Harold Wyndham and Educational Reform in Australia 1925–1968

John P. Hughes

Harold (later Sir Harold) Wyndham
Director-General of Education, NSW, and elder statesman

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Contents

Editorial

The *ERP* editorial team apologise profusely to our readers for the very late publication of the June 2002 issue. The delay is due to a variety of reasons not the least of which has been the high workloads experienced by members of the editorial team over the past 18 months. They are, in turn, indicative of the increased work pressures now commonplace amongst staff in Australian universities.

We trust our readers will agree with us that the delay in publication is more than offset by the current special issue which is devoted exclusively to the educational career of Dr Harold Wyndham, the former Director-General of Education in New South Wales, Australia's most populous state. Dr Wyndham's name is forever linked in the public mind with the so-called 'Wyndham Plan' for the reorganisation of secondary education in NSW in the 1950s. His educational career was the subject of a recent doctoral study undertaken at the University of Sydney by John Hughes. In an earlier issue of this journal (Vol 28/2 Dec 2001) Dr Hughes contributed an article on Wyndham's influence in developing the Comprehensive School in NSW but there is much more in Wyndham's remarkable career to interest professional educators and lay people alike. We are, therefore, very pleased to devote this entire issue of the journal to the publication, with minor textual changes, of Dr Hughes' thesis in full. The thesis received very favourable reviews from all three examiners and was also highly commended by Professor Emeritus Tony Vinson, who chaired the 2001 Inquiry into Public Education in NSW. In delivering the Sir Harold Wyndham Memorial Lecture in Sydney in September 2002, he described Hughes' thesis as a most informative and readable account 'that must be published'. Meeting that challenge has resulted in the largest issue of *ERP* in a history that now extends back more than half a century.

Readers are advised that the December 2002 issue of *ERP* is to appear almost immediately. It is also a special edition devoted entirely to the development of secondary education in Western Australia 1912–1972. The June 2003 issue of the journal will revert to the traditional format of a selection of miscellaneous articles.

CLIVE WHITEHEAD

Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge my debt to the Wyndham family who replied so kindly to requests for letters and interviews; to the staff of the NSW State Archives and the Mitchell Library; to Mary McPherson from the history section of the NSW Department of Education and Training; and to Professors Geoffrey Sherington and Clifford Turney for their helpful advice in the compilation of this study.

Abbreviations

AEC	Australian Education Council
ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
ALP	Australian Labor Party
ANZHES	Australian and New Zealand History of Education Society
COE	Commonwealth Office of Education
CRTS	Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme
CSIR	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
HSC	Higher School Certificate
IQ	Intelligence Quotient
ML	Mitchell Library
NEF	New Education Fellowship
NLA	National Library of Australia
NSW	New South Wales
NSWSA	New South Wales State Archives
NSWTF	New South Wales Teachers' Federation
PSB	Public Service Board
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WP	Wyndham Papers

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This educational biography provides the first full-scale evaluation of the career and professional activities of Harold Stanley Wyndham, Director-General of the NSW Department of Education, 1952–68. It is based on first-hand and largely unpublished sources, ranging from Wyndham's private and official papers to the recollections of both his supporters and opponents. It strives to explain why Wyndham rose to prominence and the nature and extent of his contribution to Australian education, and endeavours to gauge the accuracy of current perceptions of his influence and legacy.

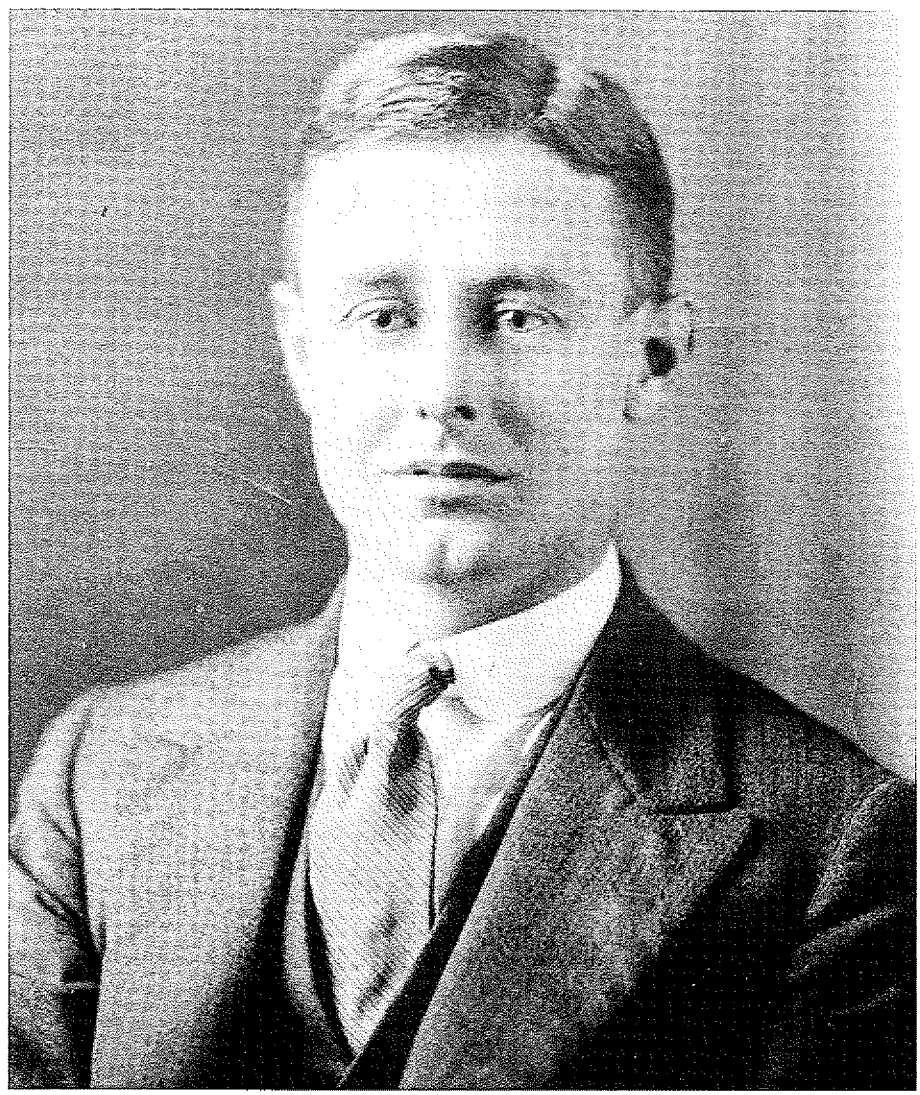
In the following chapters his professional life is examined, with special attention to key elements in its development and trends in the education sector. One distinctive aspect of his advancement was his success in securing promotions without having occupied senior positions in schools. Wyndham's response to particular educational problems, as they related to the flux of political, social and economic forces, provides the starting point for an inquiry into the way educational ideas were encountered, embraced, repudiated and transformed by Wyndham. Anyone who wishes to understand his role as a public servant cannot neglect an examination of the influences and restraints evident in Wyndham's career, the features of his administrative style, and the networks of influence in which he operated. Some scholars, regrettably, continue to perpetuate a myth when they claim that Wyndham was able to chart the course of education in New South Wales unconstrained by other forces.

Early in his career, it was the possibilities of a 'science of education', with its promise of supplying objective proofs, that intrigued the young Wyndham. Child psychology and the quantitative study of the processes of intelligence and learning would, he hoped, transform education and the profession. He realised that their successful introduction could support claims for educational leadership to be the exclusive prerogative of the professional. His studies of individual differences led Wyndham to a concern with mental deficiency, special schools for the gifted and educational 'misfits' and homogeneous, that is to say, mental-age grouping.

Wyndham changed the face of secondary schooling in NSW with the 1957 Wyndham Report. The findings of the committee which he headed, recommended both removing selection for and then extending secondary schooling. Although

he is most often remembered for this achievement, he also made important contributions to the development of other educational undertakings, such as the use of tests for vocational purposes during the Second World War, the decentralisation of the Education Department and the wider employment of ability grouping. Contemporary educationists will recognise the enduring nature of many of the issues faced by Wyndham. Such issues included catering for individual differences, the purpose of public education, the professional preparation of teachers, the responsibilities of the Commonwealth government in school and teacher education, and the respective roles of politicians and departments in policymaking.

In many respects the education system in New South Wales remains deeply influenced by the work of Harold Wyndham. The educational reforms produced during Wyndham's term with the Education Department supply an essential starting point for the contextualising of much recent policymaking in school education in Australia. The system he created is increasingly under attack. This inquiry, in explaining Wyndham's intentions and the social and historical context in which he operated, contributes to a better understanding of the reforms and conventions of his era.



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Chapter 1

Portraits of an Educationist

In his 1952 report, the Minister for Education, Robert Heffron, declared that the recently appointed Director-General, Dr Harold Stanley Wyndham, was a 'man of high scholarship and wide administrative experience', well equipped to meet the considerable challenges facing New South Wales (NSW) education.[1] For the next sixteen years Wyndham was to lead the Education Department through a turbulent period of massive expansion and major reform. There are few individuals whose connection with this office remained unbroken for so long. His endeavours included some notable successes and failures. As head of a vast bureaucracy controlling the largest schooling system in Australia, his influence was immense. Wyndham's ascendancy was hastened by a conjunction of many favourable circumstances, including a suitable political and economic climate as well as his own particular administrative style. His official stature was reinforced by his extended academic writing and by his success as a 'scientific manager'. One prominent educationist, Professor Alexander Mackie, of the University of Sydney, had already described Wyndham's advancement as the belated recognition of the importance of administrative leaders possessing sound academic attainments: 'If the philosophers, as Plato wished, will only consent to be kings [administrators] all will be well with the body politic.'[2]

There are various reasons why Wyndham's career furnishes a significant topic for investigation. Some believe that Wyndham's period of leadership marked for NSW the fullest dominion of the influence of the permanent head. It certainly has much to reveal about the nature of the power relationship which existed between the Minister and the Director-General; the political and administrative arms of government. This study constructs an educational biography which sheds light on the formative influences that allowed Harold Wyndham to enjoy immense authority. His development as an educationist and administrator and his contribution to NSW education are the central concerns. The study traces the career of Wyndham, the public servant, and sets it in its social and political context. Although the remainder of Wyndham's life is not a major interest, a full appreciation of Wyndham's career and the impact it had on NSW education requires a knowledge of his times. Hence the study examines the political and economic crises that overshadowed his public life and the role played by the

circle of professional friends who sustained him. A full personal biography is not the intention of this study. Instead, the aim is to provide an insight into the mode, working and influence of his professional career. The intimate details of his private domestic affairs and the inner struggles of his mind are not probed. Nor does this study attempt to resolve all the disputed elements in the controversies prominent during his career over such issues as intelligence testing, ability grouping, comprehensive schools and government aid to private schools. The aim is rather to reveal Wyndham's views on each of these issues and how they impacted on his career.

Wyndham played a central role in the formulation of plans to reform the secondary school system in NSW and the implementation of the 1961 *Education Act*: 'the most radical and interesting new development in Australian education up to that time'.[3] The Act endorsed most of the recommendations of a Committee appointed in 1957 to Survey Secondary Education in New South Wales, popularly known as the 'Wyndham Committee'.[4] The subsequent reforms, widely referred to as the 'Wyndham Scheme', proved highly popular and many were soon adopted by other States.

Wyndham's reforms, which helped establish universal and comprehensive secondary schooling in Australia, still provide the structure for NSW secondary schooling and a lasting monument to his educational prestige. A recent New South Wales Director-General, Ken Boston, underlined the enduring influence of the Wyndham Scheme 'While of course there have been changes within the broad model of secondary schooling established in New South Wales in the 1950s and 1960s, 'the reality is that it remains in its fundamentals the structure we presently have.'[5]

Earlier studies of Wyndham have focussed almost exclusively on his contribution to the reform of secondary schooling in NSW. Anyone who sets out to write about Wyndham owes a primary debt to three important studies of Wyndham's overhaul of secondary education: the unpublished theses of A. Hellyer,[6] K. Smith,[7] and B. Pope.[8] Hellyer and Smith provide valuable insights into the process of reform. Hellyer uses the Wyndham Scheme as a case study in educational reform, and her evaluation of the effectiveness of the changes is noteworthy for its balanced consideration of merits and flaws. Kevin Smith, in a learned and acute commentary, provides an assiduous scrutiny of the policy stages that led to the *Education Act* of 1961 and the webs of influence prevalent at each step. A wide variety of ascriptions are made by both for the origins of the Wyndham Report. Smith convincingly argues that the 1957 report was a recycling of earlier reports to provide a policy solution to accommodate powerful economic and demographic pressures on the education system in the 1950s. He cites its antecedents as: the 1933 Wallace Report;[9] the recommendations made in

1946 by the Board of Secondary School Studies; and a number of critical developments in the 1950s. Hellyer distinguishes similar origins. In Chapter 5, this study concludes that it is impossible to deny that these attributions are for the most part accurate.[10] All three dissertations noted here acknowledge that wider contextual factors provided a favourable environment for these momentous changes. Later, shorter but incisive writings on the progenitors of the Wyndham Scheme include those by Jill Duffield[11] and John Godfrey.[12]

Admirable as they are, these studies of the Wyndham Scheme remain profoundly unsatisfying insofar as none provides a complete study of its chief architect and his evolution as an educational bureaucrat or a cogent historical evaluation of Wyndham's intellectual development. Previous investigations of the Wyndham Scheme exhibit other shortcomings. Each depends for archival data almost exclusively on the official papers of the Wyndham Committee. Few had access to Wyndham's personal files, which were only recently lodged at the Mitchell Library, and none sought to provide a history of Wyndham's career founded on original documents. All assume that antagonisms between reform and tradition, and public servant and politician, related primarily to ideas, when in fact they also profoundly involved individuals and institutions.[13] Earlier studies provide at most a meagre account of the origins of Wyndham's views and the reasons for his successes and failures as an administrator.

Over time the nature of schooling and the role of the professional educator has changed. So too have scholarly estimates of the Wyndham Scheme. As the postwar education consensus dissipated, scepticism concerning the merits of the Wyndham Scheme began to surface. Beverley Pope, in a revisionist historical analysis, insists that meritocratic assumptions were concealed by the Wyndham Scheme. Reform, in her view, was an instrument employed by an emerging elite wishing to challenge the dominance of those in power. According to Pope, proponents of the Wyndham Report hoped that it would entrench 'meritocratic' principles, delegitimise a ruling class based on inheritance and legitimise 'expertise' and 'professionalism'. She concludes that a concept of meritocracy, based on class interests, underpinned the Scheme's rationale.[14] Pope contends that what was portrayed as a 'rational' approach in fact sought to turn the public issue of state schooling into a technical issue of management.[15] Current evaluations of Wyndham's role in the committee established in 1953 to survey secondary education are examined in Chapter 5.

Harold Wyndham and the Wyndham Scheme have to be understood in the context of the intellectual and administrative changes in twentieth century Australia and developments abroad. Gary McCulloch, in tracing the evolution of the notion of education for leadership in English schools,

concludes that modern comprehensives failed to enhance social equality, instead recreating distinctions between an academic curriculum for an elite and a vocational program for the majority.[16] Geraldine Joncich Clifford's bold analysis of the role and views of Edward Thorndike, effectively links the preference for more scientific methods like intelligence testing with campaigns of that era to establish the professional status of psychologists.[17] Paul Chapman's examination of the reasons for intelligence tests being adopted so readily by American schools around the time of First World War is enlightening in this respect, particularly in its elaboration of the educational views of one of Wyndham's mentors, Professor Lewis Terman.[18] Unlike previous investigations this study does not ignore the influence on Wyndham of his studies with Terman at Stanford University. Science was the new religion, promising an understanding of life's mysteries and Wyndham became a prominent Australian advocate for the mental measurement movement which professionals such as Thorndike and Terman brought to prominence. In devising scale units to measure mental capacities and others to measure educational achievement, they laid the groundwork for the quantitative investigation of education.[19]

In an endeavour to redress the paucity of information about Wyndham's professional life and views, it was found that his early published works provided an excellent starting point for tracing his evolution as an educational intellectual The origin of much of Wyndham's thinking is to be found in *Class Grouping in the Primary School (1932)*[20] which judiciously ,dissected the issue of ability grouping, as it was understood at that time, and supplied the rationale for the programs he later devised for intelligence testing in NSW schools. The proposals set forth were later enlarged and more fully developed in *Ability Grouping (1934)*.[21] The central idea which dominated both works was that existing methods of class grouping were too haphazard and should be amended to ensure that intelligence testing sorted students more effectively into homogeneous classes based on their ability. Ironically, these works are rarely mentioned by other writers[22] although they contain his most individual and characteristic doctrines. Intelligence testing had long been practised by theorists of mental measurement but it was Wyndham who realised its potential to underpin educational reform in NSW.

Any examination of the personal and professional traits that nurtured or hindered Wyndham's ascendancy and of the stepping stones which led him to the highest place in the educational hierarchy of New South Wales, must recognise that the actions of any individual can only properly be understood when placed in the context of the wider socioeconomic milieu. The relationship between the individual and the wider context is dialectical and the role of the social, political, economic and educational contexts with

which each person interacts cannot be ignored. Several major biographical studies of Australian educational leaders successfully evaluate the role and contribution of other Australian educational leaders while recognising the impact of wider social and historical forces. The impact on NSW education of Peter Board, Director of Education from 1905 to 1922, was analysed by A. Crane and W. Walker,[23] while Brian Williams examined the influence of Ken Cunningham on the development of the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER).[24] Richard Selleck, in his biography of the Victorian Director-General, Frank Tate, analysed the period in which Tate worked to provide a more critical and vivid picture of this important Australian administrator.[25] Selleck succeeded in portraying the administrative and political machinations which lay behind the official facade and in identifying where they helped or hindered Tate's projects. Like Wyndham, Tate was often involved in skirmishes over the respective roles which politicians and departments should play in policy formulation and management. More recently, the now late Michael White completed an assessment of the contribution to reform of the West Australian Director-General, Thomas Logan Robertson.[26] Each of these biographers was diligent in contextualising his subject.

A number of general studies proved useful in determining the wider background to Wyndham's career. Andrew Spaull's extensive history of the Australian Education Council identified some major sources of education policy-making in Australia.[27] Other general histories which proved valuable included William Connell's history of the Australian Council for Education Research[28] and John O'Brien's account of the development of the NSW Teachers' Federation.[29] Cliff Turney's edited collection of biographies, particularly the third volume, also provided insights into the related practices and educational ideas of Wyndham's contemporaries.[30] School administration in the nineteenth century had included, so Turney observed, 'a rather curious mixture of politicians, clergy, administrators, teachers and private individuals; in the twentieth century the development of education fell strongly and increasingly into the hands of professional educators'.[31]

Wyndham has often been characterised as representative of this new breed of professional educator and Smith, for example, describes him as the archetype of the 'modern' public administrator.[32] This new style of bureaucrat encompassed widespread knowledge and expertise and displayed great zeal for rational social planning and modern 'scientific' principles. As part of this policy-making community, Wyndham strove to establish the independence of an educational professional group, its right to self-definition, and its self-generating role in the social order.[33] Such elites still seek to maintain the 'material interests of those with assets in credentials and assets in organisation through the monopoly of special knowledge and

skills'.[34] Educationists, by the time of Wyndham's retirement, had largely succeeded in carving out for themselves an independent social and intellectual sphere,[35] and Education, as defined by the profession rather than for the profession, had, at least for the moment, become a part of national life.

Success in this struggle,[36] it is claimed, assisted the permanent head to establish claims that their professional expertise entitled them to 'shape the main policies affecting curriculum offerings and to have undisputed authority over the teaching service'.[37] Many studies contend, as discussed in Chapter 9, that subsequent changes in the role of the chief education executive have diminished this authority. A former NSW Director-General, Dr Fenton Sharpe, believes that ministers and governments have, in recent decades, markedly increased their domain of influence at the expense of education departments and their chief officers.[38] Another critic argues that, recently, 'conventions concerning the separation of political and professional powers have disappeared in Australia'.[39] Other critics insist that earlier directors-general, such as Wyndham, had considerably more power: the only thing they have hesitated to produce is proof of that assertion. Although the political influence of senior officials has always been assumed to be formidable there is, in fact, very little research data on the role of senior educational administrators to substantiate the idea. This study sought such evidence.

In the history of Australian education it would be hard to find another leader whose influence has been presumed to be so immediate, so broad and so deep, but a heavy price has been paid for this veneration. In many of the analyses of the Wyndham prescriptions, little trace can be found of Wyndham's own thought. By copious examination of original sources, this study endeavours to describe the world as he saw it, but Wyndham was also concerned to present himself and his cause in the best light, so wherever possible, other sources have been examined to rectify the omission of setbacks and actions or motives not altogether creditable. The principal sources were the wealth of primary data now available in the NSW State Archives, the Mitchell Library and the NSW Department of Education and Training. These records provide a bountiful resource for the study of Wyndham. The richest portion is the extensive private records kept by Wyndham which, after his death in 1988, were donated to the Mitchell Library. They include a near complete and annotated set of his appointment diaries. These materials were complemented by evidence revealed in interviews with members of Wyndham's family, his associates and those, completed by earlier investigators, with Wyndham himself. Full co-operation was also forthcoming from Wyndham's friends, family and colleagues, and all his personal papers were freely open to inspection. This study was based on

a close examination of primary sources[40] including archival material, official publications, commission reports, newspaper items and Wyndham's published and unpublished letters and writings. Especially important were the 'unofficial' sources. Though diaries, letters and unpublished official papers must necessarily be treated with caution, they sometimes offer views and appraisals which might otherwise might elude the researcher. Moreover, in private correspondence officials are more likely to be frank about their views.

Wyndham's other major accomplishments, besides the Wyndham Report, and his disappointments, and how they were related to the development of his career and his educational views have seldom been revealed or explored by earlier writers. Since his death there has been a need for a biography which places Wyndham within the context of educational developments in the twentieth century. The principal aim of this study was to correct that deficit. His contribution to the Wyndham Report came after a long period of involvement in the education system in such varied roles as student, classroom teacher, research officer, inspector and administrator. Indeed, the magnitude of the Wyndham Scheme reforms and the concessions Wyndham was able to extract from other policymakers relied on the status he had achieved and the networks he had already established in the course of what was, by then, a long and illustrious career. However, merely to recount this progress would supply little more than an educational catalogue. An essential task, therefore, has been to establish the main themes in his educational thought and focus attention on material which reflected both contemporary developments in educational theory and the important ideas of his time.

Chapter Outline

The initial subjects of inquiry were the programs which Wyndham and his peers most often cited as turning points in his career. These provided insights into Wyndham's professional agenda and included topics such as research and guidance, decentralisation and the Wyndham scheme.[41] The president of the Australian College of Education, Albie Jones, when awarding an Honorary Fellowship to Wyndham in 1974, listed these as Wyndham's 'signal contributions'.[42] The literature was then reviewed to determine the issues which were prominent on the professional agenda during his career and which were likely to have influenced his career. These included the 1937 New Education Fellowship (NEF) conference, which aroused great public interest in educational reform, and the 1964 Martin Report,[43] which crystallised concerns over teacher education that had been gathering momentum in the previous decade. A further subject, Wyndham's

participation in reconstruction schemes towards the end of the Second World War, indicated that his career was not confined within the boundaries of NSW. Indeed, he was perhaps, the only State education department head of his time to become a truly national figure. The networks of powerful educational interests and individuals, the so called 'policy community' in which he operated, are also traced through each stage of his advancement.[44]

The turning points which appeared to be crucial to the progress of his career are examined in approximately chronological order. An investigation of his early schooling, university studies and the 'private' life of his childhood, which form the subject of Chapter 2, provides clues to explain his personality, self-image, and the attitudes and behaviour patterns that influenced his interaction with the education system. It is clear that his Methodist upbringing indelibly stamped his character. In his adolescence, attendance at Fort Street Boys' High School introduced him to a milieu which provided later professional connections vital for the advancement of his career: some of the preferment he enjoyed was undoubtedly due to his having been a member of this elite, highly selective public high school. After completing his university studies, ability grouping became his initial area of expertise, and the conclusions he drew from this were to remain at the centre of his educational philosophy throughout his working life

Between the two world wars, educational psychology provided a fertile field for innovative thought and experimentation. In the forefront were problems of individual differences, their measurement, and how schools could best accommodate them.[45] Wyndham soon became a prominent and trusted authority on these issues in key professional circles. This period provided a number of opportunities for the young Wyndham. Chapter 4 examines Wyndham's role in the 1937 New Education Fellowship conference, the reconstruction programs arising from the Second World War, decentralisation schemes and his appointment as Secretary to the Department where he held responsibility for all finance, all administratrive staff, for the whole building program and for liaison with the Department of Public Works and the Treasury. Thus far he had risen rapidly but the top rungs of the ladder almost eluded him because of the appointment of an antagonistic minister, Clive Evatt.[46] Fortunately, Wyndham was able to avoid him by transferring to war service with the federal government. The war gave a new impetus to longstanding calls for reform and Wyndham shared in the widespread belief that education could help to generate a more prosperous and just society. The teaching profession was also on the verge of a remarkable period of growth in numbers and political influence. This helped to give Wyndham's ascendancy added strength. The immediate postwar era also witnessed the development of widespread support for the use of education to protect and promote the common interest.

Decentralisation of administration was proffered as one means to achieve this end and Wyndham was entrusted with introducing it into school administration in NSW. His avowed aims were never fully realised in practice but his apparent success assisted his rise to prominence. By far the most outstanding educational problem in the immediate aftermath of war in Australia was how to provide an adequate supply of buildings and teachers to cope with the massive increase in enrolments in primary schools It fell to Wyndham to find solutions to this problem which had been exacerbated by the economic depression of the 1930s and building programmes deferred by the onset of war.

After serving briefly as Deputy Director-General, Wyndham was appointed Director-General of Education, in 1952. His fame and influence were to reach their apogee during the next sixteen years. By the start of the 1950s Wyndham was acutely conscious of the need for reform and aware that many circumstances favoured change. Among his lasting achievements none is more striking than his reform of secondary education. The concept of universal junior secondary education gained wide acceptance after 1945 but existing structures proved ill-equipped to deal with spiralling enrolments. The Wyndham Scheme sought to remove this impasse. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 deal in turn with his contribution to the creation of the Wyndham Committee, its proposals and the surmounting of obstacles frustrating their implementation. These are the reforms on which his fame rests. It is also important, however, to distinguish what Wyndham actually said as distinct from the many interpretations to which his words have been subjected.

Chapter 8 assesses Wyndham's contribution to reforms in the professional preparation of teachers following on from the report of the Martin Committee. He was clearly bitterly disappointed at the failure of the Menzies government to implement the recommendations he made in the Martin Report regarding teacher education. Finally, Chapter 9, provides an assessment of his legacy and administrative style. His relationship with the major formal and informal agents in policymaking and some of the salient professional rituals, mores and rivalries of that time are also scrutinised. They include the complexities of the factionalism evident in the educational bureaucracy and Wyndham's techniques for managing his relationships with key individuals and institutions. An assessment is also made of the ways in which his earlier experiences contributed to his success. The latter part of the chapter considers what Wyndham's career reveals about the role of the director-general in the 1950s and the conflicts and complexities of the office. For example, he did not always observe the convention that an administrator should be the impartial tool of his political masters.

Two of Wyndham's most pervasive and enduring concerns were ability grouping and the purposes of public education. How educational institutions might better serve the individual needs of students was the one question to which he constantly referred.[47] He was particularly interested in what changes in school organisation and teaching methods were necessary to provide adequately for the individual differences among school children.[48] Wyndham's Stanford doctoral thesis examined this issue, and the specialised knowledge that he acquired contributed to several key programs on his return to Australia. He cared intensely for individuality but saw no inconsistency in also advocating substantial collective interference in schools by society. The notions of individualism and revolt which had driven John Stuart Mill to insist that a state-controlled educational system inevitably diminished individuality[49] were never entertained by Wyndham. He ardently believed that public schools provided the best prospects for progress, and any proposals for increases in government support for private schools aroused his strident disapproval.[50]

As an individual Wyndham was both the representative and the author of forces which were changing education. In the wake of the recent critique of grand theories of social change, a renewed interest in the study of such individuals is emerging. While acknowledging that biography contributes to every text, in the sense that it springs from the personal history of the researcher, the central concerns of biography about the nature of time, consciousness and the formation of the self have become major preoccupations of wider academic discourse. There have, unfortunately, been many unscholarly educational biographies often consisting of little more than a prosaic account of the subject's life, uncritically accepting claims made for and by that person and neglecting to evaluate the relationship of the subject to his or her social context. Adequate historical biography must be more than a mere'account' of a person's life. It must be a 'history' of that life that meets the standards of inquiry required by the discipline of history.[51]

No understanding of a particular individual is complete unless the history and social structure which impinge on individual choice are understood. The individual in the course of work or study in a specific institution or social setting inevitably comes under 'the influence of a complex network of relationships among traditions, customs, norms, and power arrangements'.[52] Thus, the individual life has a layer of historical narrative in which personal choices are often dictated by the social boundaries that make plausible the situations in which humans live. But a highly socialised view of the individual, in which the individual identity evaporates and the individual is viewed as a mere product of history and current circumstances, without the power to make genuine personal

choices, is itself an oversimplification. Although everyone shows loyalty to certain groups there remains a wide variation in the characteristics and behaviours of the group members that makes generalising precarious.

As a subject passes through a culture and is enmeshed in its structures, the story of his career provides one legitimate view of his work culture. The kind of person created and his outlook on his labour becomes a related and additional way of viewing his profession. Since cultures and organisations often compress their essential values and convictions into models of human behaviour, the study of an elite member, such as Wyndham, who was so often held up as a model, can delineate these values. The study of the motives, the quality of intellect, and the creative sensibilities which the individual architects of education have brought to their task can reveal a great deal about the professional setting. Systematic documentation and analysis, likewise helps to explain how economic, political, or ideological realities 'become transformed through human agency into new visions of educational purpose, practices, and arrangements'.[53]

NOTES

1. Department of Public Instruction, *Report of the Minister of Public Instruction for 1952*, Sydney, Government Printer, 1954, p. 3.
2. A. Mackie to Wyndham, 30 Nov. 1948, Wyndham Papers (WP), Mitchell Library (ML) mss 5089, 1(38).
3. K. Smith, 'Political Influences Behind the Delayed Implementation of the Wyndham Report in New South Wales' in R. Broadbent (ed.), *Education Policy Making in Australia*, Melbourne, Australian College of Education, 1982, p. 179.
4. Committee Appointed to Survey Secondary Education in NSW (H. Wyndham, Chair), *Report*, Sydney, Government Printer, 1958. The origins and significance of the Wyndham Report are examined in chapters 5, 6 and 7.
5. Ken Boston, Untitled Speech at Leura, 10 Jun. 1998, Sydney, NSW Department of Education and Training.
6. A. Hellyer, The Wyndham Report: a social and educational evaluation compiled from published comment, MEd thesis, University of Sydney, 1969.
7. K. Smith, Influence and Leadership in Educational Policy Making at State Level: a case study of the Wyndham Report and the NSW Education Act, 1961, PhD thesis, University of New England, 1975.
8. B. Pope, An Exploration of the Links Between State-Provided Secondary Schooling and the Class Interests of Professional and Professionalising Groups, MA thesis, Canberra CAE, 1986.
9. Committee of Investigation Appointed to Inquire into the System of Examinations and Secondary School Courses (R. S. Wallace, Chair), *Report*, Sydney, Legislative Assembly NSW, 1934.

10. Beverley Pope believes that the reforms were intended to conceal rather than ameliorate inequalities. See Pope, Links Between State-Provided Secondary Schooling.
11. J. Duffield, 'The Making of the Wyndham Scheme in New South Wales', *History of Education Review*, vol. 19, no. 1, 1990; and J. Duffield, The Making of the Wyndham Scheme or Whatever Happened to Selective Secondary Education, paper ANZHES Conference, Newcastle, 1989.
12. J. Godfrey, 'New South Wales Intermediate Certificate Examination Reform: 1930–1957', *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, vol. 23, no. 1, Jan. 1991; J. Godfrey, 'Everybody in New South Wales Had Done Intermediate ... Well, That Was My Plan, Until Wyndham Invented This Thing Called Sixth Form': NSW Intermediate Examination reform: 1930–1957, paper AARE Conference, 1989; and J. Godfrey, 'Unionism and Education Reform: the attitude of the New South Wales Teachers' Federation to Intermediate Certificate examination reform 1930–1957', *Education Research and Perspectives*, vol. 15, no. 1, 1988.
13. Biographical studies of related educationists include, B. Williams, *Education with Its Eyes Open: a biography of K. S. Cunningham*, Melbourne, ACER, 1994; M. White, Thomas Logan Robertson, 1901–1969, A Biographical Study, draft manuscript, Perth, Curtin University of Technology, 1997 [since published as *Thomas Logan Robertson: a biography*, Perth, Library and Information Centre, Curtin University of Technology 1999]; and P. Chapman, *Schools as Sorters: Lewis M. Terman, applied psychology, and the intelligence testing movement*, 1890–1930, New York, New York University Press, 1988.
14. Pope, Links Between State-Provided Secondary Schooling, p. 57.
15. *Ibid*. p. 77. Similar criticisms to those which Beverley Pope levelled against Wyndham are made of Cyril Burt in A. Wooldridge, *Measuring the Mind: psychological theory and educational controversy in England, c. 1860–c.* 1990, Melbourne, Cambridge University Press, 1994.
16. G. McCulloch, *Philosophers and Kings: education for leadership in modern England*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1991.
17. G. Joncich, *Edward L. Thorndike: the sane positivist*, Middletown, Connecticut, Wesleyan University Press, 1984.
18. Chapman, *Schools as Sorters*.
19. Examples of this literature include: D. McCallum, The Theory of Educational Inequality in Australia, 1900–1950, PhD thesis, University of Melbourne, 1985; D. McCallum, 'Naturalising Educational Inequality: an overview of the Australian intellectual field', *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Sociology*, vol. 16, no. 2, Jul. 1980; G. Sutherland, Ability, *Merit and Measurement: mental testing and English education, 1880–1940*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1984; Joncich, Edward L. Thorndike; and Wooldridge, *Measuring the Mind*.
20. H.Wyndham, *Class Grouping in the Primary School*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1932.
21. H.Wyndham, *Ability Grouping*, Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1934.
22. A brief but illuminating discussion of these publications is provided in L. Dunt, *Speaking Worlds: the Australian educator and John Dewey, 1890–1940*, Melbourne, History Department, Melbourne University, 1993, pp. 113–114.
23. A.R. Crane and W.G. Walker, *Peter Board: his contribution to the development of education in New South Wales*, Melbourne, ACER, 1957.

24. Williams, *Education with Its Eyes Open*.
25. R. Selleck, *Frank Tate: a biography*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1982.
26. White, Thomas Logan Robertson. Thomas Robertson, born in 1901, held a Carnegie fellowship, 1938–39, and gained a PhD from London University in 1942. He was Assistant Director, Commonwealth Office of Education (COE), 1946–50, Director of Education, Western Australia, 1951–66. Wyndham, Cunningham and Robertson knew one another very well and had numerous friends and professional acquaintances in common. See Chapter 9 of the present study.
27. A. Spaull, *A History of the Australian Education Council, 1936–1986*, Sydney, Allen and Unwin, 1987.
28. W.F. Connell, *The Australian Council for Educational Research, 1930–1980*, Melbourne, ACER, 1980.
29. J. O'Brien, *A Divided Unity: politics of NSW teacher militancy since 1945*, Sydney, Allen and Unwin, 1987. The NSW Schools Teachers' Federation changed its title to the New South Wales Teachers' Federation in 1947. Hereafter listed as NSWTF.
30. C. Turney (ed.), *Pioneers of Australian Education, Volume 3, Studies of the Development of Education in Australia, 1900–1950*, Sydney, Sydney University Press, 1983.
31. C. Turney, 'Preface' in Turney (ed.), *Pioneers*, Volume 3, p. vii.
32. K. Smith, Influence and Leadership, pp. 128–135.
33. For an introduction to this literature, see F. Turner, *Contesting Cultural Authority: essays in Victorian intellectual life*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1993; and Joncich, *Edward L. Thorndike*.
34. Pope, Links Between State-Provided Secondary Schooling, p. i.
35. For an account of the endeavours of Australian psychologists to establish professional status see W.M. O'Neil, *A Century of Psychology in Australia*, Sydney, Sydney University Press, 1987.
36. The tensions between the political and administrative arms of the Education Department early in the twentieth century are outlined in B. Bessant, Education and Politics in the Development of the Education System of New South Wales and Victoria 1900–1940, with Particular Reference to Post-Primary Education, PhD thesis, Monash University, 1971.
37. K. McKinnon, 'The Education Policy Context in Australia' in C. Fasano and B. Winder (eds.), *Education Policy in Australia*, Wollongong, University of Wollongong Press, 1991, p. 36. Wyndham in fact never had 'undisputed authority' over the teaching service as explained in chapters 8 and 9 of the present study.
38. F. Sharpe, 'Assessing and Responding to Influences: the management of issues' in C. Fasano and B. Winder (eds.), *Education Policy*. Dr Fenton Sharpe was Director-General, April 1988 to November 1991.
39. McKinnon, 'Education Policy Context in Australia', p. 36.
40. G. Elton offers numerous cogent reasons for a preference for primary sources. See, G. Elton, *The Practice of History*, Sydney, Sydney University Press, 1967, Chapter 2.
41. Wyndham, quoted in *The Australian*, 30 Dec. 1968.

42. Albie Jones, Presidential Address, Australian College of Education Annual Conference, 4 May, 1974, WP, ML mss 5089, 18(38). Same topics cited by H. Yelland, Interview by author. Hedley Yelland was a member of the NSW Public Service Board, 1969–70; Deputy Director-General of Education, NSW, 1968; Director of Secondary Education, 1965–68; Deputy Director, 1956–65; Inspector of Schools, 1950–56; Secretary to Wyndham Committee, 1954–57.
43. Committee on the Future of Tertiary Education in Australia (L. H. Martin, Chair), *Tertiary Education in Australia: Report to the Australian Universities Commission*, Melbourne, Commonwealth of Australia, 1964.
44. For an introduction to the literature on the nature and role of a policy community, see A. Pross, *Group Politics and Public Policy*, Toronto, Oxford University Press, 1986, pp. 96–107.
45. The school counsellor network was one such mechanism. For an account of the early history of school counselling in NSW see J. Lewis, A History of the Development of the Division of Guidance and Special Education in the Education Department of NSW, MEd thesis, University of Sydney, 1978.
46. Clive Evatt was Minister for Education from May 1941 to June 1944.
47. Wyndham to Lesley Dunt, 5 Nov. 1973, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
48. The utility of ability grouping as an aid for individualised learning was discussed at a 1962 ACER conference. See G.W. Bassett, *Each One is Different: teaching for individual differences in the primary school*, Melbourne, ACER, 1964.
49. M. Charlesworth, 'Individual Differences and Individualism' (Appendix 1) in Bassett, *Each One is Different*, p. 87.
50. This issue is explored in Chapter 8.
51. M. Evans, 'Reading Lives: how the personal might be social', *Sociology*, vol. 27, no. 1, 1993, p. 8.
52. T. Popekewitz, 'What's in a Research Project: some thoughts on the intersection of history, social structure, and biography', *Curriculum Inquiry*, vol. 18, no. 4, 1988, p. 396.

53B. Finkelstein, 'Perfecting Childhood: Horace Mann and the origins of public education in the United States', *Biography*, vol. 13, no. 1, 1990, p. 6.

Chapter 2

Childhood and Education

Harold Stanley Wyndham was born in 1903 at Forbes into a middle class family with a strong Methodist allegiance. Wyndham's paternal grandfather, Alexander, had emigrated from England during the goldrushes and purchased a large farm at Parkes. Alexander knew nothing about grazing or farming but he managed to survive on a legacy until the early 1880s when forced to take his family to Forbes to a smaller property. Wyndham's grandfather was patriarchal: only benignly interested in what went on around the house and with an English reserve which meant he was reluctant to show affection. Stanley, Harold's father, was born in 1874. Neither he nor his siblings was able to have more than a primary school education. Family life revolved around the local Methodist community where the church provided both a spiritual and cultural meeting place. Wyndham recalled that his father and mother, Agnes Euphemia Finigan, had first met there.[1] Her family, originally from Ulster, also had strong Methodist affiliations.[2] Her father ran an exclusive mercery in Pitt St, Sydney, and the family had been 'closely associated with the Methodist church wherever they lived'.[3]

Harold was their first child but was joined by a sister, Kathleen, in 1905, and two brothers, Norman in 1907 and Robert in 1912. By the time of his marriage Stanley had purchased his own grocery store in Forbes. Initially the business was successful and the family home lacked none of the facilities customary for a middle class household of that era. Harold was brought up in the strictest Methodist doctrines. The discipline of the family in those days was rigid. Wyndham's father had substantial responsibilities in the local Methodist church and was much in demand as one of the voluntary 'local preachers', as they were known, upon whom the Methodist church depended for the maintenance of services in the far-flung parishes. Sometimes, the young Harold would accompany him on these trips to remote settlements.

In his maturity, Wyndham was keenly aware of the limitations imposed by the sparse educational opportunities available to the males of his father's generation. Stanley's lack of opportunity illustrated markedly, for Wyndham, the constrictions within which young people of ordinary families grew up one hundred years ago, especially in rural Australia. Stanley did not share

the advantage enjoyed by those boys in the country whose fathers sent them to boarding schools in Sydney and other centres 'thus opening up for them what would today be called a secondary education'.[4] Yet, as an adult, Stanley, Wyndham believed, was to demonstrate that, had he had the opportunity for training, he could have had a successful career as an architect or have served as a pastor in a church.

> My father's experience is an example of the dearth of opportunity for able boys, especially in the country, in the decades which followed the passing of the 1880 Act. During his later adolescence, my father had wished to become a Methodist Minister, and in the later years did become a lay preacher who was much in demand.[5]

When Wyndham's own son, John Stanley, did become an architect Wyndham depicted his father's and his son's educational careers as 'a comparison of public schools and education opportunities 1890–1955'.[6]

The fragmentary memories Wyndham retained from his early childhood included hymn tunes and some organ voluntaries which, 'later in Sydney, were, to me, quite familiar, but curiously disturbing'.[7] No less vivid was the memory of hot Sunday mornings when cedar berries fell from overhanging branches and 'bounced relentlessly down the corrugated iron roof of the church, making noise out of all proportion to their size, a noise most obvious during what I later knew to be prayer time'.[8] He remembered this period as one of quietness and happiness but one where a firm adult discipline was enforced. Admonishment often took the form of 'a pruning to his seat'. The serenity, he believed, emanated from his mother, and her death from influenza in 1908 shook the foundations of his world; it meant for him 'the loss of my sense of security'.[9] His mother's sister, Rachel, came to the rescue of the bereaved young family, which included a very sick infant, Norman, not yet 12 months old. Since the business was faltering, his father sold both house and business and soon after Agnes' death moved the family and Rachel to Sydney, where they rented a house in Glebe Point. Stanley and Rachel married in 1911.

Wyndham now attended kindergarten in Glebe Point. The family moved to Kensington in 1909 where Stanley had been appointed manager of a grocery store. Kensington was then still a developing Sydney suburb mooted as the soon-to-be-favoured near-to-the-city residential suburb for businessmen. The site of Sydney's major racecourse, it was a suburb of 'solid "small" people, rather outnumbered at the time by the families associated with race-courses, from bookmakers to stable boys'.[10] Wyndham was soon enrolled at Kensington Public School, a typical small primary school of the period. He found its scope very limited. Wyndham's reminiscences were chastened

by his realisation, as an adult, of how highly regimented his school was, both in administration and instruction. Each day, Wyndham later recalled:

> we marched into school singing our tables. First class arrived in their room with the completion of 'twice-times', but fifth class had to complete 'twelve-times' before being given the order 'class sit'. Woe betide the pupil who mounting the stairs was out of step even as he mounted the two or three steps at the entrance to the school. It meant the cane across the ankles![11]

The curriculum went very little beyond the '3Rs' (reading, writing and arithmetic) and lessons were 'given' by the teacher with few opportunities for individual expression. All classes held more than forty pupils, and the emphasis in all subjects was on memorising facts. English lessons consisted principally of oral reading around the class and Wyndham recalled receiving four cuts of the cane when caught reading ahead because he was 'not keeping the place'.[12] There was a profound gulf between Wyndham's family setting and that of the other students, few of whose homes were regulated by the strict Methodist codes of the Wyndham household. Charles Ebert, who, with Wyndham, attended Kensington and later Fort Street Boys High School, remembered Kensington as 'a pretty tough place' and believed that Wyndham 'was never a typical Kenso kid', because his parents owned a store and were not involved in horse-racing. Wyndham, he concluded, 'had a sheltered kind of upbringing .... He was a bit naive in some situations and sometimes showed signs that he had not come in contact with the big rough world outside his own environment'.[13]

Although studious above the average, his early years of schooling were not marked by evidence of academic promise. The official leaving age was fourteen and few went on to one of the only two full high schools then available in Sydney for boys: Sydney Boys' High and Fort Street Boys' High School. Entrance to high school required satisfactory results in the Qualifying Certificate examination in the subjects of English, arithmetic, history and geography. Such schools offered an academic course to a selected intake of pupils, culminating in a Leaving Certificate, success in which allowed matriculation to university.

Wyndham grew through adolescence in a period of secondary school reform. Peter Board's 1911 reforms of secondary education[14] made this period an 'interesting time to have been at school since public secondary education was still in the making'.[15] Wyndham performed poorly early in his school life. He was amongst the first small group of students from the school presented for the new Qualifying Certificate[16] and obtained results only sufficient to be admitted to Cleveland Street Intermediate High School. Established under Peter Board's reforms, intermediate high schools offered an academic course but only to the Intermediate Certificate. Matriculation

would require further attendance at one of the two high schools. As Wyndham recalled, his years at Cleveland Street were 'unhappy and unsuccessful, due in a large measure to my immaturity'.[17] His class was considered to be remarkably 'below the salt'.[18] It was taken for granted that all students would follow the academic course, which came to be called the two language course because it usually included Latin and French. The school was suffering serious shortages because of the greater demands arising from the reforms and also because of the outbreak of the First World War. Despite shortages of adequately trained staff, Wyndham was fortunate to have an excellent history teacher, Mr Sinfield, to whom he credited his first impulse to study history. Nevertheless, Wyndham failed the Intermediate Examination. His stepmother then went into Head Office to request the Director of Education to admit him to Fort Street Boys'High School; she was promised that he would be transferred subject to vacancies.[19]

Fort Street Boys' High

Fort Street Boys' High under the then principal, A. J. Kilgour, was a highly selective school.[20] To be part of the small annual intake of 120 one had not only to excel in the Qualifying Certificate but be approved by Kilgour. Wyndham was duly admitted to Fort Street but was obliged to repeat third form, which had a 'salutary effect' on him, and he 'settled down to work'.[21] He made up for his apparent lack of talent by meritorious industry. On his second attempt he passed the Intermediate Certificate with an A in history, but he had slipped back a year behind his age group. Despite this series of reverses, increasing maturity and the challenging school environment now began to spur his progress. At Fort Street he had the benefit of a number of excellent teachers and was particularly impressed by Keller and Mackaness in English and Newling and Rose in history: 'Newling and Rose sealed my fate as far as my vision of later study was concerned'.[22] Now old enough to make for the first time connected plans for his future, it became his ambition to pursue a career in the study and teaching of history. At Fort Street Wyndham also acquired a love of scholarship which never left him. Kilgour made no secret of his ambition for his boys to enter medicine or law. Recording the achievements of the boys at one speech day, he paused, almost with distaste, as he reported, 'and Dr H. V. Evatt has entered ... er ... Parliament'.[23] Kilgour would often be heard to say to someone who did not come up to his standards: 'You will never have a brass plate on your gate'.[24] Wyndham was taught Latin by Kilgour when in Senior class, and Wyndham in his maturity commented that he felt Kilgour never considered him 'equal to medicine or law'.[25]

With determination the young Wyndham settled down to master Fort Street's exclusively academic curriculum where only English, history, Latin, French, maths 1, maths 2 and science were available. There was no manual arts, no music, nor any art, but this academic incubator suited the young Wyndham well. Charles Ebert, a near contemporary of Wyndham at Kensington Primary and Fort Street, observed:

> All of this was Harold Wyndham's milieu much more completely than was Kensington Primary. I don't remember any way in which he made a name for himself as a person at high school but he was a prefect and had a very good academic reputation.[26]

Nevertheless, Wyndham was never 'one of the boys'. He was not good at sport and did not represent the school in any team. Harold Mathews, who was school captain and in the same senior class as Wyndham, recalled that 'sometimes other students used to make fun of him ... he presented a funny picture with his small stature on the front seat as you saw him constantly rising to answer questions'.[27] Mathews portrayed the young Wyndham as overly earnest:

> I have a mental picture of a shortish thin legged Harold Wyndham taking his role of prefect very seriously, dressed immaculately in knickerbocker trousers and knee socks; coat and collar and tie of course ... as I knew Harold Wyndham in later years I could not imagine him breaking the rules or even new ground as an individual.[28]

Towards the end of his secondary course Wyndham's interests focussed increasingly on history and he realised that the probable means of his making a living would be to teach it. At the Leaving Certificate he won a teachers'college scholarship. Wyndham subsequently presented himself at Sydney Teachers' College and was assigned to a university course. He flourished in this new environment, successfully completing four years of history honours; three years of English; two years of psychology (then Philosophy One and Two); one year of French and one year of geology. One of the highlights of his first university year were the lectures of S. F. Bruce in history, in which he found much pleasure.[29] He gained first place in first year history and then sat for and gained a distinction, which, he recalled, later 'opened many doors'.[30] Those two years of studying psychology proved a turning point in his career. It was during them that he encountered the work of Lewis Terman, through which he was first attracted to the study of mental measurement. In retrospect, he affirmed that he became 'involved in education and in a closer association with education entirely through accident'[31] because during these undergraduate years he became interested in psychology and was admitted to the 'advanced' second year.[32]

Alexander Mackie and Sydney Teachers' College

Like most of the students attending university on teaching scholarships, Wyndham virtually ignored the Teachers' College during his undergraduate years. Consequently he knew neither the Principal, Alexander Mackie, nor the College in its Blackfriars days.[33] This was a disturbed period for the College, with students following different courses at Blackfriars, at Hereford House, as well as in the recently completed first stage of the College building in the grounds of the University of Sydney. It was only in 1924 that all the undergraduate students of the College could be brought together under the one roof and the atmosphere which Mackie had created at Blackfriars could be re-established and further developed. Further disruption was created by the decision of the Department of Education[34] during 1924 that, since more primary teachers were needed, all students who were not qualifying to sit for honours or who had failed would be required to return to College and train as primary teachers. But the notice was received by students after the closing date for applications to sit for the honours examinations. Luckily a friend somehow learnt of this directive and warned Wyndham, and he hastened with only twenty-four hours to spare to register for the examinations.[35] Wyndham's group of fellow graduates of 1925 was severely reduced by this decision to call in non-honours students and less than 40 survived the fourth or Diploma of Education year. By the end of that year Wyndham had gained the top teaching mark and won the Peter Board prize for his superlative performance in the examinations.

He was most impressed by Mackie. Even in retirement, Wyndham confessed: 'the chief influence in my earlier thinking was undoubtedly Mackie'.[36] Throughout Wyndham's career Mackie's philosophies[37] were a major influence in his educational speculations. Although Mackie appeared, at first sight, to be a distant, reticent intellectual, his depth of feeling became apparent when addressing the College. Wyndham was deeply moved by Mackie's speech at the first Anzac Day commemoration held in the new assembly hall, when Mackie described the obligation inherited from those who sacrificed so much in the recent war by those who came after in the days of peace. As he came to know Mackie better he began to appreciate his fine intellect and his Socratic fashion of lecturing, when, for example, he would start a lecture with the question: 'At what stage should a boy or girl commence school?' The next part of the lecture would be a discussion of the issue rather than an *ex cathedra* judgement. Wyndham was later to contend that one could well account for the first forty years of Sydney Teachers' College by giving an outline of Mackie and his endeavours and influence:

> the college became in many respects a reflection of Mackie's attitude towards education .... I see Mackie as a key figure in the development of teacher

> education in this country and as a stimulating contributor to the new approach to education during the first three decades of this century.[38]

A natural partnership developed from the beginning of the College between Mackie and Peter Board, the Director of Education.[39] Wyndham believed that 'Mackie had really been selected by Board'.[40] He observed that Peter Board allowed a great deal of professional autonomy to those he thought worthy of trust and that Mackie developed the College 'with the support and understanding of the Director, ... in other words here were two men, both with Scottish background, talking the same language. While they might have differed on details they broadly shared the same points of view'.[41] Wyndham also noted that many university staff displayed a 'condescending' attitude to the College and its activities.[42] As discussed in Chapter 8 this resentment characterised many of his later views on the role of universities in teacher education. Many things later taken for granted, Wyndham believed, were first espoused by Mackie:

> at the cost of being regarded by some people in the profession as dangerously radical .... Indeed, the aims of education that were set out in the 1950s by the Committee to Survey Secondary Education (the Wyndham Committee) reflect the very aims that Mackie had propounded a generation before.[43]

However, Wyndham contemptuously characterised Stephen Smith, Peter Board's successor as Director of Education,[44] as not sharing Mackie's vision and being more inclined to have in mind the formal conditions under which the recruitment, training and employment sequence of prospective teachers was carried out; 'it was manifest in general that he talked a different language ... to that of Peter Board'.[45]

Mackie's great contribution, Wyndham believed, was 'to first establish the concept of teaching as a professional occupation' and also to institute 'the development of the child as the central criteria of school curriculum and method'. The proper development of each child should be the principal object of schooling. This development depended upon some 'understanding of the nature of the child, not only of the child but also the nature of the social group the family, the class, the neighbourhood in which the child grew up'.[46] Like John Dewey, Mackie favoured progressive education's preference for activities which arose from the child's own world[47] and extolled reforming education so as to take full cognizance of the natural order of human growth.[48]

By the end of 1924, Wyndham held a degree and teaching diploma and had done rather well at practice teaching at Sydney High School, his first appointment. But this appointment was almost immediately cancelled and he was directed to report to Professor Mackie at Sydney Teachers' College.

A position as a junior lecturer to Mackie had been advertised and a chemistry and physics graduate chosen, but W. J. Elliott, the Chief Inspector, Secondary Education, decided that these qualifications were in such short supply in the schools that no-one with these attainments could be spared. Although Wyndham had not applied, he was offered the position because he had won the Peter Board prize and held honours in history, and Elliott did not oppose the appointment, Wyndham asserted, since he believed that a history honours graduate was 'disposable'. Wyndham was later to contend that this appointment 'thwarted my hope of becoming a teacher of history'.[49]

The position of junior lecturer entailed doing research work for Mackie and marking graduate essays. Wyndham was housed in Mackie's rooms and learnt a lot from observing Mackie at work. Mackie as a teacher and administrator was adept in all the arts he wished to master and soon became a model for the young Wyndham. When a matter arose Mackie would call in the lecturers concerned with that area, tasks would be identified and delegated and they would agree to meet again: 'I learnt a great deal from the point of view of watching a man mentally get to the heart of the matter and then proceed to delegate responsibility for working out the details of its several parts'.[50] Wyndham described this period as 'the most interesting and formative years of my career'.[51] He thereafter remained on a footing of considerable familiarity with Mackie.

Wyndham was delighted beyond measure at his appointment. Though small in stature, he had a penetrating gaze and a scholarly demeanour which produced an impression that this was merely the first of many honours which must surely come his way. It seemed as if all things were conspiring in favour of the young Wyndham. At the end of 1925, Wyndham was surprised to be asked to stay on with Mackie. 'The Professor astonished everyone, myself included, by asking me to remain and, when I agreed, informed me I was to begin lecturing in Psychology, assigning me two first year groups'.[52] Wyndham was still close enough to his own student days to be aware of how discomfited many students were in finding themselves supervised in their teaching practice by a junior lecturer who only the year before had been a student like themselves. Mackie accepted Wyndham's suggestion that instead of assigning him to a practice teaching group he should be appointed temporarily to the staff of a school and thus free the experienced teacher concerned to supervise the practice teaching. Under these arrangements the Department appointed him to Darlington Practice School. Mackie declined to repeat the placement in the next term after he learned that a rumour was circulating amongst the students that junior lecturers were so deficient in teaching skills that one had had to be sent out to do some more practice teaching. Mackie was determined to maintain his 'very

definite idea of the dignity of the staff'.[53] Although Wyndham wished to return to the schools to complete his probationary period of service he acceded to Mackie's request that he undertake the duties of a full member of staff. Thus in 1927, Wyndham replaced a lecturer on study leave and acquired a full teaching load and the usual extras, such as student advising.

Finally, Mackie agreed to allow him to return to schools. Wyndham had decided that he preferred primary teaching. With a note of introduction from Mackie, he met with Elliott, who, somewhat puzzled, 'and typically frosty in manner', agreed to allow him to transfer to the primary division on the understanding that the transfer 'meant no assurance that he would ever be allowed back into a high school!'[54] He was appointed to the staff of a demonstration school and found himself in front of the 6B class at North Newtown Practice School. The practice schools, Blackfriars, North Newtown and Darlington, were then closely associated with Sydney Teachers' College. Their headmasters were regarded as members of the College staff and gave lectures in their own schools to visiting groups and even occasionally at the College. Wyndham believed that Mackie always regarded the practice schools as 'the laboratory of the College'.[55] During 1928 word went out from Head Office that half the secondary group were to be prepared for primary teaching, so in the second half of the year North Newtown staff were asked to double their number of demonstration lessons. Towards the end of 1928, Wyndham declined an offer of a position from his old Fort Street teacher, Cecil Newling, to take a lecturing position at Armidale Teachers' College, since he intended to remain in the classroom to gain a higher classification. But a week later, when he received a telegram instructing him to report to Sydney Teachers' College for the following year, he readily resumed his duties which continued for a further two years.

The young man had calculated well where his best prospects for advancement lay. In early 1931, after winning a research grant from ACER, he was granted study leave to carry out an examination of methods of class grouping in metropolitan primary schools. Mackie allowed him to make the College his headquarters. *Class Grouping in the Primary School* was completed that year.[56] The report, published by ACER, made a number of recommendations, (more fully examined in Chapter 3), among them the establishment of classes for gifted children.[57] The Director of Education, G. Ross Thomas,[58] immediately responded to the recommendations by asking Wyndham to survey two metropolitan areas and select gifted pupils for the establishment of four inaugural 'opportunity' classes. As he was to return to the schools in 1932, Thomas instructed him to choose one of the classes and teach it in 1932. While in charge of his chosen class of gifted boys Wyndham again successfully underwent inspection and gained a higher classification.

Lewis Terman and Stanford University

Finding advancement too slow, Wyndham now sought sufficient resources to undertake doctoral studies. During 1932 he won both the first NSW Public Schools' Teachers' Federation[59] Travelling Scholarship and a Carnegie Grant. He chose to study at Stanford University 'because of two outstanding figures whose books were being increasingly used in Teachers' Colleges and universities but with whom almost no Australian student had worked'. They were E. P. Cubberley, then dean and founder of the School of Education at Stanford, and L. M.Terman, in the School of Psychology.[60] These two Stanford scholars enjoyed a great vogue in the first decades of the twentieth century. Before Wyndham left the College staff to go to North Newtown, he had completed the requirements for his MA in history and been awarded first class honours, but since, 'that led nowhere at that stage' he decided he had to increase the strength of the second string of his bow, psychology, and for that reason he decided that 'since we were doing so much work based on the work of Terman at Stanford and keeping in mind the quality of that University which was academically outstanding on the west coast' he would use the funds that he had received to enrol in the graduate school in the School of Education at Stanford. He departed for Stanford toward the end of 1932 after having taught the gifted boys in the first opportunity class at Erskineville Public School.[61] At Stanford he had 'two of the most fruitful years of my experience'. Both Terman and Cubberley 'proved to be great teachers, or rather I would say stimulators of post-graduate students, and I was fortunate to be accepted by Terman as a member of his postgraduate seminar'.[62] Wyndham studied more than psychology in those two Stanford years. He worked there according to the American pattern, where the candidate works in a major field but also completes a PhD minor.[63] He made educational psychology his major and administration his second field of study.

He found the eminent scholar Lewis Terman 'a remarkable person'. Terman had done notable work, first in the Stanford revision of the Binet test, and secondly on a series of studies of gifted people; his genetic studies of genius.[64] Terman destroyed the myth that the gifted are deficient in health, physique or social skills. His longitudinal studies of the gifted and his development of the Stanford Binet test brought mental measurement to scientific maturity.[65] The publication in 1916 of Terman's *Measurement of Intelligence*,[66] had, Wyndham believed, 'brought mental test methods to the notice of the whole school public'. The gifted child, Terman insisted, required an education designed and tailored to his or her particular requirements. Herein lay Wyndham's main interest. Terman's work, he asserted:

> was a powerful vindication of the thesis which experience with the tests and their application had led him to put forward, that it would be desirable to make all promotions on the basis chiefly of intellectual ability. [67]

In *Intelligence Tests and School Reorganisation (1922)*,[68] Terman proposed that schools should be organised on the basis of a multiple track plan with five ability groups, one on each path, differentiated in curriculum and method of teaching. [69] Special classes for students of high intelligence would be required.[70] Wyndham wrote:

> It seems strange that the emphasis should have remained so long upon acceleration rather than upon differentiation of curricula and of method, in the face of the rapid advances made by psychology following upon the development of tests, and in the face of repeated warnings of authorities that these individual differences demanded a curriculum different in kind as well as amount; that not more teaching, but different teaching was needed.[71]

This was a fascinating environment for Wyndham, having 'just come away from a class of gifted boys'.[72] Terman became a major influence on his professional thinking.[73] At Stanford he became friends with Terman, and they stayed in touch long after Wyndham's graduation. Terman was often listed as a referee in Wyndham's job applications. In one reference he described Wyndham as 'one of the ablest students we have had in educational psychology in Stanford University during the last twenty years'.[74] In 1946 he wrote to Wyndham, 'I shall look forward to further information from time to time about your work and your research projects. I am particularly interested in the follow-up of the gifted children who have gone through your special classes'.[75]

Ellwood Patterson Cubberley proved to be another source of inspiration for the young Wyndham.[76] Many of the views Wyndham later expressed concerning the purposes of public education were similar to those espoused by Cubberley. Lawrence Cremin commented that Cubberley's *Public Education in the United States (1919)* profoundly affected 'private practice, professional pronouncement, and public policy'.[77] In this book, Cubberley extolled the 'progressive vision of the public school as society's chief lever of social improvement'.[78] Cubberley proclaimed that:

> everywhere democracy has won its fight, the American public school, supported by general taxation, freed from the pauper school taint, free and equally open to all, under the direction of the representatives of the people, free from sectarian control and complete from primary school through the high school, and in the Western States, through the university as well, may be considered as established permanently in American public policy.[79]

Wyndham's views were characterised by a similar evangelistic enthusiasm for the public school.

Having successfully submitted his thesis, Wyndham travelled across the United States, ending up in New York. He then crossed the Atlantic and spent a month in Britain at the the London Institute of Education, then under the direction of Sir Percy Nunn, before going on to Edinburgh and then back to Australia.

On arrival he promptly reported for duty with the Department of Education.He was certified for employment as a primary school teacher, and his MA and doctorate made no difference to his status, since the Department for this purpose recognised only its own academic examinations. All that was necessary now was for him to be appointed to a class, however, his return to Sydney was also greeted with enthusiasm by his mentor, Professor Mackie, who was so anxious to have Wyndham at the College that he persuaded him to stand in for one of his staff who was going on study leave for twelve months. Mackie realised the value of a fresh young doctoral graduate with recent overseas experience and proceeded to allot all the post graduate work to Wyndham who now became responsible for all the graduates from arts or science who had done psychology in their degree.[80]

At the end of the year he received a telegram informing him that the Department had decided to adopt another of the recommendations made in his report on class grouping, and create a new position of research officer, with Wyndham as its first occupant. This was only the first of several unorthodox appointments that were to speed his rise. For a young man just beginning his career, it offered the prospect of substantial authority and enormous influence in the higher echelons of educational politics.

NOTES

1. Wyndham, To the Wakefields in England from my Great Aunt Wakefield, handwritten manuscript, n.d., WP, ML mss 5089, 37(38). Stanley and Agnes married in Sydney, 9 Apr. 1901.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.* By the Public Instruction Act of 1880 the state in NSW assumed full responsibility for primary education and for the first time accepted some responsibility for secondary education.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*

10. *Ibid.*
11. *Ibid.*
12. *Ibid.*
13. C. Ebert to author, 15 Aug. 1993. Charles Ebert was an inspector and area director in the NSW Department of Education. He was at Kensington Public School shortly after Wyndham, and also attended Fort Street Boys' High School. He was appointed Assistant to the Director-General in 1967.
14. For further details of Peter Board's reforms see, A.R. Crane and W.G. Walker, *Peter Board: his contribution to the development of education in New South Wales*, Melbourne, ACER, 1957.
15. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, 19 Feb. 1980, National Library of Australia (NLA).
16. The Qualifying Certificate, first held in 1911, marked the completion of the primary school course.
17. Wyndham, To the Wakefields, WP, ML mss 5089, 37(38). Although there is no direct evidence, it is difficult to resist the temptation to speculate that Wyndham subsequently developed a sympathy for 'late developers' which may have partly motivated his enthusiasm for the Wyndham Committee's preference for removing selection examinations for secondary schools.
18. *Ibid.*
19. M. Wyndham to author, 16 Sep. 1993. In 1936 Harold Wyndham married Beatrice Margaret Grieve, the daughter of a Methodist minister. Margaret and Harold had three sons.
20. For an account of Kilgour's principalship see D. Webster, 'Kilgour of Fort Street: the English Headmaster Ideal in Australian State Secondary Education' in S. Murray-Smith (ed.), *Melbourne Studies in Education*, Melbourne University Press, 1981.
21. Wyndham, To the Wakefields, WP, ML mss 5089, 37(38).
22. *Ibid.*
23. *Ibid.* H. V. Evatt is perhaps best known as Deputy Prime Minister 1946–49, Attorney-General and Minister for External Affairs, 1941–49, and Leader of the Federal Parliamentary Labor Party, 1951–1960.
24. C. Ebert to author, 15 Aug. 1993.
25. Wyndham, To the Wakefields, WP, ML mss 5089, 37(38).
26. C. Ebert to author, 15 Aug. 1993.
27. H. Mathews, Interview by author, 7 May, 1993.
28. *Ibid.*
29. B. Fletcher, *History and Achievement: a portrait of the honours students of Professor George Arnold Wood*, Sydney, Braxus Press, 1999, p. 86.
30. Wyndham, To the Wakefields, WP, ML mss 5089, 37(38).
31. Wyndham, Interview, Sydney Teachers' College History Project, 10 Feb. 1981, WP, ML mss 5089, 20(38).
32. For an account of Australian psychology in this era, see, W.M. O'Neil, *A Century of Psychology in Australia*, Sydney, Sydney University Press, 1987.
33. Sydney Teachers' College was relocated to its new building in the grounds of the University of Sydney in 1924. It was officially opened on March 23, 1925. See G. Boardman, et. al, *Sydney Teachers' College: a history, 1906–1981*, Sydney, Hale and Iremonger, 1995.

34. The 1880 Act established the Department of Public Instruction. Although the Minister gave instructions in 1915 for the Department to be known as the Department of Education, legislative sanction for the change did not come until 1957.
35. Wyndham, Statement, typescript, n.d., WP, ML mss 5089, 20(38).
36. Wyndham to L. Dunt, 5 Nov. 1973, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
37. See, for example, A. Mackie, *An Introduction to the Study of Education*, Sydney, Sydney Teachers' College, 1920.
38. Wyndham, Interview, Sydney Teachers' College History Project, WP, ML mss 5089, 20(38).
39. See also Boardman, et. al, *Sydney Teachers' College*, p. 63.
40. Wyndham, Interview, Sydney Teachers' College History Project, WP, ML mss 5089, 20(38).
41. *Ibid.*
42. *Ibid.*
43. *Ibid.*
44. S. H. Smith was Director of Education, 1923–40.
45. Wyndham, Interview, Sydney Teachers' College History Project, WP, ML mss 5089, 20(38). Bessant describes Smith as a 'weak and uninspiring' Director-General. See B. Bessant, Education and Politics in the Development of the Education System of New South Wales and Victoria 1900–1940, with Particular Reference to Post-Primary Education, PhD thesis, Monash University, 1971, p. 431. See also R. Selleck and B. Hyams, 'The Directors—F. Tate, W. T. McCoy and S. H. Smith' in C. Turney (ed.), *Pioneers of Australian Education, Volume 3, Studies of the Development of Education in Australia, 1900–1950*, Sydney, Sydney University Press, 1983, pp. 12–80; and Boardman, et. al, *Sydney Teachers' College*, pp. 64–65.
46. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA.
47. For an introduction to the history of 'progressive' education see Selleck and Hyams, 'The Directors—F. Tate, W. T. McCoy and S. H. Smith'; R. Selleck, *The New Education: the English background 1870–1914*, Melbourne, Pitman, 1982; and M. Lawson and R. Petersen, *Progressive Education: an introduction*, Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1972.
48. See L. Dunt, *Speaking Worlds: the Australian educator and John Dewey, 1890–1940*, Melbourne, History Department, Melbourne University, 1993.
49. Wyndham, Interview, Sydney Teachers' College History Project, WP, ML mss 5089, 20(38).
50. *Ibid.*
51. Wyndham, Taped Interview, Hazel De Berg, 17 Nov. 1967, NLA.
52. Wyndham to P. Spartalis, n.d., WP, ML mss 5089, 20(38).
53. Wyndham, Interview, Sydney Teachers' College History Project, WP, ML mss 5089, 20(38).
54. Wyndham to P. Spartalis, n.d., WP, ML mss 5089, 20(38).
55. Wyndham, Interview, Sydney Teachers' College History Project, WP, ML mss 5089, 20(38).
56. H. Wyndham, *Class Grouping in the Primary School*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1932.
57. A copy of which Wyndham submitted to the chief inspector, later Director of Education, Mr G. Ross Thomas.

58. G. Ross Thomas was Director of Education, 1930–40.
59. The NSW Public Schools Teachers' Federation later became the NSW Teachers' Federation (NSWTF).
60. Lesley Dunt reports that Wyndham chose Stanford University for his doctoral studies in order to study under Terman. See Dunt, *Speaking Worlds*, p. 109.
61. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA.
62. Wyndham, Taped Interview, Hazel De Berg, NLA.
63. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA.
64. *Ibid.*
65. See L. Terman and H. Childs, 'A Tentative Revision and Extension of the Binet-Simon Measuring Scales of Intelligence', *Journal of Educational Psychology*, vol. 3, no. 2, 1922.
66. L. Terman, *Measurement of Intelligence*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1916.
67. H. Wyndham, *Ability Grouping*, Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1934, p. 48.
68. L. Terman, *Intelligence Tests and School Reorganisation*, New York, World Book, 1922.
69. H. Wyndham, *Ability Grouping*, p. 48.
70. See L. Terman, *The Intelligence of School Children: how children differ in ability, the use of mental tests in school grading and the proper education of exceptional children*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1919.
71. Wyndham, *Ability Grouping*, p. 86.
72. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA.
73. W. Weeden to author, 8 May, 1993. William John Weeden was a NSW teacher 1928–36; Vocational Guidance Officer at Sydney Technical College, 1936–39; Research Officer for the NSW Education Department, 1940–42; Secretary, University Commission, 1943–45; Assistant Director, COE, 1946–53; Director, 1953–67. He succeeded Wyndham as Head of the Division of Research and Guidance in 1940. Weeden and Wyndham both served the Walker Committee. The first Director COE, Prof. R. C. Mills, was assisted by two deputies: W. J. Weeden and T. L. Robertson. On Mills' retirement, Weeden became Director, COE; and Robertson, Director-General, Department of Education, Western Australia.
74. L. Terman, reference concerning Wyndham for prospective employer, 28 Aug. 1933, WP, ML mss 5089, 18(38).
75. L. Terman to Wyndham, 11 Jul. 1946, WP, ML mss 5089, 1(38).
76. Ellwood Cubberley was Professor of Education at Stanford University, 1905–19.
77. L. Cremin, *The Wonderful World of Ellwood Patterson Cubberley: an essay on the historiography of American education*, New York, Bureau of Publications, Columbia University, 1965, p. 2.
78. Cremin, *Cubberley*, p. 47.
79. *Ibid.* p. 40.
80. In addition, Wyndham organised a series of seminars for selected students in research techniques. His students included B. Wright, D. Verco, M. E. Thomas, W. Hart and A. Crane, each of whom later worked for Wyndham.

Chapter 3

Research Office and School Counselling

Ability grouping became Wyndham's initial field of expertise. The rapid growth of ability grouping was underpinned by an increasing faith in IQ testing. The triumph of ability grouping and IQ testing in the 1930s was due partly to the demands of the economic and social conditions of the time, to the needs of the schooling system itself, and the claims by educationists for professional status. It was also encouraged by the successful establishment of the Australian Council for Educational Research.[1] A crisis of legitimation encouraged educationists to look to science to enhance their prestige.

The economic and social conditions of the time created a fertile environment for the wider application of testing and ability grouping. As the Great Depression deepened, the problems in schools intensified and they came under increasing public criticism. A more diverse student population was enrolling for longer, due in part to the government enforcing compulsory attendance more strictly in an effort to lower official unemployment levels. As enrolments and social dislocation increased fewer resources were provided to schools. Better sorting of students might ease these difficulties, especially if employers, who were quick to portray the education system as the cause of their severe economic woes, could be convinced that schools were catering to the vocational needs of students.

The international economic crisis imposed further strains on the school system. The Australian economy suffered more than the economies of most other developed countries. The slump in trade hit so hard that by the second half of 1929 all Australian State governments were experiencing acute budgetary problems. Cutbacks in education were quickly introduced; new building plans were suspended; maintenance and equipment were reduced; college intakes were cut back, and salaries were retrenched. In NSW a net annual gain of 331 teachers in 1929 was turned into a net loss of 212 by 1932 with married women being singled out for dismissal under the *Married Women (Lecturers and Teachers) Act*.[2] Teacher numbers now fell while student numbers rose. From 1925 to 1935, enrolments in class sixth at the top end of the primary schools remained much the same, but the number in high schools almost doubled, and enrolments in super-primary classes

rose by 20 per cent. Moreover, fewer students were leaving school or repeating class six after the final primary examination.[3] Grouping by ability might help hard pressed teachers to cope with larger classes.

The 1930s was a period of great social discord, 'among the bitterest and most troubled in Australia's history'.[4] The First World War had promoted Australia's economic development, including the beginnings of heavy industry, which fostered the growth of an industrial working class. After the bitter split over conscription, the Australian Labor Party (ALP) came under more militant industrial leadership. The sudden and prolonged postwar economic downturn aroused group and class suspicions and antagonisms. Unlike the war, it accentuated conflicts and tensions. In NSW, the Premier, John ('Jack') Lang 'set himself in 1930 and 1931 to play upon the fears and resentments of the workers' and insisted that the depression was artificially fostered by employers and anti-Labor governments.[5]

In times of economic rigour schools are often identified in the popular imagination as a major cause of the social and civil unrest which ensues. Increases in juvenile delinquency, unemployment and crime, in such times, are frequently attributed to the school system. Schools can try to allay these fears by demonstrating that they are making schooling more relevant to the employment prospects of their students by creating special provision for the atypical. Ability grouping can lessen these concerns, while also allowing for greater central control to deal with the challenges to the school system arising from economic difficulties. Vocational guidance, for example, became prominent in the 1930s, partly because of fears that an increasingly idle youth threatened the stability of society.[6]

The needs of the school system itself also fostered a reliance on the grouping and testing of pupils; even without an economic crisis, better methods of selection for secondary education were sorely needed. Under Peter Board's arrangements of 1911, an examination at the end of primary school determined whether a student went to a high school, a post-primary vocational school, remained in the primary school, or left school altogether. Within the vocational sector, students had to be allotted to a commercial, domestic or junior technical stream. This was a complicated process, particularly if it had to rely principally on the results of a public examination. Intelligence tests could make this progression more efficient. The dual examinations (the High School Entrance Exam and the Permit to Enrol Exam) were replaced by the Primary Final, a single examination for all students, in 1930. From 1936,[7] students were allocated to secondary schools on the basis of a composite mark based on an intelligence test and the external examination of class six work. After 1938, a high school examination was added in Sydney and Newcastle, but only for the few seeking admission to an academic high school.[8]

Increasing emphasis on IQ testing and ability grouping also satisfied several needs of the emerging profession of education, finding particular support from advocates of the type of 'progressive' education then in vogue in Australia. Throughout the 1930s educationists saw themselves as laying the foundations of a 'new order' for schools. Interest in the Dalton, Platoon and Winnetka teaching systems reflected a renewed emphasis on more catering effectively for individual students. Through mass intelligence testing schools could more effectively group for ability, particularly the atypical, who many believed had been grossly and negligently ignored. Inspectors emphasized replacing 'rigidity' with 'flexibility' in the curriculum. This meant the rejection of a prescriptive curriculum which could not readily be adapted to provide for different ability groups.[9]

The progressive perspective has been very influential in educational theory and practice in the past 100 years. It is characterised as a child-centred and individualistic approach to education, deriving much of its status from its claim to be in accord with the natural processes of learning.[10] In the USA, John Dewey, one of its best known proponents, stressed active and interest-centred learning; others argued for a strong therapeutic component using modern psychology to devise the best approach to learning for each individual. The latter approach increasingly relied on the testing movement to devise programs to identify and cater for 'natural' ability. Alexander Mackie and other Australian liberals committed to progressive education strove to ensure that academic selection was aligned with the distribution of this 'natural' ability. For Mackie, the major task was to match the school curriculum and type of school with the individual's 'mental constitution'. Nature was the final arbiter and it had decreed that, in ability, all were not equally favoured. This critique saw a differentiated curriculum and stratification in secondary education as 'validating a system of selection and exclusion of the expanding school population' while giving an appearance of fulfilling the promise of the 'democratic ideal' to extend equality of educational opportunity to all.[11] Thus, it is argued, this mechanism of 'naturalism', (since ability was thought to be naturally assigned), allowed the problem of educational inequality to be 'deproblematised'.[12] In this way ability grouping may have helped to conceal the growing inequities of the 1930s.

If ability was just another natural trait, then educational theory could become more scientific by more accurately and comprehensively measuring its distribution. Mackie extolled this view:

> The science of education appears to be entering on a further stage of development. Hitherto measurement has played but a small part in the organisation of this branch of knowledge. Now, however, there appears the possibility of measuring educational facts which hitherto have been mainly

> matters of traditional opinion and individual judgement .... Education has become an independent science, proposing its own problems and investigating them by appropriate methods.[13]

Research Office and Ability Grouping

In NSW one central player pressing for these reforms was Wyndham. In 1930 he was awarded £500 by the Australian Council for Educational Research and granted a year's leave from the Education Department to conduct a 'systematic examination of the whole question of grading and promotion as it affects our Sydney schools'.[14] Employing as his test of intelligence the Sydney Teachers' College Group Scale (Phillips),[15] Wyndham surveyed some 288 primary departments in the Sydney metropolitan area.[16] He published the results in his first book, *Class Grouping in the Primary School* (1932).[17]

In grouping classes, he found, principals regarded homogeneity of one sort or another, whether superficial or real, 'as an ideal, almost an axiom of class grouping' but it was a homogeneity not based on ability.[18] The major criterion of homogeneity in class grouping for 87 per cent of the schools he surveyed was scholastic attainment; a further 11.3 per cent relied upon chronological age and the remainder relied on such considerations as class record. None used intelligence tests as a major determinant in the grading of pupils.[19] Indeed, many teachers were reluctant to recognise atypical children and to provide 'a definite programme for their treatment ... [and thus] leave the group from which they come more homogeneous'.[20] No special provision was being made for atypical children in Sydney other than minor adjustments within the limits of the class group, and Wyndham could find no metropolitan school in New South Wales which had an 'opportunity' or other type of special class for the atypical in operation at that time.

Wyndham believed that grading upon the basis of chronological age was unsatisfactory since it did not make sufficient provision for individual differences. Both scholastic attainments and mental ability should be taken into account in any attempt to 'fit the school to the child', but of these 'the most significant and useful major determinant in the grading of children was the mental age of the individual'.[21]

His recommendations, which may well have provided a blueprint for the reforms he later pursued in the Research Office, continued to form the foundation for his views on school organisation throughout the rest of his career. *Class Grouping in the Primary School* stressed the need to sort students more effectively through:[22]

> (i) the use of mental age as the major determinant of class grouping;
> (ii) improved provision for the mentally defective;

(iii) a much wider use of standardised tests, the objective type of examination, and intelligence tests;
(iv) schools or classes for especially bright children;
(v) segregation of the borderline dull.

Many teachers were indifferent or opposed to such reforms. Wyndham found them apathetic about intelligence tests, and the majority of school inspectors disputed their value as a major instrument in facilitating school organisation.[23] His inquiries revealed a huge discrepancy between avowed and actual practice, as he confided to Kenneth Cunningham, then Director of the ACER:

> Beneath the surface a real controversy is raging. Most people in the schools are dissatisfied with existing conditions. Some, of course, would like to set the clock back, and there is an influential section of the inspectorate which is definitely reactionary .... The result is, that high and low, there is plentiful discrepancy between profession and practice ... the individual is ignored and the class is taken as the unit of discussion.[24]

With his appointment in January 1935 as the initial research officer in the NSW Department of Education, the first position of this kind in the education department of any of the Australian States,[25] Wyndham had the opportunity to pursue the reforms he had suggested. He now had the resources and access to the decision-makers and the schools needed to implement his ideas. His was a powerful and influential position for a young man just starting his career in the Department. However, the new Research Office devoted little of its time to original research. Instead, it became preoccupied with providing a survey and information service to head office. Most of Wyndham's work involved the selection of, and provision for, the atypical child, and the construction and application of intelligence and standardised achievement tests.[26] By 1938, testing occupied most of his time, but Wyndham would 'never suggest its divorce from the research activities of the Department' since 'the task of construction and the supervision of the use of tests is the natural work of a research officer and psychologist'.[27] A major bottleneck had developed at the end of primary school as an enrolment surge produced an increasing number of students to be sorted into the streams of Peter Board's diversified post-primary school system. Wyndham believed that any means of selection for post-primary education must be based on the capacity, or 'ability', of pupils to profit from the particular type of post-primary education offered. 'Natural capacity' had to be distinguished from attainments or achievements and training or knowledge; it was largely inborn: it was part of the native endowment: its best single index was what was called 'general intelligence'.[28]

Although there was a wide range of general intelligence Wyndham believed that students divided themselves into three main groups: those of superior, average and inferior intelligence. The degree of ability was a primary consideration but so too was the type of ability, of which he believed there were broadly two groups: those 'at home with abstract ideas or theoretical concepts, and those whose interests are in things, in concrete realities'.[29] If he could establish objective tests to grade and group such intelligence then students could be more exactly assigned to Board's academic and vocational streams. Unfortunately, although there was ample evidence as to how the degree of ability was to be established, there are no significant clues as to how the type of intelligence was to be distinguished.

Wyndham made a number of proposals. Mental age, he insisted, would form a better basis for class grouping. A child who succeeded on the items passed by most 9 year-olds, for example, was deemed to have a mental age of 9 whether their chronological age was 8, 9 or 10 years old. For Wyndham mental age, as it had been for Terman, was 'the measure of mental ability which has the greatest significance for purposes of class grouping'.[30] An IQ score was a suitable expression of the rate of development but of itself took 'no cognizance of the mental status of a child at any given time, and it is this status which a school principal needs to know when grading his pupils. The recognised measure of this mental status is "mental age"'.[31] Mental age provided, for Wyndham, the 'best single criterion of grading pupils when readiness to begin the same type of work was the primary consideration': other essential criteria for grading included previous attainments and school history.[32] Mental age was best determined by an intelligence test. An IQ score was calculated by comparing the mental-age score to the student's actual age. During 1935, school counsellors working in the Canterbury-Bankstown area tested 4377 children from primary schools using the Teachers' College Group Scale (Phillips) test. As expected, when the survey scores were placed on a graph they followed a normal distribution. Several categories of students were identified. The bottom, two per cent, ie. those with a maximum IQ score of 72, who were not receiving any special provision, he deemed 'mentally defective'. The 25 per cent of students who had an IQ of less than 90 but greater than 72, he argued, needed subjects and methods of instruction adjusted to the mental age of the child.[33] Gifted status, which corresponded to an IQ score of 128 or greater, belonged to some five per cent of those surveyed, who formed part of an estimated 7500 such students in the Sydney area.[34] In later categorising (see Table 1 below), the 'mentally defective' were labelled 'dull' and their upper IQ range set at 79. The next group was 'borderline dull' or 'below average' with an IQ range of 80 to 89. The 'average' fell in the range 90–109; 'above average', 110–119 and 'gifted' above 120.

Mentally defective children were the first priority. Those with an IQ of less than 72 were to be identified as early as possible in their primary school course and placed in special classes, where they would receive 'a radically different type of schooling'.[35] During an economic depression, Wyndham concluded, the considerable costs entailed would be so unwelcome as to 'prevent the adequate treatment of mental defectives, in the present state of the public mind and purse, emerging from the stage of pious aspirations'.[36] Mental defectives required smaller class groups for which special teachers with 'sympathy and insight' ought to be chosen. Students should be selected before age twelve, preferably in fourth class and then centralised for special treatment as early as fifth class.[37] Those of IQ 72–89, categorised as 'border-line dull' should not be segregated into special schools in primary schools:

> I am of the opinion that, during the primary school stage, the best provision for these children, will be made by the adoption of ability grouping and the provision of a differentiated curriculum ... the treatment of these 'border-line dull' children should be carried out in their 'home' schools wherever possible, but I should like to point out that such a policy, to be successful, must be an integral part, or a logical extension of the principle of ability grouping.[38]

Success depended on adaptation of the curriculum and teaching method:

> Several experiments which have been carried out in regard to atypical children show that administrative devices are insufficient. Special classes and centralisation are only the beginning of the story. The provision of special facilities, books, etc. is but the second step. Both these steps are relatively ineffective unless the advantage which they give is capitalised on by the work of a teacher with the requisite background, insight and training.[39]

The curriculum requirements of mentally defective students were quite different from those of the borderline dull. A specifically modified curriculum where 'the full standard of achievement was never aspired to' was essential for the mentally defective, whereas the borderline dull should form 'opportunity classes' following an ordinary curriculum which offered 'rehabilitation in the light of specific weaknesses'.[40]

Much wider employment of standardised tests, objective types of examination and intelligence tests was required. These initial inquiries convinced Wyndham that dealing with the problem of misfits would require a longer-term investigation based upon measuring the intelligence of every child entering high school. The major task, for the year 1935, became the administration and evaluation of these tests. In November 1935, some 18,000 candidates sat the IQ test, *Otis Intermediate Examination Form B*, at over 3,000 examination centres. Wyndham boasted that 'no piece of testing work

of similar dimension had previously been carried out in any Australian State'.[41] The results would lower the number of high school misfits since 'the high school headmasters have, for the first time, been supplied with information as to the native ability of their First-Year pupils as well as their scholastic attainments. For the purposes of forecasting success, this dual information is of the greatest importance.' The efficiency of other examinations at the secondary school level might now be better evaluated with the help of these 'objective' tests.[42]

NSW now rapidly expanded its IQ testing program. The research officer of the Philadelphia public schools, Philip Boyer, had supplied a test which Wyndham edited to suit Australian conditions and trialled on 200 sixth class children in city and country schools. Each child was then given an individual Binet test disclosing 'a phenomenally high correlation in the circumstances' of 0.82 plus or minus 0.016, which led him to conclude that the Philadelphia test was superior to the *Otis Examination Form B*.[43] This Philadelphia test was used in 1936. But now candidates for both the high school entrance examination and the Primary Final examination sat the IQ test.[44] Wyndham considered this a 'noteworthy achievement'. For the first time in NSW all the children completing the primary school course, some 45,000 students, were IQ tested. Students were tested again in 1937 but the *Otis Intermediate Examination Form C* replaced the Philadelphia test.[45] Having insufficient staff to calibrate his preferred test, the Test of General Ability (employed since 1934 by the Tasmanian Department of Education to select their pupils for high school), Wyndham relied on the *Otis Intermediate Examination*.[46] Using the 1937 results Wyndham was able to advise principals that, based on his analysis of the Otis scores, there could be distinguished [as listed in Table 1] five broad categories of general ability:

TABLE 1[47]

	IQ
Gifted children	120+
Above average	110–119
Average	90–109
Below average	80–89
Dull	79–

Source: Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 7 January, 1938, NSWSA, 10/31433.

Such widescale ability testing increasingly consumed most of the meagre resources of the Research Office and the growing school counsellor network. By late 1939, some 40,000 children were being group tested and some

hundreds individually tested annually.[48] The Research Office devoted November of each year entirely to a preliminary analysis of the test scores to determine the average scores for each age group so that a table of standards could be prepared to enable teachers to evaluate the results of the State-wide test.[49] Such a large-scale program inevitably provoked opposition, but this appears to have arisen more from bureaucratic inertia than from any professional misgivings. By 1936 the success of the program had been marred by 'the attitude of several primary schools who neither sent the necessary data to the high schools concerned, nor returned the test papers to the (Research) office'.[50] The Headmaster of Newcastle Boys' High School, Mr Mearns, told the local press, in November 1937, that 'our own intelligence tests at schools are of little value' and that 'vocational guidance was an anaesthetic to lull the people into thinking that something was being done for the unemployed youths'.[51]

Existing procedures and organisation, Wyndham insisted, gave insufficient recognition to the especially bright. The gifted, whom Terman had identified as the most neglected, required special teaching and a different curriculum. In 1932 special classes for gifted children (later known as Opportunity C classes) had been established at Erskineville and Woollahra with Wyndham appointed the teacher of the initial class at Erskineville. After Wyndham became Supervisor of Classes for Gifted Children, further classes were set up at Artarmon, Hurstville and Summer Hill. Selection for these classes increasingly relied on the results of intelligence and standardised tests. Children completing fourth class, whose ages ranged from 8.3 to 10.3, were nominated by the principals of the schools in each neighbourhood. Those accepting nomination were then given tests of intelligence and scholastic attainment and finally a medical examination. Initially, Dr Christopher McRae of Sydney Teachers' College was responsible for selection of the gifted, employing a composite test he had devised to assess some 1315 students,[52] 314 of whom successfully enrolled in the gifted classes.[53] From late 1935, Wyndham was given this role and he replaced McRae's test with a battery of tests: the *Otis Intermediate Examination; the Ballard Silent Reading Test*; and the *Sydney Teachers' College Norms in Problem Arithmetic*.[54] On the basis of these tests a mixed class of boys and girls was selected in each neighbourhood for enrolment in a special fifth class (whose average class size was not to exceed thirty-five) at one of the five central schools involved in the program.[55] A minimum score of 120 on the Otis test was required.[56] These children completed fifth and sixth class before undertaking the high school entrance examination.[57] Wider testing had convinced Wyndham that 'we have only touched a portion of the population of gifted children in our metropolitan schools'.[58]

Specialised curriculum and teaching, Wyndham argued, needed to be developed to meet the needs of this neglected high ability group.[59] He recommended increasing the amount of activity or project work and, by means of libraries, reading rooms and other facilities, providing opportunities for 'the ordinary primary school course to be enriched and for [high ability] children to follow their special interests and aptitudes in various fields'.[60] The gifted required special enhancement of curriculum rather than mere acceleration of progress from grade to grade. For exceptionally bright children extension within ordinary classes was not sufficient. Segregation into special classes was justified because:

> one comes to the point where, with outstandingly bright children, that enrichment and individual attention must go so far beyond the activities of the average members of the class, that it is no longer possible to cater for the bright child in the ordinary classroom, even when all the devices of inter-class grouping are employed. There will probably be no more than five percent of the children in any one area who will warrant segregation whereas something like twenty per cent of the children in an area are sufficiently bright to warrant special treatment in their own classrooms.[61]

Despite his efforts, by early 1937 Wyndham was increasingly dismayed by the lack of differentiation in curriculum and method for the special classes which had been established for the gifted. Differential curriculum provision required 'something more than vague directions' being given to class teachers and he concluded that further training was needed to institute a curriculum based upon 'activity lines'.[62] Fortnightly meetings with the teachers of fifth year classes were begun to provide guidance in establishing such a curriculum.[63] The Tasmanian gifted classes explored 'the possibilities of the activity curriculum much more effectively than ... those in Sydney',[64] nevertheless, the Hobart experiment was discontinued. Wyndham believed its failure was principally due not to the use of the activity curriculum but to 'the disappointing results of the children in certain subjects' and because the teachers had 'had no previous experience with gifted children'.[65]

Not everyone supported special programs for the gifted. Wyndham suspected that certain headmasters were discouraging parents from accepting their child's nomination for gifted classes and he was obliged to advise the Under-Secretary of an 'apparent lack of co-operation' amongst headmasters in several feeder schools. For example, at Bexley, a survey by the school counsellor had revealed eighteen boys with an IQ above 128 but in all cases the parents had refused to accept the invitation to join the class, prompting Wyndham to remark that 'such unanimous refusal among the parents in one centre seems to be rather more than coincidence'.[66] A few headmasters from secondary schools catering for the gifted complained 'that

headmasters in (some) primary schools ... are not giving their fullest co-operation to the scheme'.[67] In such a rigidly hierarchical structure, as the Education Department then was, it is remarkable that a junior officer just beginning his career was licensed to criticise a principal. Early in 1936 the East Hills Branch of the Australian Labor Party sent a resolution to the Under-Secretary complaining that ability grouping entailed segregation which was objectionable in a democracy and that it discouraged the mentally deficient while pampering the gifted.[68] In November 1936, the inspector, I. Renwick, submitted a report to the Under-Secretary on the progress of graduates of opportunity classes at Sydney Boys' High School. Renwick observed amongst these pupils, who were looked on 'with some suspicion', a 'lack of accuracy and intolerance of school drudgery'. Wyndham reassured the Under-Secretary that these shortcomings were more likely due to 'bad habits of work developed before the opportunity is taken to "salvage" them in special classes' than to the mere two years spent in opportunity classes.[69] Such failings were symptomatic of bright students 'whose ability has not been properly guided'.[70]

Enmore Activity School

Intelligent students experiencing difficulties with school even today are often mistaken as borderline dull or below average ability students. Late in 1935 Wyndham began work on establishing a special secondary school for such pupils, Enmore Activity School, with an initial intake in 1936 of 120 boys who were deemed 'educational nonconformists'.[71] These students were to receive special provision:

> In order to avoid the possibility of these children becoming educational misfits the Department has established a school at Enmore ... (for) boys of average ability, whose educational backwardness is due to remedial causes such as ill-health and interrupted schooling, or whose aptitude does not lie along the lines of academic attainments. Their IQ will be between 90 and 110.[72]

'Educational nonconformity', for Wyndham, was a characteristic which could be observed at varying levels of intelligence. It was vital that students of below average general ability not be mixed with students of average ability or Enmore risked 'being "tabbed" as a school for defectives'.[73] Without Enmore most of these average students, since they were nearing leaving age, would 'tend to pass out into the field of dead-end occupations at the first indication of failure in school' or 'simply drift into the ranks of the unskilled and the intermittently employed'.[74] For these 'misfits', intelligence, as determined by their performance on the *Otis Intermediate Examination Form C* rather than on failure or success at the Primary Final

examination, was to be employed as the principal selection criterion. Wyndham, as a member of the curriculum committee of the new school, was especially concerned 'with the shaping of this new venture along the lines found most successful in experimental schools overseas'.[75] The curriculum would emphasise 'manual work' and the English and mathematics provided would be 'of an eminently practical type'.[76] On completion of the three-year course a special certificate would be awarded which he hoped would have 'real vocational value'.[77] Special staff were selected, with the headmaster being 'a specialist in handicraft work'. He hoped initially that if the experiment worked similar schools would be instituted in other areas[78] but by early 1938, Wyndham had become very disappointed, as he had with the gifted program, by the a reluctance of teachers to institute constant curriculum revision.[79] Nevertheless, he saw Enmore as 'one of the most promising moves made by the Department at the super-primary level during recent years'.[80]

Early in 1938 opportunity classes began at Burwood for 'dull and defective boys above primary school age,'[81] Ages ranged from 12.6 to 15.6, and an IQ from 75 to 89. Wyndham worked with C. R. McRae and W. J. Weeden to determine which sections of the Enmore curriculum might be adopted at Burwood.[82] The new curriculum was to 'follow the lines of that devised for the Activity School at Enmore with suitable modifications in view of the lower mental calibre of the boys concerned'.[83] They were to be offered a modified curriculum in small classes, with special emphasis upon handiwork, music and physical education, to equip them 'within the limits of their capacity to take their place as self-supporting citizens'.[84] Success at Enmore might enable more extensive provision for the borderline dull at the super-primary stage.

Undoubtedly, support for wider ability grouping and the strong endorsement of IQ testing were forthcoming because they appeared to offer solutions to wider social and professional problems. Ability grouping also seemed to validate the claims to professional status of psychologists and teachers but satisfying professional aspirations also resulted in the recognition of elites, the centralisation of control, and granting special privileges:

> Professional status is typically claimed on the basis of an esoteric, specialised epistemology, which is scientific and the exclusive achievement of talented people who have undergone long periods of training ... the claim to special epistemological status is, therefore, associated with claims of a special form of consciousness, one which is both objective, impartial and verifiable (i.e. 'scientific') and also practical ... (these claims) are translated into claims for special social status via the rituals of professionalism. Professionalism stratifies social relations on the basis of both cognitive and epistemological

> claims which rely on appeals to canons of scientific practicality, predictability and control.[85]

Wyndham was representative of this new and more scientific professional educator. In the USA the claim to professional status by educators and the growth of the testing movement had gone hand in hand. Around the turn of the century a distinctive profession of school administration had begun to emerge. The purpose of the, by then, decade-old measurement movement, wrote Cubberley, had been to change school administration 'from a job depending upon political and personal favours to a scientific service capable of self defence in terms of accepted standards and units of accomplishments'.[86] Harvard's Paul Hanus argued at a meeting of the National Education Association convention in 1913: 'The only way to combat successfully mistaken common-sense as applied to educational affairs is to meet it with uncommon-sense in the same field—with technical information which is indisputable'.[87] The claims of administration to forms of more rational organisation and of professions to scientific expertise combined into a single model of what Jurgen Habermas has called 'technical rationality'. The rational planning model of the bureaucracy relied on the scientific legitimation of such planning through the incorporation of professional experts into the planning process through a common appeal to positivistic science.[88] Both groups increasingly relied on each other to guarantee their control over certification. This historical development of technical rationality in education was associated with the occupational interests of an emerging organisational profession.[89] In the economic downturn of the 1930s the idealised relations between schooling and work were questioned in a crisis of legitimation, such as Habermas described.[90] The emerging organisational and teaching profession looked to ability grouping to overcome this crisis.

Wyndham grew up in an age of extreme faith in quantification, and his views of science reflected this confidence in scientific progress through measurement, rather than reconceptualisation. Ability grouping was by no means a new idea, but IQ testing lent it a new scientific credibility. Its renewed standing allowed it to counter many of the attacks on schools flowing from the crises of the Great Depression and to underwrite claims for a more professional status for educationists. A number of key individuals, such as Wyndham, pressed these claims within Australia with a religious like fervour. A mental test for every child would usher in a new, more efficient and more equitable age in education.

School Counselling

The reliability of mass testing, Wyndham argued, depended on the proper delivery of the tests and scientific evaluation of the results. Qualified school counsellors, with a psychology degree and some school experience, were in great demand as the counselling service spread ever more widely throughout the NSW school system. Rising youth unemployment and delinquency fanned by the economic distress of the 1930s prompted public demand for more effective school vocational and educational guidance. Many Australian States responded by launching guidance programs. In NSW, from 1935 to 1940, Wyndham not only supervised the introduction of State-wide intelligence testing but also a pupil record card and the creation and expansion of a school counsellor network. These were to form the building blocks of the new guidance approach. By these means it was hoped to help students make a better choice of secondary school, to identify and make special provision for the atypical and to provide improved vocational advice. Through testing, Wyndham believed that counsellors could bring to light misfits in schools and suggest remedies before children became scholastic and social casualties.[91] Special cases were referred by counsellors to Wyndham for assessment and advice. As co-ordinator of this expanding network Wyndham was able to establish contacts throughout the Department and gather valuable strategic information for his superiors.

The counselling service grew rapidly. In January, 1935, there was one teacher unofficially devoted to school counselling part-time but by 1936 there were three full-time (William Weeden, Beryl Wright, Nancy Burton) and three part-time counsellors.[92] A year later there were six full-time staff: two district (Canterbury-Bankstown and Goulburn) counsellors and four high school counsellors.[93] They were supervised and assisted by the Research Office. By 1939 the supervision of the expanding Counsellor Service and the State-wide intelligence testing program was occupying nearly all the time of the Research Office.[94]

Under the supervision of Wyndham, school counsellors oversaw the conduct of the tests in the schools. They carried out very extensive IQ testing programs in their regions, relying on the *Teachers' College Group Scale (Phillips)*[95] for group tests. Mental testing of 'defective' children, however, remained the province of the Medical Branch of the Department of Education. When the Medical Branch attempted to become involved in group testing in schools, Wyndham objected.[96] But the Medical Branch remained a member, along with Wyndham, of the committee which organised the testing, selection and curriculum for mentally defective children.[97] Wyndham complained in 1938 that, except for enrolments at Glenfield Park Special School (the first school in NSW specifically for the mentally handicapped) 'the selection of children for special classes for mentally retarded pupils

is not in the hands of psychologists but of medical officers'.[98] By 1939 he felt confident enough, 'now that nearly all the metropolitan area of Sydney is served by school counsellors, who are qualified Binet testers', to recommend that district school counsellors assume full responsibility for testing the mentally defective in schools.[99]

Programs for the atypical could also not succeed without an extensive school counsellor service. Wyndham believed that the few psychologists graduating were discouraged from entering the Department of Education by poor salaries and a rigid promotional system, one which he himself had managed to circumvent. By 1938 Wyndham had become convinced that the selection of children for special education, either gifted or mentally defective, would never be really efficient while it remained a matter of nomination by teachers. He advised the Under-Secretary that the solution lay in the 'establishment of a comprehensive network of district school counsellors throughout the metropolitan area'.[100]

Guidance became a prominent issue in the 1930s as the Great Depression promoted fears that a marginalised group of idle youth was being created which could threaten the stability of society. Some critics thought that students who left school early, either through poor vocational choices or being misplaced in secondary school, were swelling this underclass. Their ranks, it was feared, were being boosted by those the schools officially termed 'misfits': those who repeated, or failed or dropped out in the first years of secondary school. The education system must not neglect this issue because 'misfits in schools were potential misfits in the work place and ultimately candidates for unemployment and crime'.[101] Critics of the Education Department cited the large number of these misfits as evidence that secondary education was fostering unrealistic white-collar expectations. The number of these misfits, it was hoped, could be minimised by earlier identification and more active direction of problem students to the correct type of school or vocational path.

For many of the increasing number of students entering secondary school, the existing examination system was proving to be a very inaccurate predictor of success. Peter Board's 1911 reforms of post-primary education required students to be allotted to one of three types of post-primary vocational schools or to the academic high school. By the early 1930s it was apparent to Wyndham that the nature of the secondary school population had changed to such an extent that 'the "non-academic" adolescent school population had come to constitute the majority of the secondary school population'.[102] If they were not directed to a vocational school they would become the new misfits of the academic high school. After 1923, schools and students relied on the results of the high school entrance examination (which was set and marked externally) to allot students to an academic high

school, and the permit to enrol (which was set and marked internally) for candidates seeking enrolment in one of the types of vocational schools. These two examinations were replaced, for all students, by a single Primary Final examination in 1930, but the papers for the children seeking high school places were still marked externally. As Wyndham later observed, none of these examinations proved very effective in selecting those pupils most likely to succeed in an academic high school: 'it was not uncommon for as many as one-fifth of the entrants to high school, selected on the basis of these tests, to fail at the end of first year'.[103]

Through improving the quality of assessment data, counsellors might assist placement in the correct post-primary school. Other commentators have described the duties of the school counsellors as supplying advice primarily to facilitate the transfer of pupils to the right types of secondary school, but they also advised on all varieties of educational maladjustment. Their initial purpose was to carry out 'sixth class testing and guidance of pupils into secondary schools'.[104] They were appointed 'specifically to assist the transition of sixth class pupils to secondary schools'.[105] The IQ test employed in sixth class assessment was intended 'primarily to provide the teacher with helpful information in the guidance of pupils in the selection of the most suitable post-primary courses'.[106] In the Canterbury-Bankstown program, for example, counsellors advised an assessment committee on the interpretation of the results of intelligence tests given to all of the sixth class pupils in that area. Counsellors also introduced a system of standardised cumulative record cards, known as the pupil record card, where scores on IQ tests, for school achievement and attendance and comments on health, home environment and attitude, provided data found 'most valuable in later sixth class assessment procedures'.[107] The psychological supervision of first year pupils who did not seem likely to be succeed in their new school was another important counselling duty: 'it has ... been demonstrated that by this individual attention, many cases of failure and repetition in high school have been avoided'.[108] Early school counsellors, one scholar noted, dealt with a wide range of problems. Cases were referred to them by teachers in the primary and secondary schools in their district; 'these might be cases of poorer than expected achievement, of behaviour problems, of emotional disturbance, or acute problems of vocational choice'.[109] The counsellor could refer the child to a more specialised service, such as the Psychological Clinic (later set up in the head office),[110] the Child Guidance Clinic or the Vocational Guidance Service in the Department of Labour and Industry at the Technical College guidance office.[111] Difficult cases or appeals were referred directly to the Research Officer until 1940. Thereafter, they became the responsibility of the new Educational Clinic at the NSW Department of Education's head office in

Bridge Street.[112] Guidance promised more effective treatment of atypical students:

> The function of guidance in education is an outcome of the now universally recognised importance of the innate and acquired differences which mark one individual off from another. Perhaps nothing differentiates the education of today more clearly than that of fifty years ago than the attempts to cater for such differences.[113]

If it could no longer be assumed that all students were alike, then greater diagnosis and more differential treatments were required which demanded that educational and vocational guidance be in the hands of specially trained people. Special schools and classes were now required for the atypical. To cater for an entire school system a corps of professionals trained in both teaching and psychology, would be needed. More extensive grouping by ability would require a large network of such officers. Under its research officer, Harold Wyndham, New South Wales was the first State education system to initiate a comprehensive scheme of educational and vocational guidance. In NSW vocational guidance was based, not, as in Victoria, on voluntary teacher support, but on a dedicated counsellor network.[114] Victoria depended on classroom teachers as the best guides without reliance on large-scale testing and the support of a counsellor network. The NSW scheme flourished while the Victorian withered. Its success provided an important boost to Wyndham's career.

Wyndham was able to bring to the NSW scheme his knowledge of advances in guidance being achieved in the USA. He had chosen Stanford University for his doctoral studies because of its excellent reputation for educational measurement and the opportunity it afforded to work with Lewis Terman. Many American studies were producing convincing evidence that intelligence testing was essential to formulate effective guidance. William Proctor, a psychologist who joined Terman in the Stanford Faculty of Education, had conducted a series of experiments in 1916, at the nearby Palo Alto High School, which demonstrated how useful the results of psychological tests could be for educational and vocational guidance. He found such tests could both accurately steer students through the education system and sort them into those best suited for further study or those ready for a particular career path.[115] From administering the Alpha intelligence test in 1917 to 1,349 San Francisco Bay area students, Proctor determined that those with low IQs were more likely to drop out. Other American studies demonstrated that students' career aspirations often far exceeded their ability, since their IQ scores were well below the average IQ required for their favoured occupation.[116] Such evidence strengthened

Terman's insistence that IQ test results be used as a basis for guidance.[117] Both vocational and educational guidance would benefit from such tests:

> If the pupil is to be properly trained for his life-work, as well as directed to it, his education must at every step take account of his vocational possibilities .... Facts have been presented which show the limits of a child's educability can be fairly accurately predicted by means of mental tests given in the first school year .... This early at least vocational training and vocational guidance should begin.[118]

After completing his doctoral studies at Stanford, Wyndham had the opportunity to observe these approaches in practice when he visited some of the key centres of the burgeoning American school counselling system.[119] The perceived success of these programs inspired the launching of a NSW school counsellor service. Wyndham was later to claim that a senior officer, Alek Hicks, Assistant Under-Secretary of Education, 1930–35, first raised the issue of the lack of a school counsellor scheme in NSW.[120] In 1935, Hicks mentioned to Wyndham the increasing emphasis on school counselling he had noted on his recent tour of the USA and they agreed that NSW would benefit from such a program. Hicks was able to obtain from the Minister sufficient funds for Wyndham to choose two new staff for an 'experimental' school counsellor service.[121] William Weeden and Beryl Wright were subsequently appointed. Weeden gave a similar account of the origins of the new service:

> He (Wyndham) was responsible, with a senior colleague in the Department of Education, for the establishment of educational guidance, mainly by the use of school counsellors, who dealt at first with the transfer of pupils from primary to secondary school, and also the reform of NSW secondary schooling.[122]

The new school counselling program, staffed by qualified teachers who were graduates in psychology, was, as one scholar concluded, 'aimed primarily at the problems of transition from primary to secondary school'.[123] Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania began counselling services later in the 1930s but 'no other State Department of Education provided such broad school counselling and related services as those provided in New South Wales'.[124]

The network, and with it Wyndham's influence, quickly grew. Wright was appointed to St George Girls' High and Weeden to Canterbury Boys' High School. Like all other early appointees they were graduates of Wyndham's 1934 Sydney Teachers' College research methods course for the Diploma of Education. (Other students included Crane, Hart, Haynes, Mac Thomas, Verco, Weeden, Worthington, Beryl Wright.)[125] Throughout this course Wyndham had recommended the introduction of a standardised pupil record

card and wider group intelligence testing of primary grade five and six children to provide better data for grouping.[126] The results of the new Research Office's survey of 'mental deficiency' in the Canterbury-Bankstown area, outlined in Wyndham's 1935 report, *Misfits in High Schools*, led him to recommend State-wide IQ testing as the immediate priority for dealing with the problem of school misfits.[127] Regional committees to introduce testing were soon established in many areas. Usually chaired by the district school inspector, they included the principals of the local high schools and some of their feeder primary schools. The committee allocated each of the candidates to one of several possible recipient secondary schools. Their ratings of the students were then available for the use of the secondary school in assigning the incoming students to the most appropriate graded class.[128] Transition problems could thereby be lessened and students more easily grouped by ability. But Wyndham soon recognised that these regional committees needed more than documentary information; they also required the interpretative judgments of a skilled counsellor. As the initial two counsellors demonstrated their value, Wyndham was able to persuade the authorities to add progressively to their number.[129]

Through the work of the school counsellors and the use of the pupil record card, Wyndham became increasingly confident that effective measures were in place 'to detect educational misfits in school and to suggest remedies'.[130] By 1938 there were seven district school counsellors in Sydney and two more in country centres.[131] Their major duty was to 'visit every primary school which normally sends pupils to the high schools to which they are attached and there carry out tests of intelligence'.[132] The testing, which was to be completed as nearly as possible at the commencement of the fifth class, was intended to give the authorities and the children concerned about a year and a half to make a decision with regard to the type of post-primary education each student would follow. By 1940 additional district school counsellors had been appointed to the St George, Canterbury, Australian Capital Territory and Goulburn areas, and individual school counsellors to Sydney Boys' High School, Sydney Girls' High School, Fort Street Boys' High School, Homebush Junior High School, North Sydney Boys' High School, and Hornsby Girls' High School. Their first duty remained 'to carry out tests of intelligence of all sixth class pupils in their areas, though it is hoped to obtain assessments of pupils' intelligence at an earlier stage of their school careers'.[133] It was the responsibility of school principals to conduct the tests, have the papers marked and return completed record sheets and worked papers to the district school counsellor. These test scores were then converted into IQ scores by the counsellor. When the test data were complete the counsellor would visit each school to discuss the results. School principals were invited:

> to make the fullest possible use of this new guidance service, especially in regard to the treatment of atypical children, and in connection with advice to parents and children concerning vocational opportunities and suitable post-primary courses.[134]

It was hoped that by such guidance the thinking, both of the school and of the home, would be orientated in such a manner as to reduce the serious proportion of misplacement which had hitherto occurred when children proceeded to various types of secondary education in NSW.[135]

Such testing was the major occupation of school counsellors. Even by the late 1940s school counsellors still spent most of first and second term with sixth and fourth classes administering and marking group intelligence tests, assessing IQs and providing advice to sixth class pupils on their choice of secondary schools. Assessment committees for high school entry still occupied many weeks in third term.[136] The school counsellor had become, as David Verco later observed, 'a key figure in the reorganisation which has developed to select entrants for high schools, and guide pupils and parents in the choice of the most suitable secondary school courses'.[137] Wyndham's influence and prestige grew accordingly.

By 1943 there were fifteen school counsellors. In the late 1940s specialist school counsellors began to be appointed: for the deaf in 1946; for children in hospital schools in 1950; for the visually handicapped in 1962; for the emotionally disturbed in 1966. The network was greatly expanded after Wyndham became Director-General in 1952. By 1966 in NSW there were 127 school counsellors and fourteen district guidance officers (senior counsellors with some administrative as well as counselling functions). By 1996 some 780 school counsellors were employed.[138] A 1961 survey of activities of school counsellors in NSW demonstrated that most of their activity in that period still centred around the marking of group intelligence tests given to classes four and six, but, after the new Wyndham Scheme arrangements for graduation to high school began in 1962, transition problems ceased to be a major concern. By 1966, mass IQ testing was no longer the counsellors' principal preoccupation [139] but they were still involved in data-collecting surveys or local research for the Research and Guidance Branch.[140]

By the 1970s the whole attitude to 'special' children had changed. Whereas a major task of the early counsellors had been to diagnose the needs of atypical children and then place them in special classes, by the 1970s this diagnosis was used to place the atypical in normal classes, provide support to keep them in the mainstream and to integrate any special class for as many lessons as possible into the rest of the school for at least some lessons: 'integration has replaced segregation as much as possible, and this affects what the school counsellor does about atypical children'.[141]

Problems identified by the school counsellor services contributed to this reversal in policy. In Victoria it was found, in the 1930s, that advice as to choice of secondary school was often ignored: children transferred to what were deemed inappropriate schools 'despite the most painstaking efforts to provide guidance'.[142] After a major survey of that State, Giles reported that out of a group of 777 grade six students, to whom he personally gave guidance at the end of 1932 and who were still in school at the end of 1933, 'about thirty per cent who went to academic high schools did so against his recommendation, and the comparable percentages for technical and primary school options were thirty-two and forty-four respectively'.[143] The transition problems of such students often became so acutely apparent in the first year of secondary school that they required the intervention of the counsellor:

> Naturally, schools today are made to suit the majority of children, but it is inevitable that there will be one or two children in every group who remain misfits. One of the most important tasks of the school counsellor, therefore, is to enable the headmaster or headmistress to identify those children who are not deriving the greatest benefit from their schooling and to assist them in finding the causes. Once again the causes will be many and varied. Some of them may be removed, though in most cases of serious maladjustment in schools, the case calls for even more definite investigation. In this connection the Department of Education maintains a central Child Guidance Clinic in order to give advice in regard to more serious cases, and the services of an educational psychologist are also available for the guidance of the more complicated cases of maladjustment in school work.[144]

Besides assisting transition, counsellors also played a direct role in vocational education. It had become increasingly evident that reliance solely on parent or student vocational choice contributed to the number of school misfits. Studies in Victoria had found that 'because parents and children had conflicting priorities, the careers for which the children expressed a preference at age eleven or twelve, and the career they actually entered were often vastly different'.[145] NSW post-primary vocational schools were having limited influence on career choice.[146] Counsellors could assist by providing advice to children and parents on selection of secondary schools and choice of career:

> while the general emphasis of the Counsellor's work is educational guidance and adjustment, they cannot but provide vocational information for potential school leavers, especially in the secondary school ... (although) the specific task of vocational testing and guidance has been allotted in NSW to the Department of Labour and Industry.[147]

Even after the Minister for Public Instruction, Clive Evatt, ordered the appointment of careers advisers to all post-primary schools in 1940, these new officers continued to rely on school counsellors. As David Verco recalled in 1958:

> Behind the careers advisers were the school counsellors, more thoroughly trained and handling the more difficult cases; a team of vocational aptitude testers was organised to tour the State and administer a short battery of tests, in at least the larger secondary schools.[148]

The school counsellor network appeared also to offer a salve for other wider social ills. In the 1930s, as the Depression forced more and more young people into unemployment, schools were increasingly called upon to deal with the perceived increase in juvenile delinquency. This included require advice for psychological and social misfits. Many individual cases of this type were referred to Wyndham by the counsellors and the Child Welfare Department. He was confident that his new approach to guidance could provide a remedy for juvenile delinquency.[149] Similarly, the 1936 Conference of Directors, to stop delinquents drifting into crime, recommended more IQ tests for State wards so as to improve the vocational and educational guidance available to them. The Directors believed that delinquency often resulted from the student being placed in a class beyond his or her capacity.[150] More accurate ability grouping might address some of the causes of delinquency. The conference noted that a study of London students by Cyril Burt had found that mental backwardness, as measured by IQ tests, was a major cause of delinquency. If classes for backward children were properly organised they 'would catch within their meshes over 70 per cent of incipient criminals'.[151]

All types of misfits could be more effectively identified and dealt with if better records of their progress were available. Since it was imperative that school records be standardised and that they recognise new trends in assessment, Wyndham moved quickly to design and introduce a new school record card. Its adoption by schools was one of the major objectives of the new school counsellor service. As in Victoria,[152] the pupil record card formed one of the building blocks of NSW school guidance: Wyndham stressed that 'it cannot be too strongly emphasised that the Pupil Record Card is a necessary adjunct to the whole program of guidance'.[153] He intended that the card form an integral part of the then still 'experimental' school counsellor service.[154] In 1928 the NSW Director of Education, Stephen Smith, had launched the first student record card. But this card, since it relied on the teacher undertaking additional duties, failed to be widely used in schools.[155] In 1935, with the help of the counsellor network, Wyndham launched a new record card system. It was designed as a

cumulative history card which went with the student from his or her primary school to the secondary school and included such information as family particulars, school reports, examination results, IQ test scores and follow-up comments.[156] By employing the classical child guidance approach of considering the IQ score in conjunction with the student's whole school record, such data eventually would allow assessments to replace external exams as the means of allotting students to a secondary school.[157]

Towards the end of 1935, Wyndham asked Nancy Burton (a University of Sydney psychology honours graduate), to test the card in the Narrabri district to help identify any administrative obstacles to its State-wide introduction. At the second stage of this pilot program, Wright, at the Canterbury Domestic Science School, gathered data for the card from the girls at the CDSS who intended to enrol, while Weeden did likewise from the boys planning to attend Canterbury Boys' High School. These experiments encouraged Wyndham to observe that: 'the usefulness of a similar card for all children passing on to secondary work became increasingly obvious and a number of headmasters asked that the card be put into general use'.[158] Subsequently, as the first school counsellors were initially appointed to a district the use of the card was extended to schools in that area.[159] Much of the counsellors' time was consumed in interviewing their sixth class pupils to obtain the required information.[160] In Victoria, teachers, without counsellor support, were reluctant to undertake the extra work required to complete these additional tasks.[161] In NSW the problems revealed by the pupil record card and the counsellors' discussions with primary teachers enabled more effective identification of misfits and, in some cases, their referral to specialised clinics such as the Child Guidance Clinic.[162] The success of the pupil record card and its value to head office proved yet another triumph for Wyndham.

Major reforms of this type posed a threat to those comfortable with existing practices and the early trials of the new card met with some opposition. When the cards were extended to the Canterbury-Bankstown district, Inspector Barlex claimed to speak for his colleagues when he alleged that the new card, having been devised by a psychologist rather than a teacher, gave insufficient emphasis to class marks and to subjects such as oral reading. Wyndham retorted:

> With regard to the relative merits of marks and positions in class as a measure of a pupil's standing, I deplore the contrast which is drawn between the 'psychologist' and the 'practical man'. In regard to the devising of marking systems and the interpretation of marks, the psychologist is the person who has the most constant practical experience; in any case, the 'practical man' argument is not a sound one.[163]

The nature of many of the objections highlights serious shortcomings in the assessment procedures being practised at that time by many of the schools. Wyndham had to explain that strictly comparable results were possible only when scholastic skills were tested by standardised tests, and that 'raw' marks were certainly not comparable. Place in class was much more reliable for comparison, he pointed out, than a percentage mark, but:

> in deference to the long established habit of using percentage marks, the pupil record card was drafted so that both marks and place in class might be entered, but if I were asked to suggest which should be eliminated, I would on all occasions suggest marks rather than place in class.[164]

The school counsellor network could not only uncover such anomalies but also monitor opposition to reform: 'Such objections as I have discussed do not, by any means, represent the bulk of informed opinions in the schools ... within the Canterbury-Bankstown District itself, counsellors report to me that there is a considerable body of opinion supporting the cards'.[165] To deal with the type of objections raised by Inspector Barlex, Wyndham suggested, that the NSW Director,Thomas, recommend the card at a forthcoming conference of inspectors in the Canterbury-Bankstown District, for the following reasons:

(a) It was individual: 'in addition to consideration of administrative efficiency, it must be remembered that those engaged in education are constantly stressing the central significance of the individual child; school records as well as organisation and method should reflect this emphasis'.
(b) It provided a cumulative record in one place.
(c) Its primary purpose was to make key facts readily accessible to the daily teacher:
> It has been suggested that the sole justification of the use of the card is its usefulness for the purpose of vocational guidance but it must be obvious that the features which make the card useful in vocational guidance also make it useful for educational guidance of any kind, and there seems little need to point out that educational guidance is one of the major duties of an efficient teacher.
(d) It created a flexible record.[166]

Amongst teachers contrary views were often held on the value of these new approaches. Conservative teachers argued for the maintenance of the external examination as the sole criterion for graduation to secondary schools, while supporters 'tended to regard [the] IQ score as holy gospel'.[167] Most of the early school counsellors, such as Beryl Wright, were ardent disciples of intelligence testing: 'I thought IQs were the way to heaven in those days'.[168]

By 1937, the card system was still at an 'experimental stage', in use in just two districts and certain specified schools but Wyndham was 'optimistic enough to feel, that after more than two years' scrutiny, something in the nature of finality is being approached ... the next step will be the possible extension of the card'.[169] By mid–1938 the pupil record card system had been introduced throughout the rest of the Sydney metropolitan, Parramatta and Newcastle areas, requiring an additional 30,000 cards.[170]

The changes Wyndham had encouraged allowed the system of progression from primary school to secondary school to be transformed. Studies by the Research Office had demonstrated a poor correlation between the aggregate high school entrance examination results and later secondary school success.[171] Wyndham recommended that 'as a test of past achievements, this exam could be superseded by the use of pupil record cards ... together with standardised tests in the skill subjects'.[172] The Primary Final results were being replaced, for all pupils not seeking entrance to an academic high school, by a composite mark based on an intelligence test and sixth class results.[173] The data on the pupil record card proved to be the starting point in creating a valid composite mark. With school counsellors being appointed to five more districts in 1939, a further 60,000 students joined the scheme. Another 100,000 cards would be needed to assist the 'new scheme of examinations at the end of the primary course'.[174] The composite mark system was applied, in 1940, to the assessment of all candidates proceeding to secondary education.[175] In the early 1940s, Verco devised the coordinated mark, a scaling of the pupil's place in the grade (based on sixth class assessments in English and arithmetic) so that these results were comparable between schools. The student's IQ score and scaled mark were added to obtain the coordinated mark. It was believed that this mark and other pupil record card data, used together, would provide even more accurate predictions of high school success.[176] In 1943 the high school entrance examination at the end of primary school was abolished in metropolitan areas. Allocation of pupils to all secondary schools throughout NSW was henceforth to be based on their coordinated mark.[177] Such tasks could not be trusted to the voluntary efforts of teachers but would require a corps of suitably qualified counsellors:

> Australia still has far to go in these matters. There are few, if any, specialists in the field of educational diagnosis and remedial treatment for special subject disabilities. The examination of children who present problems in behaviour is regularly carried out by full-time staffs in not more than three or four centres in the whole country ... but in the main it is supposed to be dealt with by lay bodies or by teachers in their spare time.[178]

The growth of the counsellor network was constrained by the meagre supply of psychology graduates from universities and the better career prospects they enjoyed outside the Education Department's rigid promotional hierarchy. These new professionals required a higher status and a new avenue for promotion. Wyndham often complained of the continuing difficulties he encountered in recruiting and holding suitable staff.[179] To reduce turnover, Wyndham implored Thomas to create a special promotions structure for counsellors. He stressed the difficulty of securing and holding officers with the necessary qualifications for these positions. The readiness with which these officers with special qualifications in psychology gave up work in the schools was due, Wyndham believed, to the fact that there were no prospects in the general teaching service which were sufficiently attractive to them. He was convinced that if the position of school counsellor was officially recognised and if there was a formal career structure, the drift to other professions could be arrested.[180]

By 1938 Wyndham was certain that the growth of the school counsellor network was being hindered by the lack of qualified staff. This was due, in part, to the fact that it was a new departure in the work of the Department. In time, the demand for such officers, Wyndham believed, would provoke a supply. At the same time, the major obstacle was the lack of any definite statement of policy in regard to these officers. As long as their work was looked upon as experimental and their status indeterminate, it could not be expected that teachers would be persuaded to leave

> the safe, if plodding path of annual increments as routine teachers, for the sphere of counsellor ... yet these counsellors, because of the nature of the work, are teachers of experience, officers whose industry and enthusiasm are unquestioned and graduates whose record in psychology is one of distinction. The result has been that men who might have constituted a corps of highly qualified officers are tending to seek 'safer' avenues of office within the Department or leave the service altogether.[181]

Critics may also have believed that the development of the machinery of guidance during the early thirties was also an empire-building enterprise on the part of Wyndham and Thomas. The Victorian Minister for Education, John Pennington, ascribed such motives to his Director, James McRae, to account for his enthusiastic support of the Victorian guidance program.[182] Wyndham failed to generate a new route for the advancement of his counsellors but he succeeded in doing so for himself. The extent of his authority is highlighted by the types of objections he raised to moves to establish a separate clinic to assess the educational misfits then being referred to him by the school counsellors. He argued that guidance work was the logical counterpart of his supervision of school counsellors and the

selection of children for special education. The existing Child Guidance Clinic could deal only with emotional maladjustment and behavioural disorders, complementing the work of Dr North of the Medical Branch whose major role was to identify mental defectives. Only Wyndham's Research Office could provide 'educational' guidance 'to diagnose an educational difficulty and provide a program to address a student's educational needs'.[183]

In this early stage, oversight of both research and guidance remained the responsibility of the Research Officer. With no widespread research effort in other Australian education departments, Wyndham became the first educator in Australia systematically to establish research and guidance as a central part of the functions of school administration.[184] His was the first non line appointment and it gave him direct access to the Director. It was a position of enormous influence and power for such a young officer with only cursory service in schools. The Research Officer provided 'a more free floating arm' for the Director-General, someone to whom he could toss a problem that would not have easily gone to another branch [for example, arrangements for the NEF Conference of 1937, examined in Chapter 4].[185] With supervision of both the Research Office and the counsellor network within his orbit, Wyndham could identify shortcomings in the data supplied by schools: 'the experience of the District School counsellors in their field work in 1936, called into question the reliability of a certain return made, each term, by the schools. In consequence an investigation, statistical in character, was carried out and the doubt was proved to be well-founded'.[186]

Wyndham knew that for counselling and guidance to succeed, its merits must be widely recognised. In the 1930s he was already developing skills as a publicist that would later prove vital in his campaigns for other reforms. Counsellors were needed not only to gather intelligence but also to win the support of teachers and the community for reform. Wyndham himself used the *Education Gazette* and a series of lectures to classroom teachers to promote these new approaches.[187] Maurice Hale, for three years a district counsellor at Fort Street Boys' High School commented: 'In these jobs I spent a lot of time trying to persuade teachers of the new ideas that Wyndham was spreading'.[188] Another early counsellor described his duties as 'in many ways a missionary activity'.[189] Wyndham recognised that these missionaries required more than just training in psychology: 'The position calls not only for a first class degree in psychology, but also a good background of teaching experience, coupled with the knack of getting on with people who may not be immediately convinced that one's activities are worthwhile'.[190]

Wyndham extolled his reforms as the modern, scientific way for a new breed of professional educationists to deal with misfits and for making schooling more efficient. Education was to become more 'scientific' through the application of quantitative psychological methodology. Wyndham, as a member of this new breed, derived status from his executive role in educational research and school counselling, his publications and his doctorate from Stanford. He soon became a key figure in providing experienced and trained personnel for the nascent policy community of educational psychologists, many of whom later formed the nucleus of the defence psychology services in the Second World War [for example, Hugh Philp, Bill Hart, Hugh Campbell].[191] Others in this circle included Gilbert Phillips, who had been working on the intellectual development of borderline defectives, Alfred Martin, whose interest was in test construction, and Kenneth Cunningham, the Director of the ACER, who specialised in empirical research. Cunningham later claimed that acquiring an overseas doctorate was the sure means of securing a top position.[192] Post-war reconstruction further boosted the demand for psychologists.[193] In a speech to a vocational guidance conference in 1948 Wyndham noted the 'major contribution' made by psychology to the various services during the war which had broadened the concept of guidance and fostered an increase in the number of qualified workers. In a speech in the late 1940s, he described guidance workers as the 'apostles of a new gospel' who needed 'faith' to counter frustration. They also needed to know their creed—where they stood—and not to allow themselves to be blown about.[194]

The lessons learnt from his guidance days shaped many of Wyndham's reforms after he became Director-General. The reports of the school counsellors and other evidence from psychological studies convinced Wyndham that selection at the end of primary school should be abandoned and the issue featured prominently on the agenda of the later Wyndham Committee. As he later stated: 'the whole tenor of the Secondary Report could be said to [have arisen] from our experience in guidance'.[195] His initial survey of secondary education was also based on his guidance work and measures used to deal with misfits in schools.[196]

By the late 1930s school counselling had become the major activity of the Research Office and Wyndham's major contribution to schooling in NSW at that time. As Weeden later commented: Wyndham's most significant contribution to education were his work in the Research Office which included guidance and counselling and the establishment of the new approach to secondary education.[197]

For a young officer with little school experience he had achieved a great deal, given grace to his name, and shown that he was a rising man of some

consequence. Further opportunities to enhance his professional stature now arose.

NOTES

1. Two important volumes tracing the history of the ACER are W.F. Connell, *The Australian Council for Educational Research, 1930–1980*, Melbourne, ACER, 1980; and B. Williams, *Education with Its Eyes Open: a biography of K. S. Cunningham*, Melbourne, ACER, 1994.
2. J. Cleverley, 'The State Primary School Teacher Between the Wars' in A. Spaull (ed.), *Australian Teachers: from colonial schoolmasters to militant professionals*, Sydney, Macmillan, 1977, p. 92.
3. A. Barcan, *A Short History of Education in New South Wales*, Sydney, Martindale Press, 1965, p. 241.
4. S. Macintyre, 1901–1942, The Succeeding Age, Volume 4, G. Bolton (ed.), *The Oxford History of Australia*, Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 1986, Chapters 11 and 12.
5. *Ibid.*
6. Williams, *Education with Its Eyes Open*, p. 193.
7. The year was 1936 not 1937 as Barcan states in Barcan, Short History, p. 241.
8. Barcan, *Short History*, p. 241.
9. Cleverley, 'The State Primary School Teacher', p. 92.
10. N. Preston and C. Symes, *Schools and Classrooms: a cultural analysis of education*, Sydney, Longman Cheshire, 1992, p. 61.
11. D. McCallum, 'Naturalising Educational Inequality: an overview of the Australian intellectual field', *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Sociology*, vol. 16, no. 2, Jul. 1980, p. 35.
12. *Ibid.*
13. Quoted in Barcan, *Short History*, pp. 245–46.
14. Wyndham to ACER, 14 Apr. 1930, WP, ML mss 5089, 18(38).
15. Wyndham to K. Cunningham, 15 Oct. 1930, WP, ML mss 5089, 18(38). Gilbert Phillips in 1925 published the first version of the Binet test to be scaled to Australian norms.
16. Wyndham, Survey Questionnaire, 23 Dec. 1930, WP, ML mss 5089, 18(38).
17. H. Wyndham, *Class Grouping in the Primary School*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1932.
18. *Ibid.* p. 16.
19. *Ibid.* p. 13.
20. *Ibid.* p. 16.
21. *Ibid.* p. 117.
22. *Ibid.* p. 130.
23. *Ibid.* p. 23.
24. Wyndham to K. Cunningham, 15 Feb. 1932, WP, ML mss 5089, 18(38).
25. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 18 Jan. 1938, New South Wales State Archives (NSWSA), 10/31433.
26. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 1 Jan. 1935, WP, ML mss 5089, 9(38).
27. Wyndham, Research Officer's Report Upon Work for the Year Ending Jan. 31st, 1938, NSWSA, 10/31433.

28. Wyndham to the Acting Chief Inspector, 7 Oct. 1938, NSWSA, 10/31433. Ordinary examinations measured attainment, intelligence tests were necessary to measure capacity.
29. *Ibid.*
30. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 2 Jun. 1937, NSWSA, 10/31432.
31. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 7 Oct. 1938, NSWSA, 10/31433.
32. *Ibid.*
33. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 17 Jan. 1936, NSWSA, 10/31432.
34. *Ibid.*
35. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 2 Ap. 1936, NSWSA, 10/31432.
36. *Ibid.*, 17 Apr.
37. *Ibid.*, 7 Sep.
38. *Ibid.*, 2 Apr.
39. *Ibid.*, 7 Sep.
40. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 8 Sep. 1939, NSWSA, 10/31433.
41. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 6 Apr. 1936, WP, ML mss 5089, 9(38).
42. Wyndham, Research Officer's Report Upon Work for the Year Ending Jan. 31st, 1936, NSWSA, 10/31432.
43. Wyndham, Report of the Research Officer for the Year Ending Jan. 31st, 1937, NSWSA, 10/31432.
44. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 29 Jan. 1936, NSWSA, 10/31432.
45. Wyndham, Research Officer's Report, 1938, NSWSA, 10/31433.
46. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 22 Jun. 1937, NSWSA, 10/31432.
47. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 7 Jan. 1938, NSWSA, 10/31433.
48. *Ibid.*, 1 Dec. 1939.
49. Wyndham to the Chief Clerk, 19 Apr. 1938, NSWSA, 10/31433
50. Wyndham, Report of the Research Officer, 1937, NSWSA, 10/31432.
51. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 22 Oct.1937, NSWSA, 10/31432.
52. Wyndham, Report of the Research Officer, 1937, NSWSA, 10/31432.
53. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 3 Oct. 1937, NSWSA, 10/31432.
54. Wyndham, Research Officer's Report, 1936, NSWSA, 10/31432.
55. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 15 Mar. 1937, NSWSA, 10/31432.
56. *Ibid.*, 31 May.
57. Wyndham to K. Cunningham, 5 Nov. 1936, NSWSA, 10/31432.
58. Wyndham, Research Officer's Report, 1936, NSWSA, 10/31432.
59. Wyndham to K. Cunningham, 5 Nov. 1936, NSWSA, 10/31432.
60. *Ibid.*
61. Wyndham to the Chief Inspector, 16 Jan. 1936, NSWSA, 10/31432.
62. Wyndham, Report of the Research Officer, 1937, NSWSA, 10/31432.
63. *Ibid.*
64. *Ibid.*
65. *Ibid.*
66. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 15 Jan. 1936, NSWSA, 10/31432.
67. *Ibid.*
68. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 4 Mar. 1936, NSWSA, 10/31432.
69. *Ibid.*, 4 Nov.
70. *Ibid.*, 18 Oct. 1937.
71. *Ibid.*, 2 Apr. 1936.
72. Wyndham to K. Cunningham, 5 Nov. 1936, NSWSA, 10/31432.

73. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 2 Apr. 1936, NSWSA, 10/31432.
74. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 2 Mar. 1938, NSWSA, 10/31433
75. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 6 Apr. 1936, WP, ML mss 5089, 9(38).
76. Wyndham to K. Cunningham, 5 Nov. 1936, NSWSA, 10/31432.
77. *Ibid.*
78. *Ibid.*
79. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 19 Jan. 1938, NSWSA, 10/31433.
80. *Ibid.*, 2 Mar.
81. Wyndham, Research Officer's Report, 1938, NSWSA, 10/31433.
82. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 19 Jan. 1938, NSWSA, 10/31433.
83. *Ibid.*
84. *Ibid.*, 15 Mar.
85. R. Bates, 'Educational Administration and Cultural Transmission' in R. Browne and L. Foster (eds.), *Sociology of Education*, Sydney, Macmillan, 1983, p. 74.
86. Quoted in G. Joncich, *Edward L. Thorndike: the sane positivist*, Middletown, Connecticut, Wesleyan University Press, 1984, p. 298.
87. Joncich, *Edward L. Thorndike*, p. 299.
88. Bates, 'Educational Administration', p. 75.
89. *Ibid.* p. 76.
90. Jurgen Habermas; cited in Bates, 'Educational Administration', p. 75.
91. Wyndham, Research Officer's Report, 1938, NSWSA, 10/31433.
92. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 6 Apr. 1936, WP, ML mss 5089, 9(38).
93. Wyndham, Report of the Research Officer, 1937, NSWSA, 10/31432.
94. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 30 Mar. 1939, NSWSA, 10/31433.
95. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 18 Sep. 1936, NSWSA, 10/31432.
96. *Ibid.*, 23 Feb. 1937.
97. Wyndham, Research Officer's Report, 1938, NSWSA, 10/31433.
98. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 30 Aug. 1938, NSWSA, 10/31432.
99. *Ibid.*, 4 Oct. 1939.
100. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 5 Apr. 1938, NSWSA, 10/31432.
101. A. Holbrook, 'Apathetic Parents and Wilful Children? Vocational Guidance in the 1930s' in M. Theobald and R. Selleck (eds.), *Family, School and State in Australian History*, Sydney, Allen and Unwin, 1990, p. 135.
102. Committee Appointed to Survey Secondary Education in NSW (H. Wyndham, Chair), *Report*, Sydney, Government Printer, 1958, p. 33.
103. Wyndham Committee, *Report*, p. 23.
104. J. Lewis, A History of the Development of the Division of Guidance and Special Education in the Education Department of NSW, MEd thesis, University of Sydney, 1978, p. x.
105. Lewis, Division of Guidance and Special Education, p. 43.
106. *Education Gazette*, Apr. 1, 1939, p. 83.
107. Lewis, Division of Guidance and Special Education, p. 43.
108. K.S. Cunningham, G.A. McIntyre and W.C. Radford (eds.), *Review of Education in Australia*, 1938, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1939, p. 177.
109. W.M. O'Neil, *A Century of Psychology in Australia*, Sydney, Sydney University Press, 1987, p. 48.
110. Cunningham, McIntyre and Radford (eds.), *Review of Education in Australia, 1938*, p. 210.
111. O'Neil, *Century of Psychology*, p. 48.

112. Lewis, Division of Guidance and Special Education, p. 38.
113. Cunningham, McIntyre and Radford (eds.), *Review of Education in Australia, 1938*, p. 210.
114. Holbrook, 'Apathetic Parents and Wilful Children', p. 139.
115. P. Chapman, *Schools as Sorters: Lewis M. Terman, applied psychology, and the intelligence testing movement, 1890–1930*, New York, New York University Press, 1988, p. 123.
116. *Ibid*. p. 125.
117. *Ibid*. p. 90.
118. L. Terman, *The Intelligence of School Children: how children differ in ability, the use of mental tests in school grading and the proper education of exceptional children, Boston*, Houghton Mifflin, 1919, p. 268.
119. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 25 May, 1938, NSWSA, 10/31433.
120. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA; Wyndham, Taped Interview, Hazel De Berg, NLA. Alek Walter Hicks was Assistant Under-Secretary of the Department of Education 1930–35; Assistant Under-Secretary and Superintendent of Technical Education 1936–38; member of the Public Service Board of NSW, 1939–49.
121. Wyndham, Research Officer's Report, 1938, NSWSA, 10/31433.
122. W. Weeden to author, 5 Apr. 1993.
123. W.M. O'Neil, 'Teaching and Practice of Psychology in Australia in the First Phases' in M. Nixon and T. Taft (eds.), *Psychology in Australia: achievements and prospects*, Sydney, Pergamon, 1976, p. 12.
124. O'Neil, *Century of Psychology*, p. 48.
125. Lewis, Division of Guidance and Special Education, p. 4.
126. B. Wright to author, 12 Apr. 1993. Beryl Wright was one of the first school counsellors.
127. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 6 Apr. 1936, WP, ML mss 5089, 9(38).
128. O'Neil, *Century of Psychology*, p. 48.
129. *Ibid*.
130. Wyndham, Report of the Research Officer, 1937, NSWSA, 10/31432.
131. Cunningham, McIntyre and Radford (eds.), *Review of Education in Australia, 1938*, p. 176.
132. *Ibid*. p. 177.
133. *Education Gazette*, 1st Apr. 1939.
134. *Ibid*.
135. Cunningham, McIntyre and Radford (eds.), *Review of Education in Australia, 1938*, p. 177.
136. Lewis, Division of Guidance and Special Education, p. 60.
137. D. Verco, 'Psychological Services in Education Departments', *Australian Journal of Psychology*, vol. 10, no. 1, 1958, p. 13. David James Verco, MA, DipEd, FACE, born 1913, was educated Fort Street Boys' High School; Principal Research and Guidance Officer, 1947–53; Assistant to the Director-General Education from 1953; Director of Teacher Training, 1958–67; and took over from P. Price as Deputy Director-General in 1963. He became Director-General in 1969 and died in 1972.
138. Eleanor Davidson, Director of Student Welfare, Department of School Education, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 Nov. 1996.

139. I. James, 'School counselling in NSW', paper Seventh Annual Conference of the Australian College of Education, *Teachers in Australia*, Sydney, F.W. Cheshire, 1966, p. 168.
140. James, 'School counselling in NSW', p. 174.
141. Lewis, Division of Guidance and Special Education, p. 62.
142. Holbrook, 'Apathetic Parents and Wilful Children', p. 145.
143. *Ibid.*
144. *Education Gazette*, 1 May, 1939.
145. Holbrook, 'Apathetic Parents and Wilful Children', p. 148.
146. A. Barcan, *Two Centuries of Education in New South Wales*, Sydney, NSW University Press, 1988, p. 207.
147. Cunningham, McIntyre and Radford (eds.), *Review of Education in Australia, 1938*, p. 178. See also G. Sherington, 'Vocational Guidance, Training and Employment of Youth in New South Wales: from depression to post-war boom' in R. White and B. Wilson (eds.), *For Your Own Good: young people and state intervention in Australia*, Melbourne, La Trobe University Press, 1991.
148. Verco, Psychological Services, p. 20.
149. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 1 Aug. 1939, NSWSA, 10/31433.
150. Conference of Directors of Education, Minutes, Oct. 1936, NSWSA, 19/8221.
151. *Ibid.*
152. For details of the introduction of pupil record cards in Victoria, see Holbrook, 'Apathetic Parents and Wilful Children', p. 140.
153. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 1 Aug. 1939, NSWSA, 10/31433.
154. Wyndham, Research Officer's Report, 1938, NSWSA, 10/31433.
155. Wyndham, address Vocational Guidance conference, 17 May, 1948, WP, ML mss 5089, 24(38).
156. B. Wright, Interview by author.
157. J. Pratt, Interview by author. Jim Pratt was a research assistant with the ACER, 1939–40; Senior Lecturer in Educational Psychology and Experimental Education, University of Melbourne, 1946–49; worked for the COE, 1949–66, in such roles as, Chief Education Officer (Research), Deputy Director and Acting Director.
158. Wyndham, Research Officer's Report, 1936, NSWSA, 10/31432.
159. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 15 Oct. 1937, NSWSA, 10/31432.
160. Lewis, Division of Guidance and Special Education, p. 43.
161. Holbrook, 'Apathetic Parents and Wilful Children', p. 143.
162. B. Wright to author, 12 Apr. 1993.
163. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 15 Dec. 1936, NSWSA, 10/31432.
164. *Ibid.*, 19 Jan. 1937.
165. *Ibid.*
166. *Ibid.*
167. J. Pratt, Interview by author.
168. B. Wright, Interview by author.
169. Wyndham, Research Officer's Report, 1938, NSWSA, 10/31433.
170. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 21 Jun. 1938, NSWSA, 10/31433.
171. *Ibid.*, 24 Jan. 1938.
172. *Ibid.*
173. Lewis, Division of Guidance and Special Education, p. 44.
174. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 7 Feb. 1939, NSWSA, 10/31433

175. Barcan, *Short History*, p. 241.
176. Lewis, Division of Guidance and Special Education, p. 44.
177. Barcan, *Two centuries*, p. 226.
178. Cunningham, McIntyre and Radford (eds.), *Review of Education in Australia, 1938*, p. 210.
179. See, for example, Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 16 Nov. 1938, NSWSA, 10/31433.
180. Wyndham, Report of the Research Officer, 1937, NSWSA, 10/31432.
181. Wyndham, Research Officer's Report, 1938, NSWSA, 10/31433.
182. Holbrook, 'Apathetic Parents and Wilful Children', p. 136.
183. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 21 Apr. 1938, NSWSA, 10/31432.
184. J. Pratt, Interview by author.
185. *Ibid*.
186. Wyndham, Research Officer's Report, 1938, NSWSA, 10/31433.
187. Wyndham, Research Officer's Report, 1936, NSWSA, 10/31432.
188. M. Hale, Interview by author, 13 Dec. 1993. Maurice Hale became principal of Wagga Wagga Teachers' College in 1960.
189. M. E. Thomas, Interview by author, 14 Apr. 1993. M. E. Thomas was one of the initial school counsellors. In the early 1950s he became an Inspector; 1953 appointed Principal Research and Guidance Officer. After the Research and Guidance Division was replaced in 1957 by two divisions, Research and Planning, and Guidance and Adjustment, Thomas became Chief of Guidance and Adjustment from 1957–72 and Director from 1972–75.
190. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 18 Aug. 1936, NSWSA, 10/31432.
191. J. Pratt, Interview by author.
192. L. Dunt, *Speaking Worlds: the Australian educator and John Dewey, 1890–1940*, Melbourne, History Department, Melbourne University, 1993, p. 107.
193. O'Neil, 'Teaching and Practice', p. 11.
194. Wyndham, address Vocational Guidance conference, 17 May, 1948, WP, ML mss 5089, 24(38).
195. Wyndham, Interview, J. Burnswoods, 13 Jun. 1979, WP, ML mss 5089, 26(38).
196. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA.
197. W. Weeden to author, May 8, 1993.

Chapter 4

Educational Reform

The New Education Fellowship

In 1937, in an Australia-wide tour sponsored by the New Education Fellowship, eminent overseas educators delivered lectures on progressive educational thought and practice at a series of conferences. As a result of this tour, organised by the Australian Council for Educational Research, Wyndham gained a valuable opportunity to consolidate and extend his professional network. The Sydney conference was considered an outstanding success. The extensive newspaper coverage it received and the broadcasting of talks by major speakers made education 'the topic of the day'.[1] Wyndham was to find the undertaking 'a gruelling but very valuable experience' although he later admitted that it had not had a direct influence on educational development'.[2]

International conferences were the chief medium through which the New Education Fellowship worked. Many of these gatherings, by bringing into focus a major problem of the day, had become landmarks in the development of education in the countries where they were held. The NSW Minister for Education, David Drummond, had attended a previous conference of the Fellowship in Cheltenham and offered enthusiastic support for the Sydney sessions.[3] Wyndham was confident that provided sufficient local interest was aroused, Australia could look forward to visits from educational authorities with international reputations. In addition to providing a unique stimulus to public and professional thought upon education, a conference would put Australia on the educational world map. Those attending the conference would probably also derive as much benefit from personal contacts with such authorities as from the most formal aspects of the conference.[4]

At a meeting of the newly established Sydney NEF Committee on 3 July 1936, Wyndham was appointed organising secretary for the Sydney sessions.[5] In this capacity he was to assist the conference executive committee and the program, publicity and registration committees.[6] By August 1936, the increasing demands of conference preparation made it necessary to appoint an assistant to maintain the routine work of the Research Office so that Wyndham could devote most of his time to organising the conference.[7] The

Research Office and the school counsellors also became heavily involved in the preparations.[8]

Arrangements needed to be made for the program, the accommodation, entertainment and the transport of the delegation of speakers from overseas. Most sessions were scheduled for Sydney Teachers' College and the Great Hall of the University of Sydney. The morning discussion groups would be held in the University and Teachers' College lecture rooms. The morning lectures of a more general character, would require the Great Hall of the University or the Assembly Hall of the Teachers' College. The evening lectures, intended to appeal to the public as well as to those professionally engaged in education, were to be conducted in the Sydney Town Hall.[9]

Wyndham co-ordinated the planning and promotion which encouraged over 36,000 people to attend the twelve Sydney sessions.[10] Cunningham later conveyed to Wyndham:

> the warmest thanks of the Committee for your unselfish devotion to the interests of the conference and the remarkably fine work which you did in an organising capacity .... You will be pleased to learn that our preliminary balance sheet shows a very satisfactory credit balance. If we allow £1000 for publishing the report we shall still have well over £3000 in hand.[11]

After settling expenses Wyndham was able to send some £1000 to the central conference executive.[12]

The popularity of the conference relied to a large degree on effective publicity. After a meeting of representatives of the NSW Public Schools Teachers' Federation and the Under-Secretary, G. Ross Thomas, articles drawing attention to the event were placed in *Education* and *The Education Gazette*.[13] Cunningham regularly forwarded material, mostly biographies of individual speakers, to be submitted as articles.[14] *Education* began publicising the conference as early as April 1936 and an editorial in August urged teachers to provide financial and organisational support. From early in 1937 *Education* gave details of the speakers and the program and supplied information on obtaining leave for those teachers who wished to attend all sessions of the conference.[15] The meetings of the conference, the publicity emphasised, were intended not solely for the enlightenment of teachers and others professionally interested in education but were designed also to be of interest to the wider public.[16] Wyndham was obliged to respond to letters to the newspapers objecting to the closing of certain schools in order to permit teachers to attend the conference. He explained that the dates available for the conferenceto were limited by the schedules of the speakers and the needs of the other States, but any disruption to schools, he promised, would be more than recompensed by the benefit teachers would derive from a conference which 'affords Australian

educationists a unique opportunity of hearing and debating with overseas delegates representing leading educational opinion in fourteen different countries'.[17]

In July 1936, Cunningham wrote to the Under-Secretary of each State inviting them to provide an outline of education in their State for the guidance of conference speakers. Thomas directed Wyndham to compose a draft for the NSW section of this outline, entitled *Guide to Education in Australian Schools*.[18] The final text briefly described the purposes and activities in NSW of the domestic science schools, Hurlstone Agricultural High School, Carlingford District Rural School, Blackfriars Correspondence School, Glenfield Special School for Mentally Backward Boys and Girls, and the Enmore Activity School. Mention was also made of the special classes for gifted children which had 'more than justified their establishment'. [19]

The conference highlighted many issues then vexing NSW educationists. After the Governor, Lord Wakehurst, officially opened the Sydney sessions at Sydney Town Hall on Monday 9August, Dr Cyril Norwood of St John's College, Oxford, gave an address entitled 'Education for Citizenship'.[20] In subsequent sessions educational luminaries such as Isaac Kandel called for greater decentralisation of school administration and less reliance on external examinations. Others, such as Harold Rugg, spoke of the need to make the school curriculum more socially responsive through a new approach to social studies which gave a better understanding of modern life and developed a sense of democratic, social and political responsibility.[21]

The conference provided Wyndham with the opportunity to renew several valuable professional acquaintances. He had met Rugg at Columbia Teachers' College and Herbert Hamley at London University on his tour of the USA and Great Britain after completing his Stanford studies. Hamley, a Melbourne graduate, had become a leading professor of educational research in England after leaving Australia.[22] Hamley wrote to Wyndham in late 1936 to say that he was

> looking forward to the opportunity of seeing old friends in Australia and particularly of establishing intellectual contact with men like yourself who are interested in educational research. I was glad indeed to read the account of your work, which you were kind enough to set out in such detail, and I congratulate you on the excellent start that you have made on your decision to bring your department into close association with the schools.[23]

The conference succeeded beyond the wildest dreams of the organisers in focussing public attention on educational reform. As the *Sydney Mail* concluded:

> it was productive of overwhelming evidence in support of the theory that democracy and freedom now depend for their survival on a healthy and well-informed citizenry .... Behind all the discussions and lectures at the conference was an evident urge to condemn educational methods that are based on rigid centralisation.[24]

The conference has since often been cited as a turning point in Australian education. Connell affirmed that 'the general stirring that had taken place was lasting'; that the great effect of the conference was that 'it initiated a change in the climate of Australian education'.[25] Alan Barcan believes that it was 'an important precipitant' of reform.[26] Drummond later stated that his approval of the abolition of the Primary Final Examinations and of the 1938 Board of Secondary School Studies proposals for a new secondary examination structure was 'due partly to the impact of the New Education Conference'.[27] Although Wyndham believed it supplied a landmark in Australian educational history and denoted a milestone in his own career, he was much less sanguine about its long-term impact on educational development. Reformers were encouraged in their efforts but their plans were thwarted by the crises which confronted all schools in the inter-war years. Wyndham argued that during the inter-war years those responsible for education in Australia were preoccupied with the increase in numbers at the post-primary level, the greater diversity of talent which this generated, and with the maintenance of educational services in the face of severe financial retrenchment.[28] From 1914 to 1935 enrolments in public schools increased by 53 per cent but government expenditure declined overall.[29]

The conference reminded the public that fundamental reforms were needed but it failed to provoke an educational revolution. The public mind, Wyndham concluded, was quickly diverted by the growing threat of war, and the 'same cloud increasingly overshadowed professional thinking'.[30] By the time Australia emerged from the Second World War, the whole context of educational thinking had changed. For Wyndham, looking back in the 1970s, there was little doubt that the developments which had taken place in education in Australia after 1945 were not to be attributed to any particular source such as the NEF conference, but to the re-thinking 'provoked by a manifestly changed world and by the significant change in the nature and atmosphere of Australian society which is to be discerned after 1950'.[31]

Wyndham reasoned that most of the educational developments which took place during the interwar years, such as the institution of area schools in Tasmania and the establishment of the Board of Secondary School Studies in New South Wales, were primarily administrative, though their intention and their effects were intrinsically educational. He believed that at that time 'there was little general questioning of established thinking. The chief

challenge came from those concerned with atypical children; the development of special provision for mentally retarded children and, later, for gifted children'.[32] There was little of the more fundamental questioning of the whole basis of education and of the role of the school which had been generated in countries more profoundly affected by First World War and its aftermath. While there were individuals and groups in Australia who did question accepted ideas and practice in a more fundamental fashion, 'their number was small, and their influence must be said to have been only marginal'.[33] The significance of the NEF conference, in Wyndham's view, lay in the challenge it posed to a community traditionally slow to realise the extent of changing circumstances and the need for educational change. It was a challenge which, 'because of the status of those whom the conference brought to Australia, could not be ignored, either by the public or the profession. Never, before or since, has so distinguished a group of educationists been in Australia at the same time'.[34] For Wyndham 'it was the focal point for the reconsideration of the aims of education'.[35] Although it had little long term impact the NEF conference provided a 'datum line' in much professional thinking; it encouraged those convinced of the need for change to persist in the face of lay indifference and despite the distractions of war. Many of the ideas expressed in 1937, had by the 1970s 'been woven into the stuff of Australian education'.[36] It was Wyndham's destiny to play a key role in this revision of professional and community thinking.

Through the use of his own gifts and the support of friends in high places, Wyndham's professional career seemed assured but political changes in NSW were to threaten the chance of further advancement. In the immediate pre-war period Wyndham found his ambitions increasingly thwarted. Research and guidance had developed to the stage where Wyndham was able to persuade Thomas to propose to the Public Service Board of NSW (PSB) that the successor to the Research Office, the Research and Guidance Division (or Branch, as it had come to be called) should be set up as an 'almost island sub-department with its own head', but the Board would not approve the recommendation.[37] When Wyndham cast about him for some means or stratagem by which he could escape these constraints, he found that his skills were needed elsewhere in a time of national crisis.

Inspector of Schools

After war was declared, Wyndham was one of only six staff from the NSW Department of Education specifically not allowed to enlist. He was needed to organise a planned child evacuation from Britain to Australia.[38] But the evacuation did not eventuate immediately and the Director 'out of a blue sky', according to Wyndham, appointed him as an inspector of schools for

the Mudgee district.[39] It is more than likely that Wyndham was well aware of his imminent appointment, as he could hardly have been unaware of the virulent opposition being mounted against his promotion. The teachers' union took the extraordinary step of sending the Director the following letter:

> Persistent rumours to the effect that Dr Wyndham is to be appointed inspector of schools, compel the unprecedented step of addressing you on a rumour subject. I am instructed by the NSW Public Schools Teachers' Federation to ask that if the rumours prove false this letter be destroyed; if correct, to ask you as Permanent Head of the Department to reconsider your recommendation of Dr Wyndham for the position. So seriously does the Federation view the proposed appointment that I am to send a copy of this letter to the Public Service Board with the request that it veto your recommendation. It is noted that Dr Wyndham was the first Federation scholar and that the protest is not in the slightest respect personal. Dr Wyndham is at present in charge of Research and the Federation considers that this is a very important field of educational work which will be weakened by his withdrawal. It should be increasing rather than decreasing in quantity .... Dr Wyndham has had only a limited teaching career. His service in actual teaching is very limited and during such service he acted in a subordinate capacity. He has not acted as Headmaster. Dr Wyndham's departmental classification is 2A and since he, as a 2A man comes into the picture, other 2A men should also have been invited to apply, as many have greater general capacity than Dr Wyndham.[40]

Wyndham's meteoric and unorthodox rise in the Department was provoking resentment amongst his contemporaries who felt the accepted criteria for promotion to inspector were being ignored for Wyndham's benefit:

> He had nothing, absolutely nothing of school experience behind him: all he had ever done was to be a clerk at the Teachers' College and for a short time a class teacher. He had certainly studied, won an award from the Teachers' Federation that took him to the USA and a doctorate. His credentials in scholarship were exceptional, he was a thinker, had a good brain, but on the face of it was entirely lacking in general experience, handling of staff, public and parent relations, problems of school management etc. Teachers in general, and certainly their representatives on the Federation Council, resented this.[41]

But Thomas overcame all opposition and appointed Wyndham as an inspector. Before taking up his appointment Wyndham unsuccessfully applied for the position of Principal of Sydney Teachers' College, recently vacated by Mackie.[42] At the beginning of 1941 he was transferred back to head office as the personal assistant to the new Director, John McKenzie.[43] For Wyndham, McKenzie was the archetype of an effective Director. McKenzie

was the man 'who of all the directors in the various States shouldered the burden of the war most successfully'; he cooperated with the war effort but 'never yielded an inch so far as educational service was concerned'.[44] Although the new Director had hardly any opportunity in such conditions to develop education, he did manage to institute classes at the secondary level for non-academic and backward youngsters (the general activities classes as they were called) and to complete the 1941 revision of the primary school curriculum (which made special provision for teaching children of low ability). NSW was the only State, Wyndham noted, where no educational institution was closed during the war.[45] McKenzie was also impressed by Wyndham, a man he wished to promote but the next eighteen months, in his new position, proved disconcerting for Wyndham's ambitions. He began to feel he was to be a neglected man. Although McKenzie, like Thomas, readily adopted the role of Wyndham's mentor, political forces outside the Department resolved to check his rapid rise. In May 1941 a new Labor government was elected and Clive Evatt was appointed Minister of Education. Wyndham found 'it was a difficult time because of the temperament and ideas of the minister, not forward educational ideas but personal ideas as much as anything else'.[46] Beryl Wright described this period as that time when 'that crazy Clive Evatt was minister'.[47] Wyndham's comments on the opposition he encountered reveal that he and other key players already saw him as McKenzie's successor:

> Clive was persuaded by the Teachers' Federation to get rid of Wyndham. The Federation, whenever a new Minister comes, waits on him as a deputation and is really tough because he is a newcomer and it was one of the things they demanded because, though I had been their Travelling Scholar, they were suspicious that I might come through I think and they wanted to nominate the next Director of Education. McKenzie got quite a blunt note 'Send Wyndham back to the bush.' It got to the point where no paper that had my initials on it was ever approved by the Minister so McKenzie and I made an arrangement whereby I drafted the recommendations and McKenzie signed them. That's how we could work, but I got fed up with this and tried to enlist and McKenzie wouldn't have it.[48]

Royal Australian Air Force

Wyndham began to feel that his career had come to a standstill. He now sought approval to join the armed forces, but McKenzie again refused, suggesting to Wyndham that at 38 years of age he would probably be assigned to some army desk job. However, Wyndham learnt from a Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) officer that they wanted somebody like Wyndham, with a combination of administrative and guidance experience, for

the rehabilitation section they were developing. His expertise in mental measurement could assist the war effort. After Wyndham expressed an interest, 'they went through all the hoops, Prime Minister to Premier to Minister to release Dr Wyndham from his war book commitment'.[49] As a person now in his late thirties Wyndham felt, 'whether wisely or unwisely, exasperated with what I regarded as the relative futility of my job, and by means that needn't be discussed, gained my freedom to enlist in the RAAF'.[50] McKenzie, Wyndham's wife later claimed, finally allowed Wyndham to join the RAAF 'to get him away from Evatt'.[51] Opportunities which arose from the Second World War were eventually to allow Wyndham to become a central figure in the postwar reform of education.[52] The design and introduction of the Wyndham Scheme and his approach to Commonwealth involvement in education both owe a great deal to the lessons he learnt from his war work for the Commonwealth which came at a very opportune juncture in his career.

In January 1943 he enlisted and in due course became an officer in the RAAF Rehabilitation Section. His career, no longer stifled by jealousies within the NSW education community, again prospered. The next two years established Wyndham as a leading national figure amongst both professional psychologists and educational administrators. He also acquired administrative skills to add to his repetoire. For almost a year, he served on stations organising rehabilitation on behalf of RAAF headquarters. The Rehabilitation Section, in part, carried out general educational activities similar to those being delivered by Army Education but was concerned primarily with the problems of re-establishment in civilian life of service personnel, either after their discharge during the war or at the end of the war.[53] Some of the first personnel were now returning from the Empire Air Training Scheme and the initial batch of prisoners of war was being released; their demobilisation needed organising at the same time as rehabilitation centres were being prepared. In these centres Wyndham worked with the medical staff to plan retraining for the civilian job most appropriate in the light of the individual's disability and military training. For example, he observed that a flight maintenance mechanic might know a great deal about the technical details of aircraft maintenance but there were few equivalent jobs available in civil life. An airman may have left school before finishing his high school course and distinguished himself in the RAAF, but he was now classified as unfit ever to fly again when he was discharged. Wyndham asked, what would he do? Professional vocational guidance skills were necessary to identify not only the servicemen's rehabilitation needs but also their possible post-discharge occupations. Wyndham estimated, for example, that possibly as many as 80 per cent of wireless assistants would need rehabilitation assistance: for those assistants who did not have a job

to which to return, he suggested such post-discharge occupations as watchmaker or typewriter mechanic.[54] For motor mechanics, he ascertained that the training course and two years of RAAF service were adequate to satisfy civilian requirements for trade efficiency status.[55]

Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme

At the same time, the Commonwealth increasingly pursued similar objectives through the creation of the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme (CRTS). This aimed to rehabilitate ex-servicemen by affording them training for callings which would be in undersupply after the war, particularly for occupations in which a shortage might make it more difficult to meet national needs.[56] The training scheme was managed by a committee on which government departments, ex-servicemen's organisations, educational authorities, employers and employees were represented. Wyndham was one of the RAAF representatives on the original committee which set up the CRTS scheme. The new Ministry of Post-War Reconstruction administered the scheme by making use of other Commonwealth departments and agencies and State, local and semi-government authorities, as well as consulting with employers, employees and ex-servicemen's organisations. A decentralised organisation was developed which relied upon State and regional branches. The Ministry ensured that the various forms of training were available, organised financial support for the training institutions providing it, determined numbers to be trained, and negotiated quotas for various trades with employers and unions.

Wyndham began to doubt whether, with all the administrative problems and the number of other authorities involved, the scheme was getting anywhere.[57] He later described his work on the CRTS committee as 'very valuable experience ... talking to members of all the services' employing and training authorities'.[58] His duties extended to drafting part of the *Re-Establishment Act*.[59] At the Post-war Reconstruction Officers Conference in December 1944, Prime Minister John Curtin explained that the *Re-Establishment Act* was not intended merely to supply financial assistance or medical aid but to give returned servicemen and women and the war worker 'essential independence and an essential place in the community'.[60] Dr Herbert Coombs, in his closing address to this conference, emphasised 'we cannot hope to do this job of finding employment and re-establishing servicemen and war workers as quickly as it will be necessary unless the government is prepared before the end of the war to start to move over some of its manpower for preliminary work'.[61]

RAAF work brought Wyndham into increasing contact with such civilian authorities as H.C. Coombs, head of the Department of Postwar

Reconstruction and Wallace Wurth, Director-General of Manpower, both of whom were investigating reconstruction problems similar to those Wyndham was grappling with. Wurth encouraged Wyndham to leave the RAAF to work with himself and Coombs,[62] and in late 1943 he was duly transferred to a job which straddled both the departments of Manpower and Post-War Reconstruction. It entailed pushing the CRTS through to launching, principally by organising the vocational guidance side of the Demobilisation Plan, and developing special provision for the retraining and placement of disabled ex-servicemen.[63] Wyndham now held the primary responsibility in both departments for the co-ordination of psychological testing and vocational guidance services.[64] Coombs relied on him, as co-ordinator of vocational guidance, for advice on all questions of vocational guidance and psychological testing and recommendations to the States on guidance activities.[65] Programs for the re-establishment of service personnel had been launched by Cunningham but were being seriously impeded by the difficulty of recruiting suitable staff.[66] Coombs hoped that Cunningham could still provide some advice to Wyndham, 'since he has co-operated with you on so many occasions and would welcome your counsel and advice'.[67]

In the Department of Manpower, Wyndham took over as Director of Psychological Manpower from Ian Clunies-Ross.[68] Wyndham was to act as supervisor of all psychological work within the department. Wurth was advised by Wyndham on the best use of psychological personnel and psychological methods (including standardising tests), especially in regard to vocational guidance. He also represented Wurth on the Psychological Advisory Committee and gave 'effect to the wishes of the Committee'.[69] A large part of his time was taken up visiting each State to conduct general oversight of Commonwealth vocational guidance activities, such as assessing civil vocational guidance provision and examining the facilities provided by the forces for discharge.[70] He devoted special attention to evaluating the rehabilitation programs for disabled personnel provided by Army hospitals.[71] In his first assessment of vocational guidance services being offered at demobilisation centres he concluded that many were in a state of 'little more than frank anarchy'.[72] He found that the authorities seldom suggested occupations not on the issued list, often not even properly using the available vocational guidance information.[73] Improved staff training and more stringent and widespread employment of psychological tests, he concluded, were urgently needed.[74]

Many of the strategies Wyndham had mastered in developing the NSW school counselling service now proved invaluable. He succeeded in convincing the medical services to employ a standardised medical discharge form which included an individual's coded medical record and their limitations so that employment and training officers could easily understand

the employment ramifications. Overcoming staff shortages was an immediate priority. As Director of Psychological Manpower Wyndham was empowered to gather personnel with experience in counselling or in guidance or psychology from all the services. He transferred all suitable personnel from the navy, air force and army so that eventually all the demobilisation centres could offer professional vocational guidance. In Sydney, he assembled the team which did the first extensive job analyses in Australia from the point of view of physical disability. These were then related to the medical, paramedical and biographical information of those being discharged.[75]

By now Wyndham was fast becoming a key contributor to the major changes, kindled by post-war reconstruction aspirations, which were emerging in education at both the State and federal levels. His new role encompassed far more than the rehabilitation of the disabled. He was now also to liaise between the CRTS and the Universities Commission, established in 1943 to provide financial assistance to university students and control admission to certain faculties, and served on two key committees: the Education Advisory Committee of the NSW Division of Reconstruction and Development; and the interdepartmental committee chaired by Dr Edward Walker.[76] Through these groups he was able to influence the proposals for the reform of education at both school and university levels. Wyndham also liaised between the Commission and the CRTS concerning benefits for demobilised soldiers. He favoured mutual recognition of matriculation qualifications by Australian universities, with greater standardisation of selection criteria rather than a reliance on individual cases.[77] Procedures needed to be established quickly to identify prospective university entrants amongst dischargees. Careful vetting in the services as well as at university was essential since once someone matriculated the universities had no grounds to refuse entry.[78] University candidates, Wyndham recommended, should receive guidance before posting to army matriculation schools, followed by testing and/or an interview on discharge, then scrutiny by their regional CRTS Committee and guidance and follow-up while attending university.[79]

After joining the Education Advisory Committee of the NSW Division of Reconstruction and Development, which had his mentor, McKenzie, as chairman, Wyndham was entrusted with the compilation of the Committee's report on the future of education in NSW.[80] He began by identifying the deficiencies of the existing educational arrangements in NSW, then suggested remedies and the relative priority of each of these measures. The major resource shortages highlighted in both primary and secondary schools could be effectively redressed, he argued, only by immediate and substantial Commonwealth support.[81] The existing supply of teachers he considered to be deficient in both quality and quantity: more recruitment,

improved training institutions, certification and in-service facilities were vital for effective schooling in the post-war era.[82]

The Australian Education Council

Greater Commonwealth aid increased the risk of the States losing their traditional control of education.[83] Wyndham had become keenly aware of the tensions between Commonwealth and State educational authorities through his work with the Australian Education Council (AEC). He was Secretary to the AEC from 1936 to 1940. In March 1936, largely at the behest of Drummond, the State ministers had met to seek Commonwealth assistance for technical education.[84] Since Wyndham had done all the statistical research work for Drummond's submission, the Minister had Wyndham accompany him as part of the initial delegation to Melbourne. This meeting set up the Australian Education Council, comprising all State ministers of education with a standing committee of their directors of education, and Wyndham was appointed inaugural secretary of the Council. The AEC sent a deputation to the Prime Minister, Joseph Lyons, urgently seeking grants-in-aid to the States to step up technical training in view of the likelihood of war but was 'turned down flat'.[85]

Further meetings were held in 1937 and 1939, but they achieved little: one observer claimed the meetings had been little more than a 'holiday' in which very little forward planning was done.[86] During the war, the rise to prominence of the ACER, huge post-war reconstruction programs and the establishment and rapid expansion of a federal department of education forced the AEC into a more active role. Expansion of the Commonwealth's role began under the Commonwealth Government's defence powers and responsibilities, was boosted by the programs for the rehabilitation of ex-servicemen and developed into schemes of assistance on a wide front, including universities and schools.[87] As a result of the war, the Commonwealth greatly expanded its role in education, particularly in universities and technical education, through the Universities Commission, the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme and the Commonwealth Scholarship program. During the war there were frequent complaints by AEC members that the Commonwealth had launched programs without consulting State ministers.[88] L. Edwards, the Director of the Queensland Department of Education, wrote to McKenzie in January 1943 noting that the AEC had not met for three years and could soon be superseded by some other authority: 'it appears to me that the only people who do not make statements in regard to post-war reconstruction are those who administer departments of education'.[89] McKenzie responded: 'I think it highly desirable that the council should meet at an early date'.[90]

The AEC eventually met in Melbourne in May 1943.[91] Its deliberations were overshadowed by the fears of the States that the Commonwealth was intent on usurping their control of education. They noted that the Commonwealth, through its newly acquired sole control of income tax, could now exert much more economic leverage on the States: it was likely that any increased Commonwealth aid would come with strings attached, thereby undermining State control of education.[92] To limit Commonwealth influence they preferred an expanded ACER rather than the proposed Commonwealth educational authority.[93] Evatt's complaint that the States had not been consulted before the recent establishment of the Department of Post-war Reconstruction under Coombs or regarding plans to establish State committees of the CRTS typified the increasing resentment felt by the States towards the Commonwealth over educational matters.[94] At the next AEC meeting in 1945, John Dedman, Minister for War Organisation of Industry and for the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research [CSIR], defended the Commonwealth's involvement by arguing that it was principally concerned with the rehabilitation of ex-servicemen by affording them training for callings which would be in undersupply after the war. Teaching was such an occupation. An estimated shortage of approximately 10,000 teachers in the postwar period would constitute 'a grave national problem' which would be exacerbated if the school leaving age was raised and class sizes reduced.[95] It was a problem which could be effectively addressed, he argued, only if the Commonwealth and States shared responsibility.

The AEC, for its part, was intent on preserving State control of education. Instead of a Commonwealth Office of Education, the AEC pushed for an interstate bureau to be housed in a permanent AEC secretariat rather than in a Commonwealthl government department. This bureau would carry out some of the functions of the ACER's research role, at both national and State levels, through a research officer in each State employed by the respective education departments. It would also provide administrative machinery for the States to regularise their liaison with the Commonwealth Government on educational matters and perhaps assist in the disbursement of any federal funds to the State education system.[96] This proposal never eventuated.

The Walker Committee

Wyndham had similar reservations in his advice to the Commonwealth. From early 1944 Wyndham represented the Department of Post-War Reconstruction on what became known as the 'Walker' committee: an inter-departmental committee on education established in October 1943 by Cabinet and chaired by E. R. Walker, Deputy Director-General of War Organisation and Industry.

John Dedman convinced Curtin to agree to the appointment of the committee to review the Commonwealth's responsibilities in education, past, present, and future and to propose machinery to assist the Commonwealth in the discharge of these responsibilities.[97] The Committee included senior representatives of CSIR, the Universities Commission, Army Education, the Departments of Health, Post-War Reconstruction and War Organisation of Industry, and the Director of Industrial Training.[98] It operated as a 'secret and back-room committee, not an open inquiry'.[99] As part of the committee's secretariat, Wyndham, with Coombs and Professor Richard Mills, began drafting a report on the Commonwealth's responsibilities in relation to education. Wyndham recognised that the Commonwealth had 'inescapable commitments' in education which were not related closely enough in immediate purpose and oversight by the Commonwealth, but he, nevertheless, opposed increased Commonwealth control of State education.[100] State education could not prosper without Commonwealth assistance, but Wyndham viewed with 'extreme foreboding' the centralising of all education under federal control.[101]

The Walker Committee's conclusions were party inspired by the feelings of military and economic insecurity and the social democratic aspirations fostered by the war, sentiments later strongly echoed in the Wyndham Report. The need for better educational facilities was likely to increase after the war, the Committee concluded, because Australia would face increased economic competition and danger because of its 'relative proximity to revengeful Japan'.[102] The operation of the uniform tax scheme would place more responsibility on Commonwealth policy which:

> should be based upon the recognition of responsibility for uniform standards throughout the Commonwealth and for equality of educational opportunity among the States, and the necessity of preventing human wastage by ensuring that an individual's education should be determined by capacity and not by the financial circumstances of his parents.[103]

The Walker Committee cited with approval the recommendations of the Joint Committee on Social Security:

> that education is essentially a social service which should be nationally controlled and should provide in reality, equality of educational opportunities for all in Australia alike ... there can be no New Order, certainly no democratic New Order, while education remains at its present level and the foundations must be laid now ... the State systems of education cannot provide a service which competent opinion would regard as reasonably adequate.[104]

Free secondary education for all and the raising of the school leaving age were identified by the Walker Committee as immediate priorities. Options for

a Commonwealth educational authority were also canvassed by the Committee. Coombs recognised that any new federal agency must take account of the AEC's national role. A paper on the AEC's role and function was prepared by the Walker committee secretariat and therefore 'was presumably written by Wyndham or W. J. Weeden'.[105] The Committee finally recommended a Council of Ministers be established, consisting of the six State ministers of education and such Commonwealth ministers as were concerned with education, to be advised by a standing committee of the relevant permanent heads in the States and Commonwealth. Coombs hoped that a new Federal Office of Education to act as secretariat to a reconstituted AEC, might induce the States to admit the Commonwealth as a member of the AEC. The secretariat could begin by undertaking Commonwealth level activities requested by State governments and gradually develop into a central authority for research and information on Commonwealth interests in education.[106] It could also act as a channel of communication on educational matters with other countries and advise the Commonwealth Government on measures which might be taken to develop education through the States.[107]

Wyndham was of the view that any new federal educational authority should not undermine the AEC's role. After visiting Washington to report on the United States Office of Education, Wyndham recognised the need for 'a central clearing house of ideas' in relation to the issues raised by Commonwealth activities, and for a continuous 'education audit' of Commonwealth commitments.[108] He favoured a permanent organisation to form part of the Department of Post War Reconstruction but it should be independent of the Universities Commission and, he warned, would need to clarify how it would relate to the AEC and its Standing Committee.[109] The Walker Committee report, partly drafted by Wyndham, called upon the Commonwealth to make a greater contribution to education.[110] The Walker Committee proposed two distinct standing committees: one to advise the Commonwealth on its own problems and one to collaborate with the States. Liaison between committees would be provided by Commonwealth representation on both groups and by a secretariat. The suggested committees were: a Commonwealth Advisory Committee on Education and a Joint Committee on Educational Development.[111] The Secretariat for the Committees would be provided by a Committee on Educational Development 'patterned on the United States Office of Education'. The Walker Report suggested that the AEC be asked to transform itself into a Commonwealth-State council, along the lines of the Agricultural Council. It also recommended that the Universities' Commission be established on a permanent basis and that an Australian National University [ANU], with a

focus on Australia and the Pacific, designed to 'cultivate a stronger Australian sentiment', should be established immediately.[112]

Early in 1945 the Labor government accepted most of these recommendations. The 1945 *Education Act* established the Commonwealth Office of Education [COE], first within the Department of Post-War Reconstruction and later as a section of the Prime Minister's Department, to provide educational advice, to liaise with State educational authorities, and to provide a point of contact with international agencies and a source of statistics and other information. The Universities' Commission, staffed by the COE, was also established as a permanent statutory body to oversee financial assistance to university students, but the recommendations of the Walker Committee and Dedman that the Premiers' Conference be invited to discuss whether there should be a Commonwealth/State Joint Committee on Educational Development were not supported. The Commonwealth did express its intention to seek a seat on the AEC, but this was never pursued.[113] Some of the motives reported by Coombs for establishing the Australian National University highlight the powerful social democratic sentiments of the postwar era:

> The concept of the National University was an expression of the optimism of the time. We accepted in good faith the assurances of political leaders that they were committed to a richer, more secure way of life for all after the war; we believed that the war itself had demonstrated that resources could effectively be directed towards chosen purposes; and we were convinced that the social sciences provided the intellectual framework which would enable those purposes to be wisely chosen and the resources be creatively directed. The Keynesian foundation for the economic management of the war had been sufficiently effective to justify the conviction.[114]

Education was increasingly seen as the key to constructing a more equitable and efficient postwar Australia. Dr J. D. Medley, President of the ACER insisted that 'the better future ... cannot be brought about solely by the formulae of economists. There has got to be reconstruction of persons as well as machinery'.[115] Raising the school leaving age, revising the curriculum, reforming examinations, increasing the number and enhancing the calibre of teachers would all be necessary to improve the efficiency of schools.[116] Subsidies for university students must be extended to cover the years between the school leaving age and matriculation, 'for it is here that the biggest wastage occurs. And it must be accompanied by a serious attention to the development of psychological aptitude testing services, which have proved themselves an invaluable ally to the educator'.[117] To create a democratic society 'genuine equality of educational opportunity' and provision for learning the lessons of 'co-operation' would be

essential.[118] The lessons learnt from the Second World War could be exploited only if education was reformed:

> We now realise that we can never return to the days of 'peace', to unemployment, malnutrition, slums, and a blind insularity. We know we must have a new order to match Hitler's new order .... Never in the world's history had there been such an example of the power of education as a social force .... Hitler reconstructed his people first .... Reconstruction in Australia must begin with Australians: it must begin in the schools. Advisory committees may meet and write flatulent, cautious reports. One party may replace another in government. Paraphernalia of democracy like these will never make a new order until the inner life of the people is changed; and the only instrument which can do this is education.[119]

UNESCO

Providence intervened to assist Wyndham's first appearance on the international stage. At the end of the war, a conference was organised in London to discuss the draft constitution of a body which came to be known as the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). Within a few weeks of his demobilisation, while still employed by the Department of Post War Reconstruction, Wyndham flew to the London conference to be available as the alternate delegate to Australia's representative, Herbert Evatt, who was to lead the mission. No sooner had he arrived than he learnt that Evatt was held up at a conference in the United States, and suddenly Wyndham became head, without any brief, of the Australian delegation. His presence of mind did not desert him, he spoke eloquently and signed, on behalf of Australia, the agreement to establish UNESCO subject to ratification.[120] The conference became the 'the major educational thrust on the international scene' in the postwar period[121] but Wyndham felt disillusioned with its outcomes; what he had hoped would be a conference of educationists and scientists became, he believed, a conference of politicians or people representing political points of view.[122]

Being chosen to represent Australia at such an international conference was a mark of Wyndham's growing stature within the educational community. As his career blossomed he became increasingly prominent at the international level. In 1958 and again in 1966, Wyndham was a member of the Australian delegation to UNESCO. In 1959 he was a member of the Australian delegation at the Commonwealth Education Conference at Oxford, at which the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan and the general scheme of Commonwealth Co-operation in Education were inaugurated. His enhanced international profile, in turn, added to his

stature on the domestic scene. At the conclusion of the initial UNESCO conference, Wyndham took the opportunity to visit educational centres in Great Britain, and then toured the United States to report on the United States Office of Education for R. C. Mills and the Walker Committee.

Everywhere in Great Britain Wyndham noted evidence of a new mood of reform. The lessons learnt on this tour were to have a significant influence on his approach to the establishment of the Committee to Survey Secondary Education in New South Wales, the so-called 'Wyndham Committee', and on its subsequent report, the 'Wyndham Report'.[123] What most impressed him in Great Britain was the increased emphasis on social planning and a new willingness on the part of central government to intervene to achieve social, economic and educational goals. This was evident in the social service aspects of the 1944 *Education Act* which instituted an 'educational ladder which supplied administrative provision for equality of opportunity. It embodied a comprehensive conception of education service which included medical inspection and treatment, meals and clothing if necessary'.[124] Wyndham noted with approval that the Act raised the school leaving age from fifteen to sixteen and provided for the whole range of handicapped children. He believed this was the first recognition by educational authorities 'of the variety of ways in which children may differ so as to be ill served by "normal" schooling'. Such children had for too long been neglected in a country where 'psychologists [had] no generally accepted status among educational authorities'.[125] Teacher supply, buildings and finance, Wyndham believed, posed the three major obstacles to the achievement of equality of opportunity as called for by the *Education Act*.[126]

Scotland provided fresh cause for admiration. Wyndham learnt that the Advisory Council on Education employed a different mechanism from that available in NSW for furnishing advice to the Minister of Education. The Council had been set up under the *Education (Scotland) Act* of 1918 to supply the Scottish Education Department with an authoritative source of independent advice free from any private partisanship. The Scottish Council was likely, he concluded, to wield more influence with government ministers than the corresponding English body, the Central Advisory Council, in large part through Scotland's lack of a Minister of Education, and because its local education authorities commanded less administrative power than those in England.[127] The effectiveness of the Scottish Council came from maintaining close links with the Education Department. Wyndham noted that the department supervised the Council through the provision of 'assessors' to the Council. These senior officers of the Department provided technical information and kept:

> the Council in touch with the practical facts of the administrative situation ... the harmonious relationships which have consistently existed between the department and the Council are attributable to the close personal contact maintained between the Chairmen of the Council, the assessors and the secretary (who is also a senior officer of the department) .... Because of the effectiveness of the relations between the Council and the department, the Scottish Council reports have had a more direct influence upon educational practice than has been the case (in England).[128]

Following the passage of the *Education (Scotland) Acts*, 1945 and 1946, a report on secondary education was produced which was to inspire several of the Wyndham Committee's proposals.[129] The Council's 1947 report expressed 'a deep-felt desire to preserve in peace the unity realised in war' by creating a new type of schooling for all adolescents which would 'suit the many as the old suited the few'. It condemned as outmoded the concept of secondary education as a luxury or privilege or 'social stamp'; rather, it was 'a right and a necessity'. When this was recognised, 'the demand for equality of educational opportunity ceases to sound like the voice of envy: rather does it express the determination of the community that no smallest part of its precious store of talent be lost'.[130]

Jill Duffield has argued that these arrangements in Scotland supplied Wyndham with his model for the structure of the later Wyndham Committee. Such was the approach of the Scottish Council that the ideas of educational experts were tempered by the imperatives faced by administrators, an approach which may have encouraged Wyndham to organise the Wyndham Committee in such a way that he acted 'simultaneously as chairman of a public enquiry into secondary education policy and also as the chief administrator who would carry out its proposals'.[131]

On his return to New South Wales in January 1946 from his tour of Great Britain and the United States, Wyndham was appointed a staff inspector with the Department of Education. Robert Heffron had replaced Clive Evatt as Minister for Education in 1944.[132] Although no precise appreciation of the political balances of the day is possible Wyndham undoubtedly found Heffron's regime much more hospitable. Wyndham's sphere of action within the Department was much enlarged. He now assumed responsibility for the general supervision of the work in research and guidance, the oversight of commercial secondary schools, and the first trial in NSW, indeed in Australia, of the decentralisation of educational administration. There was a growing feeling in the educational community that major reforms were urgently needed. Upon his return Wyndham soon 'became aware of some of the exasperation of members of the Board of Secondary School Studies about what had not been achieved'.[133] Late in 1946, Australia hosted its second international conference of the New Education Fellowship, with the theme of

'Education for International Understanding'. Once again many of the overseas speakers called for reform of the educational system, but many in the audience were mindful that the optimism expressed at the 1937 conference had not reached fulfilment in educational change.[134] Wyndham identified several critical reforms that he wished to achieve. Foremost, was further special provision for the atypical. Effective provision, he believed, required a curriculum tailored to each group's particular needs. The Research Bureau (as it was now known) proceeded to develop the 'alternate curriculum' or 'GA curriculum' (general activity curriculum) for the 'below average' group of adolescents whose individual IQ score fell between 80 and 89. He also planned to provide a different curriculum for adolescents of 'average ability but of non-academic talent', many of whom then attended Enmore Activity School.[135]

Commercial Secondary Schools

Commercial secondary schools, another of Wyndham's responsibilities, also demanded an overhaul. Peter Board's 1911 reforms had established three types of superior public schools: domestic, technical and commercial. None was flourishing. Each provided two years of vocational education after the completion of primary school. Junior technical schools, available only to boys, provided courses in trade arithmetic, drawing and brushwork, and science. Domestic superior public schools, for girls only, included in their curriculum cookery and laundry, home management and gardening. The former Minister, Clive Evatt, had renamed 'domestic' schools as 'home science' schools since 'domestic' was not a term he liked.[136] The commercial schools, also available only to boys, provided arithmetic, algebra, business principles and elementary economics.[137] The number of junior technical schools remained at 25 between 1942 and 1949, home science schools fell from 39 to 30, and the number of commercial schools dropped markedly from 13 to 9.[138]

The vocational courses offered by commercial schools were neither popular nor effective. Only small numbers of students ever completed their schooling and many failed to realise their career ambitions. It had also been established that career choices made at age 13 or 14 were highly unreliable,[139] and 'modern companies said leave these children alone, we have our own methods of bookkeeping [accounts and lettering and bookkeeping machines]'.[140] Wyndham saw little educational merit in a course in bookkeeping and business principles',[141]and his first act as a staff inspector was to organise the termination of the commercial school as a type of superior public school; by late 1946 commercial schools were abolished.

In policy terms, there was no longer a distinction between superior public schools and secondary schools, and it was Wyndham who championed the call to recognise junior technical and home science schools as secondary schools. This was achieved in 1949. Wyndham hoped the move would

> improve on the pattern inherited from Peter Board by formally bringing those other types of schools for adolescents into the secondary orbit; provide a rather different curriculum for the boy or girl of average ability but non-academic talent; and provide a curriculum for the slow learner down to the borderline dull.[142]

Decentralisation

Administrative reform also required attention. Among Wyndham's achievements in the immediate postwar era none is more striking than his trial and expansion of a program of decentralising educational administration. The high degree of centralised control had been one of the most persistent criticisms of Australian education system which continues to the present day. Before 1939, visiting overseas educationists had regularly and vehemently denounced the centralisation of Australian education. Many speakers at the 1937 New Education Fellowship Conference warned that centralisation was producing inflexibility and mediocrity.[143] Isaac Kandel argued that it engendered a lack of adaptability in Australian education.[144] The administration of State education systems was so over-centralised, Kandel insisted, that it encouraged 'an inevitable "rule by a bureaucracy", sacrificing progress in education "at the altar of efficiency" and resulting in a feeling of complacency'.[145]

Centralisation is a feature paramount in both the development of Australian education and of the Australian state itself.[146] It has been seen by many as the 'sacred cow' of Australian state education.[147] Supporters of Australia's centralised education administrations claimed that they were necessary because the population outside the few large centres was sparse and scattered, distances were vast, and schools were small. This view saw centralisation as a chief means of promoting equal educational opportunities throughout a large land area with a scattered population. It thereby formed part of 'an explicit Australian philosophy of education'.[148] Opponents argued that centralised systems produced an insensitivity to local needs and retarded the development of an enlightened public opinion. A basic lack of confidence in community life was said to underlie the fears of the States that decentralisation would undermine uniformity and quality of provision.[149] Australians traditionally looked to government rather than to the local community to address their needs and readily accepted primary

and secondary schooling organised and controlled by a large, complex, highly centralised State department of education. For example, nearly all the celebrated innovations in education are known by the names, not of private individuals or communities, but, of the committees and officials who suggested them, e.g., the Ramsay, Martin and Wyndham Reports.[150]

Even today decentralisation remains an issue which highlights some key paradoxes that state education must address. These include creating effective local education programs that also accord with State-wide government policy; encouraging local involvement in schools; and developing a well-informed public opinion on educational matters, while preserving the professional independence of teachers.[151] At the head of State education is a State minister still answerable to parliament for the actions of the education department, despite the need for policies to be developed locally if substantial decentralisation is to occur. Such incongruities are not easily reconciled within Australia's constitutional and parliamentary structures. Effective decentralisation is in many ways inhibited by Australia's federal system of government and Westminster conventions of parliament. Under the Australian Constitution, the control of education is vested in the State Government, which exercises this control through a cabinet minister who oversees the Department of Education. Since financial support for education is primarily a State matter, the State minister, cabinet and treasury are accountable. Centralised inter-departmental administration imposes a further measure of conformity on departments. Until the 1970s, the appointment of teachers and salary schedules were still determined by public service boards on the basis of State-wide agreements with the organised teachers' unions. In NSW the Public Service Board, consisting of four men [few of whom had backgrounds as professional educators], had the responsibility under the *Public Service Act* of 1902 'to establish and ensure the continuance of a proper standard of efficiency and economy in the Public Service'.[152]

Departmental organisation also reinforced centralising tendencies. It followed a classical bureaucratic hierarchy, with divisions and subdivisions, and officials ranged hierarchically, stretching down through head office officials and inspectors to principals, deputy principals and classroom teachers. Regional offices, when established, were not associated with local government, but were extensions of the central State authority. Centralised decision-making, centrally devised courses of study, an external examination system, a statewide inspectorial system and centrally provided professional services long thwarted any substantial transfer of power. Wyndham, for example, even while extolling decentralisation, would not allow research responsibilities to be decentralised or classes for the atypical to be supervised and maintained locally, insisting that policy for these

programs must be centrally determined from the 'head office' of the Department of Education in Bridge Street, Sydney.[153]

On his appointment as a staff inspector, Wyndham was instructed to organise a trial whereby educational administration was devolved to a local 'region'. The move to introduce regions was not a sudden and isolated decision. In the previous decade it had became an important part of State government policy to stimulate regional districts in order to slow the population drift from rural to urban areas. By the end of the 1947 financial year, 230 secondary industries had been assisted to establish themselves in the State and, of these, 130 were commenced in country areas.[154] Defence weaknesses disclosed by the Second World War also stimulated interest in decentralisation. More industry and more people in rural areas were urgently needed, it was believed, to strengthen defences: 'Decentralise or perish must be our watchword'.[155] The scheme Wyndham devised had little impact on decentralising administration but it enhanced his reputation and advanced his career.

The Public Service Board played a key role in introducing decentralisation in NSW and also directed, so Wyndham claimed, 'that the project was to be in the hands of staff inspector Wyndham'.[156] Before the war, as Research Officer, Wyndham had often discussed decentralisation with A. W. Hicks, when he was the Assistant Under-Secretary in the Department of Education. Both men, when visiting the USA and Great Britain, had been impressed by the significant financial and administrative involvement of the local communities in their schools. Hicks later promoted the idea when he was appointed to the PSB.[157] Although the signature on the instruction was that of Wallace Wurth, Wyndham 'recognised its real origin' as Hicks.[158] According to Wyndham, Hicks spearheaded the initial move to decentralisation: 'the moving spirit with administrative weight was Mr A. W. Hicks'.[159] A committee, chaired by Noel Salmon, Secretary of the Department, was appointed and its report identified several minor administrative functions that could be decentralised. It was argued that more substantial decentralisation was impractical until 'local communities achieve greater independence and initiative in self-government and only when it is possible to place upon local communities some direct and financial responsibilities for the conduct of education'.[160]

In a report on postwar reconstruction Professor Macdonald Holmes delineated a number of regional areas for NSW, one of which was the Murrumbidgee area with Wagga as its headquarters.[161] Wyndham chose this as the trial area, since there 'was already active in the area a movement arousing interest in a greater measure of local responsibility for education and cultural matters'. He realised that in addition to planning its successful implementation, would 'involve indoctrination in certain quarters'.[162] The

Murrumbidgee area had a total population of around 150,000, about 300 schools and about 15,000 students. Wyndham recognised that the new arrangements differed considerably from those prevalent in the local educational authorities of England or the school districts of the USA. Most important was the fact that the local community would not directly fund the schools. The scheme, Wyndham frankly admitted to teachers, entailed serious risks:

> While doubtless beneficial in some respects, local staff selection in Great Britain and the United States has been the cause of promoting local political pressures which hamper the freedom of teachers .... It remains to be seen whether the Murrumbidgee scheme will succeed, without financial responsibility being involved, in capturing local interest and enthusiasm and in integrating more fully local schools within the life of the community ... it may only result in unnecessary duplication of business or it could lead to educational developments of far-reaching benefit for NSW.[163]

In NSW the Minister of Education, R. J. Heffron, gave an assurance that:

> there will be no curtailment of, nor increase in the proportion of, expenditure on education from public funds in the Murrumbidgee Area solely by reason of the fact that certain types of administrative work have been decentralised ... the movement of teachers from one part of the State to another will not be impeded by the establishment of the Murrumbidgee area ... the carrying out of policy for the State as a whole remains the responsibility of the Director-General of Education.[164]

By the end of 1946 the pilot scheme began operating in the Murrumbidgee area. The duties of the new director could not be construed to authorise determination of local staff or resource levels and certainly did not sanction any regional variation on State-wide curricula. Almost exclusively of a very limited administrative kind, the Director's responsibilities included organising minor building works, teachers' leave, transfers within the area, determining efficiency awards for teachers and 'keeping closely in touch with regional development, for getting to know regional needs and for keeping in touch with local opinion generally'.[165] After the pioneer program had been operating for five years, it was concluded that the arrangements were successful enough to warrant extension, and other areas were designated.[166] The criteria by which the scheme was judged successful were never made clear.[167] In 1951 four additional regions were created in rural areas and the western section of the Sydney region was given its own regional status. These regional directorates together formed the 'area system'. As Director-General, Wyndham was able to translate the exploratory stage into a more

permanent pattern of administration.[168] By the end of the 1950s, all the rural parts of the State were divided into seven administrative areas.

The two objectives Wyndham most stressed were the speeding up of administrative processes by delegation to area directors and the building up of a local interest in education. The degree of delegation, in the first few years, was not, he insisted, a measure of what might be expected at the end of ten years' actual operation of the new arrangements. In this initial period he did not expect that the response of local communities would 'be more than one of welcome and general interest'.[169] The volume of work being dealt with in the head office of the Department was so great, Wyndham argued, that a choice had to be made 'between expanding head office or decentralising some of its activities'.[170] A second and perhaps more compelling purpose for the Wagga experiment was the policy of the State Government to 'foster development of country towns as an offset against the drift towards the city'. Decentralisation of education in NSW could be regarded, Wyndham asserted, as part of a method to 'achieve this wider social purpose'.[171] Decentralisation continued to remain a major priority for the Labor Government, as the Premier, James McGirr, emphasised in his policy speech in 1947. Wyndham claimed that the most significant purpose was 'to establish within local areas or communities a real sense of proprietorship and direct interest in the schools established for the education of the community'.[172]

Many of the motives for decentralisation within the Department of Education were more prosaic. As Wyndham suggested, in the immediate postwar years it had became increasingly evident that head office could not meet the burgeoning volume of business. These administrative pressures, rather than significant local demand for greater control, were undoubtedly the major stimulant. Charles Ebert, a contemporary of Wyndham and himself a Regional Director, assigned such a motive to the creation of the area system. Head office introduced the scheme, he claimed, because it

> was bursting at the seams rather than (from) a genuine desire to decentralise administration ... (it was) more to take some of the pressure off head office than from a genuine desire to give more authority to local groups in developing a system of education to meet local needs .... There was simply nothing to delegate to; no local authority and no strength of administration prepared and equal to the task of taking over .... It was never intended to let delegation go too far from the central power.[173]

Even such modest reform provoked new rivalries within such a strongly hierarchical administration; Ebert noted 'an obvious reluctance on the part of the Director of Secondary Education to have an Area Director interfere in "his" schools'.[174] In 1961 Freeman Butts concluded: 'beginnings of

decentralisation have been made in New South Wales and Queensland but only minor decisions have been delegated to the Regional Directors, little or no responsibility is vested in the local community, and the major decisions have been reserved for head office in Sydney or Brisbane'.[175] In 1962 Ebert described the regional office in which he acted as Director as 'essentially a branch office conscious of head office, rather than an autonomous local administration unit accepting a transfer of authority from government to people in a direct form'.[176]

The NSW Teachers' Federation 'always contested the establishment of area offices ... they wanted greater input than Wyndham would give them'.[177] The pilot decentralisation program was denounced in late 1948 by a meeting of all regional New South Wales Teachers' Federation Associations in the Murrumbidgee Regional Area. They complained that there had been no consultation with the Federation, that the scheme had no clear statement of functions, and demanded an urgent review. The meeting called for decentralisation, not to local communities, but to inspectorates and teachers.[178] A preference was also expressed for greater control by local teachers rather than parents. It was also claimed that if decentralisation genuinely dispersed power it could threaten the supremacy of State-wide pressure groups. Wyndham noted that the Wagga trial:

> drew little response from the area as a whole or even the local community of Wagga .... Teachers as a body regarded the development with suspicion. Perhaps their greatest concern was lest teachers in the Riverina would be likely to remain in the Riverina for the rest of their lives. They certainly demanded an assurance that there would be no eclipse of their opportunity to secure promotion to higher positions in any part of the State. Officers in head office carried out the reorganisation faithfully, but many of them, too, had still to be convinced that it would really serve a useful purpose.[179]

The officers of these new branches saw their first loyalty as belonging to the central organisation and were still obliged to follow centrally devised policies, rules and regulations. They were most likely to consider themselves as 'birds of passage' who sooner or later would move to the head office of the central organisation or to another of its regional branches.[180] High school headmasters had a desire to disassociate themselves from district inspectors and area directors, and there were occasions when the Director of Secondary Education bypassed the Area Director when dealing with his headmasters.[181] The scheme was meant to transfer routine matters to local offices, thereby taking pressure from head office, but State-wide policy was still determined by the Minister, Treasury, the PSB, the Department of Public Works, the Premier's Department and head office. Most matters, even when approved by the local principal, inspector and Area Director, still went to

head office, leading the scheme to be described as 'probably the most annoying waste of effort in education'.[182]

In 1966 a further three regions were created in metropolitan Sydney. By the end of the 1960s, the role of regional director had expanded to include responsibility for special educational services, regional guidance officers and a range of consultants working out of the regional office. An effective regional in-service education programme also began to develop, with an increasing number of area wide conferences for primary and secondary teachers on administration and curriculum.[183] But after three-quarters of a century of central control, there still remained 'a natural tendency to appeal to head office for guidance'.[184] One prominent Australian educational historian, W. F. Connell, concluded: 'it is doubtful if, in their first twenty years of existence, the regional directorates in NSW or Queensland had much effect on the development of local participation in education or on significant educational decisions affecting their areas'.[185]

These comments notwithstanding, many of his peers, and indeed Wyndham himself, saw decentralisation as one of the turning points in his career. On his retirement, the *Education Gazette* noted:

> Of the many changes that have taken place during his forty-three years of service with the Department, one of the most significant has been the decentralisation of administration. In this movement, Dr Wyndham has played a leading part. As a staff inspector in 1946 he was responsible for drawing up detailed plans for the establishment of the first area office of education, installed at Wagga in 1946. Subsequently, during his tenure of the office of Secretary to the Department (1948–51), other administrative areas were established. The pattern of decentralised administration was completed in 1966, when the whole of the State was brought under the operative control of regional directors of education.[186]

By the end of his term as Director-General, Wyndham was claiming that 'there is no State in Australia which has done more to decentralise administration. The area director is in a great many matters the captain of his own ship'.[187] Wyndham later listed his major achievements as school counselling and research, decentralisation and the Wyndham Scheme.[188] Reflecting on his career, Wyndham concluded that the type of decentralisation he had fostered had proved a success:

> For an old man, it does help to be able to catch an occasional glimpse of a dream coming true in addition to the more frequent reminders of the mistakes one has made. In regard to the regional concept, of course the crucial question is: does the community regard the schools and the educational services of the region as theirs, in terms both of achievement and responsibility, rather than as belonging to an impersonal body in the (inevitably sinful) city, out of reach of

> local discussion and seemingly interested chiefly in spending money on Harbour Bridges and Opera Houses?[189]

In 1974 the president of the Australian College of Education, Albie Jones, when awarding an honorary fellowship to Wyndham, cited as 'his signal contributions': research and guidance, decentralisation and the Wyndham Scheme. Wyndham was appointed staff inspector, he intimated, principally for the purpose of initiating decentralisation: 'It is no accident that Harold Wyndham became staff inspector in 1946. Nor is it an accident that the whole State, had been ... (decentralised) by 1968.'[190] Hedley Yelland also saw decentralisation as one of Wyndham's landmark achievements.[191] He claimed that Wyndham introduced decentralisation 'to break the dictatorship of Bridge St and transfer as much control of the schools as possible to local authorities ... (through decentralisation) he brought about the most radical reform in administration since the beginning of public education in this State'.[192]

In contemplating early decentralisation programs, one is struck with their apparent contradictions. Whatever Wyndham's reasons were for establishing the program, his claims that certain virtues followed, such as schools becoming more responsive to local community needs and inefficient work practices becoming eliminated, do not stand up to scrutiny. Work practices may actually have become more inefficient and there is little evidence of increased local interest in schools. Education continued to be seen as a 'science' best left in the hands of trained professionals, and Wyndham never contemplated schemes to increase local involvement through participation in staff selection or even more controversially in curriculum development. The superficial nature of the reforms posed no threat to head office. Nevertheless, even such modest reforms were an important symbolic departure from former practice and certainly enhanced Wyndham's prestige with the education community. Moreover, the successful installation of the new arrangements demonstrated Wyndham's virtuosity in marshalling public and professional opinion and managing organisational change, often in the face of staunch opposition, in the byzantine structures of a very hierarchical and centralised NSW Department of Education. Such skills would prove invaluable for his later reforms, notably for the Wyndham Scheme.

Wyndham's perceptions of the purpose and form of decentralisation underline a set of educational and political assumptions often ignored by contemporary policymakers. Wyndham drew on democratic theories that found renewed vigour in postwar Australia. The Wagga experiment was unashamedly intended, as part of State-wide policy, to have social and economic benefits (such as assisting local employment) that had little direct relation to education in the local schools. The revival of economic liberalism

in the 1980s undermined this idea that the state, and its education system, had a social or 'nation-building role'.[193] Devolution in more recent times has confirmed the end of the neo-keynesian consensus which emerged in the aftermath of World War II.[194] This consensus provided a key foundation of Wyndham's approach to decentralisation and later to the Wyndham Scheme.

A report of the *Temora Independent* on Wyndham's speech at a civic reception in 1960 betrays some key attributions, these days seldom invoked, that for many earlier permanent heads formed the foundation of their public persona:

> Dr Wyndham said there was a growing feeling in communities such as Temora that schools were 'our school' and not merely government schools. He said: 'Community life helps develop schools and I feel that a school belongs in the heart of the people.' Dr Wyndham expressed himself as a champion of decentralisation; 'the great bulk of the work in administering this vast educational organisation is done at divisional headquarters, such as the one at Wagga. The machinery would collapse otherwise.' Dr Wyndham said the decentralisation had led to closer identification of local communities with schools .... Alderman Wellingham described Dr Wyndham as a great Australian educationist, 'Dr Wyndham stands for everything we expect in a democratic community,' referring to the fact that Dr Wyndham had risen from the ranks, as a mere teacher, to the top as permanent head of the Education Department; 'unlike politicians who are put there Dr Wyndham has attained his position through sheer hard work'. Politicians, he said, were here today and gone tomorrow. Civil servants such as Dr Wyndham were the pillars on which the state functioned.[195]

Secretary of the Department

Further laurels awaited Wyndham. He was now to assume the position of Secretary from Noel Salmon after the latter's retirement. In November 1948 he was summoned by the Chairman of the Public Service Board, Wallace Wurth, to be told of his appointment by the Board as Secretary of the Department. He had now joined the administrative elite of the Department. In this new position he held responsibility for all finance, all administrative staff, for the whole building program and for liaison with the Department of Public Works and the Treasury.[196]

The recommendation for his appointment is most likely to have come from the head of the PSB, Wallace Wurth, and to have had the support of another key Board member, Alek Hicks.[197] From working closely with Wyndham in postwar reconstruction, Wurth had developed a high regard for Wyndham's ability. Support of the PSB was at that time essential for success in public administration. Wallace Wurth chose Wyndham, his contemporaries believed, 'to ease him through into senior positions'.[198] Wyndham's

selection confirmed that he had been anointed by McKenzie as his successor: he had been 'singled out by the Director-General, John McKenzie, to succeed him because of his outstanding ability'.[199] The Secretary, Noel Salmon, and the Director-General, McKenzie, had decided that Wyndham was to succeed McKenzie and convinced the Chairman of the PSB, Wallace Wurth, to agree.[200] They felt the position would provide him with the administrative experience necessary for a modern director-general. Hicks had earlier figured as one of Wyndham's mentors when, as Assistant Under-Secretary, Department of Education, he had encouraged Wyndham to establish the Research Office and, later, the school counselling service. Hicks, Weeden noted, was 'a man prepared to be unorthodox and who was probably better than most in his unorthodox methods'.[201] Wyndham's appointment was seen 'as a means of increasing his seniority and widening his experience in preparation for further promotion'.[202] The job of Secretary, one contemporary noted, would provide Wyndham with 'very good training for the administrative side of Department'.[203] His appointment was 'a lead-up to give him a broad understanding as to how the Department operated on the administrative side'.[204] Wyndham was now in no doubt that he was being groomed for the position of Director-General.[205]

The considerable expertise in administration and finance required of his new role encompassed many areas which, Wyndham later confessed, he then 'didn't know the first thing about'.[206] Fortunately Salmon and Wyndham got on very well personally, and Salmon invited Wyndham to spend as much time as he could with him in the short period before he retired, when Salmon gave Wyndham 'a crash course' in a number of things that he 'knew very little about'. Fortunately, Wyndham had been what no other inspector had ever been: head of a branch in the Department. So he knew at first hand how life was lived in the administrative headquarters, at least at branch head level.[207]

The strictures imposed by six years of the war had left a vast backlog of shortages. In his new role Wyndham now had to counteract severe shortfalls in teacher supply, building maintenance, equipment and materials, all exacerbated by a serious scarcity of funds. Massive postwar housing schemes were devouring most of the available labour and materials and retarding the overhaul of buildings and construction of new schools now so urgently needed. The diversion of skilled labour and materials to home building made it even more difficult to provide sufficient new classrooms. Imperatives to expand the school building program came just as the economy was improving and the demand for housing and labour was outstripping supply. Large housing estates being established on the outskirts of Sydney demanded the rapid addition of new primary and secondary schools. The Department of Education now planned and erected

numerous additional permanent buildings and, as an interim measure, stepped up the construction of temporary timber portable classrooms.

The Government was obliged to enlarge the education budget to meet these shortfalls. Wyndham was pleased to note that, although the 1941 allocation in NSW for education was nearly £6 million, by 1951 the education vote was over £23 million.[208] But even such massive increases in the education budget could not adequately cope with the burgeoning demand and the postwar shortages which the Department had to contend with. Wyndham now found his most pressing problem was that of:

> men and materials, particularly the latter, and there were instances where in order to build a school for the increasing enrolment in the locality, one had to build a school of considerable size of common bricks and have the architects do what they could to make the building otherwise presentable.[209]

The need to retrain returning teachers, to select and train new ones, to build schools and equip them to meet the demands of the projected burgeoning of school enrolments, demanded forceful and decisive action. The anticipated huge growth in enrolments after 1950 would require intensified recruitment of teachers, and additional teachers colleges would be needed. Entry requirements were quickly lowered, and even untrained graduates were now offered positions in secondary schools. The number of teachers colleges increased from two in 1945 to six in 1951.[210]

Wyndham's appointment as Secretary, one contemporary observed, was 'quite a dramatic change' since 'no-one from the academic side of the Department had previously ever held this top administrative position'.[211] The type who usually went ahead in Department, another colleague later noted, was invariably 'a policy bloke with school then inspectorate then administrative experience'. Wyndham had pioneered a completely new path. He was resented by many as 'the academic who came through with a Stanford PhD and was a threat from the academic point of view to those who had gained their position through seniority'.[212] Alexander Mackie, however, was well pleased with Wyndham's appointment:

> I was very pleased to learn the true nature of your new job. It is a great satisfaction to learn that the previous policy of promotion by seniority has been abandoned in one case at least. No doubt it has a useful field of operation but I am sure that is only where routine procedure is to be practised and that should not be at the higher educational levels, where alertness to new ideas and readiness to change older methods that have lost their virtue is needed. I look forward to you moulding educational policy as did Board and Elliott. I am pleased that the higher positions are no longer to be held by people of poor or mediocre academic attainments. If the philosophers, as Plato wished, will only consent to be kings (administrators) all will be well with the body politic. And

> so I would offer you that comfort in not being able to devote yourself to the contemplative life. I take it, in fact, that your new position might be best described in the terms used in Scotland at an earlier time in the Presbyterian church, where there was no pension and no age of retirement. When the parish minister became infirm on account of age and not equal to a full week's work there was appointed an assistant with the title 'Colleague and Successor' and this should no doubt be your designation, though it may very well be inadvisable to use these terms.[213]

Wyndham realised that he had usurped 'the field marshal's baton in every clerk's knapsack ... (my appointment) was revolutionary. It caused a great stir in the ant-heap'.[214] The likelihood of Wyndham being so appointed caused considerable apprehension among the administrative and clerical staff. His appointment 'caused a lot of trouble with great disquiet amongst administrative staff because the top position had been lost to them'.[215] The administrative staff resented someone coming out of a professional into an administrative division and thereby blocking off a top job.[216] They were assured by the PSB that such a coup would not recur.[217]

Wyndham now began to overhaul the administrative structure. The work of the 27 different branches of administration all funnelled through one chief clerk and 'through this narrow neck' to the Secretary. He divided the administration into divisions, such as Properties, Personnel, Schools (in the sense of the operation of schools), and Research and Development and then the special division of Physical Education, Music and so on.[218] Through these reforms Wyndham was able to soothe the resentment aroused by his appointment. This plan of reorganisation of the administrative and clerical service gave promotion to several of the senior officers who, before Wyndham's appointment, might have expected to succeed Salmon in the post of Secretary. Within each division there were now several branches, each with an officer-in-charge, and thus 'what might have been an awkward confrontation was avoided'.[219]

Yet his career was still not moving quickly enough to satisfy Wyndham's ambitions. He told a colleague 'that he could see himself spending years as Secretary to the Department, waiting for J. G. McKenzie's retirement, and that he was wasting years, and would waste more, without any increase in status'.[220] He held that job for two and a half years until, in April 1951, he was made Deputy Director-General. The Director-General was due to retire in mid–1952 but, as had been the practice, the reigning head of the Department was invited to stay beyond sixty-five years of age to see the school year out. Unfortunately McKenzie died in office a fortnight before the end of the school year and Wyndham became Director-General overnight in November 1952.[221] The top rung of the administrative ladder was now in his grasp.

NOTES

1. K.S. Cunningham, G.A. McIntyre and W.C. Radford (eds.), *Review of Education in Australia, 1938*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1939, p. 112.
2. Wyndham, Interview, Anon, handwritten transcript, 16 Apr. 1969, WP, ML mss 5089, 26(38).
3. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 Jul. 1937.
4. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 18 May, 1936, NSWSA, 10/31432.
5. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 6 Jul. 1936, NSWSA, 10/31432.
6. T. Roberts, The 'Lewis Group' and the Influence of Socialism in the NSW Teachers' Federation, 1931–1943, BA (Hons) thesis, Australian National University, 1976, p. 53.
7. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, Aug. 24, 1936, NSWSA, 10/31432.
8. B. Wright to author, Apr. 12, 1993.
9. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, May 29, 1937, p. 14.
10. This is the number Roberts estimates attended the Sydney sessions. See Roberts, The 'Lewis Group', p. 54.
11. K. Cunningham to Wyndham, 3 Nov. 1937, WP, ML mss 5089, 18(38).
12. Wyndham, Application for Sydney Chair, typescript, n.d., WP, ML mss 5089, 18(38).
13. Wyndham to Under-Secretary, 10 Mar. 1937, NSWSA, 10/31432.
14. K. Cunningham to Under-Secretary, 16 Apr. 1937, NSWSA, 10/31432
15. Roberts, The 'Lewis Group', p. 53.
16. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 Jul. 1937.
17. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 Jul. 1937.
18. K. Cunningham to Under-Secretary, 13 Jul. 1937, NSWSA, 10/31432.
19. G. Ross Thomas to K. Cunningham, 5 Nov. 1936, NSWSA, 10/31432.
20. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 Jul. 1937. Professor Gary McCulloch provides a detailed evaluation of the educational views of Cyril Norwood. See G. McCulloch, *Philosophers and Kings: education for leadership in modern England*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1991, Chap. 4.
21. W.F. Connell, *The Australian Council for Educational Research*, 1930–1980, Melbourne, ACER, 1980, p. 111.
22. *Ibid.* p. 109.
23. H. Hamley to Wyndham, 16 Dec. 1936, WP, ML mss 5089, 1(38).
24. J. Taylor, Cutting from Sydney Mail, 18 Aug. 1937, WP, ML mss 5089, 18(38).
25. Connell, *Australian Council for Educational Research*, p. 114.
26. A. Barcan, *Two Centuries of Education in New South Wales*, Sydney, NSW University Press, 1988, p. 233.
27. J. Godfrey, 'The Cautiousness of the Minister is to be Commended Rather than Condemned': the role of David H. Drummond, Minister for Education, in New South Wales examination reform: 1932–1941, paper ANZHES conference, 1993, p. 15.
28. Wyndham, Comments at the Request of McNamara, typescript, c. Dec. 1973, WP, ML mss 5089, 37(38).
29. Australian Education Council, Minutes, May, 1937, NSWSA, 19/8217.
30. Wyndham, Comments at the Request of McNamara, WP, ML mss 5089, 37(38).
31. *Ibid.*

32. *Ibid.*
33. *Ibid.*
34. *Ibid.*
35. Wyndham quoted in Y. Larsson, 'Pioneering Progressive Education: the World Education Fellowship in Australia and the world 1915–1987', *New Era*, vol. 68, no. 2, 1987, p. 57.
36. Wyndham, Comments at the Request of McNamara, WP, ML mss 5089, 37(38).
37. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA. The duties of the Public Service Board of NSW are specified in Chap. 9 of this study.
38. Wyndham, Interview, U. Bygott, 3 Jun. and 15 Sep. 1975, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
39. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA
40. W. J. Hendry, Secretary, NSW Public Schools Teachers' Federation to G. Ross Thomas, 8 Dec. 1939, WP, ML mss 5089, 18(38).
41. H. Mathews to author, 10 Aug. 1993. Harold Mathews was a NSWTF Councillor in the 1940s and 1950s.
42. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA.
43. John McKenzie was the permanent head of the Department of Education, 1940–52.
44. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA.
45. *Ibid.*
46. *Ibid.*
47. B. Wright, Interview by author.
48. Wyndham, Interview, U. Bygott, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
49. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA.
50. Wyndham, Taped Interview, Hazel De Berg, NLA.
51. M. Wyndham, Interview by author, 23 Apr. 1993.
52. For an introduction to the impact of the war on schools and educationists see A. Spaull, *Australian Education in the Second World War*, Brisbane, Queensland University Press, 1982.
53. Wyndham, Taped Interview, Hazel De Berg, NLA.
54. Wyndham, Appointments Diary, 6 Apr. 1943, WP, ML mss 5089, 8(38).
55. Wyndham, Appointments Diary, 22 May, 1943, WP, ML mss 5089, 8(38).
56. Australian Education Council, Minutes, 19 to 22 Mar. 1945, NSWSA, 19/8218. For an account of the origins of the CRTS see A. Spaull, *John Dedman: a most unexpected Labor man*, Melbourne, Highland House Publishing, 1998, pp. 100–106.
57. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA.
58. Wyndham, Taped Interview, Hazel De Berg, NLA.
59. Wyndham, Interview, U. Bygott, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
60. J. Curtin, address Postwar Reconstruction Officers Conference, 15–17 Dec. 1944, WP, ML mss 5089, 11(38).
61. H. Coombs, address Postwar Reconstruction Officers Conference, 15–17 Dec. 1944, WP, ML mss 5089, 11(38).
62. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA.
63. Wyndham to W. Radford, 7 Feb. 1975, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
64. H. Coombs to W. Wurth, 13 Nov. 1943, WP, ML mss 5089, 11(38).
65. H. Coombs to Secretary, Department of Army, 10 Jan. 1944, WP, ML mss 5089, 11(38).

66. *Ibid.*
67. H. Coombs to K. Cunningham, 15 Jan. 1944, WP, ML mss 5089, 11(38).
68. Wyndham, Interview, U. Bygott, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
69. W. Wurth to H. Lovell, 11 Jan. 1944, WP, ML mss 5089, 11(38).
70. W. Wurth to Deputy D. G. Manpower, 11 Jan. 1944, WP, ML mss 5089, 11(38).
71. H. Coombs to Secretary, Department of Air, 17 Apr. 1944, WP, ML mss 5089, 11(38).
72. Wyndham, Vocational Guidance Services, First Appreciation of the Situation, handwritten notes, 1 Mar. 1945, WP, ML mss 5089, 11(38).
73. *Ibid.*
74. *Ibid.*
75. B. Le Gay Brereton, 'Notes on a Career in Remedial Education for Physically Handicapped Children', *Bulletin of the Australian Psychological Society*, Feb.-Mar. 1994, p. 14.
76. An excellent account of the activities and recommendations of the Walker Committee is supplied by P. Tannock, *The Government of Education in Australia: the origins of federal policy*, Perth, University of Western Australia Press, 1975. Also useful is A. Spaull, 'John Dedman and the Establishment of the Australian National University', *Leading and Managing*, vol. 1, no. 4, 1995.
77. Wyndham, Appointments Diary, 5 Jun. 1943, WP, ML mss 5089, 8(38).
78. Wyndham, Appointments Diary, 10 Oct. 1943, WP, ML mss 5089, 8(38).
79. Wyndham, Appointments Diary, 10 Jan. 1944, WP, ML mss 5089, 8(38).
80. Education Advisory Committee, Minutes, NSW Division CRTS, 6 Jun. 1945, Wyndham Papers, ML mss 5089, 11(38).
81. (Wyndham?), Interim Report for Education Advisory Committee, NSW Division of CRTS, typescript, n.d., WP, ML mss 5089, 11(38).
82. (Wyndham?), Interim Report for Education Advisory Committee, WP, ML mss 5089, 11(38).
83. For further investigation of Wyndham's hopes for teacher education and his views concerning Commonwealth assistance to state education see Chap. 8.
84. A. Spaull, *A History of the Australian Education Council, 1936–1986*, Sydney, Allen and Unwin, 1987, p. 7. The Australian Education Council was established in 1936 as a body of State Ministers of Education.
85. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA.
86. W. Neal, Interview by author. Walter Neal, DEd Columbia, was Director, Special Services, WA Education Department, 1957–66; Research Officer for the COE, 1950–51; and, Superintendent Research WA Education Department, 1953–58.
87. G.W. Bassett, 'Australian Education' in R. Browne and D. Magin (eds.), *Sociology of Australian Education: a source book of Australian Studies*, Melbourne, Macmillan, 1976, p. 10.
88. Spaull, *History of the Australian Education Council*, p. 63.
89. L. Edwards to J. McKenzie, 27 Jan. 1943, NSWSA, 19/8218.
90. J. McKenzie to L. Edwards, 3 Feb. 1943, NSWSA, 19/8218.
91. Australian Education Council (AEC), Minutes, Melbourne, 10–14 May, 1943, NSWSA, 19/8218.
92. AEC, Minutes, 1943, NSWSA, 19/8218.
93. *Ibid.*
94. *Ibid.*
95. AEC, Minutes, Adelaide, 19–22 Mar. 1945, NSWSA, 19/8218.

96. Spaull, *History of the Australian Education Council*, p. 73.
97. See Spaull, *John Dedman*, pp. 63–66.
98. H.C. Coombs, *Trial Balance*, Melbourne, Macmillan, 1981, p. 195.
99. Spaull, *History of the Australian Education Council*, p. 74.
100. Wyndham, Inter-Departmental Committee on Education (E. R. Walker, Chair), minute for the Ministry of Post-War Reconstruction, 23 Mar. 1945, WP, ML mss 5089, 11(38).
101. Wyndham to J. Medley, 1 Jul. 1942, WP, ML mss 5089, 21(38).
102. Anon., Commonwealth Responsibilities in Relation to Education, draft for discussion, Inter-Departmental Committee on Education, 28 Feb. 1944, WP, ML mss 5089, 11(38).
103. *Ibid.*
104. *Ibid.*
105. Spaull, *History of the Australian Education Council*, p. 74.
106. Inter-Departmental Committee on Education, Minutes, 5 May, 1944, WP, ML mss 5089, 11(38).
107. Inter-Departmental Committee on Education, Minutes, 6 Jun. 1944, WP, ML mss 5089, 11(38).
108. Wyndham to A. Spaull, 30 Nov. 1974, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
109. Wyndham, Inter-Departmental Committee on Education, minute for the Ministry of Post-War Reconstruction, 23 Mar. 1945, Wyndham Papers, ML mss 5089, 11(38).
110. Anon., Commonwealth Responsibilities, 1944, WP, ML mss 5089, 11(38).
111. J. Dedman, Commonwealth Responsibilities in Education, Minute for Cabinet, 4 Jan. 1945, WP, ML mss 5089, 11(38).
112. *Ibid.*
113. Spaull, *History of the Australian Education Council*, p. 76. The role of the Commonwealth is further examined in Chapter 8 of the present study.
114. Coombs, *Trial Balance*, p. 200.
115. J.D. Medley, *Education and Reconstruction*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1944, p. 4. John Medley was at that time president of the ACER and later served as Vice-Chancellor of Melbourne University, 1938–51.
116. *Ibid.* p. 11.
117. *Ibid.*
118. J.D. Medley, *Education for Democracy*, Melbourne, ACER, 1943, p. 10.
119. E. Ashby, 'Are We Educated?', *Look Ahead Australia Series*, no. 2, Sydney, Consolidated Press, 1941, p. 44.
120. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA.
121. I. Chapman, 'Commonwealth Participation in Education, 1901–1964' in I. Birch and D. Smart (eds.), *The Commonwealth Government and Education 1964–1976*, Melbourne, Primary Education Victoria Pty Ltd, 1977, p. 18.
122. Wyndham cited in C. Dean to Director-General, Department of Postwar Reconstruction, 12 Dec. 1945, Wyndham Papers, ML mss 5089, 12(38).
123. Committee Appointed to Survey Secondary Education in NSW (H. Wyndham, Chair), *Report*, Sydney, Government Printer, 1958.
124. Wyndham, Some Aspects of Education in England, handwritten notes for address 1946 NEF Conference, c. June 1946, Wyndham Papers, ML mss 5089, 23(38).
125. Wyndham, Some Aspects of Educational Administration in Great Britain, typescript, c. 1946, Wyndham Papers, ML mss 5089, 12(38).

126. Wyndham, Some Aspects of Education in England, 1946, WP, ML mss 5089, 23(38).
127. J. Duffield, Independent Advice: a comparative study of secondary education policy making; Scotland and New South Wales 1943–1957, MEd Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1990, p. 24.
128. *Ibid.* p. 24.
129. *Ibid.* p. 23.
130. Advisory Council on Education in Scotland, *Secondary Education: a report of the Advisory Council on Education in Scotland*, Edinburgh, HMSO, 1947, p. 4.
131. Duffield, Independent Advice, p. 23.
132. Robert Heffron was Minister for Education from June 1944 to May 1960.
133. Duffield, Independent Advice, p. 26.
134. Larsson, Pioneering Progressive Education, p. 59.
135. Wyndham, Interview, Anon., handwritten transcript, 16 Apr. 1969, WP, ML mss 5089, 26(38).
136. *Ibid.*
137. Barcan, *Two centuries*, p. 186.
138. *Ibid.* p. 230.
139. R. Selleck and B. Hyams, 'The Directors—F. Tate, W. T. McCoy and S. H. Smith' in C. Turney (ed.), *Pioneers of Australian Education, Volume 3, Studies of the Development of Education in Australia, 1900–1950*, Sydney, Sydney University Press, 1983, p. 68.
140. Wyndham, Interview, Anon., handwritten transcript, 16 Apr. 1969, WP, ML mss 5089, 26(38).
141. *Ibid.*
142. *Ibid.*
143. P. Jones, *Education in Australia*, Sydney, Nelson, 1974, p. 115.
144. W. Walker, 'Obstacles to Freedom in Our schools: Public Service Board or Education Commission' in S. D'Urso (ed.), *Counterpoints: Critical Writings on Australian Education*, Sydney, John Wiley, 1971, p. 129.
145. I. L. Kandel quoted in Jones, *Education*, p. 115.
146. The political party which claimed to represent rural interests, the Australian Country Party, was the strongest supporter in the NSW parliament of decentralisation. See B. Bessant, Education and Politics in the Development of the Education System of New South Wales and Victoria 1900–1940, with Particular Reference to Post-Primary Education, PhD thesis, Monash University, 1971, pages 419 and 428.
147. W. Walker, 'Educational Administration' in R. Cowan (ed.), *Education for Australians*, Melbourne, Cheshire, 1964, p. 202.
148. G.W. Bassett, *Each One is Different: teaching for individual differences in the primary school*, Melbourne, ACER, 1964, p. xiv.
149. R. Butts, *Assumptions Underlying Australian Education*, Melbourne, ACER, 1955, p. 17.
150. P.H. Partridge, 'The Direction and Goals of Australian Education' in Browne, R. K. and Magin, D.J. (eds.), *Sociology of Australian Education: a source book of Australian studies*, Melbourne, Macmillan, 1976, p. 68.
151. Cunningham, McIntyre and Radford (eds.), *Review of Education in Australia*, 1938, p. 213.

152. Walker, 'Educational Administration', p. 200. The role of the Public Service Board is further examined in Chap. 9 of this study.
153. Department of Education, Decentralisation of Activities, Report of Committee, D. Verco, Secretary, typescript, c. 1946, WP, ML mss 5089, 19(38).
154. Wyndham, Decentralisation With Special Reference to the Murrumbidgee Area, address NEF Conference, 29 Apr. 1948, Wyndham Papers, ML mss 5089, 22(38).
155. Medley, *Democracy*, p. 30.
156. Wyndham to T. Reid, 16 May, 1985, WP, ML mss 5089, 6(38).
157. A. W. Hicks was a member of the Public Service Board of NSW, 1939–49.
158. Wyndham to T. Reid, 16 May, 1985, WP, ML mss 5089, 6(38).
159. Wyndham to D. Maher, 19 May, 1987, WP, ML mss 5089, 6(38).
160. Department of Education, Decentralisation of Activities, 1946, WP, ML mss 5089, 19(38).
161. Wyndham, address to Local Government Association, 5 Sep. 1967, WP, ML mss 5089, 23(38). James Macdonald Holmes was at that time Professor of Geography at the University of Sydney.
162. Wyndham to T. Reid, 16 May, 1985, WP, ML mss 5089, 6(38).
163. Wyndham, Decentralisation Murrumbidgee Area, 1948, Wyndham Papers, ML mss 5089, 22(38).
164. R. Heffron quoted by Wyndham in address NEF Conference, 29 Apr. 1948, WP, ML mss 5089, 22(38). Heffron's variegated political career is well summarised by Robert Carr in J. Ritchie (ed.), *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, vol. 14, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1996, pp. 427–429.
165. Wyndham, Decentralisation Murrumbidgee Area, 1948, WP, ML mss 5089, 22(38).
166. Wyndham, Frank Tate Memorial Oration, Victorian Institute for Educational Research, 17 May, 1954, WP, ML mss 5089, 22(38).
167. Jones, *Education*, p. 46.
168. Wyndham to T. Reid, 16 May, 1985, WP, ML mss 5089, 6(38)..
169. Wyndham, Report to Conference of Directors of Education, (19 May?), 1952, NSWSA, 19/8240.
170. Wyndham, Frank Tate Memorial Oration, WP, ML mss 5089, 22(38).
171. *Ibid*.
172. *Ibid*.
173. C. Ebert to author, 8 Apr. 1993.
174. *Ibid*.
175. Butts, *Assumptions*, p. 18.
176. C. M. Ebert, 'The Area System in New South Wales: its implications for educational administration', *Melbourne Studies in Education 1961–1962*, Melbourne University Press, 1964, p. 132; cited in W.F. Connell, *Reshaping Australian Education 1960–1985*, Melbourne, ACER, 1993, p. 201.
177. R. Carlin, Interview by author, 12 Aug. 1993. Richard Carlin was executive assistant to the NSW Directors-General, Wyndham, D. Verco and J. Buggie.
178. *Education*, 15 Oct. 1948.
179. Wyndham, Frank Tate Memorial Oration, WP, ML mss 5089, 22(38).
180. D. Jecks, 'Reactant Statement to Background Papers' in P. Karmel (ed.), *Education, Change and Society*, Melbourne, ACER, 1981, p. 113.
181. C. Ebert to author, 8 Apr. 1993.

182. P. Jones, 'The Wasted Hours and Ill Spent Dollar' in S. D'Urso (ed.), *Counterpoints: Critical Writings on Australian Education*, Sydney, John Wiley and Sons, 1971, p. 121.
183. Connell, *Reshaping*, p. 201.
184. H. Yelland, Inspection, draft manuscript, Sydney, 1993, p. 12.
185. Connell, *Reshaping*, p. 201.
186. Cutting from *Education Gazette*, Dec. 1968, WP, ML mss 5089, 19(38).
187. Wyndham to J. McLaren, 13 Nov. 1968, WP, ML mss 5089, 3(38).
188. *Australian*, 30 Dec. 1968.
189. Wyndham to T. Reid, 16 May, 1985, WP, ML mss 5089, 6(38).
190. Albie Jones, Presidential Address, Australian College of Education Conference, 4 May, 1974, Wyndham Papers, ML mss 5089, 18(38).
191. H. Yelland, Interview by author.
192. Yelland, Inspection, p. 12. Hedley Yelland later portrayed Wyndham's support for decentralisation as evidence of an egalitarian ethic: 'no Director-General ever subdivided his kingdom as he did with decentralisation'. H. Yelland to author, 30 Nov. 1998.
193. P. Smyth, *Australian Social Policy: the Keynesian chapter*, Sydney, University of New South Wales Press, 1994, p. 1.
194. T. Seddon, Schooling, State and Society: the Federation settlement in NSW, 1900 to the 1930s, PhD thesis, Macquarie University, 1987, p. 1.
195. Cutting from the *The Temora Independent*, 19 Oct. 1960, NSWSA, 19/8242.
196. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA
197. A. Webster to author, 15 Jun. 1993. Alf Webster was a school counsellor with the NSW Department of Public Instruction, 1943–46. He was appointed Senior Research Officer in 1947 and eventually became deputy to David Verco, then head of the Division of Research Guidance and Adjustment. This division was replaced in 1957 by two divisions: Research and Planning, and Guidance and Adjustment. Webster became Chief of Research and Planning in 1962, and in 1968 his title was changed to Director of Planning. He was Secretary to the Australian Education Council, 1963–76. Wyndham, in a letter to John Goodsell, Chairman of the Public Service Board, 1960–71, observed: 'Personally I am constantly dependent on Webster's judgement'. Wyndham to J. Goodsell, 7 Jun. 1966, NSWSA, 8/2269.
198. G. Gray, Interview by author. George Gray was Secretary of the NSW Reconstruction Advisory Committee 1941–43 and Secretary of the Reconstruction and Development Division 1943–46, Department of Postwar Reconstruction.
199. R. Carlin, Interview by author, 12 Aug. 1993
200. A. Webster to author, 15 Jun. 1993.
201. W. Weeden to author, 8 May, 1993.
202. *Ibid.*
203. H. Mathews, Interview by author.
204. M. E. Thomas, Interview by author, 14 Apr. 1993.
205. P. Oldham, Interview by author, 3 Jun. 1993. Peggy Oldham was Wyndham's clerical secretary from 1946 until his retirement.
206. Wyndham, Interview, U. Bygott, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
207. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA.

208. Wyndham, speech annual conference Australian Teachers' Federation, 1951, WP, ML mss 5089, 22(38).
209. Wyndham, Taped Interview, Hazel De Berg, NLA.
210. J. Burnswoods and J. Fletcher, *Sydney and the Bush: a pictorial history of education in New South Wales*, Sydney, NSW Department of Education, 1980, p. 213.
211. M. E. Thomas, Interview by author, 14 Apr. 1993.
212. G. Gray, Interview by author.
213. A. Mackie to Wyndham, 30 Nov. 1948, WP, ML mss 5089, 1(38).
214. Wyndham, Interview, Anon., 16 Apr. 1969, WP, ML mss 5089, 26(38).
215. P. Oldham, Interview by author, 3 Jun. 1993.
216. R. Carlin, Interview by author, 12 Aug. 1993.
217. P. Oldham, Interview by author, 3 Jun. 1993.
218. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA.
219. A. Webster to author, 15 May, 1993.
220. H. Mathews to author, 10 Aug. 1993.
221. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA.

Chapter 5

The Origins of the Wyndham Scheme

Wyndham received six months advance notification from McKenzie that he was to succeed him as Director-General. This allowed him ample opportunity to develop his own agenda for leadership. He foresaw three major tasks to be undertaken: first, a review of the whole provision of schooling for adolescents, second, a review of the ways in which teachers should be prepared for their calling and thirdly, the development of adult education as provided by both voluntary bodies and government agencies. In the latter instance he was especially interested in the role which the school might play in the community in general. By the end of his term of office he was able to conclude that something been done in regard to the first two tasks but the third task had, sadly, been little more than looked at. Developments in the field of adult education had consisted of responding to an increased demand rather than a complete review and recognition of the significance of the field as he had hoped.[1]

The Education Department which Wyndham inherited changed dramatically in the course of his career. There were massive increases in funding and in student and teacher numbers and major reforms in pedagogical approaches. The concept of a state education system, a system of public schools maintained by the community for the community, became widely accepted, with eight out of every ten children in New South Wales attending public schools, a higher proportion than in any other Australian State. It was Wyndham's great fortune to assume leadership at a time when economic conditions favoured the reforms which had eluded his predecessors. From 1948 to 1965 the Australian population increased by nearly 45 per cent while gross national product increased by more than 80 per cent and the unemployment rate seldom rose above two per cent. Capital inflow and the accumulation of domestic capital were high and contributed to the expansion of the tertiary employment sector and hence of the demand for higher qualifications.[2] Many menial jobs once done by teenagers were now performed by machines and employers preferred older and more educated young people to run the machines. Even less academically inclined students needed more schooling, provoking recurrent concerns about the 'wastage' of talented students who left school early.

An overhaul of secondary education, long overdue, was now not merely optional but necessary, and Wyndham's intervention was to prove a key factor in realising reforms which had been frustrated so many times previously. As the community turned towards the postwar future, those such as Wyndham, who were alert to the shortcomings of secondary education, found themselves in an almost hopeless situation. Most of the efforts to achieve reform, from the representations of the 1933 Committee of Inquiry into Certain Educational Questions, the 'Wallace Committee', to the more recent submission of the Board of Secondary School Studies in 1946, had proved fruitless. Many of their recommendations were to be renewed in the forthcoming Wyndham Report.

The Wallace Committee had recommended that a new examination become available after four years of secondary school in which candidates should demonstrate evidence of 'a good general secondary education'. At the end of a further year's study students would complete a Higher Leaving Certificate, success in which would 'imply an advanced study pursued in subjects selected as most appropriate to the individual intelligence, taste and interests of the pupil'.[3] The Committee's recommendations led to the establishment, under the 1936 *University and University Colleges Act*, of a Board of Secondary School Studies, with the Director-General in the Chair to advise the Minister on secondary school studies.

In 1943 and again in 1946 the Board recommended the abolition of the Intermediate Certificate and its replacement with an examination at the end of the fourth year of high school, but Cabinet repeatedly deferred a decision. The 1946 report included an explicit statement of the nature of secondary education as 'the education of all boys and girls from about the age of twelve till the time when they leave school for work or for some form of tertiary education'. No longer should students be selected at the end of primary school for a particular type of secondary school. Secondary schools should be organised in two stages, a general secondary education and a higher secondary education which should not be regarded solely as preparation for tertiary education. The first or general section should be from approximately 12 to about 16. The first stage should be based on a core curriculum comprising English, social science, mathematics, science, physical education, music, art and crafts. Optional subjects should be available in the first stage and the only compulsory subject at the higher secondary level should be English. The Intermediate Certificate should be discontinued. At the end of the fourth year it was recommended that there be an external examination restricted to English and optional subjects. The first stage should be followed by two years of specialist study. At the end of this period of higher secondary education there should be an external

examination in five or six subjects of which one would be English.[4] Wyndham regarded the 1946 recommendations as 'constituting the first formal statement in New South Wales of what is now recognised as the modern view of secondary education'.[5]

The problem of how to provide secondary education for all while still catering for the minority entering university was best addressed, the Wallace Committee concluded, by providing a 'Leaving Certificate' after five years for the former and a 'Higher Leaving Certificate' after six years for the latter group. Wyndham later commented: 'It is ironic that the least successful action of the Board of Secondary School studies should have been its most significant in regard to secondary education policy.' Little had been made public of these discussions, but 'at their heart lay the problem of how best to provide secondary education for the majority while providing the means to progress to the university of a minority'. In 1943 the State Government deferred the ratification of the Board of Secondary School Studies recommendation on the three certificates: Intermediate, Leaving Certificate and Higher Leaving Certificate.[6]

The New South Wales Teachers' Federation was also vigorously pressing for similar reforms. The 1944 annual conference of the New South Wales Teachers' Federation resolved that the secondary course be divided into two sections: the first of four years followed by another of two years; that a curriculum committee be established for the four-year course consisting of practising teachers and Departmental officers, without university representation; and that major and minor syllabuses be available for most subjects, the former a study in depth for those wishing to pursue the subject in later years, the latter to cover the bare essentials which any educated person should know.[7] Wyndham was well aware of:

> the frustration felt by interested members of the Federation, and by the Board of Secondary School Studies itself, over the stalemates which had been reached in attempts to develop some of the ideas which had emerged in the course of the Wallace Committee enquiries (and which were stifled in the Wallace Committee Report itself).[8]

Soon after Wyndham returned to the Department after his release from war service, J. G. McKenzie appointed him convener of a committee which would try again to raise such recommendations. The project never got off the ground, partly because McKenzie became immersed in other problems, but 'largely because those invited to take part were sceptical about anything coming out of another attempt'.[9]

Such recommendations were educational orthodoxy by the 1940s. In his September 1945 address to the Secondary Teachers' Association, Professor C. R. McRae, Principal of the Sydney Teachers' College, also championed

a four-year general education based on a core curriculum and optional courses with a two-year course to follow comprising higher secondary education with compulsory and optional subjects. Only at the end of higher secondary education, McRae argued, should there be an external examination. *The Policy on Secondary Education* adopted in December 1945 by the Teachers' Federation echoed these doctrines.[10] Despite these moves when Wyndham became Director-General, it seemed clear that the State Labor government was less disposed than ever to have the education question raised again.

Meanwhile the mass of psychological and educational evidence accumulated in Australia and overseas since the 1930s added, Wyndham noted, to the sense of urgency felt by those who were disturbed by what they saw as the unsatisfactory situation in local schools. What clearly was necessary was 'some means of breaking down an impasse which was as much political as it was educational. The opportunity was at hand'.[11]

Many changes did not require legislation. The Board of Secondary School Studies already had the power to make changes to secondary courses. As late as 1951, the Board exercised this right and amended secondary courses, introducing the 'Alternative Curriculum' to cater for pupils 'of average capacity who did not possess the capacity for a more academic approach'.[12] But Wyndham realised that it was necessary to convince parliament, the people and teachers of the need for change, rather than to impose change by departmental regulation, since, if reform was finally to succeed, it would also require the support of government, the community and the teaching profession. Wyndham was well aware, that the majority of teachers, for example, remained hard-core traditionalists who preferred the status quo.[13] He believed a new approach was needed:

> Thus, I was determined not to go in to bat on a pitch which had been so badly trampled upon. Furthermore, I was convinced that the bowling had been wrong; it had concentrated on the off stump of the nature of examinations, and the middle stump of university requirements, but had not employed good spin to the leg stump of the nature and diversity of the young people who made up the secondary school population.[14]

Subsequently, and immediately on his appointment, Wyndham pressed for a 'secondary survey':

> As soon as I could after settling in as D.G. I made my recommendations to the Minister. My 'educational' motive was that I had ample evidence from our school counsellors and my own guidance experience, of the wastage and the number of personal catastrophes which were occurring under the existing regime. My 'administrative' motive was that I had even more precise warning from Research of the impending secondary school deluge, as from 1959–60. The latter was

> inevitably the ground for my approach to the Minister. Some of the more important things which transpire between a Minister and his Permanent Head do not appear on the files. My verbal argument was that a stock-taking of the situation was a necessary first step towards a political insurance policy; the alternative was for the Government to be caught napping in an election year. Any suggestion of an educational crusade, not to say a revolution, would have turned the Minister off completely. When I got cautious general consent from the Minister (including 'I must talk about it with the Premier'), I made the formal submission recommending a committee, the membership of which could not be accused of representing vested interests; an enquiry open to the public drawing upon specific terms of reference.[15]

The Establishment of the Wyndham Committee

In September 1953, the Minister approved the establishment of the 'Committee Appointed to Survey Secondary Education in New South Wales'. In November 1957 the Committee presented its report which soon became feted as the 'Wyndham Report' and the new educational structure it proposed as the 'Wyndham Scheme'. It was to take until November 1961, however, before legislation was presented to Parliament. The reasons for this four year delay will be examined in Chapter 7.

Jill Duffield and others have variously ascribed the origins of Wyndham's own convictions to his American experience and contacts, dating from his doctoral studies; to ideas current within the NEF; the area schools of Tasmania and New Zealand; and to a 1947 Scottish plan, the Fyfe Report, for a multilateral secondary system.[16] Nevertheless she has acknowledged that 'it is not at present possible to evaluate the relative importance of these strands in Wyndham's thinking'.[17] Wyndham knew a successful scheme would allay the fears of the community and ensure him a prominent place in the history of NSW education. What were Wyndham's motives and what part did he in fact play in the birth of the Committee Appointed to Survey Secondary Education in New South Wales?

There is general agreement on the origins of the proposals in the Wyndham Report. The recommendations of the Wyndham Committee, it is recognised, were partly anticipated by the Wallace Committee in 1933 and foreshadowed even more closely by the Board of Secondary School Studies in 1946. The Wyndham Committee was created to serve a political purpose: to build an influential but broadly-based body of opinion in support of the proposed changes.[18] After the most detailed analysis to date of the origins of the Scheme, Kevin Smith concluded: 'The basic conception of the 1957 Report lay in the 1933 Wallace Report, in recommendations made in 1946 by the Board of Secondary School Studies and in a number of catalytic developments in the early 1950s'.[19]

Wyndham was not the only proponent of such reforms. First Mackie, a member of the Wallace Committee, and later McRae, while serving on the Board of Secondary School Studies, had both agitated for reform of the examination system.[20] Mackie was an educator whom Wyndham not only respected but who also engaged both his affection and esteem. By then in retirement, Mackie was content to encourage younger and more active associates like Wyndham. Mackie and McRae both held the highly influential dual position of Principal of Sydney Teachers' College and Professor of Education at the University of Sydney. McRae later served on the Wyndham Committee. Professor George Bassett, the head of Armidale Teachers' College, believed he was the most persuasive influence after Wyndham on the Committee's deliberations.[21] A. W. Hicks, L. C. Robson[22] and C. H. Currey[23] also supported examination reform and served on the Wallace Committees.

Although the many influences at work can be identified, it is difficult to separate one from the other. W. F. Connell identified passages in the Wyndham Report which, he concluded, were lifted almost verbatim from the 1944 New Zealand Thomas Report.[24] Chapter 3, on 'Aims', used what Connell identified as an American list of objectives of 1918, which were, at that time, commonly employed in teacher education.[25] Wyndham, in his account of drafting this section of the Report explains that he 'turned in desperation to the writings of Professor Mackie'.[26] Nevertheless, Smith claimed that New Zealand reforms exerted a significant influence on the Wyndham Committee:

> several of the suggestions that had been put forward by witnesses in Australia, and several of his own opinions, received strong reinforcement from Wyndham's New Zealand investigations .... Core curriculum and the system of electives as finally recommended in the Committee's Report were reputed to have especially derived from Wyndham's New Zealand experience.[27]

The Thomas Report provided the model for New Zealand's 1946 secondary reorganisation, whereby secondary schooling began, for most pupils, usually at age thirteen, without categorisation of incoming pupils. In the first secondary year some seventy percent of pupils' time was devoted to a core of subjects, diminishing to thirty percent in their third secondary year. A School Certificate examination was completed at the end of this period. Many pupils chose to remain for a further two years to receive an 'Endorsed School Certificate'. The second year was called 'Upper Sixth' in New Zealand, although matriculation was possible after the first year.

It is doubtful that Wyndham himself would have disputed such ascriptions. Wyndham indeed had visited New Zealand in 1956 where he 'spent a month going through their new scheme'.[28] He commented that 'the Director-General [Dr C.E.Beeby] was a friend of mine of some years' standing

and they had had their own secondary Education Commission and had carried out certain changes and I wanted to see what they had done, how they had done it and how it had worked out'.[29] Soon after the Wyndham Report was tabled, Wyndham told a staff conference on the Report that Albert Stephens, Director of Secondary Education was going to New Zealand to see 'every detail of actual practice'.[30] On his retirement Wyndham freely admitted: 'as for the Wyndham scheme all this talk of a revolution annoyed him! The scheme was very similar to one operating for some time in New Zealand'.[31] The Western Australian Robertson Plan tabled in 1958 also drew heavily on the Thomas Report.[32] It ended selection for secondary schools and instituted comprehensive co-educational high schools. Since Dr Robertson and Wyndham shared a close professional relationship and regularly conferred on the direction of their reforms they would undoubtedly have discussed the merits of the Thomas Report.[33]

Wyndham, in fact, never claimed that his proposals were original. He freely acknowledged the influence of other systems and individuals. The Research and Guidance Bureau, school counsellors and his work overseas had kept him abreast of current professional thinking and provided a wealth of data on the shortcomings of existing arrangements. His great achievement was not in devising new arrangements but in recognising and exploiting tactical opportunities which allowed them to be successfully installed. Success required persuasive negotiating tactics and sharp political skills, not just professional expertise. Astutely judging the political climate, Wyndham recognised that the stalled reforms of the 1930s and 1940s could be introduced only if a different strategy was adopted.

Of great assistance was the increasingly strident support for examination reform which emanated from the New South Wales Teachers' Federation.[34] In 1953, when the Department announced proposals for changing the method of examination at the Intermediate Certificate the Federation maintained that 'secondary education was in such a state that an inquiry into all its aspects should be held'.[35] Partly spurred by such demands, the Minister agreed in July 1953 to set up the Wyndham Committee of inquiry with Harry Heath, the President of the NSW Teachers' Federation, as the Federation's 'representative' on the Committee.[36] The subsequent intense and often clamorous Federation campaign has led some commentators to portray the creation and recommendations of the Wyndham Committee as arising almost entirely from Federation agitation.[37] But Wyndham denied this claim:

> I think it ought to be said also that first there was for all this vague interest in education no community demand for such a review and there was no political interest in such a review and teacher organisations, the Teachers' Federation for example, the Headmasters' Association, had had bitter experience of

> disappointment following the Wallace Committee and other attempts to do something about secondary education, and they'd almost given up hope of seeing something comprehensively done .... I'm afraid I've got to confess that I made the proposal, named the type of person to be on the Committee and, in fact, wrote the terms of reference, but because of the (political) caution, what I recommended to the Minister was a stocktaking.[38]

The Director-General was paramount. The Federation had sporadically voiced strong protests denouncing the neglect of the Wallace Committee recommendations but, in regard to the Survey, 'the part played by the Federation came later in the manoeuvrings organised by the then Minister of Education, Ernest Wetherell, prior to the ALP Conference of 1961'.[39] Indeed, Wyndham later claimed:

> because of the history of abortive attempts within the Board of Secondary School Studies to have the decisions of 1936 reviewed, and of the failure of the Federation's efforts the Director-General's recommendations of 1953 were deliberately made as a fresh approach, without reference to what had gone before, but with an emphasis upon the significance of what was already beginning to happen in the growth of the post-war secondary population ... (this strategy) ran through the whole of the project, including the determination of the terms of reference for the Committee, the manner of the Survey, and the mode of presentation and dissemination of the Committee's Report.[40]

No matter what the role of other players it is widely acknowledged that Wyndham's intervention was crucial.[41] Unlike his predecessors, Thomas and McKenzie, Wyndham as Director-General had a reformist agenda.[42] While the Federation, incensed by calls to reintroduce an externally set Intermediate Certificate, demanded an inquiry into the secondary system, the newly appointed Director-General, 'independently and surreptitiously pressed for a similar departmental review'.[43] Smith emphasised the importance of Wyndham's individual contribution:

> Wyndham certainly had a sophisticated, broad perspective of education nationally and internationally, along with an intimately detailed understanding of the workings of the head office of the Education Department. A man of drive, stamina and enthusiasm, he had a strong belief in his own ideas but was by no means inflexible. Through constant contact and interaction with leading citizens he was able to integrate a wide variety of views with his own educational insights. Indeed, there is some consensus that one of Wyndham's great skills was in coordinating the diverse approaches and thoughts of many people ... he had an ear to the ground and was able very well to interpret informed public opinion ... (but nevertheless he was) at times perceived as long-winded and dithering, his feet not entirely on the ground in regard to the average pupil,

> Wyndham was regarded by quite a few politicians as a sensitive or difficult man whose fine record was perhaps too academic. By general consensus of those with whom he worked closely, he was to prove an outstanding chairman, clever at seeking to ensure unanimity, one who did not bemuse, bully or wear people out just to get his own way. He took great care to ensure that his colleagues understood the significance of material under consideration. Working hard himself, he was very much the Director-General in running his Department. Sympathetically polite, he readily expressed appreciation for the efforts of his staff, and was always careful to acquaint his Minister with what he was going to say on matters of importance.[44]

A different atmosphere developed in the Department of Education after Wyndham took over as Director-General. One contemporary recalled McKenzie as being 'a rugged administrator', a 'no nonsense' yet forthright but able administrator: 'you always knew precisely where you stood'. For example, in a session with the Teachers' Federation, McKenzie would sit at the end of a long table and the deputation at the other end. At one meeting, this observer recollected, the mercurial Sam Lewis, then President of the NSW Teachers' Federation, thumped the table and McKenzie said, 'Mr Lewis if you hit my table once more you're going out the door!' Wyndham as Director-General had 'a much more easy relationship with administrative staff ... he would talk to staff ... he usually chaired staff meetings and encouraged staff to submit items for the agenda'.[45]

John McGrath, Acting Minister for Education in 1953, gave Wyndham full credit for suggesting the establishment of a committee. Harry Heath, President of the Federation in 1953, also insisted unequivocally that the survey committee was 'Wyndham's own idea'. Hedley Yelland believed that Wyndham 'definitely initiated the survey' although he conceded that the Federation and the press created a climate for the readier acceptance of Wyndham's original idea.[46] Wyndham himself was emphatic that the initiation of the scheme was his own idea:

> I must state frankly what I would never say in public, nor wish to be quoted as having said. The basic fact is that the idea of conducting the Secondary Education Survey, at the time, and in the form adopted, was 'all my own work', as the pavement artist said.[47]

To succeed, Wyndham realised, reform must enlist public support, or at least avoid arousing opposition:

> It seemed to me that if this inquiry was in the form of a straight out stocktake in which everybody could appear to give evidence, any findings were likely to avoid the appearance of either coming from the Teachers' Federation or from the non-government schools or from the Department, so therefore it was announced and in fact phrased as a survey. It was (for this reason) made

> a survey under the direction of a committee not a Departmental organisation .... The survey itself achieved another thing that I had in mind, namely that I wanted to stir up public opinion. Too many of the other inquiries and discussions had been among professional groups and the result was that for weeks secondary education received three and four column spreads in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, I had to appear on television, meet the press and so on, it was all part of the intention.[48]

His advice to the Minister to institute a survey, Wyndham explained, was prompted primarily by professional considerations, but there were also administrative imperatives which made the advice politically relevant, indeed, urgent. Foremost among the professional considerations was the dissatisfaction, especially among teachers and their organisations, with various aspects of secondary education, a dissatisfaction which had characterised the ten years before the war and which reemerged quickly after 1946. The research division had also been producing challenging evidence of the detrimental effects of existing selection practices: for example, through analyses of the reliability of methods of selection for entrance to metropolitan high schools, in terms of type of school attended and of point of exits from the system; of the statistics of children born in given years as they moved through the school system and became dispersed; and through a growing body of case histories available as a result of educational guidance. Additionally, an increasing body of research material, such as that relating to the characteristics of adolescence, the nature and indigence of abilities and the significance of maturation, demonstrated the hazards of early selection. Immediately after the war, information from overseas also highlighted critical approaches to the existing provision of education beyond the primary school.[49]

The 'Wastage' of High Ability Students

Neither could the administrative imperatives be ignored. Wyndham's tenure as Director-General coincided with unprecedented demands on schools, not only in burgeoning numbers of pupils, but also in community demands for a greater breadth in curriculum offerings. In the 1930s high unemployment promoted an emphasis on sorting students, but by the 1950s jobs were plentiful and the economy booming, and sorting students ceased to be the major issue. The more robust employment market was perhaps one cause of the marked decline of the whole vocational guidance program in the 1950s.[50] With a vibrant economy demanding workers with more sophisticated technological skills, the issue of sorting was supplanted by the issue of 'wastage' of high-ability students.[51]

Schools, it was alleged, were not only wasting ability: they were failing to develop the abilities that a modern economy required. In 1956 Prime Minister Robert Menzies invited Sir Keith Murray, Chairman of the University Grants Committee of Great Britain, to inquire into the role of the university in the Australian community and the financial needs of universities and appropriate means for providing for those needs.[52] The subsequent 'Murray Report' bemoaned an apparent wastage of talent and warned that the Soviet Union, the USA and the UK were producing more secondary graduates. Murray's call for secondary students to be discouraged from limiting their senior studies to a narrow range of subjects, 'gave powerful ammunition for those, including the Federation, who pressed for the implementation of the Wyndham Report'.[53] Complaints about the divorce between the products of the school system and the needs of industry grew louder. In part this was a structural separation caused by the statutory leaving age and the Intermediate Certificate examination falling a year earlier than the accepted age for beginning an apprenticeship.

As part of his work with the Commonwealth during the Second World War, Wyndham had been involved in Prime Minister Joseph Chifley's national survey which revealed that pupil wastage rates at the Intermediate or third year secondary level were substantial. But the resultant Commonwealth Office of Education's *Report on Educational Wastage at the Secondary Level with Recommendations for a Scheme of Commonwealth Bursaries* was shelved by newly-elected Prime Minister, Robert Menzies, in 1949. Smith believed, 'the evidence given in this inquiry was to influence Wyndham's later actions in seeking to abolish the Intermediate Certificate examination'.[54]

Nevertheless there was no clear community demand for and little political interest in wholesale reform. The interested teacher groups remained daunted by the failure of the Wallace Committee approach. So Wyndham recommended the project first as a survey and it was approved and announced as such: 'Its orientation was determined, however, by its second term of reference'.[55] Wyndham drafted and had accepted the following terms of reference for the Committee:

> 1. To survey and to report upon the provision of full-time day education for adolescents in New South Wales.
>
> 2. In particular, to examine the objectives, organisation and content of the courses provided for adolescent pupils in the public schools of the State, regard being had to the requirements of a good general education and to the desirability of providing a variety of curriculum adequate to meet the varying aptitudes and abilities of the pupils concerned.[56]

It is a commonplace that the orientation and sometimes the details of the conclusions of an enquiry are conditioned by the original terms of reference. Wyndham often stressed that 'it was the second of the terms of reference which was critical'. The Minister's approval meant that the Committee was empowered to critically examine secondary education in New South Wales in terms of 'the education of the adolescent'. The details of that second term of reference were intended to leave no doubt in the minds either of the Committee or of the general public as to the anticipated scope of the enquiry. Wyndham often pointed out that the wording of that second term of reference were virtually a quotation from the first term of reference to the English 1927 Hadow Committee.[57] The feature of the 'central significance' of the task set the Committee of 1953 was the acknowledgement that its concern was to be the full-time day education of adolescents.[58]

The paradox of modern education, Wyndham believed, was the need to provide education for all adolescents while simultaneously finding and cultivating talent of all kinds. Peter Board's system had achieved neither satisfactorily. The academic tendency of secondary courses had 'sanctioned the omission of elements necessary for ordinary citizenship' and created a 'wastage of ability'.[59] The Wyndham Report warned that the existing structure reflected the economic needs of an earlier generation and would incur substantial costs in the long term if not completely overhauled. Larger centralised schools, particularly in expanding urban areas, could allow greater rationalisation of resources and economies of scale while, at the same time, providing for different ability groups.[60] Ability grouping would be a central feature of this new structure.

Surging Enrolments

The most pressing problem facing the Department was how to accommodate the growing school population. Public schools, although they had already expanded enormously, were soon to be inundated with new enrolments. Wyndham estimated that by 1955, 500,000 children would be enrolled in New South Wales public schools and he anticipated an increase of 20,000 per annum for the succeeding five years.[61] The 1955 public school population would number more than five times that of 1880. The teaching force would number more than 16,000, seven times the size of the teaching force in 1881, the year after the *Public Instruction Act* came into effect. Expenditure would be in the neighbourhood of £36 million, having multiplied slightly more than 90 times in 75 years. This enormous growth in expenditure was in itself a reflection of the vast expansion of the public's conception of the state's responsibility for education. This enlarged concept of education had already given rise to a host of government programs and departments: technical

education, child welfare, youth welfare, medical and dental services, research and counselling (all originally based in Bridge Street), physical education, and aid to universities and evening colleges.[62]

Lack of community support, Wyndham knew, had scuttled earlier attempts at reform. Four of the eight high schools established under the 1880 Act had failed because of lack of demand and public support. As a result Peter Board had virtually to reorganise public secondary education in NSW after the turn of the century. As outlined in Chapter 2, Wyndham began his own high school studies soon after the introduction of Peter Board's reforms. Demand for secondary education grew so rapidly in the early decades of the twentieth century that by 1920 there were 27 high schools By 1955, 70 were required, and still many more planned; there were 23 intermediate high schools in 1920, and 45 by 1955. Even more significant over this period, and particularly after the Second World War, was the changed concept of responsibility for secondary education. The primary reason for the failure of the high schools of 1880, Wyndham believed, was the prevalence of the concept of secondary education as something which only the privileged few might enjoy; later there was the notion of secondary education as something for the intelligent and academically able few, but by the mid 1950s the concept of secondary education included all adolescents: dull, average, bright, academic and non-academic.[63] It was an ideal long extolled by progressive educationists. In its *Report*, the Wyndham Committee inevitably placed considerable emphasis upon this history of secondary education in New South Wales. Within that history, Wyndham believed, could be discerned 'both the explanation of the situation faced in that era and some indication of the inherent problems which any proposals must seek to solve'.[64]

Another compelling argument for reform was the dramatic evidence of the forthcoming massive increase in the adolescent population, the first cohort of which had been born in 1946–47. Further, the evidence indicated that what had been anticipated, in the light of experience in 1918, as 'the postwar peak' in school enrolments was certain to be a 'post-war plateau'. These considerations, but especially the latter, inevitably provoked major questions: was the increased demand to be met by an expansion of existing facilities and staff? Or would it be wiser to take the opportunity to reform secondary education? In either case it could easily be argued that a stock-taking was needed on 'both professional and political grounds'.[65]

The great increase in the birth rate from 16 per 1000 before the war to 24 per 1000 in 1947 seemed likely to persist and subsequent enrolments would engulf lower primary classes in the early 1950s. By 1959–60, they would create the beginning of the emergence of the largest secondary school population the State had seen. Immigration after 1947 would also swell this

group. Such information provided an effective means of convincing the State government of the need for a stocktaking of secondary school provision as a basis for planning how to meet the anticipated problems of the 'sixties. There were 'obstacles in the way of a ready political response, so it was 1953 before the Secondary Education Committee was established'.[66] The high postwar birth rate presaged a steady rise in primary school enrolments after 1952–53 and a subsequent unique increase in secondary school enrolments after 1959–60.[67] In 1951–52 infants schools received the children born in 1947. By 1957 New South Wales was in the middle of what Wyndham would call the 'primary school surge'. This tidal wave entered the primary schools in 1955 and by 1957 it was halfway through: in 1959–60 it would inundate the secondary schools.[68]

As anticipated, the period 1952–68 witnessed a spectacular growth in school enrolments. When Wyndham became Director-General in 1952 there were 455,000 pupils in government schools, 100,000 of them in secondary schools: in 1968, the year of his retirement, there were 747,000 pupils, including 244,000 in secondary schools.[69] Enrolments in public schools were to increase by 193,000 in the 1950s and by 165,000 in the 1960s. By the end of the 1950s the 'baby boom' had moved through the primary school and was entering the secondary school. By 1970 primary enrolments had increased to 503,000 from 299,000 in 1950, and primary teacher numbers to 18,000 from 9,000 in 1950.[70] Secondary enrolments in that period increased from 86,000 to 257,000 and teacher numbers in secondary from 4,000 to 14,000.[71]

A material crisis could well compound the looming administrative crisis. School buildings, teacher supply and government funding were initially grossly insufficient to meet postwar demand. The demands of the 1950s and 1960s provoked not only a reform of the structure of schooling but also a massive increase in government resources devoted to education. In 1906–07, when Peter Board's educational expansion was beginning, 8.43 per cent of the total State expenditure was devoted to education; the figure rose to 9.35 per cent in 1930–31, and by 1961–62, it stood at 21.29 per cent.[72]

The Inaccuracies of Existing Selection Procedures

Professional considerations also spurred calls for reform. Wyndham insisted that his initial thinking about overhauling the planning and organisation of secondary education grew out his experience in guidance and research. As outlined in Chapter 3, his investigations had convinced him that most students in early adolescence were incapable of forming any adequate or realistic idea of the occupations available to them. He described his experience in educational guidance as 'akin to experience in the pathology or casualty departments in hospital. One sees the accident cases and the

evidence of major breakdowns; one sees, so often, what could have been done to prevent accidental and abnormal situations'.[73] School counsellors had ample evidence of sheer disaster happening to youngsters who had been fitted into courses rather than the reverse. He had been able to keep in touch with some of the ample literature appearing on the characteristics of adolescents and, thanks to the Research Division, he was informed of the discussions taking place overseas on appropriate post-primary provision.[74] Research, Wyndham realised, could speed the process of reform. Professional advice used strategically could determine much of the detail of any reform. He now structured an administrative group within the Research Division to prepare background papers for the Wyndham Committee and added four research officers to research material and papers for the Committee.[75]

His years on Mackie's staff had shown Wyndham how his mentor had been thwarted by the use made of the report of the Wallace Committee of 1933.[76] Later, his work as the inaugural Research Officer of the Department had included an analysis of the efficacy of selection tests for high school entrance over a number of years and an examination of the educational attrition of representative school cohorts. The results indicated that the prevailing arrangements were most inefficient. When liaising in England with the Ministry of Education for two months in the winter of 1945–46 he had talked with the men who drafted the White and later Green Papers and had seen 'some of the sorry results of the English 11 plus exam'. When he returned to the Department during 1946, he became aware, privately, of some of the exasperation of members of the Board of Secondary School Studies 'about what had not been achieved'.[77]

Growth in demand in the interwar period had led to the organisation of different types of schools: junior technical, domestic science and commercial, which, taken together, catered for the vast majority of the secondary school population. Pupils passed from the primary school, either to a full five-year academic secondary school offering languages or, in most cases, to a school in which languages were replaced, for boys, by manual arts and descriptive geometry, and for girls, by domestic arts and commercial subjects. With some exceptions, these latter schools offered only a three-year program; those pupils who wished to go further transferred to the senior years of an academic high school, at about 15 years of age, following success in the Intermediate Certificate. Selection for these different types of secondary school was patently not working well. At about the age of 12, students in public schools were allocated to secondary schools, or to 'streams' within secondary schools, on the basis, at first, of a formal examination in English and arithmetic, but later on the basis of intelligence test results, school record and teachers' assessments. Between

1936 and 1950, eight changes were made in the basis of selection, as a result of the demonstrated unreliability of forecasts in numerous individual cases.[78] Schools made little provision for different ability groups; nor did they share a core curriculum. Once a student was enrolled in one of these schools, a fixed pattern of subjects was imposed, with little or no variation in the level of difficulty and with very little opportunity to transfer to one of the other types of school.

This practice of selection was made more significant by the fact that the allocation was to a school or 'stream' following a fixed course, the courses being differentiated on the basis of the number of languages studied, the pupils deemed the most able being placed in a 'two-language course', the least able in a 'non-language course'. Apart from the fact that this emphasis denigrated subjects such as home science and manual arts, this 'streaming' had at least two serious consequences: in each stream, the work in all subjects tended to be pitched at the expected level of ability of the stream, irrespective of the variations in interest and aptitude between individual pupils; and it was difficult to change streams, save at the cost of repeating a year. Meanwhile, the status of selective high schools and the two-language stream was enhanced by the fact that moderate success in it left open the road to the Leaving Certificate and 'matriculation'. Quite apart from the individual cases of disaster which guidance workers frequently identified, the gross administrative effect of this situation was a high degree of pupil wastage. The major significance of this was that it occurred in the junior secondary school years. As Wyndham observed: 'pupils did not merely "drop out", they were pushed out, in many cases, by lack of relevance in the curriculum and by the inevitability of failure'.[79]

Efforts to achieve status for such courses as the junior technical and home science courses and to provide opportunities for the pupils concerned had led to these courses being brought into conformity with the syllabuses approved by the Board of Secondary School Studies. This Board was responsible for the content and conduct of the Leaving Certificate Examination, an examination attempted by about only ten per cent of pupils passing to secondary education in public schools, most of whom intended to carry on to some form of tertiary education. While school principals attempted to vary courses to meet the needs of students, their opportunity of doing so was limited. Thus, even if they did not attempt to study languages, too many pupils were following courses designed for a purpose quite different from their interests or abilities, as Wyndham had demonstrated in his work in vocational guidance. The difficulty was increased by the fact that once assigned to a course embracing a number of subjects obvious unsuitability for the study of even one of those subjects frequently meant that to 'drop' it required that the pupil concerned repeat

a year. This difficulty brought a degree of finality to the decision made in the primary school which gave the lack of reliability of that decision even greater significance.[80]

Wyndham had been involved in many of the numerous adjustments formerly made to this process of selection. In 1943, for example, all examinations for entry to secondary schools were discontinued and selection for secondary school was put in the hands of a committee of principals and inspectors in each high school area. The recommendations of the committees were based on the primary school attainments of the pupil in English and mathematics, the results of intelligence tests and any special features indicated in the school record of the candidates. But the Wyndham Committee sounded a cautionary note on this new approach to selection:

> It is fair to say that the method adopted in 1943 has proved more effective than any earlier method, but it must also be said that the method still falls short of the standard of effectiveness necessary to justify the selection of pupils at the end of the primary school stage. Too many pupils admitted to 'selective' high schools prove to be ill-placed and there is a considerable number, excluded at the point of selection who, admitted to non-selective schools, later prove their suitability for academic secondary school studies by qualifying to enter fourth year and by proceeding to gain the Leaving Certificate. The irony of the situation is that, in order to do so, many of these pupils obtain admission to the fourth year of the very schools they were not allowed to enter in first year.[81]

Indeed, as noted in Chapter 2, Wyndham himself had suffered this frustration.

The type of school available to a student often depended on geographical area. In the metropolitan regions selection was the rule and schools were usually single-sex institutions; high schools with full five-year courses enjoying the highest status. Of these selective schools, some, such as Fort Street Boys' High School, were ranked much higher than the technical and home science highs. Next came the intermediate high school, such as Wyndham's own junior secondary school, Cleveland Street Intermediate High School, which was still fundamentally an academic school with movement to a full high school possible after the Intermediate examination. They are described judiciously in the Wyndham Report as schools which 'enrol pupils who appear to have less academic ability than those who have gained places in full high schools'.[82] The junior technical and home science high schools, despite their titles, were not solely vocational schools: they were designed to provide a general education for those adolescents whose interests and abilities were less academic than those of their contemporaries, especially in the study of foreign languages.

Outside the metropolitan area certain country centres had acquired high schools by the 1950s. Apart from the selective high schools in Maitland all country secondary education was co-educational providing 'streams', such as home science or junior technical, within the one school. Such multilateral schools made transfer between streams easier, insofar as it could be done in the existing school, but it was still limited by 'the discrepancies in syllabus requirements and the need to make an early decision in regard to language study'.[83] In centres not served by high schools, secondary education was available in district rural schools or in post-primary classes in country primary schools.[84]

The raising of the statutory school learning age to fifteen during the Second World War had ensured that there would be more pupils ill adapted to traditional academic courses, and the Department's response through the introduction of the 1951 alternative curriculum and the general activities curriculum had, in the absence of a detailed review of the situation, 'fallen short of expectations'.[85] Even though he had sponsored these improvements and the earlier amendments to the selection examination at the end of sixth grade, Wyndham had become convinced that they 'were but patches on an old tyre; the tyre needed replacing'.[86]

The practice of streaming, linked with the assessed ability of pupils, reinforced the common conviction that to gain matriculation was the major objective of secondary education. Yet, as late as 1956, only 7.7 per cent of a cohort matriculated and less than half of them proceeded direct to the university. Such 'pupil wastage' was now identified as a major feature of secondary demography and a shortcoming of schools. In the year before the Wyndham Committee first met, only forty-nine per cent of a cohort completed a third secondary school year; 46 per cent sat the Intermediate Certificate and only 41 per cent passed. It was the evidence derived from guidance services which confirmed suspicions that much of the wastage was from amongst able pupils. A whole psychological literature, Wyndham believed, demonstrated the need to provide for the differential abilities of adolescents and for the changes to recognise adolescence as a stage of significant development within the individual if such wastage was to be diminished.[87]

Half of the pupils emerging from the primary school, some 23,000 students, Wyndham observed, 'disappeared without trace' so far as full-time education was concerned. Even as recently as 1939, more than one-third of a school generation left school for good at the end of the primary stage. By the end of the Second World War, not only had the statutory school leaving age been raised to 15, but almost all of class the six in the primary school were passing on to some form of schooling now officially known as 'secondary'.[88]

Secondary education had to be reformed to reduce the wastage of students of high ability, that is, those students with an IQ score of 115+, or approximately 16 per cent of any age group.[89] If all these children had remained in secondary schools to complete secondary education there would have been approximately 24,500 students in 1960 in the final secondary year in government and non-government schools in Australia; in actuality only 18,500 of these children were in school. Wyndham concluded that in each of the years 1955–60, 6,000 high-ability students had left school before completing secondary education. This represented a wastage of 24.5 per cent of the potential pool of able students. W. C. 'Bill' Radford, Director of the Australian Council for Educational Research, in his 1958 ANZAAS presidential address, estimated that between two and three times as many children as were then doing so, could stay at school with high prospects of completing matriculation. He concluded that between three and four times as many children as were then doing so, could complete 'courses of quality to the end of secondary schooling'.[90] The greatest loss of children able to deal with secondary school courses occurred, Radford observed, 'from what we might call the artisan and rural homes'. The research evidence available indicated that the main reasons for non-completion of further education were: personal and parental attitudes; lack of finance; lack of information and uncertainty about future prospects; and 'lack of interest of students in present secondary education courses'.[91]

There was also a large body of psychological evidence warning against pre-selection.[92] By the 1930s, Wyndham noted, educationists 'had learnt of the unreliability of exams and the difficulty of picking winners at age twelve'. IQ tests by themselves had proved poor predictors of school success.[93] Intelligence was not enough: school success also relied on special interests and aptitudes which characteristically did not appear until adolescence. Reliance on tests to select students for secondary schools, Wyndham realised, was a major contributor to wastage. He also understood that the nature of adolescence had been redefined. Adolescents, it was now believed, demonstrated emerging aptitudes as each student developed as an individual.[94]

Wyndham argued that the significance of constellations of special aptitudes and interests had to be recognised. Adolescence was best seen as 'a period of change, in which the adolescent discovered, and could be helped to develop, aptitudes and interests not obvious during childhood ... this means that a fixed pattern of studies, based on the level of general ability, is untenable'. [95] Before the 1961 *Education Act*, which endorsed most of the recommendations of the Committee, final judgements about an adolescent's educational future were made on the basis of one early snapshot. For a more accurate assessment a series of time-lapse photos was

needed but that was impossible to administer. Wyndham believed that this broader insight into adolescent development also challenged the narrowness and rigidity of traditional school subjects. Above all, they demonstrated that 'the pre-selection of pupils for fixed patterns of courses (was) both improper and technically unreliable'.[96] It was clear to the Wyndham Committee:

> that no form of examination conducted when children are about the age of twelve can provide a reliable basis for determining the type of education which they should experience in later years. Secondly, the suitability of a course for a boy or girl depends not only upon his or her general ability but upon special aptitudes and interests.[97]

Wyndham insisted that as all adolescents were tomorrow's citizens, some common core skills and understandings were essential for all. These skills needed to be more than merely vocational as adolescents would become citizens in a society, the nature of whose activities could not be specifically forecast. Such professional considerations demanded recasting, not patching of the secondary system. But, 'in the absence of clear "community demand", such a direct approach [was] impossible'. He realised that any initiative needed 'to respect the inherent caution of government'. Consequently he chose the vehicle of a survey and sought to involve the public in any subsequent report to avoid it assuming the appearance of a manifesto from 'experts'.[98]

Wyndham was 'emboldened by what both William Wilkins and Peter Board had been able to do on their own initiative, while acting properly as administrators under a minister'.[99] He had a minister with whom he enjoyed 'good personal relations, but one who was anxious not to "rock the boat" on any issue, and who, partly for the same reason, was suspicious of the Teachers' Federation, however affable he might be in discussions with its representatives'.[100] In 1944 Robert James Heffron had taken over the education portfolio, unwillingly, Wyndham believed, and though he became increasingly interested in it, he always had the premiership in mind. He had the undivided backing of his supporters in Caucus but needed 'to be persuaded to approve something which was likely to cause a stir in secondary education'.[101]

There were still those who thought of secondary education as schooling appropriate only for the children of a social elite. A more general view was that the secondary school represented the stage of education suitable for the boy or girl of ability who was able to demonstrate industry and a readiness to study. This concept of secondary education as schooling for an intellectual elite was overlaid, to an extent seldom acknowledged in official surveys, by a parental anxiety that schooling should provide the

means whereby children could 'get on'. This view of secondary education, 'encouraged by the circumstances of an upwardly mobile society, has long been the community view of the function of school and the nature of its curriculum'.[102]

The failure of successive governments to adopt proposals for changes in secondary education had left reformers feeling that their efforts had been in vain:

> Yet the years immediately after the war saw the development which was to provide one of the grounds for challenging accepted views on secondary education ... it was an expression of the fact that the generation of the Second World War had been moved, as had that of the First War, to seek more education for their children as part of a necessary insurance against future evil. There was, in this community feeling, little of the 'make the world safe for democracy' evangelism of 1919, and many of those involved would have been hard pressed to express their views in other than utilitarian terms.[103]

Whatever their motives, parents in Australia, as in other Western countries, were keeping their children at school longer. In New South Wales, the 'persistence rate' to the fourth form stage increased after 1946 at an average rate of one per cent per year.[104]

Increased Retention

One outcome of the increased persistence rate was that appeals to extend the secondary school programme to six years became an ongoing influence of fluctuating intensity. The pressure was exerted by academics, teachers and administrators who sought a longer period of schooling for its educational value and 'by those, politically motivated, who sought to reduce the volume of juvenile labour entering the work force'.[105] A major reason for government approval of the establishment of the Secondary Education Committee, Wyndham believed, was a demonstrated (new) persistence rate at fourth form in 1953 of 16.3 per cent. The Secondary Education Committee discussed the question of the statutory school leaving age but decided not to recommend raising it to 16. They expected that the community would, nevertheless, keep children longer at school and that the government would then only have to confirm in legislation what was happening in practice. The spontaneous increase did occur and the persistence rate at the fourth form level reached 74.1 per cent in 1971.[106]

The rising persistence rate, combined with increased fertility and immigration, resulted in a dramatic boost in school enrolments. In 1948, only 13.2 per cent of entrants from a base primary cohort remained after the Intermediate examination; by 1953, that figure had risen to 16.3 per cent.

Five years later the figure had risen still further to 47.8 per cent. The percentage continued to rise and by 1968 reached 72 per cent. During the same time period [1948–68] total secondary school enrolments rose from in excess of 79,000 to more than 249,000, more than a threefold increase.[107]

The Wyndham Scheme, by adding a sixth year to the secondary course, induced an even higher proportion of pupils to stay to the fourth year of secondary school. In 1961, there were 68 pupils in third year, and 24 in fourth year, out of each 100 who had started secondary school three or four years previously. The first group to follow the new six-year course entered Form One in 1962. Some 73 in every 100 of them were in Form Three in 1964 and 42 in Form Four in 1965. By 1968 these figures had risen to 78 and 64 respectively.[108] Growing prosperity, higher job aspirations, more sophisticated technology, and a consequent demand for increased qualifications, were clearly encouraging students to remain longer at school.[109]

Similar trends were evident elsewhere in Australia. The total school population of Australia rose from 1.12 million in 1948 to 2.31 million in 1963. As a proportion of total government expenditure, education rose from 8.3 per cent in 1957/58 to 10.1 per cent in 1961/62. By 1958 Australia was spending 2.9 per cent of its GNP on education.[110] The teaching force aso expanded rapidly. In 1953, there were 15,500 teachers in NSW government schools. By 1968 the number had risen to 32,400. This more than kept pace with the number of pupils. In 1953 the teacher/pupil ratio was 29.3. By 1968 it had dropped to 23.1. In the same period in NSW the number of students training to become teachers grew from 2,680 to 9,030, and two new teachers colleges were established.[111]

The NSW Teachers' Federation Campaign

Rapid expansion imposed enormous strains on schools and teachers. In the 1950s, the New South Wales Teachers' Federation mounted a vigorous campaign demanding additional resources. It alleged that deficiencies in accommodation, class sizes and staffing had become commonplace. In 1956 it sought pledges from each of the political parties in the State election that more money for education would be sought from the Commonwealth. Widespread media attention was devoted to claims that: 'the number of schools was insufficient. Classrooms were overcrowded and the use of hat-rooms, corridors, verandahs, rented halls and other sub-standard accommodation was common ... the schools building program had been badly planned and timed'.[112]

Wyndham strongly rejected these accusations. As Secretary to the Department he had personally supervised the building program in the

immediate postwar period. He now insisted that sufficient schools had been provided to meet the population increase. In the previous ten years 5,000 classrooms had been provided for primary and secondary schools. In 1955 more than 50 new primary schools had been erected and 13 new secondary schools opened. In 1956 a similar number of secondary schools would be brought into service and it was expected that another 50 primary schools would also be opened. It was also, Wyndham complained, 'wrong to say that the building program has been badly planned'. By 1956 the enrolment surge was approaching the secondary level and the Department of Education, with carefully prepared plans for the development of new secondary schools between 1956 and 1960, was committed to a major program of secondary school building. At that very moment, in 1956, 'more than 700 classrooms are actually in course of erection'.[113]

Wyndham also disputed allegations of severe teacher shortages. He claimed that the postwar increase in the number of teachers was proportionately greater than the increase in the number of school pupils. Student enrolments in teachers' colleges and the number of colleges had more than kept pace with school enrolments. In 1945 New South Wales had two colleges and 1,400 students. In 1955 there were six teachers'colleges training a total of 3,161 students. One in every four pupils who received the Leaving Certificate was recruited for the teaching service, and at least 450 teachers had been employed each year from outside the service.[114] The average class size in primary and infant classes, Wyndham asserted, had not significantly increased in the early 1950s. On the contrary, after 1953 there had been a downward trend. At the same time, the percentage of large primary and infant classes had been reduced from 17.3 per cent in 1951 to 13.7 per cent in 1955.[115]

Ernest Wetherell, the Minister who succeeded Heffron, when addressing the New South Wales Teachers' Federation Annual Conference in 1956, acknowledged that the education system was undergoing 'a period of stress' and Wyndham added:

> but in a Service which is spending £5 million from loans and needs £4 million every year for the next three years, 'stress' is perhaps a polite word. I appreciate to the full the fact that the stress is felt overall. It is felt on the part of the administration, it is felt in every classroom, in the work of every practising teacher ... it is important that buildings go up, equipment be provided, but the heart of the matter lies in the relationship between the teacher and the boys and girls committed to his charge. A time of need, a time of stress bids us close ranks.[116]

Overseas Models

A visit to Europe in 1959 allowed Wyndham to evaluate the reaction of other governments to similar pressures. He conducted detailed discussions with educational authorities in Britain, France, Sweden, Norway and Denmark, and was pleased to find that 'in France for example they had taken steps roughly in the direction and on the same principles' as the Wyndham Report recommended.[117] In all four continental countries, legislation had been passed and was being put into effect to reorganise secondary education, which he believed was 'in something of the same direction as that recommended in our *Report*'. These observations were conveyed to the Minister and encouraged Wyndham to ask at staff meetings: 'If they can do it, why can't we?'[118]

He observed that in the junior secondary years, the first three to four years beyond primary, important developments had occurred. Pressure from increased enrolments and higher retention rates was also provoking in other countries debate on the merits of existing systems. Selection at the end of primary was increasingly being discarded. All Western countries except England and Scotland had abandoned selection for high school: he noted that 'educational authorities in most countries are coming to the conclusion that reliable selection is impossible'. It was now widely recognised that the predictive accuracy of IQ and other tests was less than that of estimates based on the practical experience of teachers. The exception to this general tendency was Great Britain, and especially England, where the majority leaving primary schools still faced a selection test. In England, Wyndham found, the controversy, over the selection test, the 11 plus exam, had become 'highly emotional because parents who can't afford "public" schools or private schools require 11 plus for entry to secondary grammar school ... (and this is) the first step towards maintaining or improving their social status'. All other Western countries had abandoned selection tests.[119]

For Wyndham the most significant overseas development was the general acceptance that secondary education should be available to all adolescents. For more than 20 years previously, socio-educational theory, and practice in the United States and much of Canada, had accepted the idea that secondary education meant the education of all adolescents, but Europeans had been slow to adopt this point of view until after the Second World War. In England, Wyndham concluded, the principles of the 1927 Hadow Report had not been translated into legislation until the *Education Act* of 1944.[120] NSW had borrowed the Scottish secondary pattern of 1908 and 'clung to the Qualifying Certificate and still clings to the Intermediate Certificate long after they were abandoned in the land of their origin'. Only in terms which were accepted in Australia could the paradox be resolved of discovering and cultivating talent while providing satisfactory education for all adolescents.

The challenge, Wyndham argued, was 'to develop a pattern of secondary education in this country which, among other things, would include an Australian Sixth Form'.[121]

Another important overseas trend that he noted was the increasing preference for progressive determination of courses: secondary classes were no longer streamed from the outset into separate courses. In Edinburgh, Wyndham visited a school which illustrated one approach to progressive determination of courses. In a rapidly growing housing area, with two secondary schools, one served as a comprehensive school for all pupils of the area. Students remained at this school for two years, following a course which was largely common, but which was varied in content and standard as the pupils' abilities and needs become apparent. At the end of their second year, i.e. at age 14 plus, those pupils who had decided to proceed to the Leaving Certificate, transferred to the other secondary school. The pupils who remained generally left at the end of the third year.[122]

He concluded, nevertheless, that 'the weight of opinion in Scotland still supports the principle of selection at the end of the primary school course and consequent separation of schools and courses'. The result was that the mainstream of Scottish practice disposed of those pupils who, at twelve plus, appeared to lack scholastic aptitude, and 'whose general ability may range from IQ 105 downwards', by allocating them to junior secondary schools. He deplored 'an apparent refusal to attack the problem on the basis of secondary education as "the education of all adolescents"'. The relatively generous basis of entry into secondary school in Scotland gave rise to most of the problems encountered in secondary education. By dividing the school population at a point towards the upper level of average ability and scholastic aptitude it left some of the same problems, with the additional one of providing for those of less than average ability, to be dealt with in the junior secondary school.[123] The admission in Scotland of so wide a range of pupils to a school so specifically defined, appeared to be a tacit admission of the fact that no final decision could be made as to the future development of many children at the age of twelve. He also noted public and university dissatisfaction in Scotland that slightly less than one third of entrants to senior secondary schools gained their Leaving Certificate and that most of the remainder left without attempting the Leaving Certificate. His visit to Scotland

> confirmed the dual impression that education in that country has a more democratic atmosphere and background than in England but that both educational authorities and the public in Scotland prize the academic tradition. The result is that the selection of pupils for secondary courses in Scotland has few of the social overtones of the '11 plus examination' in England. Nor does

> the discussion of the comprehensive school assume the political colour one finds south of the border.[124]

Because of the division in Scotland into academic and non-academic streams discussion there had been led away from the need to provide for all adolescents. Nevertheless, because selection was not as stringent 'as in England [or in Sydney]' the senior secondary school in Scotland enrolled pupils with a range of abilities and interests wide enough to raise many of the characteristic problems of the education of the adolescent. A wide variety of courses had to be provided and provision made for different levels of ability. Such provision was made, Wyndham observed, with varying degrees of effectiveness in individual schools. Yet the national situation was one of a majority of pupils failing to complete the senior secondary school course and of school authorities being urged to provide courses which were more diversified, more relevant to pupils' interests and, for some groups, more 'practical' in their method of approach. Wyndham doubted 'the reality and reliability of the dividing line between the least able of the senior secondary school pupils and the most able in the junior school'.[125]

He observed that, in Scotland, the universities had no direct influence upon the curriculum or the standards of the secondary school. The syllabuses for the Leaving Certificate, while they were the outcome of discussions between education authorities, teachers and members of the universities, were set out in general and in the briefest terms. The statement for any one subject never exceeded one octavo page and there were no set texts. No person was appointed 'ex officio' to a syllabus committee. The Department of Education selected chief examiners and assistant examiners for the Leaving Certificate and controlled the examination. The universities accepted the results of that examination, though they generally specified the subjects in which pupils must pass to qualify for university entrance.[126]

Similar trends were evident elsewhere in Europe. Monographs in English which had outlined a number of Swedish responses to such issues attracted the attention of educationists in NSW and encouraged Wyndham to further investigate the Swedish reforms. Wyndham had been most impressed by an earlier work of Professor J. Elmgren, which emphasised the need to regard the transfer and allocation of pupils to secondary courses as a matter of guidance rather than one of selection. Elmgren had stressed the importance of selection of options being primarily one of pupils' free choice. The support for these suggestions, Wyndham concluded, had prompted the abandonment of earlier proposals in Sweden to institute 'streams' after the age of eleven.[127] The ensuing argument as to when such clearly defined streams should be instituted was one of the technical reasons, Wyndham believed, for the cautious nature of Sweden's 1950 *Education Act*. This act arose from the government's view that the answer regarding the merits

of selection was not to be found in discussion but in the observation of comprehensive schools and *realskolan* working side by side.[128] The act established the comprehensive school as an integral part of the Swedish school system by establishing a framework but it set no date for the transition: there remained two systems in operation in Sweden, and in the majority of communities the old system prevailed.[129] Wyndham believed that the Swedish experiment supplied ample evidence that 'if the comprehensive school is to achieve its real purpose and become more than an organisation structure, not only has there to be a reorientation of the curriculum, but there must be a revision of textbooks and a thorough review of teaching methods'. The diversity and the length of the Swedish research programme was a reminder that, when a movement such as that towards the reorganisation of secondary education takes place, 'a movement which is largely social and political in character, no government can wait for all the answers before taking some action'.[130]

Wyndham also observed an increased commitment in Europe to the study of science and mathematics encouraged by the increasing technological requirements of the workplace.[131] The spectacular 'success of the Russians in science and mathematics had given fresh emphasis and added new overtones to the current interest'.[132] Their apparent progress culminated in October 1957 in the successful launching of the first man-made satellite, Russia's Sputnik 1, which transfixed the world community. If the Russians had a rocket as strong as that, they could now strike any city in the USA, and Western education was allegedly implicated for failing to match the high number of scientists claimed to be graduating in the USSR.

There was no shortage of ideas to be examined. Wyndham had the intellectual capacity, the networks and the acquaintance with educational theory to draw from many sources. He later acknowledged that the Wyndham Report was derivative and that it borrowed expediently and freely from professional thinking within Australia and overseas. Wyndham's great achievement was political in nature. Having witnessed the failure of earlier initiatives, he remained convinced of the importance of reform, although government and the public remained diffident. He recognised that a changed economic environment and the certainty of an enrolment surge provided a unique opportunity to convince his political masters and the community in general that a complete overhaul of secondary education was necessary and desirable. Having won the Government's approval for a survey, he now sought to create a climate which would facilitate the thorough overhaul of the NSW education system that so many educators agreed was so urgently needed.

NOTES

1. Wyndham, Taped Interview, Hazel De Berg, NLA.
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13. A. Hellyer, The Wyndham Report: a social and educational evaluation compiled from published comment, MEd thesis, University of Sydney, 1969, p. 84.
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23. Charles Currey was president of the NSWTF, 1933–34, and lecturer at Sydney Teachers' College from 1950.

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27. K. Smith formed this conclusion from interviews he held with C. Stevenson, 2 May, 1972, and A. W. Stephens, 21 June, 1972. See K. Smith, Influence and Leadership, p. 200.
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42. Godfrey, Everybody in NSW, p. 20.
43. *Ibid.* p. 5.
44. K. Smith, Influence and Leadership, p. 133.
45. M. E. Thomas, Interview by author, 19 Aug. 1993. Wyndham's relationship with his staff is considered further in Chapter 9 of the present study.
46. K. Smith, Influence and Leadership, p. 139.
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54. K. Smith, Influence and Leadership, p. 132.
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76. John Godfrey argues convincingly that Mackie's efforts to have the Wallace Committee recommendations enacted were stymied by the conservatism of the Directors J. G. McKenzie and G. Ross Thomas, see Godfrey, Everybody in NSW, p. 3.
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Chapter 6

The Wyndham Report

More than professional support was needed; to succeed the reforms would also have to win the endorsement of the Government and the wider community. The Director-General had to act as both strategist and publicist. The committee process, which he now established, was thus intended as much to marshal this public and political support as to gather evidence. Widely advertised public hearings were held in Sydney, Newcastle and Armidale. The Committee held 92 meetings over four years, including 57 public hearings between April 1954 and September 1957. A million words of evidence were taken at these hearings from a great variety of individuals and representatives of many organisations. These witnesses also tendered nearly a third of a million words of written evidence.[1] This process generated considerable public interest:

> Public hearings constituted an outstanding feature of the Committee's activity and resulted in the most detailed and prolonged publicity in the press in regard to education for more than a generation. There is a sense in which the extent of the public involvement in discussion of secondary education between 1953 and 1961 was as least as significant as the Committee's Report itself.[2]

When Wyndham took over as Director-General of Education in 1952, the first wave of the postwar 'baby boom' was entering school and it was apparent that the existing secondary system would have difficulty in coping with such a major expansion, as Wyndham commented: 'The factory will have to be almost double in size. Do we double the size of the old factory or do we design a new one?'[3] Educational reform was now not optional but necessary and success in designing the 'new factory' promised to bolster the legitimacy of the new Director-General.

The Committee recommended that, having completed the primary school course at about the age of twelve years, all pupils should proceed, without examination, to secondary education. Pupils of low ability would no longer remain in the primary school beyond the age of thirteen and a half. This new education pattern provided for: six years of secondary schooling; comprehensive local entry; and a central core curriculum, with provision for different levels of study and for a range of choice for most secondary

students. However, it avoided any direct attack on selective schools, probably recognising the strength of public feelings and the influence of former pupils. The substantial opposition which the Report encountered will be examined in the next chapter.

Detractors have argued that the Wyndham Scheme betrayed comprehensive principles, insofar as it endorsed ability grouping while doing little to promote mixed grouping, and that by retaining some selective schools it preserved selection for secondary education. They assert that the reforms simply served the interests of the middle class by entrenching an academic curriculum and an 'elitist' final two years.[4] Supporters insist that by introducing a common core curriculum of general education for junior students who were drawn from the local neighbourhood without selection and by creating a greater mix of children from different backgrounds and different levels of intellectual ability, the Wyndham scheme represented a momentous shift towards comprehensive ideals.[5]

School Certificate

The organisation and curriculum of the first stage of high school in NSW was now intended to provide a satisfactory education for all adolescents and was initially to cover four years, to the age of about sixteen. The first four-year segment was designed to provide a core of subjects common to all schools, together with a progressive increase in the proportion of elected subjects. The greater part of the curriculum for first year was to be allotted to the common core which was composed of certain 'fields of thought and experience of which no adolescent should be ignorant as a person or as a citizen, irrespective of his level of ability and of the situation in life in which he may later find himself'.[6] Such a common curriculum should include the subject fields of English, social studies, science, mathematics, music, art, crafts, physical and health education, and religious education. After the initial year, under teacher guidance, election of subjects was to be made progressively in the light of pupil achievement or potential. It was expected that time devoted to these elective subjects would increase to some 40 per cent of total school time by the Fourth Form. The use of the term 'common core' could be misleading, Wyndham observed, unless it was understood that the Committee was thinking in terms of areas of experience, not of a curriculum common in detail. Its intention rather was that, in each area, the scope and depth of study would 'be varied in accordance with the ability and interests of the teaching groups concerned'.[7] To provide an adequate range of electives it was anticipated that a minimum school enrolment in excess of 600 would be necessary. On satisfactory completion of the four year course a School Certificate was to be issued on the basis of the result

of an external examination. This assessment was intended to be a terminal or retrospective examination and a formal indication of the successful completion of a satisfactory course of secondary education.[8] English was given a special place in the Committee's proposals. It became the major continuous strand in the secondary school pattern, and the work for different classes would be reshaped, 'in scope and method of treatment, on the basis of ability grouping'.[9]

Higher School Certificate

Pupils wishing to proceed beyond the School Certificate could remain at school to follow courses leading to a Higher School Certificate (HSC) Examination, which was to be an external examination acceptable as a test for university matriculation. The content of the studies at the senior school were to be, in the main, a continuation and expansion of the elective courses. Most students were expected to leave after the School Certificate, with only some 20 to 25 per cent continuing to the Higher School Certificate. The Report saw this latter stage of schooling as meeting the needs of 'the most able adolescents between the ages of 16 and 18'[10] and, for Wyndham, Fifth and Sixth forms were intended to be unashamedly elitist: 'at one with the European tradition of cultivating elite and talent'.[11] Despite hopes that the final two years would supply a broad liberal education, it came to be seen from the outset primarily as a test for university entrance.[12]

Selection for Secondary School Abandoned

Selection for secondary schools was now abandoned for the vast majority of students who henceforth participated for the first four years in a common core curriculum which was intended to cover, in Wyndham's view 'the studies deemed necessary for competent citizenship'.[13] The first of these four years became the major focus of the reforms. Since courses were to be progressively determined within secondary schools, first form was expected to provide a period of trial and observation as a basis for selection for the study of individual subjects. Selection was to occur within the one school rather than between different schools. Although this first year of secondary school was devoted to a curriculum which all would follow, class grouping was still to be based on 'general mental ability'.[14] Education for all adolescents, 'including opportunities for the talented', was the predominant purpose of the four years of general secondary education. The completion of this stage was to be recognised by the award of the School Certificate, based on an external examination, since:

> whatever the future pattern of that examination, it is essential that, during the early years of its operation, it achieves recognition by the community, especially by the parents and the employers in the community. [15]

It was to be a retrospective, or terminal examination and would not seek simultaneously to serve as the basis of selection for higher education.

Ability grouping remained a central feature. 'Essentially the question which was asked of my Committee was: how can a sound program of education be provided for all adolescents and, at the same time, proper provision be made for the minority of talent?' Faced with this problem, the Committee came to the view that the new course of education must both 'provide opportunities for self-development and ensure a sound background for effective citizenship on the part of the generality of adolescents'. The time was long overdue for a recognition of the fact that 'secondary education is justified as part of the general educational programme for young citizens'. The community and the school system shared, Wyndham insisted, an obligation to find and to cultivate talent among adolescents, while acknowledging that, even among the talented, not all would proceed to the university.[16]

The most outstanding feature of the new secondary school pattern, for Wyndham, was not the imposition of an additional year of schooling but the general abandonment of the practice whereby, at the outset of their secondary school course, pupils had been allotted to streams, in each of which they were committed to a fixed pattern of studies, all at the same level of difficulty. For this scheme was substituted a flexibility of organisation and curriculum whereby pupils could develop individual patterns of study varying partly in the subjects studied but more significantly in the levels of study.[17] As outlined in the next chapter, the purpose of these levels in the senior years was later to prove a major subject of dispute with the universities.

Wyndham's preference for these new arrangements derived, in large part, from his enthusiasm for the tenets of 'New Education', most likely acquired from his own university studies and as a proselyte of Mackie. In the early years of the twentieth century New Education argued that the curriculum should be varied in individual cases to cater for particular interests, skills and needs. The teacher's primary concern should be with the pupil, and the curriculum was merely one of the teaching aids which could be abandoned or added to, according to the needs of individual students. New Education shared with the comprehensive school movement an emphasis on every child having a common experience, common knowledge and common skills to fit him or her to become a member of an adult community in which citizenship rights are not only common to all, but equal. Both the New Education and comprehensive schooling philosophies focussed on the pupil rather than on

the curriculum as the basic element in education, but whereas New Education exalted the individual, the comprehensive movement stressed the total group or the school community. The ideal comprehensive school mixed children of different abilities as much as possible, dividing them on the basis of interest but not, as Wyndham did, on the basis of ability or achievement. Age grading was usually recommended, however, on the grounds that each age group had common interests, distinct from other age groups.[18] While the Wyndham Scheme championed 'New Education's' call for the curriculum to be more attuned to individual needs, particularly in its approach to the first year of secondary school and through its support of age grading and core curriculum, it nevertheless retained the essential features of ability grouping, although now within the one school.

A contemporary has noted that Wyndham:

> denied any conflict in comprehensive secondary education with his work on ability grouping, pointing out that a comprehensive secondary school with a first form intake each year would group those pupils and in fact the top four classes would approximate the full intake of a selective school. The retention of a few selectives was a concession to powerful ex-pupil associations.[19]

Though seldom mentioned, the savings which could accrue through the provision of only one school to each of the burgeoning new suburbs undoubtedly also greatly enhanced the appeal of the proposed arrangements.

Membership of Committee

The choice of Committee members provided another opportunity to strengthen support for reform. The Committee comprised the Professor of Education, the Director of Secondary Education, an experienced headmaster, a man who had been Director of Technical Education and who had had a good deal to do with the re-employment of youth after the Depression, a woman who had been the director of the Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force (WAAAF) during the war and had substantial experience with women in industry, another woman who had been secretary of the Women's Union at the University of Sydney and representatives of the three churches with the greatest proportion of responsibility for education at the secondary level.[20]

The Wyndham Committee of Inquiry comprised the following ten people:

> Mr H. F. Heath, BA, BEc [NSW Teachers' Federation President, appointed to the Public Service Board, February 1955]
> Mr A. W. Hicks, MC, MA [Formerly Director of Technical Education]
> Rt. Rev. W. G. Hilliard, MA [Senior Bishop-Coadjutor of Sydney]

Professor C. R. McRae, MA, PhD, Dip Ed [Professor of Education, University of Sydney]
Mr P. G. Price, BSc [Director of Secondary Education]
Rev. Father J. F. Slowey, BA, DipEd [Diocesan Director of Schools, Sydney Archdiocese]
Miss C. G. Stevenson, BEd [Training Supervisor, Berlei Ltd, formerly Director WAAAF]
Miss M.A. Telfer, BA, DipEd [Deputy Registrar, University of Sydney, appointed Registrar 1955]
Rt. Rev. E. H. Vines, MA, BD, DipEd [Appointed Moderator, Presbyterian Church NSW, 1957]
Dr H. S. Wyndham, BA, MA, DipEd, EdD [Chairman] and [Director-General of Education]

Members were chosen, Wyndham insisted, for their expertise, not as representatives of any group. Professional skills superseded political preferment as the major qualification for membership. Harry Heath, who had defeated Sam Lewis for the presidency of the New South Wales Teachers' Federation, continued to serve on the Committee after he relinquished the presidency to Don Taylor and was appointed to the Public Service Board in 1955.[21] The Federation pressed for the appointment of additional members, nominated by the union, who had 'more direct experience in secondary education'[22] but Wyndham resisted the move. He insisted that he had included Heath's name as a headmaster, rather than as President of the New South Wales Teachers' Federation.[23] Wyndham's personal secretary, Richard Carlin, intimated that interest groups played a more vital role in the selection of Committee members than Wyndham admitted. 'The Teachers' Federation viewed Wyndham as their natural enemy, as a very good negotiator, very intelligent: but he was their *bête noire*, standing in their way. They were later able to get the Government to appoint Harry Heath to the Public Service Board.' He described Heath's appointment as one of Wyndham's bitter pills and reported that Wyndham at the time stated that he was annoyed to have '"to become a servant of one of my headmasters"'.[24] Wyndham observed that the main desire of the Premier was that the Committee should have representatives from all major Christian churches, but Wyndham convinced him that if all were represented, the Committee would become 'a Synod with a few lay educationists'.[25] Wyndham particularly welcomed the assistance to the Committee provided by Chris McRae. He had been Principal of Sydney Teachers' College and Professor of Education at the University of Sydney until 1947 and had worked with Wyndham selecting the first entry of pupils of high ability to Opportunity C classes at Erskineville and Woollahra. On the Committee, the needs of the 'bright youngster' remained his principal concern.[26]

The make-up of the Committee could hardly be seen as widely representative. Of the ten committee members, three were high-ranking officers of the Department (Wyndham, Price and Hicks) and three were educational administrators.[27] One view sees the committee as principally made up of colleagues and acquaintances of Wyndham, with churchmen Hilliard and Vines and a leading academic, McRae, included to lend 'the review committee prestige and status'.[28]

Submissions to Committee

Similarly, few surprises were to emerge from the evidence presented to the Committee.[29] In one submission, Dr Morven Brown, Director of the Department of Social Work at the University of Sydney, stressed that 'the academically gifted child is no longer the only pebble on the secondary school beach'.[30] For more than twenty years, the task of stretching out the curriculum to fit everybody had continued to be 'vexatious and formidable'. There now existed, Brown believed, 'a weight of authoritative opinion in support of the idea that early selection is always impracticable'.[31] Selection, it was now realised, involved questions of motivation as well as scholastic aptitude, and motivation stemmed from:

> a child's whole social background and home circumstances .... In a democratic society, people need to be educated not only in terms of their future vocations, in which they will specialise and draw apart, but also in terms of those civic rights, obligations and values they will share in common. Excessive specialisation that is based on involuntary division into secondary school streams, may offer advantages that are in the long run deceptive, advantages that are achieved at the expense of social unity and the possibility of common communication between the various sections of society ... the greatest danger of all of too narrow a specialisation in scholarship for the gifted is that the goal of character training will be lost sight of. The English public schools of the late nineteenth century always laid emphatic stress on all round education to produce a determinate type of character ... what we need is more concern with character training as it might equip boys to exercise leadership in a democratic society.[32]

Schools, Brown insisted, needed to break down an excessive preoccupation with ability grouping that had formed their approach over the past twenty years. There should be no selection for secondary schooling, and the curriculum of the first four years of such a school should be liberalised along the lines of the newer techniques of the primary school: there should be fusion of some subjects and wider use of activity methods and group forms of learning.[33]

In its submission the Teachers' Federation highlighted the anguish engendered by selection:

> Irrespective of the contribution which has been made to education in NSW by the junior technical and home science secondary schools, every year innumerable protests are made by parents whose children have been allocated to such schools rather than to high schools. Such protests are founded on the belief that their children are being discriminated against: are not being given the same educational opportunity as children who attend a high school. While there are some protests in country centres when children are not permitted to take academic courses, the fact they are attending a high school, that they are members of the one school community participating as such in corporate activities of the school reduces the heartburnings felt when children are allocated to home science or junior technical courses. Further, the country high school is more of a social unit, being a co-educational school.[34]

The existing country high schools of NSW, community-based schools, with courses at all levels to suit all needs in the one school, were extolled by many witnesses as the most desirable type of school. In practice, there was a measure of selectivity in these schools imposed by distance and finance.[35] Witnesses supporting such 'multilateral' high schools or critical of selection included the NSW Teachers' Federation, the Secondary Teachers' Association, the Headmasters' Association, and the Australian Council for Educational Research.[36]

The Teachers' Federation noted the increasing doubts surrounding the reliability of IQ tests. Although IQ score, they acknowledged, was not the sole determining factor in selection for secondary, the weighting of the IQ score in such selection and the very reliability of the IQ test were being increasingly questioned. It had been established, they asserted, that variations of as much as eight percentage points could occur between successive IQ tests, and undoubtedly the nature of the IQ score was such that it was influenced by the home background of the child. The Teachers' Federation wanted no selection for secondary schooling: every student should proceed directly to a comprehensive high school.[37]

The Committee was convinced that 'secondary education' now meant the education of all adolescents. Any adolescent age-group, it concluded, will present a wide variety of mental ability, special aptitudes and interests, and only a minority will have the ability and interest to proceed to higher studies. The problem was not simply one of dividing the candidates into 'able' and the 'unable' groups since, apart from intelligence, the pattern of special abilities, it was now realised, would differ from one individual to another. Since these abilities were rarely manifest before adolescence, and since the interests and attitudes of pupils change with experience and as

they mature, a final determination of the studies they should pursue at the secondary level could not be made in the primary school and was best made in the light of actual experience in the secondary school.[38] Differences between individuals demanded differences in programs of study and experience, yet 'the common future and function of pupils was to be citizens in a challenging world'.[39] Hence the determination of curriculum by students should rely on their choice from a group of individual subjects, differing in nature and demand according to the pupil's general ability and the nature and strength of any special aptitudes and interests. Such a concept of curricular structure, Wyndham argued, connoted a direct rejection of the practice of 'streaming'.[40]

Such ideas were by now the maxims of progressive educationists. To translate them into a cogent and palatable form was the immediate and considerable obstacle which the Committee faced. In this process Wyndham played the key role, eventually drafting almost all of the *Report* himself. Harry Heath's draft of the aims was considered quite unsatisfactory, and Wyndham substituted his own superior draft.[41]

> I had never intended to become so burdened. The Committee, called for volunteer writers and, in order to encourage the troops, I offered to draft Chapter 1. Mr Heath volunteered to write up the Aims, and Mr Hicks to draft another chapter. The latter was not completed, and the Committee was unhappy, almost to the point of embarrassment, about the Heath draft. It was let lie, *pro tem*. When I submitted my draft chapter, the thanks I got was 'keep up the good work'! Meanwhile, out of the Committee, some members suggested that I should tackle Aims. It involved an exercise in tact which I did not welcome: Heath and I were in College together.[42]

Wyndham believed the Committee's final recommendations had three essential features: abandon pre-selection, introduce four years of junior secondary schooling with a core curriculum, and cultivate talent through electives.[43] They can be summarised as follows:

1. On completion of the primary school course and, in general, about the age of twelve years, all pupils should proceed, without a predetermining test, to the secondary school.
2. The first year of the secondary school should be devoted to a curriculum which all will follow, but in class-groups where pupils will be brought together on the basis of general mental ability.
3. The purpose of this year would be threefold: namely, trial and observation to serve as a basis for selection for the study of individual subjects; orientation of pupils to the life of the secondary school; and revision and consolidation of skills taught in the primary school.

4. At the end of the first year, pupils (and their parents) might, under the guidance of the school principal, elect to commence the study of up to two subjects apart from those studied by all the school. The scope of the syllabus in these subjects and the standard of work would be based on the fact that the pupils constitute a selected group, as able and as ready as can then be determined, to follow such a selective course of study.[44]
5. The curriculum for the first four years of secondary education should provide for all 12–16 year-olds.
6. The curriculum would include core and elective subjects, with the core diminishing over the first four years.
7. A School Certificate should be awarded, on the basis of external examinations, at the end of the first four years (then Forms one to four, today Years seven to ten).
8. A Higher School Certificate would be awarded, on the basis of external examination, after a further two years (then Forms five to six, today Years eleven and twelve), and this should be acceptable as a test for university matriculation.
9. Two boards, a Secondary Schools Board and a Board of Senior School Studies should replace the Board of Secondary School Studies.

The *Report* did not supply a detailed blueprint for reform: it contained no precise recommendations as to curriculum, timetable or school organisation. It said nothing about costs nor about the training of teachers, perhaps to avoid alarming the Government. The Committee took the view that its central task was not finalising such details, but, on the basis of its examination of present practice and in the light of all the evidence available to it, to present a pattern of organisation and a series of objectives which would serve as the basis for a satisfactory scheme of secondary education in New South Wales, especially in public schools.[45] As presented to the Minister in October 1957, the *Report* was simply a body of recommendations, none of which either the Minister or the Government was committed to putting into effect. The Minister would determine his own position in the matter and make recommendations accordingly to Cabinet. The extent to which he could do this and the degree of support he was likely to receive in Cabinet, would, Wyndham believed, 'depend upon the existence of a strong body of informed public and professional opinion'.[46]

The most significant aspect of the *Report*, Wyndham insisted, was structural. Different types of secondary school and indeed different types of block course should disappear, and all students who had satisfactorily completed their primary work (and this within a tolerance of a certain age group) should proceed to secondary education. The course in the first year would be the same, however differentiated and modified for particular ability groups within the school. For example, there might be three versions of the English course or three versions of the mathematics course, but the first

year would be a year of exploration on behalf of the teachers and discovery on the part of the students as to where their particular talents lay. From the second year on there should be an increasing provision for work in particular fields to challenge the students.[47]

The Committee adopted the view that selection should take place within the secondary school, not outside it, and that 'it should be progressive, not catastrophic'.[48] At the time the *Report* was released, apart from ten schools for which selection was largely on the basis of the specialist course they offered, only fourteen high schools were 'selective' in the commonly accepted sense among high schools, which by 1960 numbered 111. None of any of the 174 secondary departments were 'selective'. The selective high schools were concentrated in metropolitan areas and thus 'not representative of the whole public secondary school system'.[49] Selection on the basis of sex should also be avoided, since wastage of talent was even higher for girls[50] and sex differences in special abilities and interests, had, 'in the past, often been exaggerated'.[51]

Curriculum for Junior Secondary

The Committee regarded four years beyond primary education 'as the minimum time to prepare the citizen of ordinary ability or rather ability that did not promise readiness to go on to further study either in school or elsewhere after those four years'. For the more able, a further two years would be necessary to prepare the student to undertake any post-secondary course, whether at university, institute of technology or teachers college.[52] The secondary school course should be conceived, in the first instance, Wyndham explained, as a course covering four years, terminating, for most pupils, at 16 years of age. It was recognised that not all pupils would complete this course at the outset, but the existing tendency of pupils to stay longer at school was to be encouraged. Between the second and the fourth years of this course, the amount of time devoted to 'the common core' might be expected to decrease, for the more able students, to about 60 per cent of total classroom time. The amount of time devoted to elective subjects would increase accordingly, a third elective being taken at the end of the second year by pupils ready to do so.[53] The four-year secondary programme, while creating increased provision for pupils of talent, 'still protected the majority of pupils, and they must be the majority, whose secondary education should not be overshadowed by the requirements of pre-university studies'.[54] At the same time, the proposals ensured provision for studies 'of the type which, as ordinary citizens, the most academically talented young people should not have lacked'.[55]

Provision would be made for the issue of a certificate, the Intermediate Certificate, based upon an internal examination, to pupils who were constrained to leave school at age fifteen, an age which should find them at the end of third year. A School Certificate would be issued, on the basis of an external examination, on completion of the full secondary course to the end of fourth year. This examination would be conducted by the Department of Education on the advice of a Secondary Schools Board, to be established.[56]

It was anticipated that perhaps not more than 20 to 25 per cent of pupils would continue full-time day schooling beyond the School Certificate level. These would be pupils of ability who, though their goal may not be finally determined, would be those who intended, to pursue some type of higher study. For these pupils, up to two years of further study should be provided leading, for most of them, to the Higher School Certificate Examination. The content of the studies at this senior school level should be, in the main, a continuation and expansion of the elective courses, together with English.[57] This examination, and the syllabus of work in preparation for it, should be the responsibility of a Board of Senior School Studies. It was anticipated that the majority of candidates for this examination would be over 17 years of age. Both because of their relative maturity and because of the Committee's appreciation of the problem of transition to conditions of university study, the atmosphere and method of these senior school years should be such as to foster individual study and personal initiative in the manner of the best type of English 'Sixth Form'.[58] It was hoped that, because of the representation of the universities on this Board, this Higher School Certificate Examination would be accepted as an appropriate examination for university matriculation.[59] Unfortunately, the universities were not to be quite as accommodating as Wyndham hoped.

To offer the range of curriculum recommended for both junior and senior levels substantial student numbers not available in central schools and other smaller post-primary situations would be required. The introduction of these proposals should therefore be accompanied by the payment of subsidies for travel or for boarding in country areas. Provision should also be made, under the *Bursary Endowment Act*, for those cases where economic need would be a major barrier to continuance of secondary school studies.[60]

The Committee pointed out that it was not competent to make detailed and specific recommendations in regard to curriculum: that was the job of panels or syllabus committees drawn in a representative fashion from people 'who knew what they were talking about'.[61] The Committee, nevertheless, did outline a series of principles upon which any overall curriculum should be devised:

> We were very anxious that adequate provision be made for what you might call the tools of living and of citizenship. A mastery of the mother tongue, competence in mathematics, a sound knowledge of the science of today, a sound background in what might be broadly be called the social studies and obligatory experience in hand, eye and ear.[62]

Electives

Wyndham believed that the curriculum for the least academically able pupils would consist almost entirely of the 'core' of subjects, studied at the appropriate level of ability. On the other hand, the most gifted pupils, were be encouraged to make the greatest possible use of electives, but would not be allowed to do so at the expense of a balanced curriculum. If, for example, a student ultimately studied three languages, he or she would also have studied both mathematics and science, as 'a preparation for citizenship', over a period of four years. If students' electives were mathematics and science, they would also have followed a four-year course in the social studies, music and art. It was intended that everybody would have experience with hand, ear and eye—craft, music, drama—so that even 'the most academic would have some'.[63] The electives stood in contrast to the subjects of the core, especially when they were identical in title. As electives, they would be designed as systematic studies 'demanding the high standards which could be expected of selected, able and interested pupils'. For example, where the mathematics of the core would be the mathematics needed by the 'competent citizen of the next decade, designed for those pupils who will leave school at 16 with their School Certificate', elective mathematics would be 'more systematic, more academic', designed to provide a challenge to pupils with mathematical ability and leading to work beyond the School Certificate.[64]

No combination of tests and personal information could provide the basis upon which to predetermine with reliability the type of secondary school course a primary school pupil should follow. The better approach was to observe the response of the pupil in the early stage of the secondary school: for many, this would take a year; for some, it might take longer. The essential feature of internal school organisation and of the shape of the curriculum a pupil might follow must therefore be elasticity. In the light of a pupil's achievement and of other evidence of potential, he or she should be able, under guidance, to add elective subjects to those which all students shared: electives which would provide challenges to their ability and interest. The Committee did not turn its back upon selection, but substituted for 'predestination at the primary school level, guided self-selection in the context of actual school experience'.[65] Overseas experience

lent support to such a reform. 'One of the essential features of the Swedish "comprehensive" school is the provision made for such progressive determination ... only in third year is "streaming" introduced.' Theory and practice in the USA also had for many years supported the principle of almost unrestricted entry into secondary school.[66] The new secondary pattern embraced the policy of selecting children during their first year for differing secondary programmes within the comprehensive school but not in the irreversible manner of the tripartite high school era.[67] Under the Wyndham scheme the final determination of secondary school courses was postponed until after the pupils had received learning experiences beyond the primary school level. At the end of the common first year, pupils chose from among a range of syllabus offerings and were able to attempt levels of study that past performance suggested they could manage.[68]

The Purpose of First Year

The first secondary school year represented a stage of transition in which the pupil might become familiar with the features of the secondary school and the staff come to know the new cohort as individuals. The first year was designed to be a period of orientation; 'it is analogous to the two-year stage, instituted in France in 1956, and called *"le cycle d'observation"*'.[69] This stage of transition was handicapped if it began only after the cohort entered the secondary school. There was therefore a need for staff and counsellor liaison between the local secondary school and the neighbouring primary schools, and for corresponding liaison at all levels of policy determination. Hence, on the Secondary Schools' Board one position was reserved specifically for someone who had substantial knowledge of the primary school situation and an 'ability to ensure liaison at the administrative level'.[70]

The Committee was more concerned overall with junior than senior secondary programs: 'the Committee devoted less attention to the senior stage than it had to the junior stage ... the stage at which it considered the major battle of the present had to be fought'.[71] The difficulty of catering for a wide range of ability lay at that time principally in the junior years:

> The exacting work of the fifth and sixth forms leading to the HSC has little to do with the pupil of even average ability. It is the School Certificate, at age sixteen (the average age of apprenticeship), which is still the terminus of secondary education for seventy-five per cent of the whole adolescent population. There is considerable evidence that, for most pupils of average ability, to say nothing of those of lesser ability, courses beyond the age of 16 are best provided as vocational courses closely associated with actual employment.[72]

Since that time, the massive growth in retention to year twelve has prompted further reappraisals, most recently, in the 1997 McGaw Report, of the adequacy of the provision in the senior years for a wide range of abilities.[73]

The Wyndham Committee paid the greatest attention to the question of the nature of the examination for the award of the School Certificate at the end of the fourth secondary school year rather than the HSC. It considered the arguments against the establishment of an external examination and, in general, was in sympathy with them. The Committee was aware, however, of suspicion in some quarters of the value of the Intermediate Certificate awarded on the basis of an internal examination. Further, it was convinced that the first task of those concerned with education would be to establish the status of the School Certificate in the mind of the public. Nor could it feel certain that the employers of 1957 could be assumed to be more enlightened than those of 1925, when Peter Board's new alternative credential had failed to win support. The Committee therefore recommended the award of the School Certificate on the basis of an external examination, but it looked forward to the day when, with the Certificate firmly established, the form of examination could be modified.[74] The Committee believed (with the statutory school leaving age still at 15), that the main exit point from the secondary school would prove to be at the end of the Fourth Form, and this belief was confirmed in practice.[75]

The Committee concluded that until the School Certificate really had won the respect of the community, especially the employing community, then it should be awarded on the basis of an external examination. Wyndham commented:

> I myself felt very strongly about that because I had been a teacher at a time when Mr Peter Board, who faced something of the same upsurge of secondary school population after the first war, developed the domestic science and junior technical secondary schools and realised that their students weren't eligible to sit for the Intermediate Certificate and therefore devised a certificate for them: a Junior Technical Intermediate and a Domestic Science Intermediate Certificate. When the youngsters presented this certificate to a potential employer they said: is this the Intermediate or isn't it? Finally, that attempt by Mr Peter Board was abandoned because it just wouldn't be recognised by employers and I did not want that to happen with the School Certificate.[76]

The School Certificate was to be retrospective and to stand on its own merits, not as an entrance qualification to anything.[77] The Committee noted that the average age of boys beginning apprenticeships was approximately sixteen years, so that no industrial dislocation would be occasioned by an increased length of schooling. It made no specific recommendation for the

extension of statutory schooling, fearing that 'political reluctance on that score could jeopardise the acceptability of the Committee's fundamental recommendations'.[78]

The Committee's proposals for the first four secondary school years represented the extent to which it considered the community was ready to accept responsibility for the education of all adolescents. It hoped that those proposals, if adopted, would promote a development resulting in the School Certificate being the school exit point for a greater proportion of an age cohort than was the Intermediate Certificate. Although those remaining past the School Certificate would represent a minority, the Committee believed that this minority would soon be larger than that which remained to sit the Leaving Certificate Examination. That larger group would appear, first, 'as schools and the community realised the size of "the pool of talent" in the community' and, secondly, 'as the development of science and technology, of which the Committee was acutely aware, produced callings which demanded new kinds of qualifications and, therefore, new forms of post-secondary school training'. In the immediate future, the destination of the majority of senior secondary school students would be the university. The Committee did not regard this as 'either desirable or permanent, but it was at that time a fact of life which had to be recognised'.[79]

The Committee took note of the failure rates in their first year of some five per cent of a school generation who entered the university. During the early 1950s at the University of Sydney this failure rate had reached 32 per cent.[80] The Committee was of the opinion that the cause lay partly in the situation in secondary schools. An examination of secondary syllabuses, and the results of the Leaving Certificate Examination, together with information as to the mental ability of the pupils concerned, indicated that standards had not fallen; on the contrary, there was a moderate, but definite improvement.[81] The problem lay in the fact that, while the demands of the community were rising, especially in the fields of mathematics and science, the Leaving Certificate course was the only recognised pattern of secondary studies. Even at the senior level, this course had increasingly to make provision for a wider variety of pupils; it was not solely a course preparing for university entrance.[82] It was likely that part of the cause lay in the tendency, manifest since World War One, for pupils to be presented for the Leaving Certificate Examination at an unduly early age. The Leaving Certificate Examination was originally designed for a group of candidates, more than half of whom would be 18 years of age by the end of their last secondary school year. This was the case in 1920, but by 1935 the proportion of these older pupils had fallen to 35 per cent and by 1955 to 15 per cent. In the latter year nearly 60 per cent of candidates from public secondary schools were under the age of 17.[83] While chronological age in itself might

be an inadequate measure, the Committee could not but feel that many Leaving Certificate candidates lacked that maturity which is one of the elements of success under university conditions.[84]

Since its terms of reference did not extend to the tertiary level, the Committee went no farther than to draw attention to the need for a review of the situation at the university level. The *Report* stressed that secondary schools had other tasks to perform besides preparing prospective university students. The fears expressed by universities, that schools were failing to provide students with a broad and general education, and that students entering universities lacked maturity, would be allayed not by raising matriculation standards but by extending the period of secondary schooling and a greater commitment to general education. Specialisation in a narrow range of subjects was to be discouraged.[85] The *Report* argued that Australian industry was hampered by a 'small home market', high labour costs and long distances. To ensure the best return on capital investment, Australia must have more than its share of expertise and knowledge in all its enterprises. It needed to rely more heavily than other nations on university graduates 'for both manpower and research'.[86]

Doubts were nevertheless widely expressed about the ability of the Wyndham Scheme to raise standards in the senior secondary years. Suggestions that separate senior high schools might be more effective were dismissed by Wyndham. Senior high schools, he believed, would only reinforce university control. 'To establish "matriculation colleges" would, for me, seem to mark the end of any efforts to convince parents that "getting to the university" is not the major purpose of a school'.[87] In the senior forms of the secondary school, Wyndham believed, there should be three main objectives:

> the provision of courses, to meet the needs of the higher proportion of talented students to be found in the senior forms; the adoption of methods which would inculcate in those students an attitude of personal initiative and self-responsibility in regard to their studies; and the cultivation of an atmosphere of relative maturity on the part of all concerned.[88]

The Act proclaiming the adoption of the Wyndham Committee's recommendations established the Director-General as the chairman of the two related study boards and charged the Director-General with giving effect to the approved determinations of these boards. Wyndham revealed a great deal about his conception of the role of the Director-General in his discussion of the plans for these new boards.[89] Jack Buggie, Director-General, 1972–77, later commented that the Secondary Schools' Board 'prompted some major shifts in curricula and attitudes towards secondary

education. Wyndham, as the Permanent Head, was the avenue through which the Board's discussions were implemented'.[90]

The new NSW pattern was 'specifically designed on the assumption that university entrance requirements are irrelevant for the majority of adolescents'. To that end, the authority in respect of secondary education in NSW now rested with two Boards, each of which was a statutory authority. The first, the Secondary Schools' Board, was responsible for matters pertaining to the first four years of the secondary school; the other, the Board of Senior School Studies, was responsible for the curriculum and for the examination on the completion of fifth and sixth forms. The existence of the Secondary Schools' Board, Wyndham hoped, 'constitutes a barrier which prevents the requirements of the final secondary school examination having a direct effect upon the syllabuses for the first four forms'. The Board of Senior Studies was not to be allowed to set down any specific prerequisites for entry to fifth form. Admission of students to the form was to be the responsibility of the individual school principal.[91]

Two Curriculum Boards

Before the Wyndham Scheme, the control of the Leaving Certificate had resided with the Board of Secondary School Studies, constituted under Section 32A of the *University and University Colleges Act*, 1900–48. The Board was appointed for four years and comprised fourteen members: five representatives nominated by the University of Sydney; five from the Department of Education; one from the independent secondary schools (other than Roman Catholic schools); one from Roman Catholic schools; one headmaster and one headmistress of state secondary schools nominated by the Secondary Teachers' Association of NSW, and the Director-General as Chairman of the Board. This single board held responsibility for the development of all curricula.[92] Even by the 1950s, the requirements of the Board of Secondary School Studies in respect of the Leaving Certificate were still 'allowed by secondary school principals of all types to determine the pattern of studies for most pupils in the junior secondary school years', despite the fact that the final school credential to be gained by the majority was the Intermediate Certificate, over which the Board of Secondary School Studies had no official authority.[93]

Wyndham was convinced that any replacement would need to continue to recognise the importance of key interest groups. In commenting on the 1984 Swan-McKinnon Report,[94] which pressed for the creation of a single Board of Secondary Education, he stressed:

> the history of education in this State and the political interests concerned combine to make it inevitable that the membership of any such Board should be

> derived from representation of interested parties. Such a Board needs to ensure that what it has decided to do is known and understood by parents, employers and citizens generally.[95]

At the same time it would be necessary for such a body to,

> dismantle some traditional thinking in some sections of the community, if only to make it possible for new ideas to be seen in perspective. There are still people, for example, who regard secondary education as the privilege of a minority. A more common misconception which is an obstacle to modern educational planning is the assumption that there is a distinct category of 'natural students' and another 'good with their hands'.[96]

It always needed to be remembered, Wyndham argued, 'that educational doctrines have not only to be verified in experience but, if verified, have to be preached again and again, as new generations of teachers move to strategic positions in their schools and new executives appear in associated organisations'. The Wyndham Committee would have recommended the establishment of a single Board for secondary schools, Wyndham asserted:

> had it not been for the fear, well-justified under the conditions of the time, that there would be pressure upon that Board to have the final secondary school examination meet the requirements of university matriculation and that the consequent requirements of that examination would be reflected far back in the activities of the early years of the secondary school.[97]

Wyndham was convinced that the creation of two boards was one of the principal achievements of the Committee.[98] The Committee was anxious to ensure that the first four secondary school years should be protected from university dominance for the sake of the majority of adolescents for whom, in that era, those years were likely to be their last years of full-time education. It recommended, therefore, that the activities of the first four secondary school years should be placed under the oversight of a board separate from, but not alien to, the board charged with the oversight of the final two-year stage of secondary education.[99] The two senior years, then called fifth and sixth form, and the examination to be held at the end, the Higher School Certificate, should be placed under a separate Board of Senior School Studies. That Board would include six people nominated by the universities but chosen by the Minister.[100] For the first four years of secondary schooling, the Secondary Schools' Board, with no university representatives, would create a 'watertight bulkhead between the provision of a sound general secondary education and demands upon that minority of students who would ultimately proceed to some form of tertiary education'.[101]

In 1990, following the recommendations of the Carrick Report,[102] a single Board of Studies, replaced the two Boards with an independent chairperson providing advice directly to the Minister. The new Board was responsible for the operation of the HSC, the development of curriculum and the registration and accreditation of non-government schools. It was composed of twenty-three members, nineteen of whom were appointed by the Minister as nominees of particular organisations or persons with identified knowledge or expertise. Most of the major interest groups, such as the NSW Teachers' Federation and the Catholic Education Commission, were represented. In a recent review of the NSW Higher School Certificate, Dr Barry McGaw argued that such representation encouraged 'posturing' and that the Board should be smaller and be appointed on the basis of expertise.[103]

The Wyndham Committee recommended that the curriculum for the first four years, and the ensuing School Certificate examination should be the responsibility of a new Secondary Schools' Board. The existing Board of Secondary School Studies had been set up under a university act, primarily to control the curriculum and the examination for secondary school students going on to university. The irony, for Wyndham, was that that Board 'virtually determined the curriculum in the first year' of secondary school for all students, of whom only four per cent would try to get into the university, let alone succeed. So, for Wyndham, the second significant feature of the Committee's report, besides the ending of selection, was that the Secondary Schools' Board became entirely responsible for the first four years and was completely independent of any other authority, save of course that it made all of its recommendations to the Minister.[104] Since it was to be the only body that directly advised the Minister on the first four years of secondary schooling, Wyndham expected it to act as a bulkhead to protect the activities of the junior secondary school from the demands of tertiary education.[105] Wyndham believed that 'especially during the first four secondary school years' there must be flexibility in the choice and combination of courses, provided that the subjects included those of the common core, in one form or another.[106]

The chief difference between the membership of two boards was that the Board of Senior Studies included a greater proportion of representatives from the tertiary field. For the Board of Senior School Studies, it was intended that 'seven shall be appointed from nominations made by the governing bodies of the universities within the State'. This provision was intended to enlist university expertise rather than provide representatives of the universities: members were to represent their disciplines, not their universities.[107] This provision, Wyndham advised his Minister, had:

> not been accepted with the best grace by some professors. Apart from being part of the new legislation it is desirable from an educational point of view. Nevertheless, I have been subjected to discreet pressure to achieve as general a representation of the universities as possible. There are tactical reasons why the Board should have the spontaneous support of the universities, but, for good reason, it has not been possible to make a recommendation which will satisfy all university opinion.[108]

Chris McRae, for example, strongly advocated wider university representation. Wyndham's tactics during the sessions of the Committee in relation to such views 'was to avoid university representation while leaving the way open for universities to make their contribution. The fact is not yet clearly recognised that the 1961 Act does not provide for university representation, but for membership of the Board by members of university staffs.' The practice was for NSW vice-chancellors to nominate a panel of names to the Minister, and 'for the Minister (that is the Director-General) to select from that panel the number specified in the Act, but in such a way as to ensure a spectrum of the disciplines. If he is wise he will spread his selection, as far as possible, between the universities'.[109]

Wyndham stressed that many features of the new provision, as it developed between 1957 and 1965, did not appear in the recommendations of the Committee but were interpretations of its intention or additions of detail made by the two Boards set up under the Act of 1961. These included the concept of 'levels', the introduction of General Studies in the HSC Examination, the attempts to solve the 'insoluble differential marking scales,' and, above all, 'the details of the curriculum'.[110] As explained in the next chapter some of these changes, notably in regard to levels, were to prove a major source of friction with the universities.

Most of the Wyndham Committee's recommendations examined so far had their origins in earlier educational theory. The emphasis on fitting the school to the individual echoes a philosophy of education which originated with the Jeffersonian and Jacksonian concepts of democracy, which argued that all children [except slaves] are born equal and should have the same educational opportunities. This philosophy was taken a step further by John Dewey who opposed the principle of teaching formal subjects, believing instead, that material should be taught as required; that people should be taught how to learn rather than merely learning facts. Dewey and other progressive educationists also believed that, if a community was to be truly democratic, there must be genuine communication between its members. By gathering together children of different intelligence levels each would gain a better appreciation of the unique contribution that every individual can make and this would carry over into later life

Wyndham's stress on ability grouping was the antithesis of Dewey's progressivism. Some critics believed that the *Report* merely entrenched meritocratic assumptions, thereby enshrining individualism and hiding the social construction of failure.[111] To a great extent the Wyndham Scheme's preference for individual patterns of study rested on the concept of each student establishing his or her own contract with the school, thereby diminishing the role of the community. Individual contractual relationships, as opposed to the unwritten, traditional and collective relationship of previous societies, remain central to capitalist societies, and the idea of the contract played an important part in the theoretical development of political individualism. Such contracts underwrite the primacy of individual economic advantage and diminish the importance of personal as well as group relationships. As the division of labour has increased, a more specialised social and economic structure has permitted a greater number of significant individual differences of character, attitude and experience to emerge. Wyndham was an optimistic spokesman for this new individualism.

One could view this focus on individualism as an extension of Wyndham's Methodism. Max Weber, for example has suggested that the religious individualism of Calvin created among its adherents an 'inner isolation'.[112] The people of pre-Reformation Europe believed that the earth and all things above and below it were made and maintained by God, that social roles and structures were divinely ordained, that the passages of life were governed by ritual, and that the church in Rome was the one and only arbiter of God's will. The Reformation changed this world view by proposing that each individual was capable of discerning the will of God for himself, and one effect was to fragment the religious landscape into competing perspectives and institutions, each weakening the plausibility of any one of them claiming to represent universal truth.

Nevertheless, a widespread fear that in the rapid progressive division of labour the individual risked losing completeness as a human being, together with postwar social democratic sentiments, promoted the concept of a core curriculum which would encourage a shared sense of citizenship. Today, by contrast, there is a lesser emphasis on the core curriculum providing 'the studies deemed necessary for competent citizenship'.[113] The contemporary stress on the vocational aspects of the core curriculum illuminates some other key connections between the welfare state, capitalism and democracy. Claus Offe argues that the state in a democratic capitalist society must attempt to balance two often competing pressures: the need to ensure the continuity of capital accumulation while asserting its own legitimacy by responding to democratic demands for expenditure on services.[114] Offe contends that the state can never permanently resolve those pressures. Rather, what the state does is to arrive at temporary

settlements. The Wyndham Scheme marked such a settlement. When the private sector is prosperous, as it was in the 1950s, the state is able to meet competing demands: it responds to appeals by spending more on service provision. However, in periods of economic contraction, the state lacks the resources to meet these entreaties. Such conditions have prevailed in recent decades and have been intensified by the globalisation of the world economy, which has diminished the individual nation's capacity to control its own economy. In such circumstances the state seeks to reduce its services. As Anna Yeatman explains:

> The essence of this reshaping has been to reorient the business of the public sector so that it no longer services a welfare state, but instead services a state which defines its primary objective as one of fostering a competitive economy ... the replacement of public policy objectives couched in terms of social goods by public policy objectives couched in terms of economic goods.[115]

NOTES

1. Wyndham, address Staff Conference, 17 Jan. 1958, WP, ML mss 5089, 24(38).
2. Wyndham, Some Aspects of the Nineteen-Fifties and Sixties in Secondary Education in New South Wales, typescript, 12 Dec. 1984, WP, ML mss 5089, 6(38).
3. Wyndham, Interview, U. Bygott, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
4. For example, see R. Connell, *Making the Difference: schools, families and social division*, Sydney, Allen and Unwin, 1982, p. 122, pp. 169–171.
5. H. Yelland, Interview by author.
6. Committee Appointed to Survey Secondary Education in NSW (H. Wyndham, Chair), *Report*, Sydney, Government Printer, 1958, p. 82.
7. Wyndham, External Course Curriculum, Macquarie University, Sydney, 1982, WP, ML mss 5089, 5(38).
8. Wyndham Committee, *Report*, p. 94.
9. Wyndham, address Staff Conference, 17 Jan. 1958, WP, ML mss 5089, 24(38).
10. Wyndham Committee, *Report*, p. 98.
11. Wyndham, Salient Features, WP, ML mss 5089, 14(38).
12. Dr Murray Print; cited in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 8 Aug. 1995.
13. Wyndham, Secondary Education: the need for change, lecture Spring Forum of the Australian Institute of Political Science, 15 Sep. 1960, WP, ML mss 5089, 24(38).
14. *Ibid.*
15. Wyndham, address Staff Conference, 17 Jan. 1958, WP, ML mss 5089, 24(38).
16. *Ibid.*
17. Wyndham, address Workers Education Association, Wollongong, 31 May, 1966, WP, ML mss 5089, 26(38).

18. R. McCulloch, 'The development of grading and grouping methods' in G. W. Bassett, *Each One is Different: teaching for individual differences in the primary school*, Melbourne, ACER, 1964, p. 105.
19. A. Webster to author, 15 May, 1993.
20. Wyndham, Taped Interview, Hazel De Berg, NLA.
21. J. O'Brien, *A Divided Unity: politics of NSW teacher militancy since 1945*, Sydney, Allen and Unwin, 1987, p. 11.
22. *Ibid,* p. 49.
23. Wyndham to K. Smith, 27 Sep. 1977, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
24. R. Carlin, Interview by author, 16 Aug. 1993. The Public Service Board and its role is examined further in Chapter 9 of the present study.
25. Wyndham, Interview, U. Bygott, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38). Hillyard, Vines and Slowey represented the churches.
26. B. Pope, An Exploration of the Links Between State-Provided Secondary Schooling and the Class Interests of Professional and Professionalising Groups, MA thesis, Canberra CAE, 1986, p. 70.
27. *Ibid,* p. 64.
28. *Ibid,* p. 71.
29. The evidence presented to the Committee is reviewed at length in K. Smith, Influence and Leadership in Educational Policy Making at State Level: a case study of the Wyndham Report and the NSW Education Act, 1961, PhD thesis, University of New England, 1975.
30. Dr M. S. Brown, University of Sydney, submission to Wyndham Committee, n.d., NSWSA, 8/2264.
31. *Ibid.*
32. *Ibid.* For an instructive analysis of the English public school tradition of character building see G. McCulloch, *Philosophers and Kings: education for leadership in modern England*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1991, Chapters 2 and 3.
33. Dr M. S. Brown, submission to Wyndham Committee, NSWSA, 8/2264.
34. NSWTF submission to Wyndham Committee with notes by Hedley Yelland, n.d., NSWSA, 8/2265.
35. J. Duffield, The Making of the Wyndham Scheme or Whatever Happened to Selective Secondary Education, paper ANZHES Conference, Newcastle, 1989, p. 36.
36. *Ibid,* p. 36.
37. NSWTF submission to Wyndham Committee, NSWSA, 8/2265.
38. Wyndham, Secondary Education: the need for change, WP, ML mss 5089, 24(38).
39. Wyndham, Secondary Education Report, typescript, n.d. WP, ML mss 5089, 20(38).
40. *Ibid.*
41. H. Yelland, Interview by author.
42. Wyndham to K. Smith, 1 May, 1975, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
43. Wyndham, Interview, J. Burnswoods, WP, ML mss 5089, 26(38).
44. Wyndham, Secondary Education: the need for change, WP, ML mss 5089, 24(38).
45. Wyndham, address Staff Conference, 17 Jan. 1958, WP, ML mss 5089, 24(38).
46. *Ibid.*
47. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA.
48. Wyndham, Secondary Education: the need for change, WP, ML mss 5089, 24(38).

49. *Ibid.*
50. Wyndham, speech Annual Meeting Girl Guides' Association, 19 Sep. 1962, WP, ML mss 5089, 22(38).
51. Wyndham to C. Harper, Education editor, The Sydney Morning Herald, 24 Sep. 1984, WP, ML mss 5089, 6(38). See also, L. Johnson, *The Modern Girl: social definitions of growing up in Australia in the 1950s and early 60s*, London, Open University Press, 1993, Chap. 4.
52. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA.
53. Wyndham, Secondary Education: the need for change, WP, ML mss 5089, 24(38).
54. *Ibid.*
55. *Ibid.*
56. *Ibid.*
57. *Ibid.*
58. For further discussion of the English public school view of the role of sixth form see McCulloch, *Philosophers*, pp 14 and 96.
59. Wyndham, Secondary Education: the need for change, WP, ML mss 5089, 24(38).
60. *Ibid.*
61. Wyndham, address Staff Conference, 17 Jan. 1958, WP, ML mss 5089, 24(38).
62. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA.
63. *Ibid.*
64. Wyndham, address Staff Conference, 17 Jan. 1958, WP, ML mss 5089, 24(38).
65. Wyndham, External Course Curriculum, Macquarie University, Sydney, 1982, WP, ML mss 5089, 5(38).
66. Wyndham, Salient Features of Developments Abroad, typescript, n.d., WP, ML mss 5089, 14(38).
67. Committee Appointed by the Minister for Education to Enquire into the Education of the Talented Child (C. L. Macdonald, Chair), *Report*, Sydney, NSW Department of Education, 1977, p. 9.
68. *Ibid.*
69. Wyndham, NSW Survey of Secondary Education, lecture Kuring-gai CAE, 13 Oct. 1975, WP, ML mss 5089, 16(38).
70. Wyndham, Secondary Education Report, WP, ML mss 5089, 20(38).
71. Wyndham, Some Aspects of the Nineteen-Fifties and Sixties, 1984, p. 3, WP, ML mss 5089, 6(38).
72. Wyndham to Ms P. Giffney, journalist for *The Sun*, 22 Nov. 1968, WP, ML mss 5089, 3(38).
73. B. McGaw, *Shaping Their Future: recommendations for reform of the Higher School Certificate*, Sydney, Department of Training and Education Co-ordination NSW, 1997, p. 5.
74. Wyndham, Secondary Education Report, WP, ML mss 5089, 20(38).
75. Wyndham to C. Harper, 22 Jul. 1975, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
76. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA.
77. Eventually, Wyndham hoped, the School Certificate would become internal 'along the lines of assessment outlined in the Fyfe Report of Scotland'. Wyndham, Interview, J. Burnswoods, WP, ML mss 5089, 26(38).
78. Wyndham, Secondary Education Report, WP, ML mss 5089, 20(38).
79. *Ibid.*
80. Wyndham Committee, *Report*, p. 69
81. *Ibid*, p. 49.

82. *Ibid.*
83. *Ibid,* p. 52.
84. Wyndham, Secondary Education: the need for change, WP, ML mss 5089, 24(38).
85. O'Brien, *A Divided Unity*, p. 18.
86. *Ibid.*
87. Wyndham to Principal, Cheltenham Girls' High School, 3 May, 1975, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
88. Wyndham, address Workers Education Association, Wollongong, 31 May, 1966, WP, ML mss 5089, 26(38).
89. The role of statutory authorities and boards is discussed further in Chapter 9.
90. J. Buggie to author, 23 Apr. 1993.
91. Wyndham to J. McLaren, 13 Nov. 1968, WP, ML mss 5089, 3(38).
92. Wyndham, Report to Conference of Directors of Education, 19 May, 1952, NSWSA, 19/8240.
93. Wyndham, Secondary Education Report, WP, ML mss 5089, 20(38).
94. D. Swan and K. McKinnon, *Future Directions of Secondary Education: a report*, Sydney, Government Printer, 1984.
95. Wyndham, Secondary Education Report, WP, ML mss 5089, 20(38).
96. *Ibid.*
97. *Ibid.*
98. Wyndham, Some Aspects of the Nineteen-Fifties and Sixties, 1984, WP, ML mss 5089, 6(38).
99. Wyndham, Secondary Education Report, WP, ML mss 5089, 20(38).
100. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA.
101. Wyndham, Some Aspects of the Nineteen-Fifties and Sixties, 1984, WP, ML mss 5089, 6(38).
102. Committee of Review of NSW Schools, *Report*, Sydney, New South Wales Government, 1989.
103. McGaw, *Shaping Their Future*, pp. 119–120.
104. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA.
105. Wyndham, NSW Survey, Kuring-gai, WP, ML mss 5089, 16(38).
106. Wyndham to C. Harper, 22 Jul. 1975, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38). See also Wyndham Committee, *Report*, pp. 92–94.
107. Wyndham, NSW Survey, Kuring-gai, WP, ML mss 5089, 16(38).
108. Wyndham, submission to Minister of Education, 21 May, 1966, NSWSA, 8/2269.
109. Wyndham to K. Smith, 1 May, 1975, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
110. Wyndham, NSW Survey, Kuring-gai, WP, ML mss 5089, 16(38).
111. Pope, Links Between State-Provided Secondary Schooling, p. 57.
112. M. Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, London, Allen and Unwin, 1976, p. 108.
113. Wyndham, Secondary Education: the need for change, WP, ML mss 5089, 24(38).
114. Claus Offe as reported by B. Lingard, 'Corporate Federalism: the emerging approach to policy-making for Australian schools' in B. Lingard, J. Knight and P. Porter (eds.), *Schooling Reform in Hard Times*, London, Falmer Press, 1993.
115. A. Yeatman, 'Corporate Managerialisms and the Shift from Welfare to the Competition State', *Discourse*, vol. 13, no. 2, Apr. 1993, p. 3.

Chapter 7

Implementing the Wyndham Scheme

After the Wyndham Committee was established, Wyndham expected that the task would take about five years. Thereafter he hoped to tackle the problems of teacher and adult education.[1] He was to be disappointed. The Committee reported in 1957 but 'neither the minister nor cabinet was inclined to create a disturbance'.[2] Enrolments in secondary schools were on the rise but no marked increase was expected until about 1961. It took another four years before the Committee's report was implemented. During that time Wyndham had to contend with spirited opposition to his plans for reform.

Commentators on the Scheme have since generally agreed on the causes of this protracted delay. A major impediment was the powerful Public Service Board and its chairman Wallace Wurth, who believed the scheme was too radical and too costly. Another was the opposition of the Catholic faction, then dominant in the NSW Labor Party, which initially resisted the introduction of the Wyndham Scheme since it believed that it would handicap Catholic working-class students by forcing them to remain for another year at school. It took the consummate political skills of a new minister, Ernest Wetherell, to win the support of these groups. Wetherell succeeded Heffron as Minister for Education in 1960 when Heffron himself became Premier after J. J. Cahill's death. They were two of a 'small number of non-Catholics in a government dominated by Catholics who, for the most part, had no great commitment to public schools'.[3] The delay also allowed defenders of selective schools to marshal support for their retention.[4] Such rearguard actions succeeded in emasculating some key purposes of the *Report*, but an even greater threat arose after the *Report* was accepted when the universities insisted on introducing new matriculation standards.

The Opposition of the Public Service Board

The first stumbling block was the opposition of the Public Service Board, which believed the Scheme was too expensive. Since the Board directly employed most State public servants, including teachers, and was responsible for the determination of the conditions of employment, as well as the appointment, discipline and remuneration of its employees, its

opposition could not be ignored. Wyndham disputed its claims. The inevitable increase in costs, he stressed, attendant upon burgeoning enrolments would be less under a comprehensive system. He also pointed out that the Department maintained a forward list of schools to be built, based on projected enrolments and data from other government authorities, and both the Director-General and the Minister were kept informed of five-year projections of enrolments. Some discrepancies which later occurred arose from 'the increased holding power of forms five and six, beyond that which the Committee had intended'. On the basis of these figures costs per pupil were known. Treasury itself made an estimate during the 'delay period' of costs, one which Wyndham thought conservative, and the situation was 'not helped by the intervention of the Public Service Board, which informed the Treasury that the Department's forecasts were inflated. They proved to be correct until after 1966.' Many of the objections to the costs of the Scheme, Wyndham later claimed, arose from decisions made about organisation and curriculum by the two new Boards.[5]

A huge increase in costs was inevitable on account of the postwar increase in births but it was expected that the general rate of increase in the school population would slow after 1964.[6] Nevertheless, the requirement of a common core curriculum and an extra year would necessarily impose additional costs to those inevitably attendant on increasing enrolments. The *Report* envisaged a substantial increase in the enrolments of pupils for the fourth and sixth forms respectively. This would impose an additional and huge burden, arising from the need for specialised scientific equipment, an increase in the number of schools which would need to be built, and the costs of equipping existing schools to meet new course requirements. It was estimated in 1959 that, when the reorganisation had been completed, the annual revenue cost for primary and secondary education and teacher training would rise by £725,000, £600,000 of which would go on teachers' salaries. The balance would be required for conveyance, bursaries, school supplies and ancillary costs:

> It is considered that the cost of implementing the scheme over the period of its growth will be approximately £4 million. This is not a recurrent expenditure. It takes into account the full impact of the capital expenditure of all aspects including teacher training. It will occur principally over the financial years 1963–64, 1964–65 and 1965–66.[7]

The financial costs of implementing the *Report* were likely to prove considerable, especially in meeting the need for additional teachers. By the mid–1950s the Education Department was faced with a critical shortage of teachers. Under the new system the diversification of subjects and classes would cease and in all schools the same subjects would be taught, at least

to the School Certificate level. The *Report* also recommended that in the first year of secondary schooling the same teacher should teach more than one subject to the same class thus retaining a degree of continuity with primary school arrangements. Such reforms would require a large number of additional teachers and it would be necessary to revise completely the methods of teacher training.[8] During the 'waiting phase' provision for further staff was made by increasing the number of teachers' college scholarships from 282 in 1955 to 525 in 1960. By 1964 some 1348 were taken up.[9] By 1958 Wyndham was to confess that the supply of teachers was 'nearly exhausted', with some twenty-five per cent of Leaving Certificate graduates entering teachers' colleges, but it was hoped that higher retention in secondary schools would provide more candidates for teacher training.[10] With the help of such arguments Wyndham was eventually able to win the support of the Public Service Board. Because of the scarcity of archival material and uncertainty as to the attitudes of individual members, little more is known regarding the precise reasons for their change of mind.

The Opposition of the ALP Catholic Faction

It is possible to speak more confidently of the means employed for the reversal of opposition from other quarters. Foremost of the opponents was the Catholic ALP group. This group's influence in the 1950s was greatly magnified by the ALP split of 1954–56. In the years that followed, the ALP in NSW was determined to avoid the defection of the Catholic faction. In Victoria the Catholic group had left the party and formed the Democratic Labor Party whose existence was to deny Labor government in Victoria and federally for many years. In his detailed analysis of the causes of the delay Smith highlights the importance of the hostility of this group to the extension of junior secondary schooling by a further year. Smith's emphasis, Wyndham later acknowledged, was accurate:

> You have indicated, quite fairly, the underlying causes of the delay in government action on the *Report*. Much of the talk of 'the extra year' reflected confusion as to whether it was the year of form four or form six. The former was the chief concern of politicians of a certain faith, to whom the Intermediate Certificate was the 'poor man's Leaving', and who ignored the evidence of the Committee that the average age of apprenticeship was fifteen years and eleven months, a year later than the average age of sitting the Intermediate. I appreciated the hesitancy of Mr Heffron, however impatient it made me.[11]

Determined opposition by a group of left-wing Catholic ALP members of parliament who held a majority on the Caucus education subcommittee was indeed the major impediment to the rapid implementation of the *Report*.

Heffron, although he supported reform of secondary education, was loath to alienate this group. Privation would be visited on poorer parents, this group argued, when they were obliged to keep their children at school a further year if a fourth year School Certificate replaced the existing third year Intermediate. Since the minimum leaving age was to remain at 15, they believed that the new School Certificate would diminish the opportunity for Catholic working class children to gain qualifications. It would also impose additional costs on a Catholic school system already financially straitened. Not only the additional year but the requirement of the common core curriculum that every child be provided with a four-year course which would now include science, art, music and craft, might precipitate financial ruin for the church school system.[12]

Wyndham noted that for both the Government and the Minister personally, though for different reasons], 'any move likely to disturb the educational "status quo" was considered politically inopportune'.[13] This was manifest from the outset. The Director-General's recommendation that a survey be undertaken had been received with caution, even reluctance. This caution, continuing even after the tabling of the *Report*, 'gave the "obstructionists" initial encouragement'. By the time the Minister, soon to be Premier, had come to the view that support for the *Report* could be a political asset, it needed a new Minister, Ernest Wetherell, who 'had a special relationship with caucus, which allowed him to carry through the project with resolution'. To this task, Wetherell brought 'not only his personal standing in the Party, and a keen political shrewdness, but an understanding of what the *Report* signified: everything in 1961 depended upon his personality and tactics'.[14]

Ernest Wetherell was a man of 'quite different temperament and different background and affiliations' from Heffron. Wetherell had a daughter, a son and two sisters who were teachers. Wyndham had taught with one of Wetherell's sisters at North Newtown Public School in 1928. After the war he had inspected the teaching of the other sister. When Wyndham paid his first formal call on his new minister, Wetherell asked what was being done about the secondary education report and Wyndham replied that 'the ball's in your court, not mine'. He reminded Wetherell of the objections of the ALP group, and Wetherell responded, 'Oh, we will see about that.' Thereafter Wyndham knew:

> he was seeing about it. I went along the corridor [at Bridge Street] one day and noticed the headmaster of a school on the far south coast who should have been in charge of his school, but I didn't bat an eyelid because I knew he'd called in to see the Minister as the Minister worked through Caucus, he worked through the Teachers' Federation and so forth with the result that the ALP

> conference in June 1961 carried the resolution that the recommendations of the commission should be adopted and forthwith.[15]

Legislation soon followed: 'As is often the practice, I wrote a speech, headed in accordance with protocol, "Notes by the Minister". I was astonished to hear him read my efforts practically verbatim ... as the Minister spoke, the determination and honesty of the man shone through and an impressed House listened'.[16] The successful passage of the *Education Act* 1961 was due, Wyndham believed, to:

> the quite clear determination of Ernest Wetherell. He had the advantage of being a highly respected member of the Labor Government, a completely immovable person, when he saw an issue and judged it to be right .... He'd become Minister for Education when Mr Heffron became Premier and within three months he had all the machinery of political persuasion working to bring about what I learnt was a vote with the biggest majority on record at the ALP conference.[17]

Heffron's support, Wyndham believed, had allowed the establishment of the Committee, but without Wetherell's intervention legislation would never have been introduced:

> If Mr Heffron had not accepted my recommendation, that a Committee of a certain kind with a certain set of references should be set up, if he had not won the support of the Premier of the day, the Secondary Education Inquiry would never have started ... it was Ernest Wetherell who rescued that report from the limbo of political indecision and he and I could tell a story of marches and counter marches, of meetings at 10 or 11 at night at undisclosed places and of days when with his customary dry humour had me on tenterhooks over the telephone for some five minutes before he broke the news of certain powers that had cleared the way for the next stage to be taken.[18]

The long delay gave Wyndham a better opportunity for both public discussion and staff preparation. It allowed further estimates of cost to be made, both of capital and recurrent expenditure and of staffing in public secondary schools, and for staff exercises to be held to determine the extent to which the new proposals could be put into effect with existing staff and buildings.[19] Nevertheless the political indecision of four years did retard preparations in regard to staff training, the design of new buildings, the provision of facilities, and the preparation of materials. There was a limit, beyond which, anybody, and Wyndham in particular, could 'appear to anticipate a government decision which it was refraining from making'.[20] Wyndham often came close to exceeding that limit.

> I make no apology for my active campaign of 'community education' nor for encouraging senior members of staff to do likewise. A nice question of civil service ethics arises here. No officer, especially the Permanent Head, should embarrass his Minister. Thus, while I knew I was helping to create increasing community pressure for change, I was careful to speak as Chairman of the Committee, and to expound the *Report* to people who might not have had the chance to read it or, if they had, wished to ask questions about it. Above all, it was necessary to ensure that teachers understood what was involved.[21]

Some saw Wyndham's evangelising as bureaucratic impertinence:

> I did take it to the point where there were two or three members or parliament who rather complained. I went around the country at invitation so very often to explain what the *Report* and its recommendations meant. Those two or three members of parliament who objected said that I was trying to say what was going to happen before the Government had made a decision. I was very careful to always say that there had been no decision but this is what was involved and this was why I said members of Cabinet were giving it careful consideration.[22]

In expectation of the *Report* being introduced, Wyndham had, more than half a dozen times, gone to Parliament House only to leave disappointed. When it did go forward in 1961 it was introduced hastily so as to form part of the Labor Party's platform for the State election due before the end of that year.[23] Detractors claim that the Scheme was never properly trialled and 'its introduction was like an elephant rolling over'.[24] Many teachers 'hated Wyndham because of this but they didn't understand the political imperative'.[25] Wyndham conceded that this sudden introduction meant that the schools 'were ill prepared, not unprepared, because as I say these staff conferences and deliberate preparation work had been going on but it was short notice. But it was a case of short notice or probably no scheme'.[26] When the Government announced that it:

> would put the new scheme into effect in February next year, commencing with the incoming first year, one was confronted with the choice. Either to reject, or indeed persuade one's masters that this was an unwise decision on the grounds that everything was not ready. Or to accept it. To choose between a completed blueprint and a try-out.[27]

The pattern of organisation in the comprehensive secondary schools, the Minister reassured parents, would make 'specific provision for the selection of pupils of ability'. The costs to the State of the new scheme, Wetherell promised Parliament, 'would be more than offset by supplying the higher education that is demanded by society, commerce, industry and all other productive forces in our community'.[28] The legislation presented to Parliament by Wetherell on 9 November 1961 endeavoured to allay the

criticisms from the Catholic group within the Labor Party by retaining the Intermediate Certificate and those of the supporters of selective schools by preserving several existing selective high schools.

Comprehensive vs Selective

Claims as to the relative merits of selective and comprehensive schools even today provoke a great deal of inconclusive discussion, to which this present study need not add. Nevertheless, since it is so often claimed that it was the Wyndham Scheme which first introduced comprehensive education to NSW, the issues central to this debate warrant closer examination. The basic distinctions are fairly clear, though the validity of the claims for the advantages of the respective arrangements remain uncertain. The features which distinguish comprehensive from selective schools centre around a series of loosely defined beliefs in expanded educational opportunity, delayed choice of occupation (and consequent specialisation) and a shared or common culture. The ideal comprehensive creates a lower secondary organisation very similar to that of the primary school model, insofar as it takes practically all the children from a given district and offers them a common core curriculum. Such a school will not, however, be divided into distinct, separately organised streams. A secondary school so arranged would be a multilateral school, as most secondary schools in NSW were before the Wyndham Scheme.

The comprehensive school was variously defined, but incorporated several characteristic elements at the lower secondary level which distinguish it from other forms of organisation. Firstly, it was a neighbourhood or community school serving a given catchment area. Secondly, it offered an approximately common curriculum containing elements of a broad, general education for all students at least up to age fourteen. Grouping of students according to aptitude and ability was widely practised, yet there was an 'understanding' that, where possible, at least some mixed grouping would occur and a policy of mixing was adopted as a norm, either for age levels or for subject areas. Finally, positive efforts were made to plot educationally defensible paths and routes through the curriculum for all students without special favour to minorities, unless they were shown to be significantly disadvantaged.[29]

Stratification from fourteen onwards on the basis of ability, school performance and vocational objectives was generally accepted in the comprehensive model, but if there was too much divergence, the school, it was argued, began to resemble the old system of separate post-elementary streams, with the risk of status differentials and very unequal outcomes

under the guise of meeting different individual and group needs. Selective schools represented such a divergence:

> The principle of comprehensive schooling would simply no longer apply if neither a common curriculum nor any form of mixed grouping were practised, if institutional separation occurred and if it were to be accepted that students were bound to occupational directions with quite different and unequal social status.[30]

In England the 1944 *Education Act*, which represented a high water mark for support for stratified education in Britain, insisted that 'the schools available for an area shall be not be deemed sufficient unless they afford for all pupils opportunities for education offering such variety of instruction and training as may be desirable in view of their different ages, abilities and aptitudes'.[31] The Act reflected the view which had been prevalent for several decades and which regained currency in the 1980s and 1990s: that there are different types of child with different qualities of mind and intelligence who require different types of school. In the postwar period this conviction was weakened by attacks from sociological and psychological research. Sociological research showed a wastage of ability, particularly of working-class children, and psychologists in the immediate postwar period increasingly questioned the accuracy or predictive reliability of selection procedures at the age of 11. A series of sociological surveys in Great Britain in the early 1950s pointed to the relationship between social class and educational opportunity and argued that the selective system favoured the wealthier classes and resulted in a wastage of ability. From about the mid–1950s onwards the theory and practice of intelligence testing, and particularly its role in selection for secondary education, was subjected to a radical critique.[32] It came to be accepted that test results reflected to some extent the child's environment, which called into question, not only selection for different schools, but streaming within the one school.

The 1947 report of the Scottish Advisory Council on Education, in firmly rejecting a tripartite organisation, echoed this revisionist stance:

> the whole scheme rests on an assumption which teacher and psychologist alike must challenge: that children of twelve sort themselves into three categories to which these three types of school correspond. It is difficult enough to assess general ability at that age, how much harder to determine specific bents and aptitudes with the degree of accuracy that would justify this three-fold classification.[33]

In 1955 a survey by P. E. Vernon covering all boys aged fourteen in Southampton claimed that the IQ score of boys selected for grammar or technical schools rose by an average of 4.9 points in three to four years,

while those allocated to modern schools declined by 1.9 points.[34] The British Psychological Society's special working party of leading educational psychologists in its 1957 report modified the earlier view that intelligence was immutably fixed, admitted that it was partly a result of environmental stimulation, and subsequently argued that selection at the age of ten or eleven be suspended and that streaming in junior school be avoided.

The British Government was at that time also confronted with political pressure from middle-class parents, who found that the expansion of overall pupil numbers in secondary schools had closed off to their children the high-status selective grammar schools where they had customarily been enrolled.[35] Comprehensive education offered one means of accommodating this surge in demand. Popular support for social democratic initiatives also was encouraging governments to mount programs to redress social inequalities. London County Council reflected the strength of this feeling in its London School Plan of 1947 when it established 103 comprehensive schools with the aim of promoting, 'all-round growth and development, physical, intellectual, social and spiritual ... (since) it seems indefensible to categorise schools on the basis of intellect only'.[36] British Labor governments were of course more susceptible to such pressures. They were also persuaded by evidence of wastage of ability in the stratified system but even more so by a wish to increase equality of opportunity.[37] The social democratic dream of a more unified, harmonious social system led to a desire for a more unified schooling system. These concerns were further reinforced in the 1960s by a preoccupation with more effectively employing education to harness science to generate wealth and to compete, militarily and economically, with the USA and USSR.

In Australia, social democratic sentiments also inspired much of the new interest in comprehensive schools. Many committed Australian supporters of comprehensive schools saw them as agents of social change and argued that selective schools threatened national unity and harmony. The resentment of arrangements which allocated some students to academic secondary schools while others were offered a different, semi-vocational curriculum in less prestigious technical, junior home science and other schools, as in Britain, was fanned by the pressure of numbers arising from the surge in the birth rate in the 1940s together with increased retention encouraged by the growth of white-collar jobs and increasing economic prosperity.[38]

Despite such themes being prominent in the Wyndham Report many selective high schools managed to retain their traditional status. Since selection for secondary school was a Departmental prerogative it was not included in the legislation, but the Minister for Education in his Second Reading Speech for the Education Bill of 1961 justified the anomaly of

maintaining some selective schools as being necessary, since the location of some selective schools made it 'well nigh impossible to constitute them as local area secondary schools', and because they were 'schools with a long-established history which no sensible person would wish to ignore'.[39]

The political cost of abolishing a selective school could indeed be so high that a sensible politician would ignore it at his or her peril. For example, despite the Teacher Federation's vigorous support for abolishing selection, the staff of some selective high schools demanded the maintenance of selective schools within the proposed new comprehensive system.[40] Graduates of these schools and parents of current students also rallied to their defence. The likely conversion of their school to a comprehensive model became at first the object of their contempt and at last of their fears and jealousy. Many considered the nobility of their school part of their own personal merit. With their members often holding prominent positions in the community, such parent groups and associations of former students, connected by what they saw as the intimate ties of a shared and superior schooling, were able to mount powerful campaigns for the retention of their school. Agitation of this nature did not always succeed. Opposition to converting Newcastle Girls' High into a comprehensive, co-educational school not only failed but provoked other parents and teachers to agitate for the abolition of all selective high schools.[41] Defenders of comprehensive provision argued that its implementation would ensure that secondary education was not confined to a privileged social or intellectual minority but was equally available as a right to all adolescents.[42] This liberal notion of equality of opportunity attracted support from within the Labor Party and a community which continued to demand higher levels of education for its children.[43] Supporters of comprehensive schools deplored the retention of a few selectives as 'a concession to powerful ex-pupil associations'.[44] Opponents of selective schools had few doubts about their shortcomings. For example, Hedley Yelland argued that only comprehensive schools could bring the best out of everyone and not just the top. As an inspector, Yelland had concluded that selective schools were inefficient: 'the merely good suffered while the very good prospered, plus you can't tell at the age of twelve what a youngster is capable of'. If the secondary school was large enough students could be assigned in each subject to a class of similar ability.[45]

The implementation of the *Report*, which started in 1962, began a general trend towards making older high schools in Sydney more comprehensive. Gradually junior high schools were either closed and their pupils transferred to a neighbouring school, or the junior high school was upgraded and established as a six-year high school in a new building. The same procedure was followed with junior technical and home science schools.[46] Many high

schools which had previously not provided for general activities type pupils now instituted classes for them. All new high schools built in the outer suburbs of Sydney in the 1960s and 1970s were comprehensive, co-educational six-year schools.[47] Wyndham was prepared, however, to make exceptions for some selective schools, such as his own former high school, Fort Street Boys' High:

> In NSW as a general policy, we have set our face against pre-selection on the basis of primary school attainments ... our policy has been modified, however, in regard to schools like Fort Street and Sydney Boys High for two reasons. First, with the growth of other high schools nearby, the remaining feeder areas for Fort Street would be very small and in the case of Sydney Boys High almost non-existent, since the school is surrounded by parklands. The second motive has been that we have been hesitant, for reasons of any particular blueprint, to make violent changes in regard to schools with a long historical tradition. The resulting compromise works somewhat as follows: pupils who qualify to proceed to secondary school and who live in what can be regarded as the present feeder area for, say, Fort Street, proceed to Fort Street. At the same time boys living outside that feeder area, whose assessment mark at the end of primary is beyond a certain point, have the option of seeking enrolment at such a school as Fort Street, or of attending their nearest secondary school. I should add that in the case of Sydney Boys High, this wider area from which pupils may be drawn is limited to the eastern suburbs and in the case of Fort Street, to the western suburbs of Sydney. I should also add that it has always been the practice for our Department to permit the enrolment of the sons of the old boys, provided that the son meets the usual requirements for entry into high school.[48]

As 'area high schools' based on the new comprehensive model sprang up adjacent to selective schools problems arose. As it does today, the difficulty of maintaining the selective nature of the older schools while ensuring reasonable standards of entry for the neighbouring comprehensive schools remained. If the pupil intake for a selective school was restricted to its immediate vicinity, it would, by definition, cease to be selective, but, if the intake extended widely into the areas of other schools the quality of their intake would suffer. The range of selection was widened for Sydney Boys' High School and Sydney Girls' High School, which were both located at Moore Park. These two high schools were to act as local schools for the top 25 per cent of ability in their immediate neighbourhood and provision was also made for the attendance of children of ex-pupils and for brothers or sisters of existing pupils. A number of schools distant from Moore Park were to remain 'closed' schools, i.e. they would enrol all pupils in their locality including the most able.[49]

Despite these official pronouncements, the evidence presently available on Wyndham's private attitude to selective schools is ambiguous. One of his contemporaries later reported that he did 'carry a torch' for selective schools and that he 'would never contemplate abolishing them'. According to this source, he thought they challenged children and brought out the best in them,[50] but his wife, Margaret Wyndham, asserted that 'if he had been able, he would have tried to do away with selective schools altogether'.[51]

When the Professorial Board of the University of Sydney expressed its concern to the Minister that eliminating selective schools would diminish the quality of matriculants Wyndham advised the Minister that such a preference for selective schools ignored the ample evidence that 'pre-selection' of pupils was reliable only in respect of a minority. He reminded the Minister that the preparation of successful undergraduates was not the sole purpose of secondary education and that the interests of the total group needed to be recognised. There was, he noted, 'a considerable, and growing, body of political opinion opposed to "selective" schools in an equally sweeping fashion'. A better alternative would be to select the more able students upon more reliable criteria within a comprehensive secondary school. Wyndham seems to have realised that the wisdom and authority of the professional is seldom victorious in a contest with private interests when he acknowledged that 'traditions could not be ignored' and schools such as Sydney High and Fort Street would need to be retained and 'might serve as centres for senior pupils from wider areas where schools could not sustain a sixth year'.[52]

University Opposition

The retention of selective schools represented the most serious long term threat to the comprehensive school model but more immediately damaging to the aspirations of the Wyndham Report was the trenchant opposition by NSW universities to the proposed new matriculation standards. The requirements of the universities, Wyndham believed, had, for too long exercised, a 'powerful and stultifying grip on secondary education', but this was not entirely due to ill-will on the part of the universities. Some of it could be attributed to the persistent 'examination complex', which resulted in a single senior examination having to serve a host of different purposes.[53] Perhaps because of tradition, this single examination seemed inevitably to drift towards satisfying only one purpose: university entrance. To some extent, too, the blame should also fall on teachers, syllabus committees, and administrators (such as Wyndham), who failed to use what powers they had. One of the points of major dispute with the Wyndham Scheme was the

attempt to diminish university influence by quarantining the first four years of secondary schooling. The other was the use of various levels designed, it was claimed, to cater for differing aims rather than varying degrees of difficulty. First and second levels were to lead to university studies while third level was meant to be broader and to be free from higher requirements. If this proposal worked in practice it would herald a significant advance. Unfortunately, ominous signs emerged that it might not be given a chance when the universities of Sydney and New South Wales announced in 1965 that their entrance requirements would be four passes at second level and one at third level. If these requirements were imposed, and only five subjects could be taken, the margin of error for most students would be zero. One slip in their second level subjects would disqualify them. The practical result was likely to be that the third level subjects would rarely be chosen: better to take all subjects at second level and let the slips work themselves out. A further likely effect was that, with schools tightly staffed, not enough students would elect third level subjects to warrant their being offered. In short, the non-university entrant pupils 'would go on missing out'.[54]

Wyndham protested to a joint committee of NSW universities comprising professors representing the universities of New South Wales, Newcastle, New England, the Australian National University and Sydney, formed to devise their new matriculation rules. Those who defended the universities argued that it was a mistake for all sixth year students to aim at matriculation. But schools knew that students were usually not convinced of this until they had tried and failed. The 1965 State elections saw the Labor Party defeated. The new Liberal-Country Party Government appointed C. B. [later Sir Charles] Cutler,[55] from the Country Party to replace Wetherell as Minister for Education. Clearly, the dispute with the universities occurred at a politically sensitive juncture for Wyndham. As the issue became increasingly heated and of media interest, David Verco, the Deputy Director General of Education, conveyed Wyndham's advice to the new Minister: 'to stick to the line that the universities are their own masters'.[56]

In late August 1965, before departing for Europe, Wyndham wrote to the Senate of the University of Sydney rejecting its proposed requirements. He made it clear that:

> neither as Director-General nor as Chairman of the Board of Senior School Studies do I assume any right to say what the matriculation requirements of the University should be .... My anxiety in regard to the Senate's decision is twofold. Firstly, the Board of Senior School Studies must maintain the standards it has laid down in respect of individual subjects to be examined at the Higher School Certificate. The matriculation requirements, because they demand a pass at a uniformly high standard in every subject but one, of those which the

> candidates will be able to present, will constitute a demand which is unlikely to be met by a reasonable number of candidates for entrance to the University. Secondly, those requirements are likely to have the effect in schools of destroying a significant part of the educational value of the curriculum and the organisation which the Board of Senior School Studies has provided.[57]

Wyndham claimed that the new secondary school pattern represented an abandonment of the practice of organising pupils into what was considered to be ability groups, 'every member of which followed much the same curriculum, with subjects at the same level of difficulty'. Instead of this 'streaming' of pupils, provision had been made for each pupil, within the limits of staffing and timetables, to develop an individual pattern of studies. These patterns would differ from one pupil to another, in respect of the subjects studied and the level at which they were studied. This variety of individual course patterns would be reflected in the results of successful candidates at the forthcoming School Certificate Examination. The same principle:

> will govern the choice of courses of study in forms five and six and, it has been hoped, would be reflected in the results of the Higher School Certificate. Secondly, the selective nature of the enrolment of these senior secondary school forms needs to be borne in mind. It is anticipated that even if the present tendency for pupils to remain longer at school continues, not more than twenty-five per cent of any 'generation' commencing secondary education will remain beyond the School Certificate stage to enter fifth form. This year, only forty-five per cent of the original first form remain to sit the School Certificate Examination and it is not expected that many more than half of these will seek enrolment in fifth form next year.[58]

The Board of Senior School Studies, Wyndham continued, had designed courses for fifth and sixth form maintaining the principle of individual patterns of study with 'all courses designed to challenge the abilities of a school enrolment representing, in general, an able minority of ability'. In most subjects courses had been prepared at three levels. This was

> in keeping with the intention of the new secondary school programme and is based on the belief that even the most able student is not equally competent in every field of study and that his needs are not best met by demanding that his syllabus of study should be the same in nature or standard in every subject.[59]

The third level was designed for those not continuing with the subject at university: second level was for those going to university. First level 'denotes a scope of work and level of difficulty suitable only for outstandingly able students in the field concerned'. The standard required

was, he asserted, better than honours at the former Leaving Certificate and second level was equivalent to an A pass. The Board assumed that 'all these facts are known in university circles' since seven of the nineteen members of the Board were university professors; 121 university staff were members of syllabus committees; and all syllabuses were made available to university. Wyndham realised with regret that

> the recommended requirements for matriculation approved by the Senate suggest that the Board's assumption has been ill-founded. These requirements come very close to demanding the impossible of many senior secondary school pupils and go far towards distorting the purpose of the Board of Senior School Studies in regard to this concluding stage of secondary education.[60]

The requirement of four second levels for matriculation would mean that students would study five second level subjects and avoid first level. If the proposal to accept, for matriculation purposes, 2F Maths in combination with 2F Science as three subjects was successful, the threat to the first level was even greater. If parents and students chose five subjects at second level to be safe this would also challenge the viability of third level. It would mean that students would have no time for discussion and reading across subjects.

> It is not possible to avoid the difficulties which arise from the fact that the Higher School Certificate Examination, like the Leaving Certificate Examination, has been established to mark the completion of secondary education, yet it is used as a means of selecting candidates for entrance to tertiary institutions.[61]

Even if only the top 25 per cent complete secondary education, Wyndham insisted that 'apart from any other consideration, their numbers [were] likely to be greater than the number of university places available'. Matriculation remained, nevertheless,

> something of a shibboleth in the community. While neither the universities or the schools are to blame for this attitude, the extent to which the matriculation requirements of the University of Sydney prescribe the content and pattern of the last two years of the secondary school course will create a serious educational problem.[62]

Wyndham anticipated strong parental pressure 'which school principals will be unable to resist, to allow their young people to attempt courses which will keep the door open to matriculation'. Not only will this result in a considerable number of young people studying courses which are suited neither to their special abilities nor to their later prospects, but 'it is likely

to jeopardise the standards which the Board of Senior School Studies hopes to achieve at "second" and "first" levels'.[63]

The storm broke when this protest to the University of Sydney Senate went public. The widespread popular interest in these issues was evident in the media's subsequent rapt attention to the dispute. *The Sydney Morning Herald* of 16 September 1965, emblazoned its front page with the headline: 'University Senate Divided: Split Over Standards for Matriculation.' It noted that many Senate members, on the advice of the Professorial Board, believed that the third level should be eliminated from matriculation and that second level in the new HSC was not equal to an A pass at the Leaving Certificate. Others 'led by Dr Wyndham' insisted that second level was equivalent to an A pass in the Leaving Certificate. In London, the previous night, Wyndham had told the *Herald*: 'My personal view is that the university has tended to underestimate the "standards" which the Board of Senior School Studies will require of the Higher School Certificate examination'.[64] The dispute, the *Herald* explained, had begun in August when the Professorial Board made certain recommendations to the Senate which, in Wyndham's absence gave its approval. Wyndham learned of them and after 'some delay wrote four pages of what has been described as trenchant criticism of the recommendations'. His arguments changed the minds of some members of the Senate and the Professorial Board who agreed to meet on the following Monday to reconsider their action.[65] The NSW Teachers' Federation, in attacking the new matriculation proposals, insisted that the standards suggested would force secondary education to meet the requirements of one examination, the HSC, and thereby neglect the needs of the majority of students, most of whom were not going on to university.[66] Despite such objections the University of NSW announced that it would require for matriculation, four of the five HSC subjects at second level, 'standards [which] correspond very closely to those recommended by the Professorial Board of the University of Sydney'.[67]

The clash over matriculation posed serious political risks for the new Government. By frustrating the hopes of parents with children half-way through secondary education:

> the standards of entry could have explosive political implications for the State Government ... both Government and opposition MLAs [Members of the Legislative Assembly] fear this would put university education beyond the reach of all but virtually the 'quiz kid' classes unless more universities and colleges are built soon. They believe that the aim of the Wyndham course, to develop children for well-balanced citizenship, would be destroyed in a race by students for high marks. Instead of being increasingly open to all, higher education would become the exclusive possession of an intellectual 'snobbocracy' ... the government is expected to have intense pressure placed on it to take a hand

> in the dispute ... [because] backbench MLAs are concerned with the trend to make university more exclusive at a time when more highly trained specialists are required.[68]

Several questions were asked of the Minister in the House to which he replied cautiously expressing confidence in the universities' sense of public responsibility.[69]

Without waiting for the University of Sydney to review its stance, Newcastle University, the University of New England and the University of New South Wales, announced in late September 1965 that they too would require five passes, four of which must be at second or first level. Most of these universities also required that a foreign language be included.[70] When the University of Sydney's Professorial Board reaffirmed its recommendations to the Senate, Cutler announced, 'amid mounting public concern', that he would soon confer with senior Departmental officers. Education Department senior officers, the *Herald* claimed, feared that many students would 'be discouraged from taking the Ordinary Level (Third Level) course and will attempt examinations beyond their capability'. The State Council of the NSW Teachers' Federation protested that the decision would bar large numbers of HSC students from university entry and several prominent independent school principals, such as the Rev. Douglas Trathen, headmaster of Newington College, also attacked the university requirements.[71] Even the Commonwealth Government became embroiled. Prime Minister, Robert Menzies, promised a 'precise inquiry' into the controversial matriculation rules and complained that his Government had not been consulted.[72]

The universities' defence was spirited and emphatic. Professor Rex Vowels, from the University of New South Wales, the chairman of the university joint committee on matriculation, argued that opposition to new matriculation standards arose from a misunderstanding of the relationship between the syllabuses at the three levels. It was wrong to assume, he contended, that first level, second level and third level corresponded respectively to the honours, A and B grades of pass in the Leaving Certificate. The distinction between first and second levels, he believed, was 'generally one of difficulty and intensiveness of study', whereas the distinction between second and third level was 'as much a difference in kind as in degree'; where they differed, they did so 'markedly in approach'. Third level, he insisted, was primarily for those not wishing to go on to university.[73]

Even Wyndham's own reputation now came under attack. J. Hirschhorn, Associate Professor of Mechanical Engineering, a member of the Council and the Academic Committee of the University of New South Wales, launched

a scathing attack on Wyndham. He believed that the controversy then raging was due to a misunderstanding of the nature of third level, which was:

> created especially for those who have a desire for a good general education, but do not intend to proceed to university. It should be understood that the treatment accorded to the various subjects at this level is so shallow that they cannot be used as a basis for further study in a particular field at a tertiary level. [74]

He noted that Wyndham had raised objections before the Academic Committee of the University of New South Wales, but:

> since he argued from the patently wrong premises that 'Level Three' was intrinsically of matriculation standard, his representations were duly disregarded. Frankly I cannot understand why Dr Wyndham should make such erroneous statements. Did he, in all these years, fail to keep himself informed of the progress and final decisions of his own syllabus committees? What the public should be concerned about at this juncture is the state of preparedness of the Department of Education. [75]

The furore over matriculation requirements even followed Wyndham overseas and he wrote to Verco (who was acting as Director-General in his absence):

> I have been chased from Sydney by both the *Herald* and the *Telegraph* and find it difficult of course to make comments at long distance. The *Telegraph* asked me whether, in view of the significance of the discussions, I had not given any thought to returning earlier than planned. I gave them an appropriate reply and an innocuous one. I have, however, debated the question seriously and have decided against it. As I see it my return would be no guarantee that I could swing the voting decisively in the right direction. My judgment here must depend upon my estimate of the attitude of the Professorial Board which, of course, is now almost a month out of date. Perhaps, I am being pessimistic. The situation which I would be at pains to avoid is that of being forced to be a party to an unsatisfactory compromise vote and it would seem to me that if I were to make a special trip to be present in the Senate next week, I would have to be a party to a decision one way or the other. I have also in mind the fact that a special flight in order to be present at the Senate would be likely to be made a '*cause célèbre*' by the press and this, I think, would be unfortunate from several points of view ... if the University (that is, the Professorial Board) is determined to persist in its attitude, I would rather they take full responsibility for their decision .... The Professorial Board is not sufficiently aware of the significance of the term 'level'; I do not need to say to you that this is not a question of standard so much as of type of course. ... The University people will not believe that we are dealing with (in Years eleven and twelve) the upper quarter of ability. [76]

The flurry of letters from private school headmasters opposing the universities' demands prompted the *Herald*'s editor to comment: 'The schoolmasters believe (apparently with the backing of the Department) that a pass at the third or basic level in the new scheme will be equal to a B pass in the present Leaving Certificate.' Professor Vowels organised a meeting of representatives of schools, the Department of Education and the universities but the *Herald* wondered:

> whether it will achieve much in the absence of Dr Wyndham, who is at present abroad ... [it is] vital that he should be there ... for the whole of the Wyndham reforms will be threatened if the universities get their way, since masters will naturally warn their fifth-year pupils that to have any hope of going to a university, they must take all their subjects at second level. In that case the third level, which was intended to give much needed elasticity to the system, would quickly acquire the stigma of failure. Come home, Dr Wyndham![77]

By early October, the University of Sydney announced that its matriculation standards for the first graduates of the Wyndham Scheme would the be same as those approved for the other three universities. A meeting of the university's Senate had agreed unanimously on these standards while Wyndham was overseas. Sir Stephen Roberts, the Vice-Chancellor, issued the statement of the Senate which included the promise that in the years 1968 and 1969 'and thereafter' no student quota would remain unfilled if there were sufficient applicants. The Vice Chancellor assured reporters that the words 'and thereafter' had been added by the unanimous decision of Senate and that 'that disposes of the argument that the new matriculation standards are only to keep the numbers down'.[78]

Wyndham became concerned lest the quarrel with the universities should embarrass the new Liberal Minister, Charles Cutler:

> I must confess that the worry about the whole situation has cast a cloud over my short visit here. I would be sorry to think that at this early stage of his tenure of office, the Minister may have been embarrassed by my absence, even though, as I believe, my presence would not have proved an asset.[79]

He expected to be confronted by reporters on his return to Mascot airport but proposed 'to say as little as possible'.[80]

Wyndham believed that 'while the University had every right to set its own entrance standards, it also had an obligation so to frame its requirements as not to impede, indeed thwart, the schools in their discharge of their proper function'. Much of the power that universities held over secondary schools, he concluded, derived from the peculiar status accorded to matriculation by the community and parents, and even some employers. He believed that Sydney's Professorial Board had not been adequately

informed of what lay behind the thinking of the Board of Senior School Studies regarding the nature and purpose of 'levels'. He blamed professorial Board members who were also members of the Board of Senior Studies for this.[81] He never ceased to insist that the universities had misunderstood the purpose of levels. They were not meant to be streams or levels of ability: 'This is precisely the type of secondary school organisation from which we have broken away .... I have long since rued the day when we agreed to use the term "level" in regard to various types of course offered at either stage of the secondary school course'.[82]

The university attacks continued to take their toll on the reputation both of the Wyndham Scheme and the Director-General himself. A. M. Ginges, from the Department of General Studies at the University of New South Wales, wrote to the *Herald*:

> Everyone knows that the Wyndham scheme went off half-cocked and now, after nearly four years, it seems that Dr Wyndham and his planners could be hoist by their own petard .... With a nice piece of computer work he [Wyndham] could pass just the right number to fill all the vacancies in the universities, no matter what their requirements happened to be. So don't cry over levels, cry over education.[83]

Wyndham's administrative style, according to some critics, contributed to the universities prevailing in this dispute. Wyndham was seen by many as a 'temporiser' compared to Robertson [Director-General, Western Australia] who was firm and intelligent.[84] One of Wyndham's contemporaries later claimed that:

> Hicks and others used to be nasty about Wyndham's lack of fortitude. It brought about his biggest loss when in his final run he didn't insist on the real Wyndham scheme going through. McKenzie would have told the universities to go to hell. The Wyndham Scheme deserves full credit for initiating proposals backed by the Teachers' Federation but it was taken out of his hands by the universities.[85]

Others, although denying that Wyndham was indecisive, concede that the false expectations of his enemies may have contributed to the delay in introducing the Scheme:

> though far less authoritarian and direct than such Department of Education leaders as John McKenzie and John Back, or John Baxter at the University of New South Wales, Wyndham's methods were likely to encourage productive discussion. He was prepared to listen to ideas and to examine them carefully. Some who believed they had influence with politicians who were involved in educational policymaking, tended to 'play down' his ideas and capacity. In my

> view some developments which he favoured were stalled because of such miscalculation and manoeuvring.[86]

Wyndham might purchase their support but he could never secure the esteem of such foes.[87]

Wyndham, for his part, refused 'to accept the recurrent epidemic of examination fever in the Australian community as a symptom of a deep-seated interest in education'. He was appalled at the publishing, in the 1980s, of HSC examination results: 'Have we exhausted the possibilities of what we might do while tradition continues to shackle us with the public examination? ... the public examination is more than a commonplace; it is one of the pillars of the temple'. To this present day the idea that competition promotes learning remains so very familiar that the generality of parents consider it as founded not only in reason but in nature itself.[88]

Senior secondary education has changed dramatically since the Higher School Certificate was planned by the Wyndham Committee in the 1950s and developed and implemented in the 1960s. The most obvious changes in Years eleven and twelve have been that more students stay to the end of secondary school and that a wider range of subjects and courses is offered. Whereas only 20 per cent of students stayed to complete the HSC in its first year in 1967, by 1996 some 70 per cent of the Year seven [formerly known as the First Form] cohort sat for the HSC. In 1967, 69 courses were offered in 28 subjects; in 1995 there were 149 courses developed by the Board of Studies in 81 subjects, with another 244 courses with Board endorsed content, and almost 3,000 school-designed courses.[89]

Nevertheless, many of the issues contested in the 1960s still remain prominent. Denis Fitzgerald from the NSW Teachers' Federation has argued that:

> the trouble stems mainly from the dominance of universities who use the certificate for their own private purposes. Vocational subjects should be treated the same as subjects such as physics and chemistry but universities won't include them and many students are making the wrong career choices.[90]

It is now possible to see why the Scheme did not realise the hopes of its initiator. In the first place, it was introduced in the context of a highly centralised Department which continued to restrict the initiative of the individual teacher; secondly, it had to accommodate the continued demand of the universities that students should pass difficult entrance examinations. Many argue that the Scheme was never radical: that it was hedged about with so many exceptions that it never had a chance to set up genuinely comprehensive schools; that in retaining selective schools and not insisting on co-education it was not a concerted attempt at installing

comprehensive education. This view sees Wyndham's principal achievements as extending secondary education from five to six years and reforming the low and middle school curriculum of junior secondary to give it 'a more general taste'.[91] Critics stress that the academic curriculum was maintained by the Wyndham Scheme notably through its requirement that only two 'practical' subjects be completed in junior secondary which 'loaded' the scheme in favour of the academic pupil.[92] Yet, at the time, others, such as Mark Bishop, Headmaster of Cranbrook School, praised the Scheme for introducing to public schools 'some of the facets of independent school education' such as emphasising the arts 'which independent schools had been doing for the last twenty years'.[93]

Its supporters ascribe the Scheme's shortcomings to the necessity to meet political exigencies. They believe the Wyndham Report was 'mutilated before it was introduced as the Wyndham scheme'. The Committee's calls for the removal of the Intermediate were thwarted by 'politicians who saw the Intermediate as the "poor man's Leaving Certificate", and insisted on its retention'. The Scheme as introduced, it is claimed, was an 'emasculated version' of the original report.[94]

Changes to the Scheme Since Wyndham

Since Wyndham's retirement there have been many changes to the Scheme. The first major deviation came when the Vaughan Committee of 1973 won the approval of the two Boards to remove the linkages between mathematics and science in the senior years which had given them 'an artificial mark advantage'. The Vaughan Committee's *Base Paper on the Total Curriculum, Years seven to ten* proposed the first four years of secondary be structured into two modules, Years seven and eight and Years nine and ten. It suggested that a core curriculum of mathematics, science and technology, man and society, arts [art and craft and music], and physical education should comprise 80 per cent of school time in Years Seven and Eight declining to 60 per cent in Years Nine and Ten to allow increasing specialisation. The notion of an exploratory first year was adulterated, with the one-year orientation being cut back to one term because 'exploration and development of the pupil's potential is to occur in all years'.[95]

The 1997 McGaw Report acknowledged the legacy of the Wyndham Report.[96] In one sense both reports were concerned primarily with equity: the Wyndham Report with ensuring equity in access to secondary education; the McGaw Report with equity in senior secondary education. The English grammar school 11+ selection system was the subject of much investigation by the Wyndham Committee, as was the predictive validity of the test score. The outcome was 'the proposal for comprehensive education: the extension

of opportunity to all to find within an integrated secondary schooling system the opportunity to realise one's potential'.[97] Just as the English 11+ examination and the 'developmental insensitivity' of predicting secondary school success were rejected by Wyndham, the McGaw Report sought to 'address the correlation between postcode and Tertiary Entrance Rank and the validity of the projection of school-relevant data university selection criteria'. Many of those who had taught 'pre-Wyndham' concluded that the Wyndham Report demonstrated that the final evaluative process effectively determines much of the approach in the final years of secondary school.[98]

Wyndham's success, even in his own terms, was far from complete. He preserved ability grouping in a form more appropriate to the day and age and better able to serve social democratic purposes but his hopes that the Scheme would end selection for secondary schooling and protect secondary education from university control were far from fully realised. The universities continued to dictate levels of matriculation which undermined the likelihood of senior students enjoying a broad liberal education. Hedley Yelland suspected that Wyndham saw his major failure as the inability to break this high school-university nexus.[99]

Despite Wyndham's public denials, the Scheme ran counter to comprehensive principles insofar as it endorsed ability grouping and did little to promote mixed grouping in which students of high, medium and low ability attend the same class. The distinctions between a liberal academic curriculum for an elite who would progress to matriculation and an emphasis on vocational education for the majority remained entrenched.[100] The retention of selective schools undermined comprehensive principles and, in the longer term, retained a base from which later ruinous attacks could be launched on the viability of the overall comprehensive system. Nevertheless, when viewed against the backdrop of the disparate system it replaced, by introducing a common core curriculum of general education for junior students who were drawn from the local neighbourhood without selection, the Wyndham Scheme represented a significant shift towards comprehensive education.

Wyndham had more success in other areas. Decentralisation was increased and provision for the atypical was greatly expanded with the creation of a wider range and larger number of opportunity classes: Wyndham was still prepared to encourage special education outside of the comprehensive school model. In 1952 a detailed general activities course for low-ability pupils was introduced to secondary schools, the first group of remedial teachers was trained, and the first educational clinic in an administrative area was established at Newcastle. In 1956 the Department of Education assumed responsibility for a total education program for deaf and

visually handicapped children and in 1959 the first school for emotionally disturbed children was established.

Despite its detractors there is little doubt that, at the time of its introduction, the Wyndham Scheme was generally acknowledged as a momentous reform. This is evident, not only in official and media acclaim, but also in the response of individual schools. A teacher from Toolebuc Central School, an isolated rural school, wrote to the Department to say that she was planting a tree in front of the school 'not only to commemorate the Wyndham Report but to impress upon the district that an advance in education has taken place'.[101] Symbolically, that tree, as acknowledged in the recent McGaw Report, survives to this day despite a difficult infancy and successive threats to its existence.

NOTES

1. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA.
2. *Ibid.*
3. J. O'Brien, *A Divided Unity: politics of NSW teacher militancy since 1945*, Sydney, Allen and Unwin, 1987, p. 11.
4. See K. Smith, Influence and Leadership in Educational Policy Making at State Level: a case study of the Wyndham Report and the NSW Education Act, 1961, PhD thesis, University of New England, 1975, Chap. 6, and J. Duffield, 'The Making of the Wyndham Scheme in New South Wales', *History of Education Review*, vol. 19, no. 1, 1990, p. 40. See also O'Brien, *A Divided Unity*, Chap. 3.
5. Wyndham to K. Smith, 1 May, 1975, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
6. R. Heffron, Confidential Minute for Cabinet, 10 Jul. 1959, NSWSA, 8/2268.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Anon., The Committee Made the Following Recommendations, typescript, n.d., WP, ML mss 5089, 20(38).
9. Wyndham, The New Secondary Education Pattern: ways and means, address Institute of Public Administration, 4 Jun. 1964, WP, ML mss 5089, 24(38).
10. Wyndham, address Staff Conference, 17 Jan. 1958, WP, ML mss 5089, 22(38).
11. Wyndham to K. Smith, 1 May, 1975, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
12. J. Duffield, The Making of the Wyndham Scheme or Whatever Happened to Selective Secondary Education, paper ANZHES Conference, Newcastle, 1989, p. 23.
13. Wyndham to R. Debus, n.d., WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38)
14. *Ibid.*
15. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA.
16. Wyndham to K. Smith, 1 May, 1975, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
17. Wyndham, Interview, J. Burnswoods, WP, ML mss 5089, 26(38).
18. Wyndham, speech on his retirement, 18 Dec. 1968, WP, ML mss 5089, 23(38).
19. Wyndham, Shaping Educational Policy, typescript, n.d., WP, ML mss 5089, 26(38).

20. Wyndham, Interview, J. Burnswoods, WP, ML mss 5089, 26(38).
21. Wyndham to K. Smith, 1 May, 1975, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
22. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA.
23. P. Oldham, Interview by author, 30 Jul. 1993.
24. R. Petersen, Interview by author.
25. P. Oldham, Interview by author, 3 Jun. 1993.
26. Wyndham, Taped Interview, V. Keraitis, NLA.
27. Wyndham, Address to annual conference NSWTF, 24 Jan. 1962, NSWSA, 19/8244.
28. Quoted in O'Brien, *A Divided Unity*, p. 56.
29. V. Skilbeck, 'Main Issues and Trends' in *Adolescenis and Comprehensive Schooling*, Paris, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 1987, p. 8.
30. *Ibid*, p. 8.
31. Cited in D. Reynolds, *The Effectiveness of Selective and Non-selective Schools: an experiment in nature*, paper annual meeting of the American Research Association, Washington DC, Apr. 20–24, 1987, p. 2.
32. D. Rubenstein and B. Simon, *The Evolution of the Comprehensive School*, 1926–1972, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973, p. 63.
33. Quoted in Rubenstein and Simon, *The Evolution of the Comprehensive School*, p. 48.
34. Rubenstein and Simon, *The Evolution of the Comprehensive School*, p. 64.
35. *Ibid*, p. 59.
36. Cited in Rubenstein and Simon, *The Evolution of the Comprehensive School*, p. 44.
37. See G. McCulloch, *Philosophers and Kings: education for leadership in modern England*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1991, pp. 74–81 and Chapter 7.
38. A. Barcan, *Two Centuries of Education in New South Wales*, Sydney, NSW University Press, 1988, p. 238.
39. Committee Appointed by the Minister for Education to Enquire into the Education of the Talented Child (C. L. Macdonald, Chair), *Report*, Sydney, NSW Department of Education, 1977, p. 11.
40. O'Brien, *A Divided Unity*, p. 53.
41. A. Armitage, *Newcastle High School: the first seventy five years*, Newcastle, 75th Anniversary Committee, 1983, p. 158.
42. O'Brien, *A Divided Unity*, p. 53.
43. *Ibid*, p. 56.
44. A. Webster to author, 15 May, 1993.
45. H. Yelland, Interview by author.
46. J. Lewis, A History of the Development of the Division of Guidance and Special Education in the Education Department of NSW, MEd thesis, University of Sydney, 1978, p. 43.
47. *Ibid*.
48. Wyndham to W. Symonds, 8 Jun. 1962, WP, ML mss 5089, 1(38).
49. Wyndham to Minister, 26 Jun. 1963, NSWSA, 8/2268.
50. P. Oldham, Interview by author, 30 Jul. 1993.
51. M. Wyndham, Interview by author, 19 Aug. 1993.
52. Wyndham, submission to Minister, 18 Aug. 1960, NSWSA, 8/2268.

53. Wyndham, Secondary Education: the need for change, lecture Spring Forum of the Australian Institute of Political Science, 15 Sep. 1960, WP, ML mss 5089, 24(38).
54. B. Hannan, *The Bulletin*, 12 Feb. 1966.
55. Charles Cutler was Minister for Education from May 1965 to June 1972.
56. D. Verco to Wyndham, 19 Aug. 1965, WP, ML mss 5089, 18(38).
57. Wyndham to M. Telfer, Registrar, University of Sydney, 31 Aug. 1965, WP, ML mss 5089, 19(38).
58. *Ibid.*
59. *Ibid.*
60. *Ibid.*
61. *Ibid.*
62. *Ibid.*
63. *Ibid.*
64. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 Sep. 1965.
65. Three Senate members outspoken against the recommendations were Justice R. Le Gay Brereton and two government nominees, Mr A. Landa, MLA, and Mr J. Ferguson, Chairman of the Milk Board.
66. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 Sep. 1965.
67. *Ibid*, 18 Sep. 1965.
68. *Sun Herald*, 19 Sep. 1965.
69. Verco informed Wyndham that the Minister's words were guided by 'what Hedley (Yelland), Les Craig and I cooked up with some lines from Phil Price.' D. Verco to Wyndham, 30 Sep. 1965, WP, ML mss 5089, 18(38).
70. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 20 Sep. 1965.
71. *Ibid*. 21 Sep. 1965.
72. *Ibid*, 22 Sep. 1965
73. *Ibid.*
74. *Ibid*, 27 Sep. 1965.
75. *Ibid.*
76. Wyndham to D. Verco, 28 Sep. 1965, WP, ML mss 5089, 18(38).
77. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 Sep. 1965.
78. *Ibid*, 6 Oct. 1965.
79. Wyndham to D. Verco, 4 Oct. 1965, WP, ML mss 5089, 18(38). Charles Cutler had succeeded Ernest Wetherell as Minister for Education in May 1965.
80. *Ibid.*
81. Wyndham, Interview, U. Bygott, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
82. Wyndham to Professor D. Mellor, School of Chemistry, University of New South Wales, 14 Jun. 1966, NSWSA, 8/2269.
83. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 8 Oct.1965.
84. W. F. Connell, Interview by author, 17 Dec. 1992. The late Emeritus Professor W. F. Connell studied at the Universities of Melbourne, London and Illinois and was Professor of Education at the University of Sydney 1955–1976. See also M. White, Thomas Logan Robertson, 1901–1969, A Biographical Study, Perth, Curtin University of Technology, 1997.
85. H. Mathews, Interview by author, 7 May, 1993. Since Hicks appears to have consistently supported Wyndham's projects, Mathews' observation is remarkable.
86. G. Gray to author, 24 May, 1993.

87. Wyndham's administrative style is further examined in Chapter 9.
88. Wyndham, address Inspectors Conference, n.d., WP, ML mss 5089, 26(38).
89. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 6 May, 1996.
90. *Ibid*, 26 Oct. 1993.
91. W. F. Connell, Interview by author, 17 Dec. 1992.
92. Wyndham acknowledged this criticism. See Wyndham, The New Secondary Education: the first three years, typescript, n.d., Wyndham Papers, ML mss 5089, 19(38). See, for example, B. Bessant and A. Spaull, *The Politics of Schooling*, Melbourne, Pitman Publishing, 1976, pp. 64–65.
93. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 Sep. 1965.
94. C. Ebert to author, 8 Apr. 1993.
95. Dr John Vaughan, cutting from the Australian Monthly Review, n.d., WP, ML mss 5089, 18(38).
96. B. McGaw, Shaping Their Future: recommendations for reform of the Higher School Certificate, Sydney, Department of Training and Education Co-ordination NSW, 1997. Chap. 1.
97. Brother Ambrose Payne, *Newsletter*, Australian College of Education, NSW Chapter, Dec. 1996.
98. Payne, *Newsletter*.
99. H. Yelland, Interview by author.
100. Professor Gary McCulloch concludes that English comprehensive schools also recreated distinctions between liberal and vocational education. See McCulloch, *Philosophers*, p. 5.
101. Y. Booth to Wyndham, 19 Jun. 1963, WP, ML mss 5089, 1(38).

Chapter 8

Confronting the Commonwealth

Australian Federation represented a highly pragmatic compromise between the need to cede just enough power to the centre to create a viable Commonwealth, and the need to leave the States with sufficient responsibilities for them to agree to the new union. Education was one of the responsibilities left to the States. This system of federalism, where the national and State governments were to operate in distinct spheres of activity and authority, was eroded by disparities between the revenue-raising capacities of the different levels of government which tended to obscure lines of accountability. Although local municipal and State governments had responsibility for most of the services that citizens received, they seldom possessed the finances to fund their programs solely from their own resources. Wyndham realised that increased federal funding was essential but feared it would undermine the status of both the Director-General and the public schools. As a firm defender of State control of education he was troubled by growing Commonwealth involvement.

Education became a key issue for Commonwealth-State rivalry after 1945. Since the Australian Constitution does not specify educational responsibilities for the national government, Commonwealth initiatives have relied on its financial powers. Despite growing Commonwealth involvement in education, it remains a constitutional responsibility of the States, and States' rights are jealously guarded. For example, attempts to devise a national approach to curriculum development and reform in Australia have proved consistently difficult. Yet in evaluating the resistance of the States to a unified national approach:

> we need to be wary of interpreting their recalcitrance solely in terms of self-interest; although no doubt that plays as pervasive a role in this context as it does in other areas of political activity. For the most part the Australian States wear their parochialism with conviction, and indeed with a measure of pride. Their allegiance lies with old loyalties and old rivalries, and it is this legacy that constitutes the major obstacle to genuine cooperation between the Commonwealth and the States in a national effort for schools.[1]

By the early 1970s, Davis Hughes, NSW Minister for Public Works, was bemoaning 'a complete breakdown in State-federal relations which can only be damaging to all educational progress'.[2] In the immediate postwar period the Commonwealth had been ready to accept a definite role with respect to university education, but was most reluctant to acknowledge any general responsibility for school education or teacher preparation, both of which it deemed to be solely the concern of the States. Only after a protracted struggle did the Commonwealth accept a direct responsibility for the resource standards at which all schools operate. The major expansion of its role began during the Second World War under the Commonwealth Government's defence powers and responsibilities, was continued in connection with the rehabilitation of ex-servicemen, and evolved, by the end of the 1960s, into substantial schemes of assistance on a wide front, including universities and schools.[3] After the war the States were faced by an unprecedented demand for their educational resources but no longer exercised complete control over their own finances, since the collection of income tax, their major source of revenue, had been taken over by the Commonwealth.

Increasing Commonwealth Involvement in State Education

After the establishment of the Commonwealth Office of Education in 1945, the Commonwealth Government gradually committed itself more and more to the support of universities, but it was not until the early 1960s that it agreed to support education below the tertiary level, initially through assistance to independent schools within Commonwealth territories. When the Commonwealth did begin to make specific grants to the States for schools it was for the explicit purpose of improving science and technical teaching facilities. For many years, to no avail, the States pressed the Commonwealth to make large-scale capital grants for both general and specialist facilities in government schools, while public meetings organised by teachers unions and parent groups and numerous petitions urged a greater degree of direct Commonwealth involvement in school education.[4] Despite vociferous campaigns by both parents and teachers significant federal funding was not forthcoming until the early 1960s. Initially, it came as part of 'state aid': government aid to non-government schools. From 1964 the Commonwealth provided science laboratories and equipment for both government and independent schools and colleges. By the late 1960s the Federal Government had extended its support to include the development and operation of colleges of advanced education and the building of teachers' colleges and secondary school libraries. Subsequently, Commonwealth expenditure on education rose from about $34 million in 1960 to $302 million in 1971.[5]

As demand for education swelled it became apparent that State governments could not meet the urgent demands for expanded and improved facilities. It was believed that a rapidly developing country such as Australia needed to increase its levels of education, particularly in the fields of science and technology. Most direct Commonwealth assistance came in the form of matching grants: to obtain these the States had to make a similar financial contribution. The Commonwealth government cared little that the States could meet matching grants in any field without this having a profound effect on other sectors of government funding but matching grants often directed State funds into areas which were not priority areas for State education as a whole.[6]

Commonwealth money was usually directed to particular purposes, whereas State finances were needed to pay for fundamental educational goods and services, such as teachers' salaries and the building of new schools. Deploying its funds in this way greatly magnified the Commonwealth's influence. Following the Murray Report of 1957,[7] the Commonwealth undertook to assist the States to finance their universities by a system of matching grants. In the 1960s this system was extended to include colleges of advanced education.[8] As Commonwealth financial support increased so did its leverage, although nearly all educational institutions receiving Commonwealth support remained the legal responsibility of the States. Assistance was provided from Canberra but in a form which drastically reduced the autonomy of State governments and distorted the way they fund their education systems.

Wyndham was at the centre of many of these conflicts. He noted that educational administration in the 1940s had been marked by a rapid rise in costs. In 1941 the allocation in NSW for Education was nearly £6 million; by 1951 expenditure from revenue and loans was about £23 million. On becoming Deputy Director-General, Wyndham admitted that the States were:

> at full stretch in meeting their day-to-day commitments and more money must be made available if we are to raise our respective education systems to the standards I know we are all aiming at. This money can come only from the Federal Government. For some years I have been a strong advocate for special educational grants by the Commonwealth ... surely, in view of the relation of education to defence, we might expect, even if for no other reason, special assistance from the Commonwealth. Outstanding of the many needs of our schools today are teachers and accommodation. When these needs are satisfied everything else will come readily.[9]

Wyndham argued that the formulation and implementation of Commonwealth policy were arbitrary and haphazard:

> they constituted interventions, both in the nature and manner of their origination, and in relation to the policies and planning of the recipients (and) that, even if one can discern some coherence between them, these interventions, especially at the school level, have been 'ad hoc' in nature.[10]

He emphasised the existing constraints on State expenditure. The State budget was cellular, with allocations for head office administration, primary education, secondary education, teacher preparation and then various items like the museum and the universities. It was then 'horizontally divided', and many of the items in it were fixed; for example, salaries and wages, bursaries and transport of children to schools. Salaries consumed from 69 to 82 per cent of the education budget, leaving between 18 and 31 cents in the dollar to run schools, to repair them, and to pay for freight, for postage and all other costs. For example, in 1967–68, of the $160 million from State consolidated revenue spent by the New South Wales Department of Education, which itself comprised some 43 per cent of the total revenue, more than $132 million was spent on salaries.[11] Nevertheless, savings still had to be found to win matching grants from the Commonwealth. For Wyndham, such a process was 'a political "stand and deliver": no government could reject a Federal grant'.[12]

Wyndham was determined to resist any erosion of State control. Indeed, his view was that the entire responsibility for all education services, including those of higher education, should reside with the Australian States: the State should be the policy and planning authority for all levels of education. Planning of school education, Wyndham emphasised, could not be divorced from planning of higher education. Commonwealth decisions on university finance, which usually required States to match grants, so dominated State spending that other sectors were neglected. The total capital expenditure by NSW on education by 1968 was $64.5 million, of which $13.1 million was directed into universities and technical colleges by the need to match Commonwealth grants.[13] Commonwealth support for universities, Wyndham believed, had hindered the growth of teachers' colleges. 'The substantial [Commonwealth] support for universities, welcome as it has been, especially since it has been conditional on State expenditure, both capital and revenue, resulted in the retardation of the development of sorely needed teachers' colleges'.[14] The evolution of the relationship with the Federal Government in respect of the University of Sydney's finances, Wyndham observed, was a recurrent problem for the Vice-Chancellor and therefore for the Senate, particularly since it was on a matching grant basis for capital. 'Now that meant that the Menzies Government could sound like a Santa Claus but it was sapping State finances. It stopped the development of the teachers' colleges.'[15] Such

tensions in federal-State relations hampered educational planning. Davis Hughes, the NSW Minister for Public Works, complained:

> You cannot plan in a vacuum. Finance must be related to the needs of the whole system. This deadlock must be broken before irreparable damage is done. This highlights the urgent need for an overall education philosophy. It makes clear that the Commonwealth has no such philosophy, no fundamental policy. The States, on the other hand, enunciate and adhere, within financial limits, to firm philosophies and policies. But State policies are affected and controlled in some almost destructive ways. Thus, Commonwealth government decisions, made without reference to any predetermined overall education policy, dictate to the States how they must spend a large portion of their own funds.[16]

The States' Campaign for Commonwealth Funding

Calls for the Commonwealth to provide greater financial support grew during Wyndham's period as Director-General and he himself was a central player in several key initiatives. He helped compose a statement of needs of Australian education (often referred to by its authors as the 'case') which pressed for increased support for State education systems. After some delay, in June 1961, the NSW Premier, Robert Heffron, on behalf of the Australian Education Council presented this report, entitled *Some Aspects of Australian Education,* to the Prime Minister. In response to such pressures the Commonwealth established the Committee on the Future of Tertiary Education in Australia, the 'Martin Committee', of which Wyndham was a key member. Its recommendations prompted greater Commonwealth participation in tertiary education, including teacher preparation.[17] Another milestone was the Commonwealth decision to assist secondary schools, both government and non-government, through the provision of science and technical facilities.

Individually, the permanent heads of the respective education departments had been collecting information on local needs for the decision to mount the 'case'. During the 1960s several further assessments of the needs of school education in Australia were undertaken by the ministerial council and the Australian Education Council. Wyndham and Thomas Robertson (the Director-General of Education in Western Australia) were the chief proponents of such reviews. Wyndham, through his long association with the AEC, was well aware of the difficulties of securing Commonwealth support. He had attended the inaugural meeting of the AEC in 1936 and served as its first secretary until 1940. As Secretary of the NSW Department of Education he had prepared all NSW submissions to the AEC. After 1952, as Director-General, 'Wyndham along with Robertson worked hard behind the scenes to reactivate the dormant organisation'.[18] In 1960, the Council

issued a statement of the needs of Australian education, which was later revised in order to include additional statistical material, and reissued in 1963. Despite these appeals adequate funds were not provided for government schools throughout the 1960s, in spite of the increased involvement by the Commonwealth government in other sectors of education.[19]

The AEC took far too long, Wyndham believed, to endorse the 'case'. By September 1958 he was concerned that because of the delay their appeal 'may well have missed the bus'.[20] The AEC by 'letting things slide, [is] playing into the hands of the Commonwealth. On top of the fiasco in regard to "the case", I think we might begin to deserve the attitude that we are just Local Education Authorities with rather large territories'.[21] Wyndham also feared that the presentation to the House of Representatives by Herbert Evatt, Leader of the Opposition, in April 1958, of a massive petition demanding federal aid[22] had 'made the issue of Commonwealth aid almost a party political one'. Once Evatt supported the petition, Wyndham believed, the Prime Minister would have nothing to do with it.[23] He later suggested:

> Any more onslaughts on Canberra with truckloads of organised letters can only embarrass the [State] Ministers in any more formal approach to the Commonwealth. You will recall the photograph of H. V. Evatt gazing at a railway porter's truckload of such correspondence. Had the 'case' been put up at that time, discussions from the Commonwealth side would have lasted five minutes.[24]

In August 1958, the Prime Minister intimated to Parliament that Commonwealth aid for education could be provided under Section 96 of the Constitution which gave the Commonwealth power to assist States for any specific purpose including education. 'It is only on second thoughts, I feel, and with the election now coming over the horizon, that the Prime Minister went so far as he did in the recent debate in the Federal House,' concluded Wyndham.[25] Robertson told Wyndham: 'I construe it as an open invitation to the State Premiers to put their case before the Prime Minister.' But 'fascinated apparently by the results of the Murray Committee' most Premiers wanted a committee set up.[26]

The presence of a Commonwealth representative on the Directors' Conference (the committee of permanent heads which advised the AEC) made the formulation of an appeal more difficult. Both Wyndham and Robertson were concerned about the status of the Commonwealth delegate. Wyndham regretted that a decision had been made in 1945 to allow the Director of the Commonwealth Office of Education to be automatically part of the Directors' Conference.[27] When R. C. Mills, the inaugural Director of

the Commonwealth Office of Education had died, Robertson raised the question of the position of his successor, William Weeden, and, specifically whether he was to be invited as an observer or not:

> Because of our personal relations and the kindly feelings of Directors generally it was agreed that he should continue in the same way as Mills had. I maintain that this was as an observer but Jock (William Weeden) claims that it was as a full member of Conference. The point has never been settled.[28]

Robertson felt that it was 'quite unethical' for Weeden to have remained in the Conference while they were discussing the 'case'. This, he felt, constituted an encumbrance for the presentation of the 'case' as Weeden was 'aware of all the drafts before amendment, of policy, admissions of weak points, and so on'. They agreed that the States were 'handicapped in meeting annually under the surveillance of the Commonwealth'.[29] Robertson 'purposefully refrained' from sending drafts to Weeden, as it was, he believed, 'inevitable that he will be called upon by the Prime Minister to comment on the "case" and I do feel that for his own sake as well as for ours he should not be in on our deliberations and discussions .... I do know that Harold Wyndham is strongly of the same view as I am'.[30] Wyndham, too, found the issue of Weeden's part in these discussions very awkward:

> Quite frankly, if I were in Weeden's position I would withdraw from such discussions but this, of course, is a matter of personal taste. As I see it, we are placed in the position of a group framing a case to seek an overdraft from the Company's bank with the bank manager's secretary sitting in on the discussions! On the other hand, knowing, as you know the mentality of the boys in Canberra with their opportunity to spend a day or two studying a two-page minute, I can imagine the high-powered lens that would be applied to anything we wrote. I feel, too, that in comparison with, let us say, certain Canberra Treasury boys, some of our colleagues are a little naive. It could be that Weeden's advice could enable us to avoid statements or arguments which, from the Canberra point of view, appear wide open to criticism and in that sense his contribution may have been useful to us. Herein lies the awkwardness. It all depends where his heart lies. Personally, as I have suggested, I would prefer not to have any hand in framing a proposition addressed to my chief with the pretty certain knowledge that it would be sent to me ultimately for comment. This is the more relevant when one suspects that the chief in question is not particularly interested in the needs of State education authorities and might well welcome destructive rather than constructive criticism on the part of his advisers. This may be unfair to all concerned, but I must say it is the way I feel about the whole situation. Coming closer to the point, the question arises, who is to tell him, if it is so decided, to 'keep off the grass' and what effect is that

> likely to have on his advice to Canberra if and when the document is referred to him?[31]

The question of the Commonwealth's formal participation in AEC meetings arose again in 1966 and 1967. Wyndham remained an opponent of any proposal to allow the Commonwealth formal representation, successfully arguing that Commonwealth participation would lead to its domination of the Council.[32]

By mid–1959 Wyndham had told Robertson that the NSW Government was no longer so enthusiastic about the 'case'. Robertson suspected that 'perhaps some of the other States too have gotten cold feet'. Robertson hoped that although 'your man probably would not want to be put in the position of leading the band [he] would probably be quite glad to be on the bandwagon if anything came of our representations'.[33]

After some delay, the State Premiers requested Menzies to list the 'case' on the agenda of the next Premiers' Conference. Subsequently, in June 1961, Heffron presented the report to Menzies and urged him to establish an enquiry and, in the interim, to provide emergency assistance to the States for education. He was supported by all the other premiers.[34] The published review recommended, some believed, 'substantially what the teachers' and parents' organisations had been putting forward for many years'.[35] It called for federal aid for education and a nationwide inquiry into the needs of primary, secondary and technical education. Finance available in the future, the report insisted, should not only provide for a full educational service, but also be of such dimensions as to allow 'the accumulated deficiencies of the last ten years to be systematically reduced'. The report called for the teaching force to be increased by almost 6,000 to cope with growing enrolments. An extension of the minimum training period for teachers from two to three years was also an urgent priority.[36] One contemporary believed that it was Wyndham who arranged for Heffron to present the document to Menzies. Wyndham's only misgiving, according to this commentator, would have been 'the danger of handing authority for education to the Commonwealth. The Directors-General wanted the money with no strings attached'.[37]

Menzies saw no need for an inquiry. When the Premiers again raised the issue of federal funding of schools, in February 1962, he insisted that he was not prepared to establish yet another committee which would open another field of financial responsibility for the Federal government.[38] When he finally relented in 1964 and agreed to provide federal funding for improved science facilities, both public and private schools, to the alarm of those opposed to state aid, were to be subsidised.[39]

Another sector that sorely needed assistance was teacher preparation. Many more teachers were urgently required and their preparation needed

to be improved. The increase in school population in the postwar era had so boosted the demand for teachers that the existing teachers' colleges had become 'characterised by the prevalence of makeshift and inadequate facilities'.[40] There was also an urgent need to extend the minimum length of teacher training from two to three years. Additional facilities for the preparation of more teachers was yet another pressing that to prosper, colleges needed greater autonomy.[41]

The Martin Report and Teacher Education

The *Report of the Committee on the Future of Tertiary Education in Australia*, popularly known as the 'Martin Report',[42] tabled in the Federal Parliament in March 1965, forecast that tertiary enrolments in the period 1963 to 1975 would more than double and enrolments in teachers colleges would almost double from 14,600 to 27,000. Its recommendations 'constituted a watershed in Australian higher education and not least in the education of teachers'.[43] The Martin Report suggested three categories of tertiary institutions be established: universities, institutes or colleges, and colleges of teacher education. It also gave strong backing to the idea that the Commonwealth government should assist all forms of tertiary education.

Wyndham was the principal architect of the recommendations concerning teacher training. Appointed to the Committee on its establishment, he was given responsibility for drafting Chapter 4, 'The Training of Teachers'.[44] Unfortunately, most of his aspirations for teacher education were to be disappointed. Wyndham later asserted that the chapter in the *Report* with which he was 'especially involved' was:

> not exactly the chapter which I wrote, as it was approved by the Committee ... without wishing to libel either Chairman or Secretariat, the *Report*, in its details and its inflections, is, in some measure, the product of the Secretariat of the Universities Commission. The Committee did not see the proofs of the *Report*, as printed.[45]

The demand for teachers was soaring by the early 1960s. The number of teachers employed in NSW rose from 15,500 in 1953 to 32,440 in 1968. In that same period, the number of teachers in training increased from 2,680 to 9,030; two new teachers' colleges were established; and, after Commonwealth assistance was finally secured, tenders were invited in 1968 for three others.[46] In NSW at the time of the Wyndham Committee's work, one out of every four students gaining their Leaving Certificate entered a teachers' college; no other profession had such a huge intake.[47] Maintaining an adequate supply of teachers posed a serious challenge. Recruitment to supply sufficient teachers for the postwar student population bulge

necessarily came from the low-birthrate generation of the economically depressed 1930s.[48] Wyndham believed that the need for more teachers, had 'been exaggerated in some quarters but in other quarters it has been completely underestimated. Treasury has been attracted to the underestimate'.[49]

In 1965 he complained that a five-year plan for the development of teachers colleges prepared by the Department was being ignored by Treasury. The need to introduce a three-year course of training as the minimum period of basic training made such development all the more urgent. The State government was reluctant, however, to provide for additional capital expenditure on teachers' colleges. The Department of Education had never had a works programme for teachers' colleges similar to that maintained for schools. This was acceptable when there were only two teachers' colleges and a maintenance programme was the only requirement but times had changed and new colleges had been 'developed almost on an emergency basis'. Individual capital works had been approved on an *ad hoc* basis but such an approach was now 'quite inadequate', having in mind the increasing demands upon the teacher training programme and the fact that the building which would have to be done for four colleges which now existed was of an order which 'demanded better than a piecemeal approach'. Moreover, the building of new teachers' colleges would, 'sooner or later be inevitable'.[50]

Such surging demand made the extension of the training period more difficult. As the school enrolment boom moved from primary to secondary the focus shifted to the preparation of secondary teachers, who, it was argued, should all have some university training.[51] Although three-year training was finally introduced in 1969, Wyndham was disappointed that his aim of a three-year qualification for all teachers was not realised during his term as Director-General: 'One cannot but confess to some disappointment that in 1967, this objective [had] not been attained'.[52]

Teachers' colleges enjoyed little autonomy in this period. Departmental authority over teachers' colleges often entailed a detailed intrusion into their organisation and administration and public service regulations discouraged any open criticism by college principals and staff. As one college principal conceded: 'The Education Department which runs the colleges determines the curriculum of the college and even, at times, the content of the syllabuses within it. The college's goal focus is clearly defined as "what the Department wants".'[53] Staffing was largely determined by State departments [and, in NSW by the Public Service Board] and recruited from within the confines of State teaching services. Principals made recommendations on the number of staff required and the equipment and building needs of the college, but the Department made the final decision.

Such strict control by the State employing authority provoked resentment within the colleges.[54] Following the recommendations of the Martin Report, these concerns were addressed in NSW by the establishment, in 1966, of a Board of Teacher Education, with the Director-General as chairman, which allowed teachers' colleges a greater degree of autonomy.[55]

Wyndham attempted to portray the role of the Department as more passive and benign. As 'a matter of policy' he claimed that he 'kept aloof from the affairs of all colleges'.[56] Matters of general concern to do with teacher education were 'placed before' the Principal's Conference [the meetings of all college principals and the Director-General or his representative]. For a number of years Wyndham chaired the Conference but later delegated the task to his Deputy, David Verco, partly in order to emphasise his detachment from what he believed to be 'the true role of a college principal'.[57] He was, nevertheless, ready to discuss matters that principals brought to him and he acknowledged, that he 'had a direct hand ... in the contest which arose over [William] Connell's project for "taking over" Sydney Teachers' College'.[58]

He hoped that one day teachers' colleges would become autonomous but he discerned several major obstacles. The first was political. It would have been quite impossible, he believed, 'without some external or financial inducement, to rid the political mind of the traditional view that colleges were part of the Department and, in a quite direct way, a responsibility of the Minister'. Another impediment was that, in the view of Treasury and the Public Service Board, teachers' colleges existed as necessary adjuncts to the recruitment of a special kind of public servant. A further obstacle was the dubious academic quality of some students seeking admission to colleges. He believed that the situation improved in the 1960s. By 1966 there were enough applicants with full university-entrance qualifications to justify a three-year course at tertiary level. Teacher recruitment, and pressure to reduce class-sizes 'had greater, and more natural, political significance'.[59] The quality of teachers college principals and staff was yet another impediment. However high his 'personal regard for the principals and for a considerable number of their staffs, [he] knew that, in some cases, time would be the only solution'. Wyndham wanted the Director-General 'as far out of the picture as possible. Such constraints which the colleges felt came from the Department, should be only those constraints placed upon the Department itself. Thus it never occurred to me to ask questions about courses.'[60] He hoped to form a corporate body for the training of teachers which 'could bring together sources of thought'; it might start as an advisory body and eventually achieve executive status. It could authenticate credentials and achieve 'growing independence for teacher training'.[61]

Teachers' college principals also hoped for greater autonomy. For Dr Ivan Turner, Principal of Sydney Teachers' College, this would best be achieved through the integration of teachers' colleges with universities. Such a merger would raise the status of the profession; policy would then be in the hands of the training authority and not the employer; Commonwealth funds would be made available; the trainee would not be tied to State service; academic freedom for staff would be allowed; and freedom in the selection and employment of staff provided. But such an integration with universities, Wyndham argued, would require teachers' colleges to approach universities as 'supplicants' and this would not be possible until teachers' colleges could negotiate from 'a position of strength'; i.e. that all teachers were completing three years of training. He feared that if a university agreed to take over teacher training it would select its own staff and this could leave 'a very large remnant' stranded at the old teachers' college.[62] Some principals pressed for independence from both the Department and the universities through the establishment of a statutory body to be called the 'NSW Institute of Teacher Education', controlled by a State Council composed of representatives from all teachers' colleges and other academic bodies and the Department, but with an 'independent chairman'. Eventually it might also register all teachers in schools. 'The governing body would be responsible to its charter and not the Minister, Department or Public Service Board.' The creation of a statutory board would have required government support and Wyndham believed that:

> if the Minister could be induced to move at all, the first step would be to appoint an Advisory Board ... the Government would be reluctant to hand over capital assets to a chartered body. There was also the danger that a chartered body would not supply a sufficient number of teachers and the Department would be put in a position of having to train more of its own.[63]

Extending the length of teacher preparation was generally acknowledged as another essential reform. Principals urged the introduction of a course of four years' minimum duration but would be pleased to accept a three-year course 'as representing at best a transitional step towards the four-year course'.[64] The extension of preparation time, they insisted, should apply to students in all types of courses, whether they be infant, primary or secondary, but Wyndham advised that the 1962–63 and following financial years were going to be 'very difficult ones'. The Treasury had set a maximum limit of 6,725 students in training for 1962 and that meant that withholding scholarships from some 1,500 qualified students. Treasury also raised with the Minister the 'desirability of spending so much money on teacher training'. In spite of this Wyndham hoped that it would be possible to introduce three-year training in 1964.[65]

Comprehensive solutions to problems such as those outlined above were possible only with federal funding. This led in 1961 to the creation by the Commonwealth government of a Committee on the Future of Tertiary Education in Australia, the so-called Martin Committee. In announcing its composition, the Prime Minister, R.G.Menzies, emphasised that:

> the rapidly increasing number of students who may wish to take advantage of tertiary education, and other factors such as student wastage, staff shortage and the pressures on universities generally, make it imperative that we investigate the best way of making the most efficient use of available and potential resources.[66]

Initially, Wyndham held high hopes for the Committee. The rapid increase in the number of young people seeking higher education was evidence, Wyndham believed, that there existed a 'pool of talent' which was not being used.[67] To meet the expected surge in tertiary enrolments, what was needed, he believed, was a diversity of provision, not just the creation of more universities. Wyndham hoped that the Martin Committee could provide a vehicle for securing federal funding for teachers' colleges, thereby allowing teacher preparation to be extended to three years and colleges to be granted greater autonomy.[68] Despite the great expansion in the postwar years of student numbers in tertiary institutions, Wyndham believed that the growth of teachers' colleges was restrained by a lack of Commonwealth support. Indeed, the Commonwealth, in making funds available to universities but not teachers colleges, had curtailed their growth.[69]

Chapter 4 of the Martin Report noted that teacher training had already undergone a major expansion in the postwar period. The 28 teachers' colleges operating by 1963 represented a marked expansion of teacher training facilities across Australia since the war. In 1946 there had been only seven teachers' colleges in the whole country. This rapid increase inevitably increased demands for additional finance and staff. The *Report* lamented that 'the common characteristic of all colleges is that they are full to capacity. Some are overcrowded'.[70] Some 29 per cent of full-time students in tertiary institutions were preparing to become teachers and the demands produced by surging school enrolments and calls for reduced class sizes meant that extra places would be needed in teachers' colleges and additional ones would have to be established. The Committee estimated that about 10,000 new places would be required for primary teacher trainees alone by 1975.[71] The Martin Committee recommended that the responsible authorities extend the period of pre-service preparation to three years as quickly as possible.[72]

Another area of concern was the generally poor qualifications of teachers' college staff. Since they were part of the public service, most colleges were

required to accept an applicant for a staff position from within the government teaching service unless it could be demonstrated that there was no one in that service with adequate qualifications. Lecturers were chosen from the ranks of teachers and tended to 'perpetuate methods already assumed to be efficient for the system'.[73] A teachers' college needed staff with sound scholarship in the basic fields but as the Martin Report argued, few could

> remain 'pure' scholars, for they must have the capacity, the interest and the opportunity to explore the implications of knowledge in their respective fields for the education of children of different ages, both in schools as they are, and in schools which may be developed in the future. It seems probable, therefore, that many of the members of staff of teachers colleges must be drawn from the staffs of schools.[74]

Attracting better qualified staff was difficult. The problem of maintaining or improving the quality of teachers' college staff was compounded by the extent to which universities, then growing in number and size, were able to pilfer highly qualified teachers' college lecturers as well as promising teachers from schools.[75] The *Report* insisted, however, that colleges had special advantages over universities in training teachers. Their tutorials and general guidance constituted 'a significant contribution by teachers' colleges to the training of undergraduates who are teachers' college students'. It noted that in the States for which statistics were available, the failure rate was lower for such students than for the average of students in the faculties concerned.[76] Nevertheless, closer ties with universities held considerable risks. No self-respecting college would agree, Wyndham insisted, to enter into a partnership in which the university might refuse to recognise any element of the work of that college. 'The best of the colleges have so much to teach the universities!' Recognition of any part of a college course would be useless unless it meant either the award by a university of sub-degree recognition or the possibility that the student could thereafter complete full university requirements. 'Not for a generation is this likely to be possible full time for more than a few students.'[77]

Wyndham suggested that the Martin Committee might well recommend full recognition of non-university tertiary institutions, since there were 'good grounds for suggesting that teacher training should stand on its own feet and be recognised as such'. Teachers' colleges should seek a three-year training program and the power to grant their own diploma or degree. The need to extend training to three years was all the more urgent for junior secondary teacher trainees, since 'the students following such courses would provide many of the teachers who would staff the first four years of the (new) six years' course'.[78] The Martin Committee precipitated

discussion on the relationship of teachers' colleges to universities and the whole question of the status of the credential to be issued on the completion of a teachers' college course, for example, the possibility of teachers' colleges awarding degrees.[79]

Nearly all these suggestions were accepted by the Committee.[80] The Martin Report recommended that autonomous teachers colleges should be created: each would be a corporation established by statute with the right to appoint and employ staff, to hold examinations and to grant diplomas. It should be the function of a new State Board of Teacher Education to recommend to the Minister for Education the granting of autonomy to a faculty or to endorse a course. An autonomous college would be governed by a council appointed by the Governor in Council. The Committee hoped that, at a later stage, when the functions of the Board in any State and its relationships to institutions preparing teachers were established in practice, the Board might be authorised to grant professional degrees.[81] Wyndham argued that the Board should be the authority which granted a State-wide teacher's certificate and, 'in due course, may arrange for the granting of degrees to students completing approved courses for professional preparation'.[82] The Board would act as the channel for the disbursement to member colleges of State and Commonwealth funds to be made available for the preparation of teachers. The Board of Teacher Education should be an autonomous body established by statute. Its membership should include representatives of the State department of education, non-government schools, government schools, universities, autonomous teachers' colleges, and citizens with a knowledge of and interest in the preparation of teachers. The Permanent Head of the State department of education, or his or her deputy, should be the chairman of the board.[83]

Achieving genuine autonomy would be difficult. Most of the evidence on teacher training submitted to the Martin Committee from the universities was, Wyndham believed:

> concerned with a 'take-over bid' of teacher training. I firmly support the idea of autonomous colleges as a goal ... but to take Sydney Teachers' College as an example, what of the ownership control and maintenance of a property worth about £10 million? Is it to be handed over? To whom? With what inducement?[84]

He hoped that the proposed State Board of Teacher Education:

> could act as an 'umbrella' for colleges not ready for autonomy. It would also serve as a safeguard against 'take-over bids' by universities. For university departments of education to be free to pluck the eyes out of teachers college staff, facilities and courses could mean the end of all self-respecting development on the part of colleges themselves.[85]

Further, his experience suggested:

> Beware of Professorial Boards until you can talk from a position of strength. Or is this impertinence? Is academic stature worth seeking on the part of the institution if the degree is to be the degree of another institution? Can any recognition of courses between college and university be worth achieving save under conditions of mutual respect or, until that is achieved, under the aegis of a supra-institutional body, to wit, the State Board?[86]

The Commonwealth was not convinced. In accepting the bulk of the recommendations of the Martin Report, the Commonwealth acknowledged a responsibility to support all forms of tertiary education except teacher training. When presenting the Ministerial Statement to the House of Representatives the Prime Minister, R. G. Menzies, insisted that the States themselves should find the resources needed:

> The next important recommendation of the Committee is that the Commonwealth should enter the existing field of teacher training .... Important as this field is, the Commonwealth is not prepared to enter it. It is one which has been the exclusive responsibility of the States and is, in each State, closely bound up with the State education department's judgment as to the training it wishes teachers in its schools to have, and to the manner in which it decides to run its primary and secondary schools. Moreover, on the evidence of the State education ministers themselves, the amount required in this specialised field, in order to bring standards up to what they would regard as satisfactory, is not large, amounting to a total requirement covering the needs of all six States of $1.25 million annually over a period of four years ... recurrent expenses compared to universities and colleges are also ... not great. The impact of the Committee's recommendations as to the length of teacher training, and as to the standard required of a student before he embarks on it, would vary widely between the States and the removal of teachers colleges from the control of State education departments is clearly one which is primarily for the States to determine. Therefore, while we do not denigrate the importance of the Committee's recommendations in this field, we believe that it is one where action can be, and should be, left to the State governments which have before them the Committee's recommendations for adoption and action should they so decide.[87]

Wyndham's general hopes as well as his particular efforts were dashed and he was bitterly disillusioned. He feared that

> the decision in regard to teacher training has set back the programme and the full recommendation of the professional preparation of teachers as a tertiary level activity for some years .... I cannot escape the feeling that some of the boys in Canberra, not excluding one in the AMP building, have been at work. At the moment I am feeling like having a fight about it but have to decide

> where the ring should best be set up! The position is made more difficult because most of the newspaper reports, including political comment, are full of approbation.[88]

It was in the field of teacher preparation, so Wyndham believed, that the Prime Minister's statement dealt 'the thinking of the Committee the most significant blow'.[89] The Commonwealth's claim that it was not prepared to enter this sphere since it was deemed a State responsibility was little more than a plausible pretext since it 'conveniently overlooked the fact that, by the very decisions announced by the Prime Minister, the task of providing more teachers of better quality [would] be greatly increased'. Menzies' assertion that the Commonwealth was precluded for constitutional reasons from teacher education was clearly refuted, Wyndham insisted, by its support for universities and grants for the teaching of science.[90] The Commonwealth similarly declined to encourage teachers' colleges to grant degrees. This would inevitably result, Wyndham believed, in their being seen as 'sub-tertiary' and not providing a credible alternative professional path. The States were obliged to accept Menzies' verdict but 'the Commonwealth proposals fail[ed] to provide adequate assistance to the States for the widening of the "bottleneck" of entry into tertiary education which the Martin Committee saw as the first and most obvious problem confronting Australia'. In the absence of financial support to non-universities, university would remain the goal of most matriculants.[91]

The more Wyndham considered the Prime Minister's statement, 'the more exasperated' he felt.[92] His umbrage exposed a side of his character seldom otherwise revealed in his official persona. In his alarm and uncertainty he wondered if the Martin Committee report should not be formally remitted to the Australian Education Council, but he was not sure if his Premier would agree. It was now time, Wyndham believed, that:

> underlying issues were brought out clearly and the Commonwealth made to realise that piecemeal handouts, quite apart from the question of their adequacy, are likely to be positively dangerous to the systematic development of any educational programme, State or national. In the most recent case, the decision of the Commonwealth Government has been to pick, like an indiscriminate vulture, at the body of the *Report*, leaving it a bloody carcass, with a few scraps tossed to the States.[93]

The New South Wales Minister for Education, Charles Cutler, was also convinced that the exclusion of teacher education would adversely affect the balance of the overall tertiary education funding provided by the States. 'Our treasuries are now confronted with the need to channel further monies to other forms of tertiary education, to attract Commonwealth grants.' New South Wales, Cutler believed, could only take advantage of the

Commonwealth's offer in tertiary education at the expense of its own program of teacher education.[94]

While such disappointments were keenly felt by most teacher educators, many believed the Martin Committee had proved too weak an advocate for improved teacher preparation. Ivan Turner recalled the 'cavalier fashion with which the [Martin] Committee treated invitations to visit teachers' colleges'.[95] It had sent only one member for half a day to each of the three NSW colleges visited and this member 'had no experience of teacher education and obviously knew nothing about it'. He complained that although universities had got what they wanted, such as a limit on numbers and a smaller percentage of first year students, teachers' colleges and technical colleges were still expected to offer sub-degree courses. Teachers' colleges could now not hope for admission to the university community as a right, although some of them, at the discretion of a State Board, might be allowed to negotiate to this end in due course.[96] Turner believed that the Committee:

> had not made out a case for teacher education that really conveyed the sense of urgency that some of its words were intended to convey. Above all it did not stress the threat to the whole structure of tertiary education if developments in teacher education did not march ahead of developments in the other tertiary groups. In the end the Commonwealth Government did not support teacher education at all.[97]

Reform might still be advanced, however, with the help of the State government. Wyndham sought a commitment to accelerate the building programme for teachers' colleges to prepare for an extension of teacher preparation to a minimum of three years. He suggested that the Minister might 'deem it wise' to take the matter to Cabinet, since it had become an issue involving the Commonwealth and the States.[98] This tension arose, he noted, 'from the Prime Minister's rejection of the relevant recommendations of the Martin Committee'. At the 1965 meeting of the Australian Education Council the States resolved to inform the Commonwealth that they could not extend the period of training without Commonwealth aid but Wyndham still advised his Minister that 'one of the questions which has to be decided within the next two years is whether NSW should not take the initiative in the matter'. If action was postponed beyond 1968 it would prove far more expensive in terms of both capital and revenue and have a more serious effect upon the staffing of the schools, at least during the first phase of the changeover.[99] It should never be overlooked that provision of facilities for the extension of the minimum period of preparation to three years was 'of paramount importance'. Australia could not afford to lag behind other developed countries in this regard. The acceleration in the rate of increase

in school enrolments anticipated in the 1970s, he warned, made the introduction of this extended period of preparation 'well nigh impossible if it is delayed beyond 1968'.[100]

Extension of training, Wyndham insisted, was far more urgent than requiring all teacher trainees to be university graduates. He scorned the whole gospel of the necessity of elevating teacher training to university level. Wyndham believed that, in one sense, the demand for teachers to be graduates was largely about status. 'The demand, in at least one quarter, that "all teachers should be graduates" is manifestly status-seeking, and an industrially based demand'.[101] Such aspirations could be the means of according institutions for the preparation of teachers degree-granting status or for bringing the work of these institutions into an integrated programme within a university framework. In either event, he asked, 'what would be the status of the resulting degree, in the mind of the community, of teachers at other levels, to say nothing of university circles?' Such concerns compelled him to vote in the University of Sydney Senate against the institution of the BEd degree 'because I feared that the award of such a degree would be likely to rivet upon its recipients the traditional university doubt as to the academic status of the subject "Education"'.[102] He was confirmed in this fear by the argument of another Fellow of the Senate that such a degree would be 'suitable for students not quite up to the demands of a BA!' More significantly, he felt that the institution of the degree, as proposed, left unsolved most of the problems of achieving sound scholarship within an integrated programme of professional preparation. A later proposal to the Senate, which was resisted both by Wyndham and by the Vice-Chancellor, was that the University of Sydney's Department of Education '"take over" Sydney Teachers' College on a basis which meant the disposal elsewhere of members of staff and of courses not acceptable to the University'.[103] In Wyndham's view, the best solution of the general problem, achieved thus far, was that which had been developed at Macquarie University, where sequences of study and academic standards, both in subject-matter fields and in education courses, had been ensured. At the same time, by a gradual increase in the proportion of the latter courses, over a total four-year period, a sense of unity in the programme had been achieved.[104]

Despite Menzies' rejection of the Martin Committee's recommendations, the Federal government did in fact become increasingly involved in teacher education. From 1967 it began to make unmatched grants for the building of new teachers' colleges and other capital works, and from 1969 to support teacher education programs that were run by the new multi-purpose colleges of advanced education.[105] From the beginning of 1974 the Commonwealth accepted responsibility for the funding of all tertiary education, including teacher preparation.[106]

State Aid for Private Schools

Yet another source of conflict with the Commonwealth was the issue of state aid. It remains to this day one of the most persistent and bitter disputes in the education sector. In most non-government schools, but in Catholic schools especially, the rapid expansion of enrolments in the postwar era provoked a financial crisis. The 'baby boom' and migration of people from largely Catholic countries meant that church schools were very overcrowded. The Catholic schools' insistence on low school fees and a lack of government funding led to a crisis even more severe than that being experienced by State schools. In NSW both major political parties were committed to state aid, but only the Commonwealth Government had the resources for substantial support.[107] The Australian public accepted state aid with remarkable equanimity, apart from sections of the Australian Labor Party, and to a lesser extent, sections of the Protestant Church.[108] Prominent amongst opponents were the nonconformist Christian churches, such as the Methodists, Presbyterians and Congregationalists, which at times came into collision with the conservative Anglican and Roman Catholic churches, which strongly supported state aid.[109] Nonconformists believed that the primary purpose of the State's involvement in schools was to educate children to understand their responsibilities as citizens; not necessarily to educate them in ways their parents might require.[110] One prominent Presbyterian argued that 'in one's church one receives spiritual nurture, in the public school the nurture of citizenship ... but indoctrination [in denominational schools] is not education for democratic citizenship and can have no equitable claim on state funds'.[111]

Wyndham reserved a particular contempt for state aid and was an implacable opponent of it from Commonwealth or State governments. To some extent Wyndham's attitude could be attributed to an extension of his Methodist faith. A contemporary reported that he was opposed to:

> handing over any money, particularly to the Catholics. It got so political that we could never find the file on state aid. A Minister got it and it never got back into the Department. State aid was a greater problem from Wyndham's point of view than from the Commonwealth's. It was a conscious strategy of Wyndham to devote energy to stop state aid in NSW. His religion may have had a little to do with it.[112]

Wyndham was always emphatic on this point. His wife later recounted that Wyndham:

> was not terribly fond of private schools. When he spoke at the Methodist Ladies' College (Burwood) he told them they would have been much better keeping in touch with Methodists at public schools. He would not have said this at a non-

> Methodist school. He resented the fact that they were spending all this money on Methodist schools but not all the kids were Methodist. It was all right [in Wyndham's view] for mainstream churches to set up schools but not for the state to pay for it [sic].[113]

In July 1962 all Catholic schools in the parish of Goulburn were closed in protest against the ruling of the NSW Education Department and health authorities that the lavatory facilities of one of the schools were unacceptable. Although the schools were reopened one week later, their closure highlighted the need for additional funds if the Catholic system was to survive.[114] In August 1962 the Anglican and Roman Catholic Archbishops of Perth called upon their State Government to pay non-government schools half the average cost of educating a child in a State school and to assist with capital development. The Anglican Archdeacon of Perth, Thomas McDonald, warned, that 'it is clear that without some measure of public expenditure the expansion, and even the continuance of non-government schools is seriously endangered'.[115]

Wyndham cautioned Robertson 'that whatever happens in Western Australia could vitally affect our situation here, to say nothing of that in other States'. The consideration which was uppermost in his mind was that once any department was constrained to move away from existing legislation which forbade aid to denominational schools from State revenue, it had to be 'most careful as to the terms on which any concession is made'. The demands in NSW, Wyndham protested, were being made on the same basis as they had in the nineteenth century, that is, for aid 'without strings'.[116] 'In no country where aid is given is it given on this outright basis. The fact is carefully ignored by claimants here.' He noted that state aid advocates would cite both England and Scotland, but neglect to mention that, in those countries, funding for non-government schools brought with it a range of conditions relating to policy questions, such as the imposition of compulsory fees, standards of operation, enrolment criteria and the employment of teachers. His concern was that 'once the retreat starts in one State on any "no strings" basis, other States would be left in an indefensible position'.[117] If he were instructed to suggest the basis of some measure of concession, he would advise the Minister that any measure of aid 'should be attended by a requirement to employ trained teachers and real inspection so as to ensure school facilities and standards of achievement [i.e. "*bona fide*" certification of schools]'. Capital grants should be made available only in terms of an overall developmental program for a locality, approved by the Minister. Since few Australian private schools had school boards of governors, State authorities could not, as in England, demand the right to nominate a proportion of members, but 'we could, as in Scotland, make certification of teachers and inspection of schools "stick"'.[118] Some

safeguards as to capital grants were essential, otherwise there would be 'excess building expenditure, even duplication'. There was, Wyndham claimed,

> as yet no sign in NSW of any need to make such recommendations to the Minister, but Perth, hard on the heels of Goulburn, cannot but rock the boat. The gist of my position is that, unless our masters are warned, they could be taken in by the implicit argument that there can only be 'aid without strings'. Neither in England nor in Scotland would aid of this kind be considered. Further, Ministers of Education should hang together on this issue or else they are likely to hang separately.[119]

No sooner had the alarm provoked by the Goulburn crisis begun to die down than the Catholic Archbishop of Sydney, Cardinal Gilroy, sent an open letter to Premier Heffron, calling on the NSW Government to provide financial assistance for science facilities. Wyndham warned his Minister that state aid infringed the principle of separation of church and state. Although it was not in the Constitution, as it was in the USA, 'there had been a decision that there would be no established church in Australia'. The state was providing a service out of taxation and could not be expected to subsidise another competing service when the service it provided was available. The Catholic system was 'a separatist system which discourages non-Catholics from attending. The state may permit the development of such an enclave in a democratic community on the grounds of freedom of conscience; it would be a matter of grave concern if it subsidised such separatism'. The Roman Catholic claim for funding, he argued, was a claim for assistance for a specific faith and the building of a particular church. He noted that 'NSW during the last century had almost forty years' experience of aid to church schools and there is ample evidence of the evil facts of the dual system, not all of them attributable to the bitter sectarianism of those days'.[120]

In 1963, on the eve of a federal election, Menzies promised to provide Commonwealth finance to all secondary schools, both government and non-government, for science buildings and equipment. It was 'a particularly effective political stroke. The Menzies government had survived since 1961 with a majority of one seat. The science block proposal reinforced the inclination of the Democratic Labor Party to continue to direct its preferences to the Coalition parties.'[121] Menzies' science block proposals presented supporters of federal aid, including Wyndham and the NSW Teachers' Federation, with a dilemma. While most were opposed to state aid, the proposals also represented an historic retreat from Menzies' refusal to make grants to the States for schools under Section 96 of the Constitution. After the Menzies Government was comfortably returned, large-scale

Commonwealth assistance to secondary education, both government and non-government, began.[122] The change in policy was to have a profound long-term effect on Australian education. The subsequent massive growth in government aid to non-government schools has since produced in Australia a unique system of blended public and private education. In 1995–96 the Commonwealth, under its general recurrent grants program, provided $916 million for government schools and $1651 million for non-government schools. The States, for their part, spent about $3543 for each student in a government school compared with $949 for each student in a non-government school. Between 1970 and 1995 non-government enrolments increased by 48 per cent, compared with a 2.2 per cent increase in government schools.[123]

Wyndham saw the introduction of state aid as 'one effect of political forces on education', and believed it had been reinstituted because of 'vote-hunting on the eve of elections'.[124] In retirement he warned that:

> the problem these days is that people are demanding more from the schools than once they did. It is exacerbated by a steady move of the politicians to give aid to church schools. The target is the Roman Catholic vote, but other churches show no reluctance to putting their hands out for aid, including the Methodist! Meanwhile the public school NSW Teachers' Federation which has gone quite industrial, and is generally pro-Labor, is attacking the Government through press and radio and, inevitably doing the public school system a great disservice by emphasising the deficiencies and saying nothing about its merits and achievements. Am I glad that I have retired![125]

He deplored 'both the motives and the methods which are apparent, especially at the national level, in the shaping of this aspect of educational policy. That policy has reached the stage, however, having regard to the attitude of all political parties, at which it is irreversible.'[126] State aid, Wyndham warned, posed a serious threat to social unity:

> All concerned need to take care lest the present trend of enhancing the position of the church or private school while denigrating the public school system could prove the means of cultivating a 'two nations' community. The difference in such a community would not be one between the God-fearing and the godless, but one between acceptable middle-class standards and 'ockerism'.[127]

Wyndham's frustration with the Commonwealth's treatment of the States can be readily understood. His opposition had failed to slow the introduction of state aid. Yet again States' rights had been weakened. His failure to stem the tide of increasing Commonwealth control and his inability to enlist Commonwealth support for teacher education were

evidence of the substantial weakening of the power of the Director-General caused by the expansion of Commonwealth involvement in education. For a permanent head like Wyndham, confidence in the special expertise of the professional administrator was no longer enough. He was obliged to recognise that educational administrators increasingly needed to be less concerned with the delineation of principle and more with understanding the circumstances in which agreement was possible. The changing role of the educational administrator and its implications are examined in the next chapter.

NOTES

1. K. Piper, *Riders in the Chariot: curriculum reform and the national interest 1965–95*, Melbourne, ACER, 1997, p. 10.
2. D. Hughes, 'The Role of the Australian States' in R. McCaig (ed.), *Policy and Planning in Higher Education*, Brisbane, University of Queensland Press, 1973, p. 65.
3. G.W. Bassett, 'Australian Education' in R. Browne and D. Magin (eds.), *Sociology of Australian Education: a source book of Australian Studies*, Melbourne, Macmillan, 1976, p. 10.
4. See A. Spaull, *A History of the Australian Education Council, 1936–1986*, Sydney, Allen and Unwin, 1987, Chapter 3; and J. O'Brien, *A Divided Unity: politics of NSW teacher militancy since 1945*, Sydney, Allen and Unwin, 1987, Chap. 2.
5. R. Fitzgerald, 'Emerging Issues in the Seventies', *Quarterly Review of Australian Education*, Melbourne, ACER, vol. 5, no. 3, Sept. 1972 p. 21.
6. Hughes, 'The Role of the Australian States', p. 65.
7. Committee on Australian Universities (K. Murray, Chair), *Report*, Canberra, Government Printer, 1958.
8. In 1974 the Commonwealth assumed full financial responsibility for the nation's institutions of higher education.
9. Wyndham, speech annual conference Australian Teachers' Federation, 1951, WP, ML mss 5089, 22(38).
10. Wyndham, address ANZAAS Conference, 1971, WP, ML mss 5089, 26(38).
11. Hughes, 'The Role of the Australian States', p. 66.
12. Wyndham, Interview, U. Bygott, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
13. Hughes, 'The Role of the Australian States', p. 66.
14. Wyndham, address ANZAAS Conference, 1971, WP, ML mss 5089, 26(38).
15. Wyndham, Interview, U. Bygott, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
16. Hughes, 'The Role of the Australian States', p. 65.
17. Committee on the Future of Tertiary Education in Australia (L. H. Martin, Chair), Tertiary Education in Australia: *Report to the Australian Universities Commission*, Melbourne, Commonwealth of Australia, 1964, Chap. 4.
18. Spaull, *History of the Australian Education Council*, p. 138.

19. Comprehensive accounts of the campaigns to secure federal funding can be found in Spaull, *History of the Australian Education Council*, pp. 104–120; and O'Brien, *A Divided Unity*, Chap. 2.
20. Wyndham to T. Robertson, 5 Sep. 1958, NSWSA, 19/8242.
21. Wyndham to T. Robertson, 8 Apr. 1959, NSWSA, 19/8242.
22. O'Brien, *A Divided Unity*, p. 19.
23. Wyndham to T. Robertson, 5 Sep. 1958, NSWSA, 19/8242.
24. Wyndham to T. Robertson, 6 Apr. 1960, NSWSA, 19/8242.
25. Wyndham to T. Robertson, 5 Sep. 1958, NSWSA, 19/8242.
26. T. Robertson to D. Tribolet, 1 Sep. 1958, NSWSA, 19/8242.
27. Spaull, *History of the Australian Education Council*, p. 163.
28. T. Robertson to Wyndham, 26 Mar. 1959, NSWSA, 19/8242.
29. *Ibid.*
30. T. Robertson to D. Tribolet, 10 Apr. 1959, NSWSA, 19/8242.
31. Wyndham to T. Robertson, 21 Apr. 1959, NSWSA, 19/8242.
32. Spaull, *History of the Australian Education Council*, p. 164.
33. T. Robertson to Wyndham, 1 Jun. 1959, NSWSA, 19/8242.
34. O'Brien, *A Divided Unity*, p. 25.
35. M. Kennett, *Teachers' Challenge: professional standards and public service*, Sydney, Alpha Books, c. 1969, p. 133.
36. Kennett, *Teachers' Challenge*, p. 133.
37. A. Webster to author, 16 Aug. 1993.
38. O'Brien, *A Divided Unity*, p. 30.
39. See D. Smart, 'The Industrial Fund: a highly successful model of big business collaboration with the Headmasters' Conference in the interests of school science', *Melbourne Studies in Education*, MUP, 1984.
40. National Inquiry into Teacher Education (J. Auchmuty, Chair), *Report*, Canberra, Australian Publishing Service, 1980, p. 253.
41. D. Dexter to R. Carlin, 1 Jul. 1964, NSWSA, 8/2273.
42. Martin Committee, *Tertiary Education in Australia*.
43. Auchmuty Inquiry, *Report*, p. 248.
44. D. Dexter to Wyndham, 18 May, 1964, NSWSA, 8/2273.
45. Wyndham, response to Questionnaire of Members of Martin Committee, 21 Jul. 1978, WP, ML mss 5089, 5(38).
46. *Grapevine, Journal of the Administrative Officers of the New South Wales. Department of Education*, vol. 3, no. 2, Dec. 1968, p. 1.
47. Wyndham to Anon., 28 Jul. 1982, WP, ML mss 5089, 5(38).
48. Auchmuty Inquiry, Report, p. 253.
49. Wyndham, Memorandum to Minister, 8 Sep. 1965, NSWSA, 19/8245.
50. *Ibid.*
51. R. Butts, *Assumptions Underlying Australian Education*, Melbourne, ACER, 1955, p. 71.
52. Wyndham, Taped Interview, Hazel De Berg, NLA.
53. A. R. Crane, 'Assessing a Teachers' College', *Education News*, vol. 12, no. 5, p. 13, Oct. 1969; cited in Auchmuty Inquiry, Report, p. 256.
54. Auchmuty Inquiry, Report, p. 256.
55. Grapevine, *Journal of the Administrative Officers of the New South Wales. Department of Education*, vol. 3, no. 2, Dec. 1968, p. 1. Statutory corporations are further discussed in Chapter 9 of the present study.

56. Wyndham to Anon., 30 Aug. 1978, WP, ML mss 5089, 5(38).
57. *Ibid.*
58. *Ibid.* Space does not permit exploration here of this acrimonious interlude. See A. Barnes, 'Years of Growth and Stress, 1947–1967' in G. Boardman, *et. al*, *Sydney Teacher' College: a history, 1906–1981*, Sydney, Hale and Iremonger, 1995, pp. 167–180. It is prominent in the archives. See WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38); and NSWSA, 11/10532; 19/8245.
59. Wyndham to Anon., 30 Aug. 1978, WP, ML mss 5089, 5(38).
60. *Ibid.*
61. Wyndham, Conference of Principals of Teachers' Colleges, Teacher Training Standing Committee, Minutes, 1 Dec. 1959, NSWSA, 11/10532.
62. I. Turner, Conference of Principals of Teachers' Colleges, Teacher Training Standing Committee, Minutes, 11 May 1960, NSWSA, 11/10532.
63. Wyndham, Conference, 1960, NSWSA, 11/10532.
64. Conference of Principals of Teachers' Colleges, Teacher Training Standing Committee, Minutes, 30 Apr. 1962, NSWSA, 11/10532.
65. *Ibid*, Minutes, 26 Nov. 1962, NSWSA, 11/10532.
66. R. Menzies; cited in Martin Committee, Tertiary Education in Australia, p. 225.
67. Wyndham to E. Wetherell, 29 Mar. 1965, NSWSA, 8/2269.
68. *Ibid.*
69. Wyndham, handwritten annotations to draft of Martin Report, n.d., NSWSA, 8/2273. See Martin Committee, *Tertiary Education in Australia.*
70. Martin Committee, *Tertiary Education in Australia*, p. 210.
71. *Ibid*, p. 103.
72. *Ibid*, p. 118.
73. Butts, *Assumptions*, p. 73.
74. Martin Committee, *Tertiary Education in Australia*, p. 110.
75. *Ibid.*
76. *Ibid.* p. 108.
77. Wyndham, handwritten annotations to draft of Martin Report, n.d., NSWSA, 8/2273.
78. Conference of Principals of Teachers' Colleges, Teacher Training Standing Committee, Minutes, 28 Nov. 1961, NSWSA, 11/10532.
79. Wyndham to T. Robertson, 10 Aug. 1961, NSWSA, 19/8242.
80. Martin Committee, *Tertiary Education in Australia*, pp. 121–122.
81. *Ibid*, p. 121.
82. Wyndham to D. Dexter, 1 Jul. 1964, NSWSA, 8/2273.
83. *Ibid.*
84. Wyndham to L. Martin, 16 Jun. 1964, NSWSA, 8/2273.
85. *Ibid.*
86. *Ibid.*
87. Hansard, *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates*, House of Representatives, 16th March to 29th April, 1965, Canberra, Commonwealth Government Printer, p. 272; cited in M. Gwilliam, The Growth of the State Teachers' Colleges of NSW, as a Response to Need, and their Metamorphosis into Colleges of Advanced Education, MA Ed Project, Macquarie University, c. 1977, p. 79.
88. Wyndham to T. Robertson, 26 Mar. 1965, NSWSA, 19/8242. Undoubtedly he was referring here to William Weeden, Director, COE, then housed in the AMP building in Sydney.

89. Wyndham to E. Wetherell, 29 Mar. 1965, NSWSA, 8/2269.
90. *Ibid.*
91. *Ibid.*
92. Wyndham to T. Robertson, 6 Apr. 1965, NSWSA, 19/8242.
93. *Ibid.* The same quote is cited in Spaull, History of the Australian Education Council, p. 146.
94. C. Cutler to J. Pizzey, 26 Jan. 1966; cited in Spaull, *History of the Australian Education Council*, p. 148.
95. I. Turner, Conference of Principals of Teachers' Colleges, Teacher Training Standing Committee, Minutes, 3 May, 1965, NSWSA, 11/10532.
96. *Ibid.*
97. *Ibid.*
98. Wyndham, Memorandum to Minister, 8 Sep. 1965, NSWSA, 19/8245.
99. *Ibid.*
100. Wyndham to W. Fife, Assistant Minister of Education, 23 Jun. 1966, NSWSA, 19/8244.
101. Wyndham, Interview, U. Bygott, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
102. *Ibid.*
103. *Ibid.*
104. *Ibid.*
105. C. Turney and J. Taylor, *To Enlighten Them Our Task: a history of teacher education at Balmain and Kuring-gai Colleges*, Sydney, Sydmac Academic Press, 1996, p. 40.
106. Auchmuty Inquiry, *Report*, p. 260.
107. O'Brien, *A Divided Unity*, p. 39.
108. Bassett, 'Australian Education', p. 13.
109. *Ibid*, p. 7.
110. J. Godfrey, 'I Believe in Fair and Bonny Play': David H. Drummond and the state aid issue, 1930–1962, paper ANZHES conference, 1992, p. 8.
111. Rev. MacNeil Saunders, speech at Lyceum Theatre, Sydney, 10 Sep. 1961, WP, ML mss 5089, 20(38).
112. R. Carlin, Interview by author, 23 Aug. 1993.
113. M. Wyndham, Interview by author, 18 Jun. 1993.
114. W.F. Connell, *Reshaping Australian Education 1960–1985*, Melbourne, ACER, 1993, p. 104.
115. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 9 Aug. 1962.
116. After a prolonged series of bitter sectarian battles the *Public Instruction Act* of 1880 had ended government assistance to non-government schools.
117. Wyndham to T. Robertson, 24 Aug. 1962, NSWSA, 19/8242.
118. *Ibid.*
119. *Ibid.*
120. Wyndham to E. Wetherell, 21 Nov. 1962, NSWSA, 8/2268.
121. O'Brien, *A Divided Unity*, p. 36. See also, Smart, 'The Industrial Fund'.
122. O'Brien, *A Divided Unity*, p. 37.
123. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 Feb. 1997.
124. Wyndham to E. Pearse, 8 May, 1971, WP, ML mss 5089, 3(38).
125. Wyndham to G. Odgers, 1 Aug. 1971, WP, ML mss 5089, 3(38).
126. Wyndham to B. Backhouse, 14 May, 1972, WP, ML mss 5089, 3(38).
127. Wyndham to Rev. Douglas Parker, 5 Apr. 1982, WP, ML mss 5089, 5(38).

Chapter 9

The Wyndham Style and its Legacy

To appreciate Wyndham's achievements it is essential to understand the administrative and political battles which were fought behind the sedate facade of administrative life. Although Wyndham's style was a product of his times, and he certainly displayed many of the professional characteristics commonplace amongst his peers, there remained such a wide variation in the features and behaviours of the members of his circle that generalisations can only be made with caution. Underestimating the differences between individuals who belong to similar groups, as Jean-Paul Sartre warned, is a fault to be wary of: 'While undoubtedly Valery is a petit-bourgeois intellectual, not every petit-bourgeois intellectual is Valery.'[1] Both Wyndham's singularity and his universality merit historical investigation.

Much of what Wyndham said is stimulating and informative but to try to find in his pronouncements a coherent or novel educational theory or ethic is a vain task. Some clues are provided by his allegiance to many of the tenets of 'progressive' or 'New Education';[2] a philosophy based to a large degree on the theories of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the German philosopher Johann Herbart, and the American progressive educationist John Dewey.[3] This is not the place to recount in detail the origins and development of progressive education. To this day the precise nature of 'progressivism' remains a matter of dispute, although it is agreed that it valued 'science, efficiency, conservation and social order' and held that 'experts should play a greater role in society'.[4] There were other 'progressive' propositions that were also central to Wyndham's educational philosophy: teaching should be more scientific and the school served not merely by trained teachers but also by doctors, nurses, counsellors and psychologists; education should offer a key means of moderate social reform; and school life ought to be a happy as well as profitable series of learning experiences. For Wyndham this meant a more liberal approach to curriculum development and pedagogy. It prompted him to extol a more 'child-centred' schooling, where, as Rousseau suggested, the child's own world became the central concern and school organisation reflected the natural order of human growth: propositions certainly not novel in the annals of schooling.[5] Wyndham's

zeal for ability grouping, shared by the broader progressive movement in his era, was founded on the belief that the development of the individual child would profit by placing students in groups of homogeneous ability.

For the most part, however, Wyndham's philosophy was an eclectic amalgam of progressivism and other ideas in vogue overseas in professional circles. Wyndham was admittedly an admirable and conscious collector of schemes for the improvement of schools. His method of developing his philosophy was by accretion: each successive edition enriched and strengthened the original version. It was not imaginative theoretical insights but his broader vision, his ability to see the opportunities for change, and his willingness to accept the responsibility for initiating educational reform, that placed him ahead of most of his contemporaries. It was the way he pursued his goals, rather than the manner in which he formed them, that distinguished Wyndham. Education may suffer as much from narrowness of purpose as from inconsistency, and it is a great mistake to undervalue those spokesmen who ensured that educational problems were stated as widely and broadly as possible.

Administrative Style

In Wyndham's relationships with other officials and leaders certain distinctive aspects of his personality clearly emerge. His own particular administrative style was partly a result of his upbringing. He had an enormous ambition to succeed, which, an associate asserted, came from his stepmother. This informant believed that Wyndham's temperament was moulded by both a puritan home setting and a dominant stepmother: that his character was largely the product of being raised in a strict Methodist household.[6] His wife similarly reported that in his youth Wyndham was mostly influenced by his stern and religious stepmother: great things were to be expected from her stepsons and she was determined to see them distinguished. His wife conceded: 'My husband could be quite obstinate and never took notice of women because his stepmother had ruled the roost ... if his natural mother had not died and the family had stayed in Forbes there would not have been the push to achieve.'[7] This inflexibility often found expression in a countenance that appeared to many as very self-opinionated: when Wyndham thought he was right he was very insistent.[8] Wyndham's great administrative weakness, according to Hedley Yelland, was 'his inability to reconcile rivalry and weld his team into a harmonious whole'.[9] Other contemporaries believed he was so ambitious 'because he was small and not particularly attractive. He worked so hard and I doubt if he did too much except work'.[10]

Many of his other personal characteristics contributed to his advancement. Wyndham realised that 'you've got to be tough to be a good administrator'.[11] He was an assiduous, meticulous worker who was able to write lucid English with great rapidity. One professional colleague added that Wyndham's 'ability to speak eloquently was the strongest influence in the progress of his career'.[12] It is very much of an accomplishment for an educational leader to speak well. A technique he favoured was the citing of statistics, with which he meant to convince the reason of his hearers, but only after he had taken possession of their feelings. Friends described him as not only verbally very fluent but also highly intelligent with a single-minded approach which could make a problem explicit and suggest action. They believed he was an excellent judge of character who handled senior educationists superbly and exhibited such virtues as personal loyalty, persistence, directness, sensitivity and confidence.[13] Others observed that he was 'always ready, even anxious to get opinions from outside'.[14] Yelland reported that each day Wyndham would interview three senior officers, the Secretary and the Directors of Primary and Secondary Education, for about one hour: 'When I discovered that he would listen I got on well with him.'[15] His demeanour, such supporters believed, was that of a not undistinguished but nevertheless modest leader of an important class of professionals:

> As Director-General Wyndham was a very secure man: he was sure of his facts and spoke with much conviction. He expected and obtained a tremendous respect. He obtained this respect by being a very accomplished speaker, who in turn made his staff feel that their individual contributions were all important. His security was enhanced by his willingness to acknowledge, both personally and in public, the assistance he had received from several officers. By virtue of his wide experience, Wyndham knew what questions to ask and had an excellent background against which to interpret the answers.[16]

Wyndham often cited the former Director of Education, Peter Board, as one role model he sought to emulate. In his farewell speech at his retirement dinner in December 1968 he confessed that he would be well pleased if 'shall we say in forty years time, if anything I may have done, at the end, stands up as well in review as Peter Board's work,[17] I would be more than happy as I rotate on the top of a distant cloud'.[18] In 1969, in recognition of his achievements, Wyndham was awarded a knighthood. 'The happy thing about this event is that it is the first time that anyone in NSW connected with public education has been knighted and the staff of the Department, very properly, has taken it as recognition of the work of the Department'.[19]

Networks

His success in office relied on the comfort and support of numerous allies and he had certainly enlisted some formidable sponsors. Wyndham, Andrew Spaull insists, was 'encouraged' by David Drummond, Minister for Education, 1927–30 and 1932–41.[20] After working as Alexander Mackie's personal assistant Wyndham formed a close personal and professional association with this eminent scholar whose influence was so evident throughout the education policy network.[21] The intimacy between the two grew ever warmer. Wyndham received a good deal of excellent advice and encouragement from Mackie in the direction of his own ambitions. No one canvassed for the young Wyndham with more persistent zeal than did Mackie. During the early stages of Wyndham's career, Mackie [who retired in 1940] continued to serve as both the Principal of Sydney Teachers' College and Professor of Education at the University of Sydney. He was also a member of the seminal 1933 Wallace Committee of Inquiry into Post-Primary Education.[22] One observer believed that 'Wyndham's connections with Mackie were very important and it's quite likely that Mackie's recommendation established him with G. Ross Thomas, the Director from 1930 to 1940'.[23] Mackie's educational philosophy, derived from the 'New Education'[24] and echoing the doctrines of John Dewey,[25] was readily embraced by Wyndham. Another informant believed that G. Ross Thomas regarded Wyndham 'almost as a sort of god or son'.[26] Wyndham it seemed was a young man whom the Director desired to have brought forward.

Another key supporter was Alek Walter Hicks, Assistant Under-Secretary of the Department of Education, 1930–35, Assistant Under-Secretary and Superintendent of Technical Education, 1936–38, and a member of the Public Service Board of NSW, 1939–49. Wyndham had collaborated with Hicks when establishing the first research bureau and opportunity classes. Hicks had also supported the creation of the school counsellor network and the decentralisation program and served on the Wyndham Committee. Several informants believed that another of his sponsors, John Gordon McKenzie, Director from 1940 to 1952, groomed Wyndham to succeed him.[27]

A former colleague believed that one major reason for Wyndham's rise in the Department was the patronage he enjoyed because of the loyalty to the 'old school tie' evident in his fellow alumni and ex-teachers of Fort Street Boys' High School. One reason suggested for McKenzie's support is that he felt a special attachment to Fort Street where he had been the Modern Language Master when Wyndham was a student. Another factor often listed as contributing to his ascendancy was Wyndham's doctoral qualifications from Stanford. Also repeatedly referred to was an aspect which is today seldom mentioned as an ingredient necessary for success: his religion.[28]

Religious affiliation in the first half of the twentieth century would have been prominent in the calculations of those determining where their best career prospects were to be found. Indeed, it was a prerequisite for success in certain fields:

> In the early 1930s, and for many years afterwards, each government department was dominated by a particular religious group: the Education Department by the Methodists. It was a great advantage to be a Methodist in the Department in the 1930s. This continued to be the case when Wyndham became Director-General.[29]

Another of Wyndham's associates noted: 'It appeared to be a major advantage to be a Methodist.'[30] For what special merit the young Wyndham was selected for patronage scholars may never be certain, but Wyndham, as a candidate for various offices, was perhaps more likely to be accepted by superiors who shared his religious affiliations. Hedley Yelland suspected that Wyndham's religion was a key contributor to his rapid rise:

> One thing that could have helped his career was his religion. He was a great man for duty; the stern daughter of the voice of God. Religion gave him his discipline in life. It always struck me as queer that before the 1950s there was a feeling that you had to be anything but a Catholic to prosper in the Department. He was a good non-conformist and I think that some of his earlier appointments may have had a religious basis.[31]

Another informant confided: 'Can I say cryptically that Thomas was a Methodist and Wyndham might have sung in the same choir.'[32]

Wyndham also enjoyed both the support and fellowship of many of his peers.[33] William 'Jock' Weeden was often cited as an abiding friend. Their careers had followed similar paths. Weeden, who was only two years younger than Wyndham, had also graduated from Fort Street and the University of Sydney; had served as Research Officer with the NSW Education Department from 1940 to 1942; and in 1953 became Director of the NSW section of the Commonwealth Office of Education. Their friendship survived Wyndham's misgivings concerning Weeden's COE role. Weeden had regular contact with Wyndham throughout the whole of Wyndham's term as Director-General and believed that he was 'one of the two outstanding directors-general of that period'.[34] Although he doubted whether any individual has a significant or enduring influence on educational development, and whether those influences can be accurately assessed, 'subject to this limitation, I think Harold Wyndham's influence compared more than favourably with the majority of his colleagues as Director-General'. Weeden confirmed that he was 'very fond of Wyndham' who 'was a very good and loyal friend'.[35]

Another steadfast friend and ally was Thomas Logan 'Blue' Robertson, Director of Education, Western Australia, from 1951.[36] Many were the discussions which were held between them as to the best way in which things might be arranged.[37] They would consult before important meetings, and their different methods of argument would be settled, how one should take this line and the other that. One contemporary believed that Robertson and Wyndham were 'kindred spirits'. [38] Robertson and Wyndham, in his view, were the driving force in the Australian Education Council in that era. It was a partnership that worked well[39] Robertson was slightly older and much taller than the diminutive Wyndham. He too had won a scholarship to complete a PhD overseas and there were many other similarities in their careers.[40]

David Verco was another close friend of Wyndham and became his intended successor. He also held postgraduate qualifications. Like Wyndham, his career had prospered despite limited school experience. When Wyndham retired in 1968 he was pleased to note that Verco would assume the mantle of Director-General. Verco was an elder of the North Turramurra Church of Christ. In his career with the Department of Education he was often closely associated with Wyndham. He was a member of one of Wyndham's classes at Sydney Teachers' College and one of the State's original school counsellors. He shared with Wyndham an interest in research and planning and became Wyndham's assistant when his mentor became Director-General in 1952. One senior officer believed that it was 'quite obvious that Wyndham groomed Verco to succeed him'.[41] Verco nevertheless was not reluctant to assert his independence: 'I have been involved very closely with him. Does this make me a protege? I am certainly indebted to his leadership, but I would also hope that I have developed some original concepts of my own.'[42] Wyndham was 'particularly happy' about Verco being his successor and believed Verco had 'a decade ahead of him'.[43]

Within the Department of Education there were, however, cliques with their own identity; each seeing themselves as intrinsically superior or inferior to others. Wyndham's success threatened to undermine the influence of several factions who found many reasons to dislike him: he was a primary school teacher interfering in secondary education and his status relied on his academic and administrative achievements rather than teaching accomplishments. He also could appear quite priggish in both his personal and social relationships:

> Wyndham was something of an intruder into the tight enclave of secondary education. I sensed almost resentment among secondary school administrators and principals that an 'outsider' should become top man in their field. Wyndham was just not 'one of the boys'. However, he had ideas and initiative.[44]

There was a good fortune about Wyndham which added greatly to his enemies' wrath. Wyndham had been appointed a district inspector without having been a school principal and such promotions meant, they alleged, that he had gained advancement without enduring direct competition from his contemporaries. At the time it was generally expected that a substantial amount of an administrator's early career would be spent in schools and it was natural for most successful administrators to form their educational philosophy and biases at this period of life. Most senior officers had followed this route and many believed Wyndham was unfitted by his irregular early career for the office of Director-General. They believed that all officers who were of real use had acquired their skills through devoting considerable time to succeeding in positions in schools. It was the way of the profession. His supporters argued that the fact that Wyndham was never in any specialised field of education and held doctoral qualifications allowed him a more balanced view of his responsibilities.[45] They insisted that his early career allowed Wyndham to achieve a good theoretical grasp of education often denied to those obliged to serve a long apprenticeship in schools.[46]

Wyndham's administrative style and ambitions also provoked opposition. Some of his other contemporaries contradicted the reports of his friends and supporters. Many found his public performances long-winded, conceited, and pompous. Several claimed that as an administrator he was imperious and discouraged professional collaboration. One of his senior officers could not remember 'any occasion when Wyndham visited my office. Also during this period I do not recall being invited to Wyndham's office on official business: my further recall is that the Director of Secondary Education was an infrequent visitor to Wyndham's office'. The same colleague believed that Wyndham's style was, 'to a degree, aloof, and that his control was remote'.[47] Another associate reported that Wyndham had the 'worst ability to get on with people' that he had ever encountered. This informant claimed that initially when John Goodsell replaced Wallace Wurth as chairman of the Public Service Board, he and Wyndham were 'best mates but six months later they were estranged'. Wyndham, he believed, did not readily forgive those who had injured him, and was arrogant and obstinately trenchant in his views.[48]

Wyndham certainly faced some powerful opposition within the Department. Some of the differences arose from the fact that most senior officers were secondary teachers, and there had always been friction in the Department between primary and secondary teachers. The Department of Education was made up of a multiplicity of parts with a high degree of rivalry between them. Another source of antagonism was the involvement of both Wyndham and Verco in church life which provoked, it is reported, comments such as 'that is what you would expect from a bible-basher'. There was

something in the hard, unsympathising virtues of Wyndham which antagonised many of his colleagues.[49] Many were jealous that Wyndham, with so little school experience, had been preferred ahead of those who had worked their way up gallantly, in the usual way.

Many thought Wyndham was a 'know-all' who assumed his doctoral qualification entitled him to behave in an intellectually arrogant fashion.[50] Wyndham, it seemed to such critics, gave himself airs and his religious piety reinforced an impression of aloofness. Most of the senior officers in the Department would join each other for a drink after work but Wyndham and Verco declined.[51] This group was very strong in sarcasm and derided the absent Wyndham as a sanctimonious churchgoer and teetotaller.[52] 'He was not fond of drink and so was often despised by the drinking mob at head office because he couldn't hold a schooner with the boys. He was still a regular churchgoer when Director-General.'[53] Wyndham would have viewed such amusements as idle and profligate. He had never been known to do anything improper by those who had been closest to with him even in his earlier days. His critics concluded Wyndham was hard and dry and too dispassionate.[54]

The NSW Teachers' Federation

Some powerful organisations also sought to thwart Wyndham's ambitions and weaken his influence. Before Wyndham was first appointed as a staff inspector the NSW Teachers' Federation had formally complained that he did not satisfy the orthodox criteria and he was never popular with the Federation.[55] Wyndham acknowledged that in planning his survey of secondary education he had to 'assess the potential of other forces in the field, for example the Teachers' Federation, by whose "machine", I was automatically regarded as the personification of "Head Office"'.[56] He also resisted their claims for a reduction in the hours of face-to-face teaching and class sizes, fighting them 'tooth and nail right along the line'. They viewed Wyndham 'as their natural enemy, as a very good negotiator, very intelligent, but their *bête noire*, standing in their way'.[57] They were to inflict a painful injury on Wyndham's reputation just before his retirement, when, in October 1968, NSW teachers went on strike for the first time. Class sizes, the provision of relief staff, ancillary staffing and the conduct of the Public Service Board on salary negotiations were cited as the major concerns.[58] Despite Wyndham issuing a directive that all schools were to remain open,[59] some 65 per cent of the membership heeded their union's directive to strike for one day.[60] Wyndham was very discomfited by the strike,[61] and in the letter his brother Norman wrote, trying to console him, some of the reasons for Wyndham's anguish can be discerned:

> I was distressed to hear that in any way at all you had thought yourself involved in the recent teachers strike ... the growing pains of the Wyndham Scheme are acknowledged .... Of course the strike was undignified and purposeless. The whole community knows that there is not enough money.[62]

The Public Service Board

Another major institution restricting Wyndham's influence was the Public Service Board. The policy landscape was overshadowed in his era by the Board, which constrained both the Minister and the Director-General. In running the Department the Director-General had, what might be termed a 'divided responsibility': he had a direct responsibility to the Minister but was also accountable to the PSB for the discipline, efficiency and economic administration of the Department. *The Public Service Act* of 1895 established a Public Service Board as a statutory corporation to 'abolish all patronage with respect to appointments and promotion in the Public Service' and to 'establish and ensure the continuance of a proper standard of efficiency and economy in the Public Service'.[63] Originally it consisted of three members, whose term of office was limited to three years, but later amendments to the Act instituted permanent tenure and increased the membership of the Board to four.[64] Members of the Board were removable from office only by a resolution of each House of Parliament.[65] In its oversight of education services the Board regularly inspected the Education Department to review procedures, organisation of branches and the work of officers. When allegations of maladministration or misconduct arose the Board conducted inquiries and could discipline officers, including teachers, who were judged at fault.[66] It also determined the number of staff that could be employed by the Department of Education. The Board's approval was necessary for the creation of new positions and promotions. Moreover, in determining the Public Service Regulations, the PSB prescribed the conditions for the classification of schools and the number and grade of promotions positions in each school.[67] Although it delegated to the Director-General authority to approve the promotion of primary and secondary teachers, the Permanent Head still required the Board's approval for any other appointment.[68] The Board also had responsibility, under Section 14 of the *Public Service Act*, for determining salaries 'fairly appropriate' to the work of officers and employees.[69]

Some its other powers were quite extraordinary. The Board, for example, could exercise prerogatives not only to make law but also to interpret and administer it. Its legislative powers enabled it to make regulations which became part of the law of the land immediately they were issued and laid on the table of the Legislative Assembly for a prescribed period. It was not 'an over-simplification to say that, in plain language, this means that the

Government of the day always does anything the Board tells it to do'.[70] At the time it exercised 'a detailed control over the life and prospects of individual teachers'. The power of the Board was such that in Wyndham's time the chairman, Wallace Wurth, was nicknamed 'the de facto Premier'.[71] Board members were variously called 'power-drunk despots, dedicated servants of the public, bureaucratic monsters, and faithful, incorruptible guardians of democratic government'.[72] Hedley Yelland observed that Wyndham was always 'uneasily subject' to the Public Service Board. It was then the practice for the PSB to 'appoint all top officers in the Department and the Minister routinely approved'. In Yelland's view the Public Service Board 'practically ran the state'.[73]

Wyndham was fully aware of the importance of winning the support of the Public Service Board. To establish the Research Office he needed the support of both the Director, G. Ross Thomas, and the PSB. 'The strength and influence of the PSB should not be underestimated. Wyndham's relationships with Wallace Wurth[74] and Harry Heath were crucial. In those days things were so much smaller and personal relationships so much easier.'[75] Wyndham, once he was appointed Director-General, one contemporary noted, had to engage in 'a kind of three way tussle with the Board and the Federation'.[76]

When the Public Service Board launched an inquiry into teacher education in 1957, Don Taylor, President of the New South Wales Teachers' Federation asked:

> If such an enquiry is necessary why has the public announcement not been made by the responsible Minister? Why has the Director-General been ignored? If it is an expression of dissatisfaction with the Director-General, and if it is not thought necessary for the Minister for Education to set up a Committee and inform the public, then there is but one conclusion, and that is that the Public Service Board is taking over complete control of education.[77]

By 1959 the NSW Teachers' Federation was complaining that 'the Board's control of education had lessened the status, influence and authority of the Director-General and his staff'.[78] The PSB, it was asserted, continuously usurped the functions and control of the Education Department. Since the Board controlled staffing, and since policy could not be implemented without appropriate staffing, the Board had the right to question any action taken by the Department.

The Education Commission

In 1957 the annual conference of the NSW Teachers' Federation cited acute teacher shortages and insufficient accommodation in schools and teachers

colleges as evidence that the PSB had been so negligent that it should be replaced by an Education Commission solely responsible for the special requirements of the education sector. The conference called upon the State government to legislate immediately to remove the Department of Education and the Department of Technical Education from the jurisdiction of the PSB and to establish an Education Commission subject to parliamentary control through a responsible Minister. This Commission was to consist of five members chosen triennially, two of whom should be elected by the NSW Teachers' Federation and two by the government, with a chairman acceptable to both parties.[79] The new Commission would be responsible for the formulation and administration of education policy including the control of teachers and other staff. It would have the power to enter into agreements with the NSW Teachers' Federation on salaries and other conditions of service.[80] Although the campaign to establish a Commission continued throughout the 1960s, nowhere did its advocates explain the exact functions proposed for the Commission, nor was it explained whether the Commission would retain the existing powers of the PSB or whether some of these would be handed over to the Director-General.[81]

Wyndham resolutely opposed this scheme. The PSB, because it did not directly intervene in specific education policy matters, could be tolerated, but the powers of an Education Commission, as proposed, would rival those of the Department. In his view, another major impediment stood in the way of the proposed arrangement: such a body, he warned, would either supplant or erode the responsibility of the Minister. 'It would be most unsound to consider the division of the total educational program of the State. The present divorce between technical and general education, even under the same Minister, should be warning enough on this score.'[82] Any form of participation in educational administration by the Commission would be incompatible with the doctrine of responsibility of officers to their Minister since officers would then have 'to serve two masters'. Even if the Commission could only advise, then the Minister would receive advice from two sources:

> betokening a belief that more competent advice could be given to the Minister by members of such a Commission than by officers of proven ability. The latter could hardly be blamed if they took the view that they might be well advised to resign in favour of the members of such a Commission.[83]

The chief interest of the NSW Teachers' Federation seemed, to Wyndham, to be 'the creation of a body separate to the Public Service Board, on which the Federation would have a preponderant influence, to determine the salaries and working conditions of teachers'. The Commission could destroy or eclipse the two boards established under the Wyndham Scheme and 'undo

more than half a century of work, which through the creation of the boards has achieved effective liaison between government and non-government schools and between the schools and universities'.[84] The very criticism levelled against the PSB, that it intervened in educational issues, Wyndham insisted, could also be applied to the Commission:

> In short, if the Government feels bound to set up some body in respect of education separate from the Department of Education and from the Public Service Board, it should be a body responsible for the determination of salaries and industrial conditions of teachers and should be strictly limited to those functions.[85]

In August 1967 the new Premier, Robert Askin, announced his Government's decision to establish an inquiry into the establishment of an Education Commission.[86] Wyndham, commenting later, in retirement, felt that an undue emphasis had been placed upon the intrusive role of the PSB in educational policy. In his experience, 'that role was real enough, especially between 1940 and 1960, but, by means which I shall not stop to discuss here, it could have been dealt with without resort to an Education Commission'.[87] The case for an Education Commission, he argued, must stand on broader ground and would raise wider issues.[88] Unless it was to be made an advisory body, it could not be established without some review of the powers and responsibilities of the Minister of Education. If established as a statutory corporation it would be a body 'interposed between the Minister and the agencies of education. Above all, by what means could it be made more likely that the membership of such a Commission would reflect a variety of competent experience, rather than an aggregation of representatives of pressure groups?' The proposal might so alter the role of the Director-General, that the permanent head could become 'more than ever, the meat in the sandwich'.[89]

The Director-General and the Minister

Wyndham knew that the crucial element for the success of a permanent head was a constructive relationship with his minister and he succeeded in cultivating a rapport with each—Robert Heffron, Ernest Wetherell and Charles Cutler.[90] With the Wyndham Report, Heffron, 'faced a somewhat worried Cabinet in terms of costs, including those of non-government schools'.[91] Wyndham readily acknowledged the primacy of the Minister, insisting that educational policy is 'in the last analysis, the Minister's policy'[92] but noted that it is not always solely or even principally shaped in legislation. At the parliamentary level educational decisions tended to be linked to matters of immediate political consequence and were more likely

to be made in Cabinet or in the Party Room rather than 'announced as Government policy on the floor of the House'.[93] It was at this level that the status and skills of individual ministers were paramount.

Wyndham observed that the assumption that it is solely the Minister who creates policy and the Director-General who carries it out 'is unsound in theory and practice .... The initiative for policy may come from the Minister, from the Director-General or, if the Director-General is competent, from one of his colleagues. It is often modified and improved in discussion.'[94] The Minister, although 'free therefore to launch an idea of his own, would be wise to keep his party colleagues informed and wiser still to consult his professional officers'. Question time in the House, when particular questions are raised without notice, posed a singular risk, since the Minister may make promises 'which then become mandatory for the Department. That such commitments are educationally wise will depend upon the background which the Minister himself has built up and the liaison which exists between himself and his professional officers especially his Permanent Head.' Theoretically all educational policy was the Minister's policy but 'it is unreal to think that the Minister makes policy and the Department carries it out. The real situation was a two-way traffic of ideas.' The Minister needed his officers' advice to translate his party platform into legislation and they in turn might suggest changes. 'Much may depend upon the Minister's standing in Cabinet, but in NSW the Minister for Education is invariably a senior member of cabinet.'[95] For example, Robert Heffron, the Minister Wyndham first served under when he became Director-General, had also been the Minister for Education and Child Welfare since 1944. He became Deputy Premier in 1952 and Premier in 1959.[96] Heffron proved a very useful and malleable ally:

> His contribution to education was that he was Deputy Premier which meant that when it came to Budget time his word carried a bit more weight than an ordinary Minister. But he did not know much about education. He said to me, one morning, almost sheepishly, after he had been in the Ministry for about ten years: 'You know this education business gets under your skin, doesn't it?'[97]

The Minister may have had his own policy but for Wyndham he was generally 'just an interested layman'.[98] Wyndham observed that community thinking had never forced a party to go to the polls with education as the major issue, nor had any government been returned to power with education as a leading policy commitment; 'suffice it to say that it is a situation which leaves a great deal to the initiative of the Minister and the Director-General'. Wyndham identified three major sources of educational activity: the education system, the Department of Education and political decisions. Central to the process was the Director-General. 'It is rarely the case that

a proposal emanating directly from or through the Minister is approved or put into effect without consultation with the professional officers of the Department.'[99]

An alert Director-General would warn a political party before an election if he believed the policy proposed would conflict with his own professional principles; if 'he felt he had a professional responsibility not consonant with the political'. The Director-General had to keep abreast of political and community forces. The permanent head must 'never leave his Minister out on the end of a limb which his opponents will be ever too ready to saw'.[100] Subtle guidance was sometimes necessary if a minister was not to 'politicise education' by acting against the Government's mandate. Wyndham recalled one incident:

> I had an Acting Minister make a suggestion to me within the first hour of his taking over which was against the policy of the Government. My response was to say that he would appreciate that the matter called for some careful thinking. This I would devote to it, but I would need a minute from him indicating specifically what he had in mind. He looked at me hard for a moment or two, then let the matter drop .... What I had actually done was to have him clearly claim his responsibility and thus his power to give me such an instruction, however implicit it may have been.[101]

Education officials and leaders, such as Wyndham, collectively formed a policy community or policy network in which access to the policy process was limited to a privileged few.[102] Usually members of such groups sought to preserve existing ways of determining policy and to protect current programs and levels of spending. Sometimes they also fought for alternative policies, opposed rivals, did deals and contested the rules.[103] Personal relationships between political and administrative actors, within a shared framework, often determined how each would act and which policies would succeed. These personal relationships were usually underwritten by the status of the organisation or group which the individual represented.

Wyndham knew that he needed the support of his Minister and key groups such as the Public Service Board and the NSW Teachers' Federation. The Director-General was only one of the several players determining educational policy and during his term in office Wyndham witnessed many changes in the relative influence of each of the key institutions. Success usually depended on winning the support or at least the acquiescence of these groups. Although it was common in the 1950s and '60s to bring interest groups into the policy-making process by inviting them to sit on statutory boards or committees of inquiry, Wyndham stoutly resisted any reform, as, for example, the creation of an Education Commission, which would have threatened the authority of the Director-General.

The stages of his advancement can be viewed as parts of an uneven and loosely fitting process of change, which came together in rather different ways at different times, but there was no inevitability about his progress. If, for example, his time of difficulty with Clive Evatt had not coincided with the need of the Commonwealth for Wyndham's skills, he may well have found his hopes permanently frustrated. The progress of Wyndham's career was in several important respects peculiar. Very few teachers or administrators had taught at a teachers college. Even fewer held doctoral qualifications, and of these, it is unlikely that any would have had a close association with scholars of such prominence as Mackie and Terman.[104] His early appointment as Research Officer gave him privileged access to the higher echelons of the Department, even though officially he held a junior position. Even as an inspector he spent most of his time in special roles at head office rather than serving a particular district with responsibilities to visit the schools therein. Before he became Director-General he undertook a wide variety of tasks, ranging from specialised research to managing the entire school building program through the stringencies of the late 1940s. These experiences proved invaluable when he managed NSW schools in the 1950s and '60s.

The degree of power which senior public servants actually enjoy, or the control a particular minister has over a department, has 'always been a conundrum in Westminster systems'.[105] It is an issue crucial to both the viability and legitimacy of the modern constitutional democracy which depends on maintaining the correct balance between the political and bureaucratic systems. After Wyndham the educational scene became less dominated by directors-general and recent decades have witnessed a steady and marked decline in the status of the office. There is little point in transposing the mid-twentieth-century role of the permanent head into the late-twentieth-century context in which new models of executive responsibility are being developed but a re-evaluation of earlier models can provide an instructive perspective on the current debate. In some ways Wyndham's career represented the pinnacle of influence of the permanent head, especially in relation to the Minister of Education.

Many critics have commented on the links between ministers and their departmental heads but few have developed an historical perspective which accurately delineates the earlier respective roles of the Minister, the permanent head and interest groups. Their oversight may arise initially from an eagerness to depict a marked contrast between present practice and an idealised traditional model. Many of the trends they assert to be of recent origin were, in fact, already evident in Wyndham's era. The simple linear progression from dominant permanent head to the emasculation of that office, so often depicted, turns out, in reality, to be a rather more complex

transformation than one might imagine. Wyndham's contribution as departmental head to moves to reform secondary education or to secure federal funding amply demonstrate how in major policy matters his actions were neither neutral nor anonymous. Indeed, his career confirms that there has always been a tug-of-war between the Minister and the bureaucracy:

> Under the Westminster system of government the relationship of a minister to his permanent head is anything but clear-cut. The jockeying for position between the Minister and his Head is endemic, the struggle for bureaucratic power within the Department is immense and obsessive for those participating and ultimately damaging and draining for the Minister if he gets involved in it.[106]

The traditional model portrayed an administration obeying the minister's every whim, serving any governing party equally, and not contributing to policy but merely administering those policies decided by the political leadership. It relied on two ideals: an hierarchical, bureaucratic model of administration, and the particular conventions of accountability and responsibility derived from the Westminster system. Max Weber conceived the ideal bureaucracy as one based on fixed and official jurisdictional areas controlled by regulation, graded levels of authority and permanent tenure of bureaucrats who held their job as a vocation.[107] This typically 'English' theory of administration stressed the independence, fairness and all-round abilities of the professional administrator.[108] It is hazardous, however, to regard it as an inclusive definition or yardstick by which to measure the increase or decrease of influence of those in office. Some scholars readily fall into such an error and by so doing recreate myths about Wyndham and his role. There is no doubt that he frequently enjoyed substantial autonomy from ministerial control and direction but he was always restrained by the power of other interest groups and his political masters. Legally and formally the Minister remained paramount although the permanent head exercised considerable authority. Some of the claims made concerning the influence of permanent heads in Wyndham's era grossly exaggerated the power of the Director-General. For example:

> At one time the Director-General was viewed as sufficiently professionally expert to lead and shape the main policies affecting curriculum offerings and to have undisputed authority over the teaching service and ministers tended to confine their interventions to ensuring broad government policy was implemented. They rarely interfered in 'educational' matters.[109]

It is clear that Wyndham's ministers left most curriculum matters to their chief executive to deal with but it is a misguided exaggeration to claim that Wyndham's authority over the teaching service was undisputed. The rigid

control exercised by the Public Service Board over the teaching service and the measure of independence it enjoyed from ministerial supervision have too often been ignored or overlooked. Other players could also thwart the aspirations of the Director-General. For example, many of Wyndham's hopes for the Higher School Certificate were frustrated by the opposition of the universities. To portray Wyndham as charting the course of NSW schools unconstrained by other forces is to perpetuate a myth.

Despite these exaggerations many assertions made by scholars concerning the former role of the Director-General are supported by the evidence revealed in this study. The Minister could indeed exercise enormous authority if he so wished, but in NSW in Wyndham's era, as in Western Australia, the Minister was traditionally content to leave policy-making largely to the bureaucrats.[110] The relative inexperience of the Minister as an 'enlightened but harried amateur'[111] stood in marked contrast to the expertise and demeanour of a lofty mandarin, like Wyndham, proud of his professional integrity and the success of his judgement. Ministers often lacked adequate background knowledge or sufficient formal education to contribute to many administrative decisions. In most instances they also had a shorter period in office than their department head. For example, in NSW from 1940 to 1968, there were two Directors-General, McKenzie and Wyndham, but five different ministers. It is hardly surprising therefore, that ministers often demurred 'to the civil servants in control of what the government actually does as distinct from what it symbolically purports to do'.[112] The contribution of public servants to policy formulation was enhanced as the complexity of government increased, and many more matters extended beyond the knowledge and control of elected officials.[113] Longer service also allowed senior public servants to weather the hostility of some of their political masters.

In theory the Westminster system provided a clear line of authority from the minister to his permanent head and the authority of the department head and his officers has always been by delegation from the minister. An impartial public service, according to this prescription, was obliged to act on ministerial instruction and provide 'only one source of official advice via the permanent head'.[114] This study confirms the belief that Directors-General, such as Wyndham, were the 'single and unchallenged adviser to the minister' on professional educational matters'.[115] Nowadays they are 'merely one of several advisers'.[116]

The rapid growth of the education sector in the postwar decades eventually led to it becoming too large and complex for any Minister to continue to rely on only one source of advice. It was, therefore, only to be expected that the role of the permanent head would also change as the education system expanded and community expectations were enlarged.

A former Director-General of Education in Victoria lamented that in the 1970s there occurred 'a far greater depersonalisation of the director-general and the administration ... the "Department" grew so big that only a few people could comprehend it in all its manifestations'.[117] Early signs of this trend were already apparent in Wyndham's time. A further stage of expansion became possible only when, after the sustained protests of leaders such as Wyndham, governments eventually agreed to allot additional funds to education. As long as the education 'pie' was growing demands for more resources became the joint aim of the Minister and the department head and indeed most other interest groups.[118]

Wyndham usually acted as senior adviser, not only in school education, but for all sectors of education, including universities, teachers' colleges and technical colleges at both State and federal levels.[119] The 1961 Martin Committee included the Directors-General Alec McDonnell from Victoria and Wyndham from NSW.[120] Declining government spending and demands for public sector reform in recent decades have created a much less congenial environment for the permanent head to exert influence. A reduction in government spending and the revival of economic liberalism in the 1980s posed a radical threat to the idea of the state having a social or 'nation-building role'.[121] In the mid–1980s some 3.6 per cent of gross domestic product was devoted to education; by 1999 that figure had dropped to 2.8 per cent. Governments, both Federal and State, still look to schools to help solve the nation's longer-term economic problems but expect them to carry out these tasks with reduced real funding. Increasing politicisation of education, characteristic of the 1980s, allowed ministers at both State and Federal levels to intervene more directly in the formation of education policy.[122]

There are other reasons which have also contributed to undermining the role of the Director-General as a senior adviser. The consensus of the postwar period dissipated in the late 1960s and education came under intense scrutiny. Wyndham witnessed the growing strength and industrial militancy of teacher unionism, culminating in the 1968 strike, with barely concealed anxiety. The political climate also changed dramatically soon afterwards. Governments increasingly recognised the need for more rapid responses to media requests and the convention of referring questions to Departmental officers was increasingly judged by the media as a sign of weakness. The realisation of Wyndham's hopes for universal junior secondary education marked a substantial increase in community education levels. As the general level of education rose in the community, the media increasingly became interested in supplying detail as well as principle. This trend obliged ministers to be conversant with the details of program implementation as well as the more general prescriptions of strategic policy.

The opportunity for the Director-General to exercise a formative influence on educational policy was restricted by a tendency for new governments to come into office with policies 'extending far beyond the high principles of strategic policies to which they were once devoted and reaching typically into the details of program policies and even the minutiae of their implementation'.[123]

As Wyndham's term of office progressed it became increasingly evident that a government could exploit the political advantage of a successful education policy. In what Fenton Sharpe, a recent NSW Director-General, described as a 'new form of populism' government today increasingly consults 'public opinion polling rather than bureaucrats to determine what the public wants'.[124] A more politically astute public also makes greater use of the political process for registering complaints and requests. Many of these take the form of approaches to the Minister to obtain exemptions from existing policies. Members of parliament and ministers often find it difficult to delegate requests from constituents and thus 'the political process ... becomes directly involved with day-to-day administration'.[125] Senior educationists now commonly express fears that politicians are less interested in professional judgement than in competing in an educational auction: making dramatic announcements to gain electoral advantage but disguising their tactics as a policy debate.

Many of the other factors which curtailed the influence of the Director-General as senior adviser first made an impact during Wyndham's term of office. In his era, countervailing powers elsewhere in the polity grew in strength. Lobby groups proliferated and became sophisticated in bypassing Departmental officers and gaining direct access to the Minister and Government. The increasingly militant, industrial unionism of teachers and their growing number made politicians acutely conscious of their power as a lobby group. The first teachers' strike in NSW in 1968 hailed a new era of political influence for the Teachers' Federation. It subsequently demonstrated that it could excite sufficient professional and community sympathy to deliver votes at elections. State ministers were more vulnerable to this sort of pressure than their federal counterparts because they are more accessible to their constituents. Backbench members, too, are seen as accountable by their constituents for the educational provision in their electorate. Some pressure groups undoubtedly welcomed a reduction in the influence of the Department in favour of a Minister who is more vulnerable to their blandishments and dependent on their support.

Shifts in the political climate have since obliged both ministers and heads of department to acquire more support staff to handle media inquiries and produce policy advice. This rapid growth of 'minders', which began soon after Wyndham retired, has provided for the Minister alternative sources of

advice which are often seen as more politically sensitive than those provided by the Department.[126] Another source of properly prepared and researched advice is now available on a regular basis and these new lieutenants often mediate between the Minister and senior public servants. Under Labor Governments in NSW ministerial advisers were frequently recruited from teacher unions. The chief executive also acquired new sources of advice. Much of Wyndham's value to his superiors, early in his career, lay in his success in creating such additional sources of advice for the Director-General. This is most readily apparent in the roles he delineated for the Research Office and school counsellors. Since policies are today more often devised and monitored by party committees and pressure groups such as teachers' unions, the departmental head's 'capacity to influence either their broad direction or their mode of application is significantly limited compared with what it was in past times'.[127]

Idealised though it was, the traditional model of administration was often invoked by men like Wyndham to legitimate their influence. He appealed to the ideal of impartiality and the notion that the 'professionalism' of the office-holder ensured more 'scientific' and 'objective' advice and that long service enhanced his judgement. Today ministers continue to depend heavily on the advice of senior officials but the latter have lost the advantage of relatively greater experience since it became the common practice for each new government to install a new permanent head. This has led to the identification of the Director-General with the incumbent political party and weakened his or her credentials as a seasoned and unbiased professional leader. Under the new Senior Executive Service arrangements most States now hire their permanent heads on a limited contract basis, which includes requirements of accountability and regular reports to the Minister on the performance of their department. In NSW, in 1985, Bob Winder became the first Director-General not to be appointed with permanent tenure but to be employed for a five-year term.[128]

Another factor influencing the relationship of the Minister and the permanent head was the role of statutory authorities. They are collegial administrative entities, such as boards, commissions, councils and the like, which are created by statute and enjoy 'a measure of organisational and operational autonomy ... [from] ministers of state and their departments'.[129] Statutory authorities perform a wide range of functions including quasi-judicial roles. One argument commonly advanced to explain the declining influence of the department head is that his or her advisory role has been partly eclipsed by the additional advice provided by the increase in the number of statutory authorities involved in education.[130] A remarkable feature of statutory authorities is that in exercising their duties they usually do not have full and direct responsibility to Parliament.

Consequently they are often outside the usual system of accountability which applies to government departments and can, therefore, diminish both the power of the Minister and the Department.[131] The Australian and NSW constitutions both envisaged that executive power would be exercised by departments administered by ministers but in recent times executive power has to a great extent been farmed out to statutory corporations.

The NSW Board of Studies was created as a statutory authority under the 1990 *Education Reform Act*. The Act, for the first time, listed for the new Board specific curriculum areas and spelt out the respective roles of the Minister and the Board. It replaced the two boards Wyndham had established, the Secondary Schools' Board and the Board of Senior School Studies. The Act signified increased government interest in areas such as the curriculum, formerly considered to be the province of the professional educationist. The creation of statutory authorities was a device also favoured by Wyndham, as evident in his preference under the Wyndham Scheme for the establishment of two statutory boards: one to oversee the School Certificate program and another the Higher School Certificate. Wyndham's hope that his creation of two boards would diminish the influence of matriculation requirements on the first four years of secondary schooling, revealed a use he favoured for statutory boards: to provide a shield against other interest groups; in this case, the universities. Wyndham saw statutory authorities as a means of elevating professional influence. The creation of a Board of Teacher Education as a result of the recommendations of the Martin Committee was one instance where Wyndham argued that a statutory authority structure would enlarge professional sovereignty.[132]

A further reason for the declining status and power of the Director-General has been the increasing involvement of the Commonwealth government in primary and secondary education. Contests for power between the Commonwealth and the States influenced many of Wyndham's endeavours. Although he wanted federal funding enlarged, he consistently and trenchantly opposed any increased control of schools by the Federal government. His opposition became even more vehement as the issue of increasing federal government aid to private schools forced its way onto the political agenda. The expansion of federal government influence in state schooling which has accompanied the boost in federal funding testifies to the substance of Wyndham's fears that the authority of the permanent head would be undermined by the growth of the Commonwealth's educational program. Yet, greater Commonwealth involvement 'ironically ... came about as a consequence of explicit encouragement by the States, especially in the late sixties'.[133] For example, the large-scale public funding of non-government schools arose indirectly from a series of campaigns by the State

ministers of education through the Australian Education Council which argued that a massive infusion of Commonwealth funds was necessary to upgrade the public school system.

Major increases in Commonwealth financial assistance to non-government schools subsequently eroded the influence of State heads of department. Wyndham was a trenchant opponent and reserved his most relentless condemnation for any such increase. As mentioned earlier this stance probably had its origins in the longstanding opposition of the Methodist Church to any assistance to Catholic schools. Another influence could well have been the views of Ellwood Cubberley, whom Wyndham so much admired. Cubberley portrayed the history of American education as the story of the 'public schools triumphant' over narrow sectarian interests.[134]

Government support for non-government schools was an anathema to Wyndham. Like nineteenth-century opponents of state aid, he saw himself warring against privilege and the sinister interests of the few. In recent decades Australia has developed a unique system of financing non-government schools, both in the levels of support offered and the conditions which are attached to them.[135] Regrettably, many of Wyndham's fears have proven well justified. Nowadays, the major portion of Commonwealth funding to schools goes to the private sector. Government support allows private schools to reduce fees and thereby encourages an increasing percentage of eligible students to enrol in non-government rather than public schools. The fewer students in the public system, the smaller the size of the realm of the Director-General. Both sides of politics support such assistance and insist that further public debate will only raise sectarian and divisive arguments best left off the political agenda. Consequently, a steady shift in resources from public to private schools continues to take place with little or no discussion.

At the federal level, the influence which chief executives once enjoyed through the Director's Conference and the Australian Education Council has also diminished. The heads of State departments once had had a major influence on the policy of the Australian Education Council through a parallel Standing Committee, which was composed solely of State Directors-General from 1936 to 1972. In the late 1970s leaders of other educational sectors were included thus diminishing the influence of the heads of State departments. In 1973, the NSW Minister for Education, Eric Willis, forced the inclusion of the separate Directors-General of Technical and Further Education (TAFE) in South Australia and NSW.[136] The Commonwealth Minister for Education became an observer on the Australian Education Council in 1977 and a full member in 1979.[137] The beginning of this process by which the influence of directors-general was reduced can be discerned in

the disputes about the status on the Director's Conference of William Weeden from the Commonwealth Office of Education. Moreover, as the Commonwealth bureaucracy grew it increasingly supplied yet another alternative source of advice. The establishment in 1972 of the Schools' Commission, chaired by Professor Karmel, heralded the creation of a substantial federal education program for which each State education department was only one of many sources of advice. This enlarged bureaucracy provided the chief source of advice for the federal ministers of education at a time when federal funds increasingly supplemented State education finances.[138] Many of Wyndham's misgivings regarding Commonwealth entry into this State sphere were evident in his views on the establishment and growth of the Commonwealth Office of Education, as examined earlier.

The Australian Constitution has not, as it was intended, preserved the educational policy-making rights of the States: 'Much initiative has passed to the federal government, scarcely inhibited by constitutional provisions.'[139] The Commonwealth is fortunate insofar as it can usually exercise financial leverage without having to accept the electoral costs of the outcomes of particular policies. Subsequent tensions are more likely to require a political rather than an administrative or professional solution. It is to be expected that the Commonwealth and States will have different priorities but 'in any conflict between the State and Commonwealth policy, the traditional role of the Director-General of Education, as an instrument of State Government policy, is compromised'.[140]

The independence of bureaucrats from their political masters has, since Wyndham, been subverted in other ways. A new form of public management, which enjoys bipartisan support, seeks to be pro-active rather than re-active and is less concerned with neutrality and accountability than with raising efficiency. Subsequent changes have proceeded to the point that 'a new and quite different model of public service administration is emerging'.[141] This new model, in all its fundamentals, stands in direct opposition to Weber's concept of bureaucracy by arguing for flexible areas of work, less stress on graded authority, and a non-permanent public service. It places greater importance on establishing objectives and outcomes through such devices as corporate strategies and performance indicators and seeks to shift the focus from process to output. Its view of ministerial responsibility seeks to ensure that:

> ministers are in control in an active way, in both policy and administration, not in the negative sense of ministerial responsibility, of concentrating on the avoidance of mistakes, but in ways which are managerially responsible: they are supposed to act as 'Executive Directors' in their portfolios rather than as 'Chairman of a Board of Directors'.[142]

The senior echelons of the public service are today much less a career service and less often chosen independently of any political influence. Labor governments, particularly those headed by Don Dunstan, Neville Wran and Gough Whitlam, were the pathfinders of these transformations of the bureaucracy's relationship to the government.[143] The process gained pace at the Federal level when a new Labor Government took office in 1984. Each successive regime undermined the power of permanent heads by its 'use of ministerial staff, new sources of policy advice and external appointments to senior levels of the public service'.[144] Such identification of the government and the Department offers distinct advantages to the party in power. It allows the government to monitor more closely the pace and nature of desired change. 'It makes for convergence between government policies and program details and outcomes.'[145] This can have electoral advantages when new programs are successful but can also create an electoral backlash when schemes are unpopular. There is also the danger that local or sectional issues can distract the government from broad principles.

Today the public sector ideal derived from Britain:

> of a classically bureaucratic, neutral, permanent, hierarchical, formal, and ministerially responsible public service, is less revered. The public sector is evolving into something else. This new form is flexible and, arguably, at higher levels, a more politicised structure akin to the civil service in the US rather than the UK.[146]

The education permanent head is no longer permanent and can expect ministerial intervention in the appointment of senior professional officers and the development of curriculum. 'Ministerial responsibility and accountability have in effect been extended to cover all aspects and levels of educational policy. Conventions concerning the separation of political and professional powers have disappeared in Australia.'[147] Because of the Minister's concern with program details, the Director-General must now be conversant with every program in the Department. There is no longer a clear division between Departmental policies and Government policies, and 'all officers ... must be aware of the new political realities, government platforms and programs, the stance of major interest groups and how to promote the government's policies at the local level'.[148] Reformers would argue that such an overhaul was long overdue; that the Department of Education had fostered a bureaucratic elite which had become a powerful interest group in its own right, often thwarting worthwhile policy initiatives when it perceived these as not furthering its own interests. This view would insist that state interference must represent the collective will, as expressed through the political process, not just the arbitrary will of officials. In

Wyndham's time, the goal of educational management had been increasingly redefined as a matter for bureaucratic administration based on educational 'science' rather than political contest. McKenzie's appointment of Wyndham to the post of Secretary underlined the growing importance of this 'technical' aspect of school administration.

One of Wyndham's great merits was his skill as a publicist. He knew how to utilise the news media to stimulate public discussion and he had the talent of lucidly explaining himself. Senior educational officials today increasingly need to devote much of their energy to legitimating the activities of their department. They operate in:

> an increasingly politicised, market oriented and dynamic decision making environment, not only in matters of principle but also in relation to details of program implementation. This has implications for their selection, training and mode of operation. It represents the greatest challenge of contemporary educational leadership.[149]

Confidence in bureaucracy is arguably at its lowest ebb in Australia's history. The 1990s conservative onslaught by governments, both in New South Wales and at the federal level, has presented a substantial challenge to the status of education professionals.

Further Research

There are several recommendations for further research raised by this study. Ample scope remains for further investigation into the impact on the educational policy debate of concepts of professionalism and of the surrender to science which occurred in educational studies and administration in Wyndham's era. It could well be profitable, also, to investigate the careers of others from this period who exercised a major influence on education policy. Of particular relevance would be a study of the progress of David Verco, who, in 1968, succeeded Wyndham as departmental head. He had long been a protege of Wyndham, and had followed a similar career path.[150] He, too, was a devout Protestant. The careers of the Directors-General who immediately followed, such as John Buggie, followed the more orthodox route of promotion initially through senior positions in schools. It may be mere coincidence that Verco and Wyndham shared similar faiths but another area of some interest would be a study of the religion of a sample of high office holders in that era to see, if, as some informants claimed, an oligarchy existed. It is difficult to believe that every happy change in Wyndham's circumstances arose entirely from his own talent and diligence. An evaluation of how particular religious affiliations might have affected other individual leaders' educational views

and practices would here be of great value. In current times historians readily adopt class and gender as the prisms through which to view the actions of their subjects, but rarely acknowledge the importance of the loyalty that so many of these actors themselves proclaimed: their adherence to a particular religious creed. Other sources of partisanship within the Department, such as the rivalry between primary and secondary teachers, also merit further study.

Another worthwhile subject for investigation is the controversy surrounding the proposal for an Education Commission.[151] Here, in the arguments put forward by the major groups, there is a great deal to learn about the role of the Director-General and his place in the education policy community. Of particular value in this regard is the Rydge Report,[152] which reviews the cases advanced by the various parties and provides a detailed account of the role of the Public Service Board. The Board and its duties, subjects almost totally neglected by scholars, would provide another fruitful topic for investigation, since the PSB was so central to many of the disputes of that era and exercised such a profound influence on the power both of the department head and the minister and also on their official relationship. In addition, a wider study of the changing role of statutory authorities which control schools and schooling, beginning perhaps with the role of the Public Service Board in the 1950s and concluding with the current functions of the NSW Board of Studies, could prove worthwhile.

What final reckoning can be made of the career of Harold Wyndham? Perhaps Alexander Mackie, when praising his friend's appointment as Secretary, devised the most eloquent metaphor for making sense of the new kind of administrator Wyndham represented when he called him the 'philosopher-king'.[153] In the *Republic* Plato conceived of an imaginary state divided into three classes: the philosopher kings, the soldiers and the merchants. The dominant class, the philosopher-kings, were more than simply rulers skilled in philosophy. What Plato meant by this term was a leader who displayed a union of the philosopher's and the statesman's virtues, that must be sufficiently profound, so that all of the political acts of the philosopher-king are wise, and all his philosophical thought is directed towards political ends. Moreover, rulers should have a particular kind of wisdom: some considered theory of knowledge. Mackie was implying that Wyndham's management of schools would be superior because of his scholarly background and the special professional knowledge he had acquired. For Plato, reason alone could decide what was morally good and should dominate the soul of the philosopher king. Reason would allow him to see beyond ephemeral 'opinion', which included mere knowledge of facts to perceive genuine knowledge: to discern the ideal or perfection. Plato also insisted that the philosopher-king needed first to try everything in turn to

develop his capacities to the full.[154] Wyndham was the new type of 'scientific' educationist, skilled in the diverse arts of administration, whose academic qualifications conferred on him professional credibility. Here was Heffron's 'man of high scholarship and wide administrative experience' that he introduced as Director-General in 1952.[155]

Education in Wyndham's era became a huge bureaucratic undertaking and the larger and more complicated the organisation became the more difficult it was for any one individual to exercise an overall influence on it. From the start to the finish of his career, his strategies and aspirations reveal that views of how to attain the highest office and the conception of the type of leadership required for that role were changing. His career demonstrates that he forged a new path to the office of Director-General; one that required only cursory school experience. Today few chief executives of education departments have worked for extensive periods in schools. Wyndham's career also confirmed the increasing necessity for the modern permanent head to act as both a publicist and a statesman. The appropriate role for senior educational bureaucratics remains unresolved in the contemporary world.

This study has provided an historical dimension to this issue by examining the career of one of Australia's most notable directors-general. While no great original theorist, Wyndham made a lasting contribution to the progress of education in NSW and deserves due recognition. At the time of his retirement, the journal of school inspectors reported: 'Wyndham has become a "legend in his own time" as the architect of a new pattern of secondary education in NSW'.[156] In his official farewell speech he expressed confidence in David Verco, his successor, and satisfaction that he was passing the baton to 'someone of like mind'. He also claimed to have no regrets about leaving the public stage: 'I am all for calling it a day, a welcome rest I may say, I have made enough mistakes already'.[157]

NOTES

1. J.-P. Sartre, *Qu'est-ce que la litterature*, Paris, Gallimard, 1982, p. 141; cited in M. Erben, 'The Problem of Our Lives: social perspectives on written biography', *Sociology*, vol. 27, no. 1, 1993, p. 21.
2. Wyndham acknowledged his debt to progressive education in a letter to Lesley Dunt. See, Wyndham to L. Dunt, 5 Nov. 1973, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
3. R. Selleck and B. Hyams, 'The Directors—F. Tate, W. T. McCoy and S. H. Smith' in C. Turney (ed.), *Pioneers of Australian Education, Volume 3, Studies of the Development of Education in Australia, 1900–1950*, Sydney, Sydney University Press, 1983, p. 31. See for example, J. Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, New York, Macmillan, 1924.

4. P. Chapman, *Schools as Sorters: Lewis M. Terman, applied psychology, and the intelligence testing movement, 1890–1930*, New York, New York University Press, 1988, p. 22.
5. A competent account of the development of progressive education is provided in L. Cremin, *The Transformation of the School: progressivism in American education, 1867–1957*, New York, Knopf, 1961.
6. R. Carlin, Interview by author, 16 Aug. 1993.
7. M. Wyndham, Interview by author, 24 Aug. 1992.
8. J. Pratt, Interview by author.
9. H. Yelland to author, 30 Nov. 1998.
10. Nancy Bush, Interview by author.
11. Wyndham, Interview, U. Bygott, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
12. J. Buggie to author, 23 Apr. 1993. Jack Buggie was Director-General, NSW Department of Education, 1972–77.
13. J. Pratt, Interview by author.
14. C. Ebert to author, 23 Jun. 1993.
15. H. Yelland, Interview by author.
16. A. Webster to author, 15 May, 1993.
17. Brian Fletcher believes that Wyndham, as Director-General, 'acquired a reputation for innovation which equalled that of Peter Board'. See B. Fletcher, *History and Achievement: a portrait of the honours students of Professor George Arnold Wood*, Sydney, Braxus Press, 1999, p. 216.
18. Wyndham, speech on his retirement, 18 Dec. 1968, WP, ML mss 5089, 23(38).
19. Wyndham to Anon., 1 Feb. 1969, WP, ML mss 5089, 3(38).
20. A. Spaull, *A History of the Australian Education Council, 1936–1986*, Sydney, Allen and Unwin, 1987, p. 16.
21. See A. Spaull and L. Mandelson, 'The College Principals—J. Smyth and A. Mackie' in C. Turney (ed.), *Pioneers*, Volume 3.
22. Committee of Investigation Appointed to Inquire into the System of Examinations and Secondary School Courses (R. S. Wallace, Chair), *Report*, Sydney, Legislative Assembly NSW, 1934.
23. J. Pratt, Interview by author.
24. See R. Selleck, *The New Education: the English background 1870–1914*, Melbourne, Pitman, 1982.
25. Spaull and Mandelson, 'College Principals—J. Smyth and A. Mackie', p. 101.
26. B. Wright, Interview by author.
27. H. Philp, Interview by author. Hugh Philp served as a psychologist assisting army testing, 1940–46. He worked as a research officer COE, 1946–54. He later filled a number of academic posts.
28. H. Mathews, Interview by author.
29. *Ibid.*
30. B. Wright, Interview by author.
31. H. Yelland, Interview by author.
32. J. Pratt, Interview by author.
33. Wyndham was also a founding member and president, 1963–65, of the Australian College of Education.
34. T. L. Robertson, Director-General, Western Australia, 1951–66, is also often mentioned as an exemplary Director-General of that era.
35. W. Weeden to author, 5 Apr. 1993.

36. M. Wyndham, Interview by author, 27 Jul. 1993.
37. See also M. White, Thomas Logan Robertson, 1901–1969, A Biographical Study, Perth, Curtin University of Technology, 1997.
38. R. Carlin, Interview by author, 16 Aug. 1993.
39. Robertson introduced comprehensive and co-educational high schools in Western Australia, see W.F. Connell, *Reshaping Australian Education 1960–1985*, Melbourne, ACER, 1993, p. 88.
40. Weeden also cited Robertson as a close friend of Wyndham. W. Weeden to author, 8 May, 1993.
41. M. E. Thomas, Interview by author, 14 Apr. 1993.
42. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 Jan. 1969.
43. Wyndham to Anon., 1 Feb. 1969, WP, ML mss 5089, 3(38). Verco died in 1972 while still in office.
44. C. Ebert to author, 8 Apr. 1993.
45. W. Weeden to author, 8 May, 1993.
46. H. Yelland, Interview by author.
47. J. Buggie to author, 23 Apr. 1993.
48. R. Carlin, Interview by author, 16 Aug. 1993.
49. P. Oldham, Interview by author, 30 Jul. 1993.
50. H. Yelland, Interview by author.
51. P. Oldham, Interview by author, 30 Jul. 1993.
52. R. Carlin, Interview by author, 16 Aug. 1993.
53. H. Yelland, Interview by author.
54. R. Carlin, Interview by author, 16 Aug. 1993.
55. W. F. Connell to author, 7 Apr. 1993.
56. Wyndham to K. Smith, 1 May, 1975, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
57. R. Carlin, Interview by author, 16 Aug. 1993.
58. J. O'Brien, *A Divided Unity: politics of NSW teacher militancy since 1945*, Sydney, Allen and Unwin, 1987, p. 140.
59. *Mirror*, 30 Sep. 1968; cited in O'Brien, *A Divided Unity*, p. 143.
60. B. Bessant and A. Spaull, *Teachers in Conflict*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1972, p. 79.
61. P. Oldham, Interview by author, 30 Jul. 1993.
62. Norman Wyndham to Harold Wyndham, 4 Oct. 1968, WP, ML mss 5089, 3(38).
63. Panel of Inquiry on the Establishing of an Education Commission in NSW (N. Rydge, Chair), *Report*, Sydney, Government Printer, 1969, p. 30.
64. In 1955, Harry Heath, a former headmaster and president of the NSWTF, 1952–54, became the first appointment to the additional position on the Public Service Board. A colleague of Wyndham's reported that Heath's accession was 'one of Wyndham's bitter pills: he resented having to become a servant of one of his headmasters'. R. Carlin, Interview by author, 16 Aug. 1993.
65. W. Walker, 'Obstacles to Freedom in Our schools: Public Service Board or Education Commission' in S. D'Urso (ed.), *Counterpoints: Critical Writings on Australian Education*, Sydney, John Wiley, 1971, p. 130.
66. A renowned example is the action taken by the Public Service Board in 1955 against Sam Lewis, President of the NSWTF, 1945–52, 1964–67. See O'Brien, *A Divided Unity*, p. 65.
67. Rydge Inquiry, *Report*, p. 48.
68. *Ibid.*

69. *Ibid*, p. 44.
70. Cutting from *The Daily Telegrapb*, c. Jan. 1956, WP, ML mss 5089, 20(38).
71. *Ibid.*
72. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 Jan. 1956.
73. H. Yelland, Interview by author. Yelland himself was a member of the Public Service Board, 1969–70.
74. Wallace Wurth was a member of Public Service Board, 1936–39; became chairman in 1939 and first Commonwealth Director-General of Manpower, 1941–44.
75. J. Pratt, Interview by author.
76. C. Ebert to author, 8 Apr. 1993.
77. Don Taylor, President of the NSWTF, press release, 29 Apr. 1957, WP, ML mss 5089, 20(38).
78. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 26 Aug. 1959.
79. For a full account of their campaign see O'Brien, *A Divided Unity*, Chapter 4.
80. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 26 Aug. 1959.
81. W. Walker, 'Obstacles', p. 133.
82. Wyndham to Minister, 10 Jun. 1965, NSWSA, 8/2269. In 1949 the *Technical Education and NSW University of Technology Act* was passed. It created a separate Department of Technical Education with a Director who had direct responsibility and access to the Minister of Education.
83. Wyndham to Minister, 10 Jun. 1965, NSWSA, 8/2269.
84. *Ibid.*
85. *Ibid.*
86. Wyndham made a submission which was included in the published report; see Rydge Inquiry, *Report*, pp. 81–85.
87. Wyndham to Dr S. Ball, 5 Jun. 1978, WP, ML mss 5089, 5(38).
88. It is likely that Wyndham preferred the option of more control by the Director-General of recruitment, promotions, discipline and determining staffing establishments as envisioned in Rydge Inquiry, Report, p. 54.
89. Wyndham to Dr S. Ball, 5 Jun. 1978, WP, ML mss 5089, 5(38). Similar issues related to reforming the NSW Board of Studies are addressed in B. McGaw, *Shaping Their Future: recommendations for reform of the Higher School Certificate*, Sydney, Department of Training and Education Co-ordination NSW, 1997, Chap. 5.
90. Robert Heffron was Minister for Education from June 1944 to May 1960; Ernest Wetherell from May 1960 to May 1965; Charles Cutler from May 1965 to June 1972.
91. A. Webster to author, 15 Jun. 1993.
92. Wyndham, Shaping Educational Policy, typescript, n.d., WP, ML mss 5089, 26(38).
93. *Ibid.*
94. Wyndham to Professor P. Hughes, 23 Jul. 1985, WP, ML mss 5089, 6(38).
95. Wyndham, Educational Politics Course, lecture notes, Macquarie University, Sydney, 15 Jul. 1971, WP, ML mss 5089, 16(38).
96. Wyndham, Sources of Policy, handwritten notes for lecture, Sydney University, 19 Jun. 1962, WP, ML mss 5089, 12(38).
97. Wyndham, Interview, U. Bygott, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
98. Wyndham, Educational Politics Course, 1971, WP, ML mss 5089, 16(38).

99. *Ibid.*
100. Wyndham to Professor P. Hughes, 23 Jul. 1985, WP, ML mss 5089, 6(38).
101. *Ibid.* Wyndham was most likely referring to John McGrath, Acting Minister in Heffron's absence. See Wyndham to K. Smith, 1 May, 1975, WP, ML mss 5089, 4(38).
102. See A. Pross, *Group Politics and Public Policy*, Toronto, Oxford University Press, 1986, pp. 96–107.
103. G. Davis, J. Wanna, J. Warhurst and P. Weller, *Public Policy in Australia*, Sydney, Allen and Unwin, 1988, pp. 95–96.
104. Here perhaps the closest parallel is with the career of the Director-General of Western Australia, Thomas Logan Robertson. See White, Thomas Logan Robertson.
105. H. Emy and O. Hughes, *Australian Politics: realities in conflict*, Melbourne, Macmillan, 1988, p. 537.
106. R. Vickery, The Changing Role of the Director-General: dilemmas and strategies of a State education department, paper Australian Council for Educational Administration Conference, Brisbane, 1983, p. 5.
107. The origin of the concept of the formal bureaucratic model is usually ascribed to the mid-nineteenth century Northcote-Trevelyan Report. It recommended recruitment of British civil servants by open competition among the brightest and most ambitious university graduates. See R. Parker, 'Statesmen in Disguise', *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, vol. 60, no. 1, Mar. 1981, p. 1.
108. Those who had a major influence on its evolution included Woodrow Wilson in the United States and Max Weber in Europe. See Emy and Hughes, *Australian Politics*, p. 408.
109. K. McKinnon, 'The Education Policy Context in Australia' in C. Fasano and B. Winder (eds.), *Education Policy in Australia*, Wollongong, University of Wollongong Press, 1991, p. 36.
110. Vickery, Changing Role of the Director-General, p. 3.
111. R. Adie and P. Thomas, *Canadian Public Administration: problematical perspectives*, Sydney, Prentice-Hall, 1987, p. 154.
112. Aberbach and B. Rockman, 'Image IV Revisited: executive and political roles in governance', *International Journal of Policy Administration*, vol. 1, no. 1, 1988, p. 1.
113. Adie and Thomas, Canadian Public Administration, p. 146.
114. J. Grant, A Proposal for a Victorian Education Commission, Melbourne, discussion paper for the Victorian Teachers' Union, n.d., p. 5.
115. G. Harman, F. Wirt and H. Beare, 'Changing Roles of Australian Education Chief Executives at the State Level' in W. Boyd and D. Smart (eds.), *Educational Policy in Australia and America: comparative perspectives*, New York, Falmer, 1987, p. 257.
116. Harman, Wirt and Beare, 'Changing Roles of Australian Education Chief Executives', p. 257.
117. L. Shears, 'The Fragmentation of Power' in M. Frazer, J. Dunstan and P. Creed (eds.), *Perspectives on Organisational Change: lessons from education*, Melbourne, Longman Cheshire, 1985, p. 91.
118. See, for example, the campaign to secure further federal funding, as discussed in Chapter 8 of this study.

119. The Director-General held numerous positions. In 1968 he was chairman of the following State bodies: NSW State Library Board, NSW State Archives Authority, Secondary Schools Board, Board of Senior School Studies and subcommittees, Board of Teacher Education, Sydney Symphony Orchestra Advisory Committee, Bursary Endowment Board, Intellectually Handicapped Standing Committee, and the Travelling Art Scholarship Committee of NSW. Member of the following bodies: Public Library Trustees, Art Gallery Trustees, Senate of the University of Sydney and Sub-Committee, Council of the University of New England, Council of Macquarie University, Technical Education Advisory Council, and the Sydney Opera House Trust. Member of the following Commonwealth bodies: National Library Council and the Soldiers Children Education Board (Repatriation NSW), of which he was chairman. *Education Gazette*, Dec. 1968, p. 659.
120. Committee on the Future of Tertiary Education in Australia (L. H. Martin, Chair), *Tertiary Education in Australia: Report to the Australian Universities Commission*, Melbourne, Commonwealth of Australia, 1964.
121. Smyth, *Australian Social Policy*, p. 1.
122. S. Crump, 'Curriculum "Eighties-Style": the politicisation of education policy 1983–1993' in D. Smith (ed.), *Australian Curriculum Reform: action and reaction*, Canberra, Australian Curriculum Studies Association, 1993.
123. F. Sharpe, 'Assessing and Responding to Influences: the management of issues' in C. Fasano and B. Winder (eds.), *Education Policy*, p. 9.
124. *Ibid*, p. 12.
125. Vickery, Changing Role of the Director-General, p. 8.
126. *Ibid*, p. 4.
127. Sharpe, 'Assessing and Responding to Influences', p. 9.
128. P. West, 'Making Education Policy in the States' in B. Galligan (ed.), *Comparative State Politics*, Melbourne, Longman Cheshire, 1988, p. 170.
129. B. Stone, 'Statutory Authorities as Agents and Objects of Public Policy' in B. Galligan (ed.), p. 79.
130. *Ibid*.
131. T. Kewley, 'The Statutory Corporation' in R. Spann (ed.), *Public Administration in Australia*, Sydney, Government Printer, 1965, p. 113.
132. Nevertheless, the Board of Teacher Education was chaired by the Director-General; included a substantial Departmental representation; and to begin with was largely advisory.
133. McKinnon, 'Education Policy Context in Australia', p. 6.
134. L. Cremin, *The Wonderful World of Ellwood Patterson Cubberley: an essay on the historiography of American education*, New York, Bureau of Publications, Columbia University, 1965, p. 1.
135. The NSW Minister for Education last year wrote to the federal Minister for Education complaining that the recently introduced 'enrolment benchmark adjustment scheme', funds private schools at the expense of the public system. *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 Jan. 1998.
136. Shears, 'The Fragmentation of Power', p. 81.
137. Its meeting in 1993 saw the demise of the AEC after almost 60 years of existence. Its successor, the Ministerial Council for Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) includes additional representatives and

an expanded brief. Consequently, primary and secondary schooling matters form a smaller part of its deliberations.

138. Vickery, Changing Role of the Director-General, p. 6.
139. McKinnon, 'Education Policy Context in Australia', p. 25.
140. Vickery, Changing Role of the Director-General, p. 7.
141. Emy and Hughes, *Australian Politics*, p. 337.
142. John Cain, Public Administration and the Corporate Approach, address Royal Australian Institute of Public Administration Conference, Victorian Division, 24 Feb. 1984, cited in Emy and Hughes, Australian Politics, p. 354.
143. Halligan and J. Power, 'Developmental Stages in the Reform of the Australian Public Sector' in A. Kouzmin and N. Scott (eds.), *Handbook in Comparative and Developmental Public Administration*, New York, Dekken, 1991.
144. P. Wilenski; cited in Halligan and Power, 'Developmental Stages', p. 283.
145. Sharpe, 'Assessing and Responding to Influences', p. 15.
146. Emy and Hughes, *Australian Politics*, p. 338.
147. McKinnon, 'Education Policy Context in Australia', p. 20. For an analysis of this tendency in the Victorian school system, see B. Bessant, 'The Role of Corporate Management in the Reassertion of Government Control over the Curriculum of Victorian schools', *Melbourne Studies in Education*, MUP, 1987–88.
148. Sharpe, 'Assessing and Responding to Influences', p. 14.
149. *Ibid*, p. 16.
150. Similarities in Verco's background included attendance at Fort Street Boys' High School; a postgraduate qualification; publications in psychology; service as Principal Research and Guidance Officer, 1947–53.
151. A valuable collection of archival and other material illustrating the claims of the NSWTF and the Public Service Board is provided in M. Gwilliam, An Education Commission for New South Wales: the NSW Teachers' Federation campaign to establish teachers as the 'Voice of the Profession', against competitors for the role, chiefly the Public Service Board of NSW, MEd thesis, Macquarie University, 1975.
152. Rydge Inquiry, *Report*.
153. A. Mackie to Wyndham, 30 Nov. 1948, WP, ML mss 5089, 1(38).
154. Professor Gary McCulloch employs this metaphor in tracing the development of the notion of education for leadership in English grammar and public schools. See G. McCulloch, *Philosophers and Kings: education for leadership in modern England*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1991.
155. Department of Public Instruction, *Report of the Minister of Public Instruction for 1952*, Sydney, Government Printer, 1954, p. 3.
156. *Grapevine, Journal of the Administrative Officers of the New South Wales. Department of Education*, vol. 3, no. 2, Dec. 1968, p. 1.
157. Wyndham, speech on his retirement, 18 Dec. 1968, WP, ML mss 5089, 23(38).

Appendix

Biographical Events in Harold Wyndham's life

1903 Born 27 June 1903 in Forbes, the eldest son of Stanley and Agnes Wyndham.

1908 Enrolled at Kensington Primary School.

1915 Studied at Cleveland Street Intermediate High School.

1918 Accepted as student at Fort Street Boys High School.

1924 Graduated Bachelor of Arts, University of Sydney.

1925 Graduated Diploma of Education, University of Sydney. Joined Department of Education. Lectured in Education, Sydney Teachers' College; assisted Alexander Mackie.

1927 Commenced employment as a teacher, North Newtown Practice School.

1928 Graduated Master of Arts, University of Sydney.

1931 Awarded Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) grant to investigate ability grouping.

1932 Organised first classes for gifted primary school pupils. Published *Class Grouping in the Primary School.* Attended graduate school at Stanford University under Lewis Terman and Ellwood Cubberley.

1934 Graduated EdD, Stanford University. Lectured in Education, Sydney Teachers' College. Published *Ability Grouping: recent developments in the elementary schools of the United States.*

1935 Appointed to inaugurate research and guidance services in the Department of Education.

1937 Appointed Secretary to Sydney sessions of New Education Fellowship Conference.

1940 Promoted to inspector of schools.

1942 Joined the Royal Australian Air Force.

1944 Assigned to the Commonwealth Department of Post-War Reconstruction.

1946 Returned to the Department of Education, New South Wales, as a staff inspector. Established first regional area office in Wagga Wagga.

1948 Appointed Secretary of the Department of Education.

1951 Promoted to Deputy Director-General.

1952 Appointed Director-General.

1953 The Minister for Education, R. J. Heffron, established a committee chaired by Wyndham, to survey secondary education in NSW.

1957 *Report of the Committee Appointed to Survey Secondary Education in New South Wales* presented.

1961 *Education Act* endorsed major recommendations of the Wyndham Report.

1964 *Report of the Committee on the Future of Tertiary Education in Australia*, under the chairmanship of L. H. Martin, on which Wyndham served, tabled.

1968 Retired from the Department of Education.

1988 Deceased 22 April 1988.

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