify the training needs of teaching assistants and on occupational standards which provide a framework for more systematic training.

21. We will help schools implement the new performance management arrangements by providing better support systems for heads. The Small Schools Support Fund and Staff Working Environment Fund will both help create a more professional working environment. This is on top of the very significant new investments in school buildings and ICT which will benefit teachers and pupils alike.

Funding

22. We are making available additional funding from 2000-01 to support the extra costs to schools of teachers passing the threshold and will make sure it reaches schools. We will ensure the funds are administered with the minimum of bureaucracy.

23. A separate leaflet will be published on the consultation response in Wales by the National Assembly for Wales.

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Toby's Ideas:

Whole building and individual teachers

Include a dissemination component—you must disseminate info

More than one indicator

CREATING A WORLD CLASS EDUCATION SERVICE

**SPEECH BY PROFESSOR MICHAEL BARBER AT GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY,
WASHINGTON DC.**

10TH December 1998

INTRODUCTION

Over the next hour or so my modest ambition is to discuss 1000 years of history, examine the characteristics of a world class education system and describe the challenge of seeking to create one. I have just read a brilliant history book: *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations* by David Landes - Professor Emeritus at Harvard - a study of why some countries become rich and get richer, others rise and fall and some have never become rich at all. It inspired the opening section of this speech and I commend it to you.

THEME ONE: THE TRADE IN IDEAS

David Landes argues that:

“Anyone who looked at the world, say a thousand years ago, would never have predicted great things for this small protrusion at the end of the Eurasian landmass that we call Europe. In terms popular among today’s new economic historians, the probability at that point of European global civilisation becoming dominant was somewhere around zero. Five hundred years later it was getting close to one.”

What changed so dramatically between the year 1000 and the year 1500? A number of things:

1. The notion of private property developed in place of the tradition, familiar in Asia and the

Middle East, under which all land belongs to the despot. Private property gave people an incentive to improve what they had for the benefit of themselves and their descendants.

2. The classical heritage, which established the idea of a citizen, was revived.
3. From a Judaic-Christian tradition, the notion of dissent developed.
4. There was a growing division of power between the centre and the locality and between town and country, which opened up room and opportunity for differing viewpoints and for the establishment of market relationships.
5. But above all, technology improved. For example:
 - waterwheels: which drove machines long before the Industrial Revolution;
 - eyeglasses: which doubled the life of craftsmen and increased precision craftsmanship;
 - mechanical clocks: which established a pattern of life especially in towns and encouraged technical skill;
 - printing: actually invented in China, but exploited in Europe to the extent that, within 50 years of Gutenberg's invention in the mid-15th century, over 2 million books had been printed in Italy alone;
 - gunpowder - again invented in China - but turned into an instrument of power in Europe.

Medieval China was responsible for a series of other inventions too. Among them were:

- the wheelbarrow
- the stirrup
- the compass
- paper.

But in medieval China knowledge and know-how were not cumulative; superior techniques did not over time necessarily replace older methods. Indeed, Chinese industrial history is littered with examples of regression, as in the case of gunpowder and printing, or even of technological oblivion. The entire iron industry, for example, developed and then fell into disuse.

In Europe by contrast, there was what Landes calls a “mania for tinkering and improving”. Each time a new and better clock was produced, someone somewhere was working to do better still.

In short, in that 500 year period which we so often dismiss as the middle ages, Europeans had invented something very profound. They had invented *invention* itself. And the key to this crucial step was the notion of learning from experience and from the experience of others.

The story of voyages of exploration is similar. Between 1405 and 1431 there were seven Chinese voyages into the Indian Ocean. These had larger, more magnificent ships, many more people and were altogether much grander than the expeditions of the Portuguese to the same ocean later in the same century. But there was one crucial difference. The Chinese voyages were designed to demonstrate Chinese superiority and to overawe the people in the places they visited. The Portuguese voyages were designed genuinely to explore. They were literally voyages of discovery, seeking to find out what was there and, if possible, to become wealthy through trade.

Once begun, the process set in motion by Henry the Navigator (the great Portuguese king), was unstoppable. By contrast when the Chinese Emperor stopped the expeditions to Indian Ocean in 1431, they stopped completely, so much so that the first visit of a Chinese ship to Europe did not take place until 1851.

In short, by 1500 Europe had a capacity to learn from experience, a curiosity, an interest in discovery and an openness to ideas which provided the foundation for the extraordinary growth in the second half of the millennium.

There is an important characteristic of this series of medieval European developments which is so obvious that it is easy to miss. They were truly European: the Dutch, Czechs, Germans, Italians, French, British and many others were involved in the invention of invention. The Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Dutch, and British were all involved in voyages of discovery.

Similarly the key ideas that came to dominate the second half of the second millennium, such as:

- separation of church and state
- liberty
- progress
- the market

were not the inventions of any single country in Europe. They were genuinely European ideas. Indeed to a remarkable degree, by 1500, an intellectual community had developed which was European rather than national in outlook. For the next two hundred years this community drove out across the undiscovered plains of philosophy, science and ideas, just as in later centuries American pioneers opened up the west.

Erasmus, for example, was born in Rotterdam in 1466, lived in Louvain, Basel, and Freiburg, and became a professor at Cambridge. Two and a half centuries later, Voltaire was born in Paris but lived in England, Switzerland, Berlin and briefly the Bastille!

These two great thinkers, and those of the generations in between, belonged to this thriving European intellectual community, which was not always loved by government or church but was beyond suppression.

Of course, the story of Europe and its insolent offspring in America and Australasia is not one of steady progress. There were acts - and still are - of barbarity and brutality. There were dark periods, as when the counter-reformation drove many thinkers out of Spain and Portugal. There were huge upheavals like the Thirty Years War which destroyed cities and reduced the population of Germany by 30 per cent. But they did not drive the thinkers out of Europe altogether, nor did they stop for long the process of learning and invention which lay behind economic growth. In any case, from the 17th century onwards those whose ideas were out of fashion in some parts of Europe could either stick it out and hope for the best or follow the Mayflower to North America. There the combination of European ideas, freely available land and scarce labour encouraged major breakthroughs in thinking - modern democracy, mass production and hamburgers to name only three. These were the benefits of a free society.

Meanwhile, the lesson of the devastating periods of repression in European history is very clear. Repression ultimately damages the repressor and persecution destroys the persecutor. That explains the failure of Spain and Portugal to keep up with Holland and England in the 17th and 18th century. It also explains in this century the failure of the USSR and its satellites in Eastern Europe. In other words, the evidence of the periods of repression reinforces David Landes's main point. He concludes powerfully:

“If the gains from trade in commodities are substantial, they are small compared to those from the trade in ideas”.

This is a conclusion of stunning simplicity with obvious relevance to the present. If the trade in ideas was important then, how much more so now in the era of globalisation and universal access to sources of information and ideas?

We all know examples of people and organisations that become introverted, that turn their back on the uncomfortable truth, that adhere to intellectual orthodoxies long after the evidence has proved them wrong and that rest on their laurels and cease to seek improvement. We have seen it in companies that fail; in some countries in Europe before the collapse of communism; in British trade unions in the 1970s; and in some schools where the staff blame failure on everyone but themselves. These are organisations that have ceased to trade ideas and to learn.

Isolation, introversion and intellectual blockheadedness - what Barbara Tuchman, echoing Erasmus, called "folly" - have always led to decay. In the past, the process of decay sometimes took decades, even centuries. In the modern world, where the process of change is much more rapid, so the process of decay has become swifter too. Standing still is no longer an option - not for businesses, not for governments and certainly not for education systems.

After all, one central characteristic of the world on the brink of the new millennium is that, economically speaking, the cost of trading in ideas has fallen dramatically. As the British economist Frances Cairncross put it forcefully:

"The death of distance as a determinant of the cost of communications is going to be the single most important economic influence on society in the next quarter of a century".

Think how hard it was to trade ideas before the invention of printing; think how hard Erasmus, More, Comenius, Galileo, Newton, Voltaire, Hume, Franklin and Jefferson had to work to be part of the remarkable intellectual community which laid the foundations of modern society.

And think how easy it is now with:

- cheap efficient telephones
- email and the internet
- video conferencing
- intercontinental air travel and
- digital broadcasting.

Again as Cairncross puts it: "The additional cost of sending a call an extra mile is getting close to zero". The implications of this are profound. If the cost of trading ideas is close to zero, then economics cease to be a barrier to that vital process. Every individual organisation or country can join the trade. The only remaining barriers are in the human mind.

Indeed if access to ideas is free, what determines whether they are traded effectively is firstly, a willingness to seek them out, WHICH IS A QUESTION OF ATTITUDE; and secondly, the capacity of people to understand, debate, refine, connect and apply them - WHICH IS A QUESTION OF KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING AND IMAGINATION. In short, the key determinant of the most powerful motor of economic development - the trade in ideas - has become EDUCATION.

The European intellectual community in the time of Erasmus was the preserve of a small but brilliant élite of educated men. It was no less brilliant and not that much bigger at the time of

Jefferson. In this era of rapid change where the trade in ideas costs almost nothing, that community has become something to which every citizen must belong. It is the task of education systems to enable all young people to join that intellectual community and to become active participants in the global trade in ideas. This is why we in the UK, and no doubt you here in the USA, are seeking to build a world class education system. Precisely what that means is my second theme.

THEME 2: WORLD CLASS EDUCATION

It is of course very easy to say we want a world class education system, but unless we seek to define “world class education” it will be no more than rhetoric. We have recently provided a definition in the opening paragraph of our consultation document on the future of the teaching profession:

“Every pupil should become literate, numerate, well-informed, confident, capable of learning throughout life and able to play an active part in the workforce and the community. All pupils should have the opportunity to become creative, innovative and capable of leadership. Pupils will need education for a world of rapid change in which both flexible attitudes and enduring values have a part to play.”

One place to look to ascertain whether these goals are being achieved is in international comparative studies. As far as the British are concerned, our performance in these international comparative studies is uneven. In the recently published TIMSS study both England and Scotland were slightly below the international average in mathematics but

significantly above it in science. In literacy - where the language itself is a factor - the British have generally fallen behind a number of other English speaking countries such as New Zealand and the United States. International studies also show that even where the English average compares well, the range around the average is very wide, leaving a long tail of underperformance.

Statistics such as these provide the starting point for the present British government's approach to educational reform. They reveal the need for a systematic attempt to improve performance in literacy and numeracy and for the development of strategies to raise the standards in the country's least effective schools. These international comparisons of outcomes, however, do not on their own provide an adequate basis for judging world class performance. This is partly because the tests do not cover the full breadth of outcomes with which any education system must be concerned. It is also because what they provide is a snapshot of the early 1990s. They do not tell us who **will** be world class in five or ten year's time. Above all they do not tell us what the current policies are of those countries that will have world class standards early in the next century.

For these reasons we in the government's new Standards and Effectiveness Unit in the Department for Education and Employment have tried to go beyond these interesting international comparisons. We have examined research on educational, social and organisational change and tried to identify what the characteristics of world class education services will be early in the 21st century. Any attempt to anticipate the future is of course risky and involves making informed judgements, some of which may turn out to have been flawed. But surely it is better to seek to anticipate the future than simply to wait for it to happen. It would be a mistake to wait until 2005 before deciding what we should have done in the late 1990s!

This process has enabled us to identify what we think will be the seven characteristics of a world class education service early in the next century. Since January we have been discussing them with teachers and business people and in June, during the British Presidency of the European Union, they provided the basis for informal discussions among education ministers from the EU and central and eastern Europe. As a result we have been able to refine them. They are intended to provide a framework, within which countries can learn from each other better than has been possible in the past.

In the following paragraphs, I set out the seven characteristics and what the Blair government is doing about each of them.

1. Extensive School Autonomy

Within a policy framework which lays down curriculum, qualifications, quality assurance procedures and standards for teacher training, schools will have substantial responsibility for managing their own affairs, including budgets and staffing. This has been the trend in recent years in many countries around the world - the UK, Hungary, the Czech Republic, some parts of the USA and Australia for example - and is likely to be sustained. It is a trend which reflects developments in other sectors including business. In the UK substantial strides in this direction were made by the previous government. The present government is extending school autonomy and reforming the process for allocating funds to schools to ensure a greater degree of fairness. The goal is to unlock potential and motivate teachers at school level. Overall, this radical policy has had enthusiastic support from headteachers. Success will take time and require a climate in which risk and ambition are encouraged and leadership is a decisive factor.

2. The Capacity to Disseminate Proven Best Practice

The need to achieve consistently high standards of performance across a system will demand a capacity to ensure that all schools learn from the best. There are many possible approaches to making this happen. In some countries it will be predominantly a responsibility for the teaching profession itself, as it is in medicine in the UK. In others it will involve collaboration between the teaching profession and government. The English education system has been historically weak in this regard and has left a great deal to chance.

The present government in England is putting in place a range of new policies to speed up the identification, dissemination and adoption of proven best practice. In England these include: major training programmes for all primary teachers in literacy and numeracy; the development of a database of best practice on the internet; the publication of model teaching schemes of work in all subjects; enabling local authorities, universities and successful schools to play an active part in promoting best practice; and investing over £2 billion in teachers' professional development over the next three to four years. Much of this investment will be devolved to schools so that headteachers can provide the professional development to support their plans.

3. The Capacity to Innovate and Manage Change

The pace of social, economic and technological change in the early 21st century is likely to be even greater than it is now. As a result, organisational structures in all areas of activity need to become more fluid and capable of responding to changing circumstances. Education systems which suffer from the flaws of traditional bureaucracies will find it hard to move quickly and adapt. In the future, they will need excellent communication systems using modern technology and people in frontline services who have the power, confidence, information and resources to

make many decisions for themselves. These will need to be systems which maintain direction and cohesion through a commitment to shared values and goals, rather than extensive bureaucratic regulation. Whether they succeed will depend, in part, on the degree of cohesion in the society and the levels of trust among key stakeholders. Quality assurance arrangements will need to provide regular feedback on the performance of individual schools and the system as a whole.

Simply being responsive to change will not be enough. Education systems will also need to develop the capacity to promote innovation, research and development. The Education Action Zones which have just been established in England have been explicitly designed to encourage innovation among new partnerships of schools, business and local authorities in areas of disadvantage. Central government has committed extra resources to the zones and lifted some of the national regulations including those affecting the curriculum and teachers' pay and conditions. In return business has made an investment and the schools involved are setting ambitious targets for pupil performance and developing innovative approaches to achieving them. This programme of 25 zones, each with about 20 schools, is highly controversial, not least because it has been consciously designed to challenge the status quo.

We are also reviewing our approach to educational research and improving the capacity of central government to receive rapid, accurate feedback on the effects of its decisions. Above all, we are seeking to be in touch, to be - as Tom Peters puts it - close to our customers, among whom we include teachers, headteachers, pupils and parents. This does not mean we always agree with them but at least we ought to know what different people think and take that into account in the decisions we make.

4. A committed, high quality, flexible workforce

Success in any enterprise depends most of all on the quality of the workforce. Above all, this is true in education where the business itself is about developing people. In England the teaching profession, like other professions, is anxious about change and tends to be resistant to it.

While there are exceptions, the overall tone of public statements from leaders of the profession tends to be defensive. Yet the prospects for the future suggest more extensive change at an increasingly rapid pace. Motivating teachers, and ensuring that they are properly rewarded, supported and trained are therefore centrally important issues for government.

The present British government is committed to the modernisation of the teaching profession. Improved rewards for successful teachers have already been introduced. Quicker procedures for dismissing incompetent teachers are in place. This government has recognised that students and indeed good teachers are those who suffer most when professional incompetence is tolerated.

Last week, the government published a major policy statement - in a Green Paper - outlining a vision of a teaching profession fit for the 21st century. Tony Blair has heralded it as "the most radical reform of the teaching profession since state education began". This will generate wide-ranging debate among teachers, other staff in schools and society as a whole and will lead to radical reform of the pay, conditions, training, career development and support of teachers. It has implications for teaching methods and ideas about learning. It opens up key issues for the future including the balance of staffing in schools and the development of a trained paraprofessional workforce which can help teachers with their responsibilities. The government is always keen to learn from those innovative schools, both in Britain and elsewhere, which have raised standards by introducing new combinations of teachers, other

staff and technology. Its publication is a defining moment for this government and I will return to it in the third section of my lecture.

5. A Commitment to Equal Opportunities

World class systems will need to provide a high quality education for all children regardless of their background or educational needs.

The policy of the British government towards equal opportunities has four key elements. First, it is gathering excellent data, based on national tests for all pupils aged 7, 11, 14 and 16 and the independent inspection system. These data enable the government to monitor the education system's impact on, for example, different ethnic groups or on girls and boys.

Secondly, it expects high standards of all pupils. It does not accept that poverty or belonging to a particular ethnic minority should be used as an excuse for underperformance. Thirdly, it believes that government has a responsibility to target resources to give extra help to those who need it most. Hence across the UK there is a strong emphasis on improving provision for children with special educational needs and on tackling the problems of social exclusion.



Finally, the government seeks to avoid confusing equity with uniformity. For these reasons the government is expanding the network of specialist schools in technology, language, sport and arts. It has recently, for the first time, provided state funding to Muslim schools. Ensuring fairness means not only providing high standards for all, but also recognising, encouraging and celebrating diversity. Education systems which fail to recognise diversity in their school populations are doomed to fail in the future.

6. A Society which Values Education

The international evidence suggests that societies which value education and expect their young people to succeed in school are likely to achieve higher standards. This is hardly surprising. In some societies the value placed on education is so strongly embedded in the culture that it will not need any attention from government. In the UK, for much of this century, the education system was expected to select an academic élite and provide only basic education for the majority. The result has been a culture which, until recently, has not sufficiently recognised the potential of education to improve people's life chances. Too many of our people simply don't believe education will make a difference to them or their children.

The present government is working with partners in business and the media as well as in education to challenge these outdated cultural attitudes. Ensuring parents are involved in policy is a major priority. The emphasis on providing performance information for parents, on publishing data and on working with the media to draw attention to the value of education are all contributing to changing the culture. This year in the UK is the National Year of Reading and many businesses, media organisations, as well as educators and publishers, will contribute to emphasising the importance of literacy at all ages. There have been government-funded advertisements encouraging parents to read with their children. There have been activities in schools, colleges and libraries across the country. Television programmes have written literacy into their storylines and popular products will carry the logo of the National Year of Reading. Footballers, filmstars and other celebrities will play a part in the campaign. On street corners, at bus stops and in cafés, strangers are beginning to ask each other "what did you read today?" Or so the theory goes. Teachers will soon find that after years of feeling as though they were swimming against the cultural tide, suddenly it is flowing for them.

7. Consistent Investment with Resources Targeted to Meet Need

All the indications suggest that, as the demand for higher performance and greater access to education grows, governments will need to spend more rather than less on school education. They will have to balance the need to fund universal provision with the simultaneous pressure to target additional funds to those who need it most. Meanwhile individuals and businesses will undoubtedly spend more of their disposable income on education. For government this will be welcome and it will need to find new ways of working in partnership with the private sector.

While real growth in education expenditure can probably be anticipated in the next decade, the distribution of the funding and its steadiness over time will be important factors too. Success in bringing about major educational change and sustaining the commitment of teachers can easily be undermined by unpredictable changes in levels of funding from one year to the next.

Overall, education systems can expect to be under pressure to achieve dramatic improvements in performance in return for limited increases in expenditure. Inevitably this will demand both that traditional practices are questioned and that there is a constant search for better practice. Hence the need to encourage imagination and innovation among school leaders once decision-making has been devolved.

The British government has published expenditure plans for the next three years which indicate the areas where growth can be expected. In particular it plans to give priority to early years and primary education on the grounds that laying the foundation for early success and preventing failure as far as possible is educationally and economically preferable to dealing with failure later. It will also invest in its plans to modernise the teaching profession, following the Green Paper. The theme of the investment programme is that any additional funding must bring change - the money is for modernisation. This indeed is Tony Blair's message to the entire public sector.

THEME THREE: MAKING IT HAPPEN

The creation of a world class education service will take years - certainly five or ten in our case - but by then the world will have moved on. In the post-modern world, as we have seen, standing still is not an option. This demands a government that thinks strategically and sets its planning horizons far beyond the next election. Success will depend on careful implementation, steady investment and partnership between all those involved in the process. It requires a government which recognises that change is delivered as much through culture - people's hearts and minds - as it is through systems. Above all, the drive for change needs to be sustained.

Simplifying ruthlessly, policy which leads to real, positive change is a four stage process involving:

- development
- innovation
- implementation
- institutionalisation.

Too often in the past education policies in the UK have been taken only to the first, second or third stages with the result that their impact is marginal. This government is seeking to avoid repeating that error. While much of the first year or so of this government was inevitably taken up with policy development, much of this present year and next year will involve what I call "relentless implementation". At the same time, however, it is necessary to begin the development stage of the second wave of reform. Government therefore becomes a complex process of concentrating on the detail of policy implementation while simultaneously scanning

the horizon, just as crossing the Atlantic in the seventeenth century involved dealing with the rough seas immediately at hand and simultaneously steering a course by looking at the stars. There is room in this theme for a series of lectures, never mind just one, but let me pick out four lessons we are learning which may have a wider application.

High Reliability Systems

The first is that effective policy implementation can learn a great deal from the approach of high reliability organisations - those, such as airlines or power stations, where if something goes wrong it leads to catastrophe. This has been written about in relation to schools by academics like David Reynolds but not as far as I know in relation to policy implementation. Yet it is a key theme if reforms are to be taken to the stage of institutionalisation. Tony Blair constantly reiterates in relation to the National Literacy Strategy that we must have a “smoothly functioning machine”. We have sought to instil in the strategy a project management approach in which there is rapid feedback from the frontline to the centre and immediate action taken to solve any problems that are identified. In short, we are building in an intolerance of underperformance, which is essential in high reliability organisations.

This is easy to say but hard to do in an education system and a culture in which underperformance has been assumed and tolerance of it has been endemic. Bill Bryson, in his best-selling portrait of Britain, *Notes from a Small Island*, says the British are the only people in the world who when asked “How are you?” reply “Mustn’t grumble”. This shrugging acceptance of mediocrity is precisely what we are challenging through our education reforms.

The National Literacy Strategy is at the forefront of taking forward this culture shift. Though it has not worked perfectly, it is a major advance on any previous reform. It is a centrally-driven

policy which is bringing change in every primary school classroom. Its feedback mechanisms have enabled me, as the person responsible for it at the centre, to be able to say with some conviction how primary teachers' attitudes have shifted every couple of weeks during this first term of implementation.

There is another feature of the strategy which is worth remarking on. At every level in the system, for perhaps the first time ever, people are accepting that their success or failure will be defined by the outcomes pupils achieve. That applies to the Secretary of State for Education and Employment and to me as much as to every primary teacher. For the civil servants in Whitehall this is little short of revolutionary. All of us must now take responsibility for our decisions. Or as the Guardian newspaper put it starkly in a profile of me earlier in the year: "the country's eleven year olds hold his future in their hands".

Pressure and Support

This new accountability is a welcome advance on the old days when people at all levels in the system were only too quick to blame others for the system's inadequacy.

Teachers at school level certainly feel the pressure of accountability that comes from published data about the performance of every school, periodic independent inspection, published targets for future performance - an innovation from this year - and the knowledge that the authorities are increasingly willing to intervene in a school where failure is identified. In the last three years around 60 schools have been closed after being found to be providing an inadequate education. Three times this number have been returned to health.

This pressure to perform, however, will only work if it is matched by support. That is why, in parallel, the government has promised steady investment in the education service, has sought to improve its capacity to involve and consult teachers in the design of policy and has developed means of recognising and publicly celebrating success. Schools that achieve excellence or improve rapidly can expect from next year to receive a cash bonus which they can distribute among staff as a reward. The best schools can become “beacons” with a responsibility to disseminate best practice, successful heads have been offered knighthoods and, from the summer of 1999, there will be the national teaching awards, an education equivalent of the Oscars ceremony, orchestrated by the celebrated film producer David Puttnam and broadcast by the BBC in prime time.

In short, we want a balance of pressure and support: relentless addressing of failure and relentless seeking out and recognition of success. Both are crucial to the creation of a performance culture which we believe will be at the heart of a world class education service.

The Battle of Ideas

It is tempting as a representative of government, especially thousands of miles from home, to pretend that the policy project is not only being perfectly implemented but also been enthusiastically adopted throughout the education service. The reality of course is that the kind of change we have embarked upon meets cultural resistance. Education systems are notoriously hard to change. There are vested interests at every level who seek to defend the status quo and there is endemic fear of change.

Our focus on standards, for example, challenges a widely held view among educators that pupil performance cannot be measured. Our focus on disseminating best practice challenges a view

- deep in the culture in England - that teachers should make their own decisions about the teaching method in their own classroom. Our focus on every pupil succeeding challenges the view that poverty somehow excuses underperformance. And our overriding belief that transforming the education service can help build a better society and a more successful economy challenges the fatalistic inheritance of 1970s sociology that schools, far from making a difference, only cascade social division from one generation to the next.

However good our policies might be and however smooth the management of change, a government cannot successfully transform an education service unless it constantly engages in this battle of ideas. For successful change is as much about culture as it is about policy and systems. Winning the battle of ideas means careful presentation of policy. The success of new Labour in presentational terms has been much commented on and need not detain us here. What does need to be stressed is that there is much more to winning the battle of ideas than presentation alone. It requires building a coalition for change which includes business and parents as well as the media. It requires building relationships within the education service, especially with the many energetic school leaders who are committed to modernisation and it means setting out some clear priorities and sticking to them, month after month, year after year.

After more than ten years of restless and sometimes chaotic educational reform, teachers can be forgiven for having doubts about whether government means what it says. They have seen governments change their priorities so often that it will take time to convince them that this time the government means business. They had begun to think of policies as London buses - not worrying whether they got on board because another would be along in a minute. Since last May's election we have sought to change that attitude - literacy, numeracy and school improvement have been consistent priorities since then and will remain so. The primary

teachers who have worked so hard this term to implement the National Literacy Strategy are tired, but they are beginning to see that their energy has not been expended in vain; it is an investment in the future. The government will - however difficult it might be - stick to its priorities. As Ronald Reagan used to say "It ain't easy but it is simple".

These priorities have to be sustained even as we prepare the second wave of education reform. Every step we propose needs to be communicated as a step towards the creation of a world class education service. The second wave needs to be seen as confirming and reinforcing the messages of the first wave. We need to show how the changes we expect of individual teachers fit into this bigger strategic picture.

The centrepiece of the second wave is our Green Paper, published last week, on the reform of the pay, career structure, support and training of teachers. It needs to be seen not just on its merits but in the context of this battle of ideas. It emphasises the importance of improving performance management, rewarding the success of both schools and individuals, fast-tracking the talented, and investing in training and development. It shows how we can unlock the potential of new and potent combinations of teachers, other staff and technology in delivering teaching and learning. The priorities will remain the same but our capacity to achieve them can constantly be improved. Innovative schools are already showing the way.

We want an education system which attracts, retains and motivates teachers with a sense of ambition and a shared belief in the possibility of a world class education system. We will invest substantial additional funds to reward good teachers, improve the paraprofessional and technological support they receive and to enhance their entitlement to training but in return we will demand modernisation and the focus on performance on which our reform agenda depends.

For the last twenty to thirty years it has sometimes seemed as if the teaching profession has been cut off - or has cut itself off from the rest of society. Parents and business ceased to understand the language education professionals talked. While individual parents normally have high regard for their child's teacher, few understood the profession's leaders when they spoke against the change which was sweeping through every other sector of life and when - in spite of the evidence piling up - they defended the inadequacy of the status quo. Our proposals for the reform of the teaching profession are far-reaching and radical. They offer the opportunity to reconnect the teaching profession to the rest of the rapidly changing society in which we live. Indeed, teachers now have the chance to take their place - where they surely belong - at the heart of the learning society.

Perhaps this explains why last week these radical proposals received a cautious welcome from teacher leaders. We hope that if we sustain our priorities, implement policy steadily and communicate our vision clearly we will find that teachers join parents and business in working to create a world class education system. It is essential that they do, if every citizen is to participate in that trade in ideas which has underpinned successful societies for the last millennium and will be more important still in the next.