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Major Planning Activities in Israeli Education: Politically Dictated Improvisations

Planning is a formal act of looking at the future by way of technically weighing the alternatives. An interesting contrast in Israel is the existence of a relatively high value placed on education¹ and the absence of long range educational planning. Political considerations may explain the contrast, and, thus, one purpose of this paper is to describe and analyze selected features of the relationship of political forces and educational planning in Israel. To that end, educational planning activities are first shown to be primarily short term in nature. On the basis of examples of developments in the national administration of education, it is then argued that major proposals advanced by the Ministry of Education constituted in large part responses by the politicians to societal demands which were channeled through the Ministry. The argument is supplemented by descriptions of the primary effects which political variables have had on rapid national development and of the high degree of influence which political realities have had on major developments within the Ministry of Education.

The second purpose of the paper is to provide a rationale for the notion that in Israel, plans relating to education include educational proposals which are lacking in technical justification and/or educationally untested but strongly influential political proposals. The rationale is utilized for defining the politics of educational planning as a process by which various criteria are allowed to be outweighed by political criteria in shaping educational policies. It is suggested at the end that political manipulation of the course of educational development may not be necessarily detrimental in a rapidly developing nation.

EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

The general process of planning in Israel has been characterized as being a response to cumulative crises.² Planning for resource acquisition

¹Its budget has always been second only to that of defense. (See the annual series of *Israel Government Yearbook*, Vol. I-IXX.)

²Bertram M. Gross, "Planning as a Crisis Management" in Benjamin Akzin and Yekezel Dror, *Israel: High Pressure Planning* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1966), pp. vii-xxxii.

is usually seen as having the tendency to take precedence over planning for resource utilization. In such a system the Ministry of Finance becomes the real planning agency in that (1) it controls the economic growth and (2) its "restrictive" activities have virtually no counter-balance. Also, "pragmatism" frequently becomes the optimal master strategy and as a guide to current action, long range planning is continuously leading to the growth of decentralized high pressure, and highly competitive planning systems.

Long range *educational* planning is virtually non-existent.³ In contrast to such Ministries as Defense, Labor, Commerce and Industry, the Ministry of Education has never had a separate division for planning. Less than ten individuals have been employed at any given time in planning activities in various divisions within the Ministry, and their efforts have never been coordinated. Planning in the Ministry of Education takes place either when an urgent and visible educational need arises or when the implementation of a new idea is being advocated by an individual (or a group) who holds a key position in the Ministry. In neither case, however, is the need or the idea rigorously examined and the method which best satisfies the need or implements the idea properly sought. What usually happens is that within a relatively short period of time, a carefully outlined plan emerges including all its minute administrative details. Once approved by the Ministry heads, the plan immediately goes into operation. This is facilitated by various administrative manipulations which aid in a relatively quick allocation of money. A professional choice among alternative plans seldom exists because of the lack of professional experts,⁴ the absence of a basic goal for the plan against which a choice evaluation can be made, and because, at times, political considerations determine the chosen alternative. The Ministry has approached the Hebrew University and the University of Tel Aviv on a number of occasions for purposes of "planning." These attempts have failed because (1) most individuals who were contacted lacked interest and (2) the network of relationships among the various departments within each University is not sufficiently crystallized to create a university-wide initiative in educational planning.⁵

³The following is based on a survey of educational planning activities in Israel conducted by the writer during 1964-65 while serving as a researcher and planner in the Post-Elementary School Directorate of the Ministry of Education. The survey was reported in Hebrew, not published but may be found in the office of the Directorate in Jerusalem.

⁴In a response in the Knesset to a question regarding the lack of an educational master plan, the Minister of Education himself admitted it. See *Divray Haknesset Hashishit: Protocol Stenographi* (Minutes of the Sixth Knesset), Meeting No. 104, July 19, 1967, p. 16.

⁵In personal interview with Moshe Smilanski on August 2, 1967. (Dr. Smilanski is special advisor to the Minister of Education and Dean, School of Education, University of Tel Aviv.)

Criticism regarding the kind of planning which exists in the Ministry of Education has been voiced mainly by the Teachers Union⁶ and by the Ministry of Labor's Manpower Planning Authority.⁷ In its own pursuit of manpower planning, the Authority has attempted to secure the cooperation of the Ministry of Education but has been totally unsuccessful.⁸ Since the responsibility of implementing any educational plan ultimately rests within the Ministry of Education, all plans which are designed outside of the Ministry without the latter's cooperation⁹ are not likely to reach the implementation stage. Additional criticism has been raised by high officials of other ministries regarding the specific fact that no action has yet been taken in regard to a 1962 proposal calling for the appointment in the Ministry of Education of a deputy director-general in charge of educational planning. Criticism has also been recorded regarding the lack of attention given by the Ministry of Education to the econometric models of education¹⁰ or even to more general economic considerations in education.¹¹ This criticism, which reveals the important pivotal position of secondary general education in educational developments, has recently become particularly significant in Israel because secondary education has been one of the Ministry's major concerns since 1960.

SOME MAJOR PLANS IN THE NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATION

But to say that the Ministry of Education does not engage in long range educational planning is not to say that it does not produce educational proposals which are subsequently enacted into law. The first major proposal advanced by the Ministry led to the enactment, late in 1949, of the Compulsory Education Law. The law covered many of the legal aspects of educational activities of children aged five to fourteen inclusive, as well as adolescents aged fourteen to seventeen who had not

⁶The Union's major criticism has been against the "noncomprehensive" planning. See, for example, an editorial in *Hed Hachinuch*, Vol. XLII, no. 3, (in Hebrew), p. 3.

⁷For a brief description of the Authority's functions, see Akzin and Dror, *op cit.*, pp. 45-46.

⁸The planning of their study, *Tachazit Koach Adam: Chinuch Al-Yesodi*, i.e., Manpower Forecast: Post-Primary Education (Jerusalem: Ministry of Labor, July, 1965), for example, was done without the official participation of the Ministry of Education despite the Authority's repeated requests for such representation.

⁹Akzin and Dror (*op cit.*, p. 48) argue that such a cooperation is hampered by the "tendency of educators to regard economic analysis, administrative considerations and feasibility studies as unbecoming to 'pedagogues'" and that this tendency hinders communication between Ministry officials and planning units.

¹⁰Planning models which calculate the educational requirements for economic development in Spain, Turkey and Greece are found in the Mediterranean Regional Project, *Econometric Models of Education*, technical reports (O.E.C.D., Paris, 1965).

¹¹See, for example, H. S. Parnes, ed., *Planning Education for Economic and Social Development* (O.E.C.D., The Mediterranean Regional Project, Paris, 1963).

completed their elementary education at an earlier age.¹² Four years later, and after intensive preparations by the Ministry, The State Education Law was passed. The purpose of the law was twofold: (1) to abolish the three educational trends (Labor, Zionist and Religious) which were a "heritage of the past" and which had obtained legal status in the 1948 law¹³ and (2) to clarify the position of inspection and control over the nation's officially recognized schools. A third law, The Council for Higher Education, was passed in 1958. Based on another Ministry proposal, this law provided the method of constituting the council and specified its responsibilities and functions regarding institutions of higher learning.¹⁴ Still another major proposal, advanced in 1966 by the Ministry of Education—"to extend provisions for free and compulsory education" by one year to age fifteen—has not yet become law but there are several indications that the time for such a law is nearing (perhaps even before the November 1969 general elections).

There is no evidence which indicates that any one of these four proposals resulted from what an educational planner would like to call sound educational planning. There is some evidence which indicates that the proposals constituted responses by the politicians¹⁵ to societal demands which were channeled through the Ministry of Education. For example, the government's decision in 1949 that education must be compulsory and free until age fourteen was not based on findings of any rigorous study of national educational needs. The timing of the decision indicated that little, if any, attention had been paid to the availability of teachers, buildings and equipment. The major concern of the government was, rather, what to do with the children of immigrants who were coming into the country in vast numbers. Despite the fact that the educational authorities had not been adequately prepared to provide free and compulsory elementary education, the central government decided to make such provisions because it considered any kind and form of education to be of vital importance for the survival of the nation.

The 1953 State Education Law may also be viewed as a political response to social pressures.¹⁶ In 1950, the central government appointed

¹²Ruth Stanner, *The Legal Basis of Education in Israel* (Jerusalem: Ministry of Education and Culture, 1963), p. 32. For a "quantitative description" of the education provided for these adolescents, see *Statistical Abstracts of Israel, 1964* (Jerusalem: Central Bureau of Statistics), p. 515.

¹³Stanner, *op cit.*, p. 47. Not all leaders of the political organs initiating the educational trends were happy about this unification. See, for example, Ygaal Allon, "Histadrut and State," *Public Administration in Israel and Abroad, 1963*, Vol. 14 (Jerusalem: 1964), pp. 26-37.

¹⁴Stanner, *op cit.*, pp. 68-70. For a discussion of higher education in Israel, see Alexander Dushkin, *Higher Education in Israel* (Jerusalem: Ministry of Education and Culture, 1962).

¹⁵The term "politicians" refers here to those individuals who originate and control particular stands which are taken by political parties on given issues.

¹⁶See, for example, Joseph S. Bentwich, *Education in Israel* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1965), pp. 39-44.

a Commission of Inquiry to investigate problems associated with the existence of the three educational trends. Among other things, the Commission discovered that political party representatives were bringing pressure on parents to register their children in certain schools rather than in others. The Commission also found that some school authorities were not sufficiently considerate of parents' wishes, particularly in the matter of religious education. Following the Report's publication, the Minister of Education resigned. His successor was unable to achieve a compromise between a *status quo* situation and a resolution tabled by the 'General Zionists' (Center) and 'Herut' (Extreme Right) parties which called for the abolition of the "trends." The government resigned and in the subsequent election of 1951, the General Zionists returned with increased representation. The new coalition government consisted of the dominant 'Mapai' (Labor) party, the General Zionists and the 'Mizrachi' (Religious) party. The new government pledged to set up an educational system "embracing all elementary schools." After a lengthy process of gradually overcoming the opposition of various groups, the Ministry of Education was able to draft the bill which was eventually enacted into law.

Political solutions to educational problems are also evident now during the development of the government's 1966 "extension" proposal.¹⁷ Three major needs of Israeli society had existed during the 1950's. These were (1) the need for acculturating the "returning exiles" which arose as a result of the influx of a large number of Jews from underprivileged societies; (2) the need for bridging the cultural and ideological gaps between Israeli and other Jewish youths which arose as a result of the actual creation of the State; and (3) the need for a fixed, long range economic plan, lacking partly as a result of the unstable security situation. Such societal needs necessitated a reexamination of not only the optimal amount of compulsory secondary education but also the optimal methods for achieving equality of educational opportunities within the existing formal educational institutions. As long as these needs were only slightly pressing, the Ministry of Education was "permitted" to put out the fire by providing sporadic solutions. Toward the end of the 1950's, the needs had created public pressures which were exerted primarily by leaders of immigrants from Mideastern and North African nations. Initially, the pressures had been directed toward the Ministry of Education. When those who applied the pressure grew increasingly unsatisfied, initiative began to unveil in the socio-political arena. The last course of events, which led the Ministry, during 1960-61, to take up the problem of a possible extension of free and compulsory education, may be described as follows. The Ministry had been interested in providing free secondary education before it was ready to provide

¹⁷Naftaly S. Glasman, "Developments Toward a Secondary Education Act: The Case of Israel" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Berkeley, April, 1968), pp. 104-11.

compulsory education. Public pressure for an extension of compulsory education grew significantly. Because it was felt that compulsory education could not be enforced unless it was free of charge, the prime minister himself suggested in 1959 a provision for both free and compulsory secondary education. This suggestion, if implemented, would have necessitated a large and immediate (but unattainable) monetary investment. Since, however, practically all political parties agreed to some sort of an extended free and compulsory education, the matter was referred officially to the Ministry of Education in 1961 for the first time. Because of various problems related to another major proposal which called for associating, as a condition, the extension of free and compulsory education with structural changes of schools, the government's formal extension proposal was advanced only in 1966. However, the critical point still remains that the development of the extension proposal was facilitated in the political arena.

Developments in regard to the formulation of the school structure proposal itself indicate the existence of a case where a purely educational issue was gradually transformed into a matter of political considerations. In 1965 strong opposition was voiced by the Teachers Union to the Ministry-advanced structural proposal which called for a change from the 8-4 to a 6-3-3 educational system.¹⁸ This was preceded by the Minister of Education's appointment in 1963 of a public committee whose task was to investigate the feasibility of providing extended free and compulsory education. Actually, the Minister utilized this committee for purposes of testing the extent of commitment which the Teachers Union had to opposing a 6-3-3 educational structure. As it turned out, the opposition was so strong as to generate significant political implications. Subsequently realizing that the Ministry's administrative latitude decreased, the Minister reasonably chose to let the politicians decide on the matter. In May of 1966, the Ministry asked the Cabinet and the Knesset (Parliament) to approve the establishment of a Parliamentary Committee which would investigate the structure of education and recommend the structure which would best suit the needs of the country and the students.¹⁹ From that moment on, considerations of the structural issue became interwoven with political party interests and political activities undermined sound educational planning. At the present, there are already some indications in this regard which point to a future give-and-take political process whereby the structural issue is bargained, along with other not necessarily educational issues, for political ends.

DEVELOPMENT, THE POLITICIANS, AND THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Israel is a newly independent, developing nation which possesses characteristics common to several other developing nations.²⁰ Perhaps more

¹⁸For specific events leading to the 1965 decision, see *ibid.*, Chapters V and VI.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, Chap. IX.

²⁰For a definition of "a developing nation," see, for example, Gabriel A. Almond and James S. Coleman, *The Politics of Developing Areas* (Princeton, N.J.: Prince-

than some other developing nations, she also shares several "modern" characteristics which are typical of developed nations.²¹ In fact, the degree of intensity with which she has been progressing along the modernity scale has been unsurpassed by any other developing nation.²² Aside from the goal of physical survival and the means utilized in pursuing it, rapid development in independent Israel has meant a fast and an effective fulfilment of needs of both social integration and economic development. The methods of accomplishing these two national aims have often been found to be in conflict with each other,²³ but the nation's leaders were already able, in 1948, to cope with these contradictory pressures. Their task was facilitated by the existence of both a relatively stable political community and a chain of administrative institutions which were created prior to 1948 but whose internal characteristics were protected upon nationhood.²⁴

Rapid national development with minimal consideration of cost has also been related to political developments since 1948. Specifically, the following three conditions have been responsible for this: (1) the preparation for and the perpetuation of a "politicized" society in which most decisions that have been significant for the national development have been made by the politicians, (2) the maintenance of a public bureaucracy²⁵ which upon statehood was given strongly centralized administrative powers in order to carry out the politicians' decisions, and (3) the establishment and perpetration of a mechanism by which activities of

ton University Press, 1960), p. 532; and Fred W. Riggs, "Agraria and Industria — Toward a Typology of Comparative Administration," in William J. Siffin, ed., *Toward the Comparative Study of Public Administration* (Bloomington, Ind.: Department of Government, Indiana University, 1957), pp. 23-116.

²¹For a description of some "modern" characteristics, see Almond and Coleman, *op. cit.*, pp. 532-76, and Ferrel Heady, *Public Administration: A Comparative Perspective* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), pp. 30-33.

²²This is especially true when the degree of intensity per unit of time is used as the criterion for comparison. Rustow and Ward, in Robert E. Ward and Dankwart A. Rustow, eds., *Political Modernization in Japan and Turkey* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1964), p. 9, consider Israel to be the most developed society in Asia "by most tests." Coleman, in Almond and Coleman, *op. cit.*, Table 4, p. 542, ranks Israel as number one out of forty-six in a composite rank order of Asian and African countries on "eleven indices of economic development." Explanations for Israel's relatively rapid development may be found in Almond and Coleman, *op. cit.*, p. 557; Amitai Etzioni, "The Decline of Neo Feudalism: The Case of Israel" in Ferrel Heady and Sybil L. Stokes, eds., *Papers in Comparative Public Administration* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Institute of Public Administration, University of Michigan, 1962), pp. 229-343; and S. N. Eisenstadt, *Israeli Society: Background, Development and Problems* (Jerusalem: Magnes Publishers, The Hebrew University, 1967).

²³Some implications of these conflicts for national planning are found in Akzin and Dror, *op. cit.*, pp. 20-21.

²⁴The significance of the public administrative machinery in the development of developing nations is discussed in Hamzah Mergani, "Public Administration in Developing Countries: The Multilateral Approach" in Burton A. Baker, ed., *Public Administration: A Key to Development* (Washington, D.C.: Graduate School, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1964).

²⁵The term "bureaucracy" is not used here to symbolize all that is distasteful about centralized government — impersonal officialdom, red tape, etc. See, for example, J. M. Beck, *Our Wonderland of Bureaucracy* (New York: Macmillan, 1932) and L. von Mises, *Bureaucracy* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1944).

the public bureaucracy have been checked by the politicians in a more or less effective manner. Under such conditions, political variables became the single most important group of variables which had affected national planning, and the indication is that in Israel these variables have hindered rather than facilitated long range national planning. Requirements of political consensus, for example, have usually been placed ahead of the needs for long range solutions. Integrative and comprehensive long range planning has been hampered by the fact that the various national ministries, which have been controlled by different political parties, have operated as competing units rather than as integral parts of a coordinated government machinery. Also, the political elite has possessed certain characteristics that hindered the use of expertise which is essential in long range planning.²⁶

Within the process of national administration of education and specifically within the process of long range planning in education, the political variables are characterized more as activities of actual political planning for education than as political influence on educational planning activities.²⁷ Partially responsible for this has been the limited influence²⁸ which the Ministry of Education has exerted on the politicians. Some of the reasons²⁹ have been (1) the small size of the country, which has enabled penetration of political institutions into a larger number of matters, the majority of which have been dealt with by the public bureaucracy, (2) the high intensity of activity of many interest groups operating through these political institutions, and (3) the private political staffs working with the ministers and emphasizing political aspects of various problems undertaken by the bureaucracy.

But mostly responsible for the nature of the political variables of educational planning has been the strong influence which politicians have exerted on the Ministry of Education. Whether directly through the exercise of full authority³⁰ by the politically-appointed minister over civil servants or indirectly through the appointments of top bureaucrats according to both "achievement" and "ascriptive" orientations,³¹ the

²⁶For a more comprehensive discussion of political aspects of national planning, see Akzin and Dror, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-11.

²⁷The term "political planning" is used here as the process by which politicians estimate political ends and evaluate political expenditures and resources required to attain them.

²⁸Influence is a relation among actors in which one actor induces other actors to act in some way they would not otherwise act. (Adapted from Robert A. Dahl, *Modern Political Analysis* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963), Chap. V.

²⁹Yehezkel Dror, "Public Policy Making in Israel," *Public Administration in Israel and Abroad*, Vol. II (1962), pp. 5-16. These reasons have been shared by several other national ministries as well.

³⁰The term "authority" as "legitimized power" is adapted from Amitai Etzioni, *Modern Organizations* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), p. 51. "Power" in this respect is a special, severe case of the exercise of influence. (See Dahl, *op. cit.*, Chap. V.)

³¹The terms "achievement" and "ascriptive" orientations are adapted from Joseph La Palombara, ed., *Bureaucracy and Political Development* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963), pp. 39-48.

politicians have been able to maintain their control over the Ministry. This has not changed over time in any drastic manner. First, there has been no significant change in the proportion of the electorate being represented by most political parties constituting the various coalition governments. As a result, and also due to the relatively high importance attached to the Ministry of Education as evidenced by its relatively high annual budget, the positions of Minister of Education and one of the two deputies to the Minister have always been held by leading members of the dominant Mapai Party. This continuity was coupled with relatively small changes in Mapai's own philosophy of education. Secondly, there has been little change in the manner in which the Ministry of Education itself has operated. This was primarily due to the fact that most of the Ministry's personnel, in contrast to employees of other ministries, has consisted of civil servants hired prior to 1948 who have retained positions identical to or higher than the ones they occupied in the Mandatory Department of Education.³² Their method of operation within the Ministry has been similar to that within the Mandatory Department. Its chief characteristic has been that of "improvisation" and "muddling through," which inhibited rational decision making and long range planning.³³ Furthermore, their degree of inner propensity to change has been extremely low because of self-satisfaction with past achievements and because of reluctance to undergo yet another major change in their lives.³⁴ Due to the continuity of unchanging political ideologies influencing the Ministry of Education and due to the lack of change in the manner in which the Ministry itself has operated, only few, if any, significant changes have occurred in the extent to which this Ministry has been controlled by the politicians.

TOWARD A DEFINITION OF THE POLITICS OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING IN ISRAEL

It is possible to accept the definition of educational planning as being the exercise of "foresight in determining the policy, priorities and costs realities, for the system's potential for growth and for the needs of the of an educational system, having due regard for economic and political country and of the pupils served by the system."³⁵ In so doing, it is imperative to recognize that the first part of this definition is quite similar to most definitions of planning in general, which have been

³²Rachel Elboim-Dror, "Problems of Educational Administration in Israel," *Public Administration in Israel and Abroad*, Vol. II (1962), p. 74.

³³Yehezkel Dror, "Nine Main Characteristics of Governmental Administration in Israel," *ibid.*, Vol. V (1965), p. 14.

³⁴The three major changes in their lifetime which have already occurred are immigration to Israel, entering public life and witnessing a transition from pre-statehood to independence. (*Ibid.*, Vol. V [1965], p. 14.)

³⁵C. E. Beeby, *Planning and the Educational Administrator* (Unesco: International Institute for Educational Planning, 1967), p. 13.

recently expressed,³⁶ and also, that the third part constitutes the essence of any definition of economic planning and the last part summarizes the common wishes of political sociologists and "student-centered" educators. The focus of this paper's discussion of educational planning corresponds to the second part of the definition and, especially, to the "political realities," the existence of which must be constantly apparent to the educational planner. Specifically, the planner must be aware of the political forces which operate as a result of the prevailing mood of the country, the pressures of various interest groups, and the personalities and attitudes of the political decision makers.³⁷ For the planning technician in education to be effective,³⁸ he must probably also be politically committed to some extent. He must participate behind the scene in complex political negotiations, help in preparing political statements and speeches, and even, at times, assist in election campaigns.³⁹ However, only under certain conditions is it possible for him to be aware of political realities and involved in political activities. Provisions must be made so that the exercise of foresight in determining policy, priorities, and costs of an educational system may take place in an environment where this foresight is not at the undisputable mercy of the politicians. If, due to political realities themselves, such provisions are not available, then there is no room for the planner to operate effectively and the kind of educational planning which may exist has only limited influence on political decision makers. The result is political planning for education and a situation where educational planning activities neither improve political behavior in education nor constitute a constraint on the process of political decision making in education.

In Israel, political influence on educational planning has been such that no provisions have been made for exercising educationally objective foresights in determining policies, priorities and costs of the educational system. The mere existence of a politicized society has not permitted the establishment of clear and specific nonpolitical goals, including educational goals. The development of means which could have corresponded to such goals has not been facilitated and, thus, responsibilities for

³⁶Some examples are "Planning is more and more as equivalent to rational social action, that is, as a social process for reaching a rational decision" (Robert A. Dahl, "The Politics of Planning," *International Social Science Journal*, Vol. XI, No. 3 (1959), p. 340: "Planning is the process of preparing a set of decisions for action in the future, directed at achieving goals by optimal means" (Yehezkel Dror, "The Planning Process: A Facet Design," *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, Vol. XXIX, No. 1 [1963], p. 51); and "Planning is nearly always characterized by its functionally rational approach to decision making" (John Friedmann, *Venezuela: From Doctrine to Dialogue* [Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1965], p. 48).

³⁷Beeby, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-23.

³⁸Bertram M. Gross, "From Symbolism to Action," an introduction to Douglas Elliot Ashford, *Morocco-Tunisia: Politics and Planning* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1965), pp. xviii-xix.

³⁹This is in agreement with the observation regarding the politics of economic planning in Italy that as a policy goal, planning can be viewed "in part as the outcome of conflict and competition" among interest groups (Joseph La Palombara, *Italy: The Politics of Planning* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1966), p. 123.

sound educational planning have not been undertaken. Educational developments have resulted from either technically unjustified educational plans or from educationally untested but strongly influential political plans. In neither case has there been allowance for long range and technically supported educational planning.

The existence of technically unfounded educational plans has been commonplace. Earlier it was shown that the Ministry of Education lacked coordination in its planning efforts and also possessed a high degree of administrative latitude. Thus, in order to accommodate relatively quickly the needs and pressures which have been imposed on it, the Ministry engaged in sporadic types of educational planning activities rather than in an establishment of long range educational plans. As long as the Ministry was not interrupted in its pursuit of implementing short term plans and as long as no serious conflicts arose as a result of Ministry intentions, the above situation persisted. When Ministry intentions acquired long range implications, or when conflicts arose over basic educational philosophies, then the situation changed. Political planning activities dominated the educational decision making arena and politicians were charged with the responsibility for conflict resolution.

This state of affairs has persisted because it has been quite attractive to politicians and to top ranking non-political Ministry officials alike. By avoiding the need to deal with controversial issues which have political implications, the nonpolitical officials (who have typically been *status quo* oriented persons and noninnovators) have been able and glad to conduct their work without being subjected to concerted efforts of political intervention. The reasons why the politicians have found this arrangement to be convenient have been different. The urgent and rapidly changing national needs arising from mass immigration, security problems, and economic boycotts have demanded that they — the decision makers — possess and preserve a high degree of flexibility. By encouraging nonpolitical officials to be engaged in short term educational planning activities and by subjecting long range educational plans to political considerations, the politicians have been able to avoid being bound by any long range obligations in education which lack political consensus.

Thus, due to political planning for education, activities involving the determination of policy, priorities and costs for the educational system of Israel have been kept to bare minimum. Apparently in other countries, such activities have been maximized. The argument that a central planning body needs to have close relations with the political forces in order to be effective may be true for “developing” Tunisia or “developing” Morocco.⁴⁰ The argument that political facilitation of non-planning suits a “social market model” and enhances development may

⁴⁰Ashford, *op. cit.*

be true for "developed" West Germany.⁴¹ Such supposedly clear and steadily continuing processes of the politics of planning and, specifically, of educational planning cannot exist in Israel where political planning actually supersedes all other planning activities, including educational planning and, to a large extent, even economic planning. The Israeli situation is so dynamic and rapidly changing that the politics of educational planning may, in fact, be defined as the process by which social, economic and rationally approved criteria are allowed to be outweighed by political criteria in shaping various educational policies. The major notion here is that the degree to which political considerations outweigh all other considerations is not constant. Rather, it varies according to the extent of the political significance which is attached to a given educational issue. This extent, in turn, varies according to rapidly changing and almost unpredictable specific national needs.

It is sometimes argued that political considerations may "undermine the congruence between economic planning and educational planning that supplies much of the rationale for the latter"⁴² and that such considerations may, in turn, be detrimental to the progress of a developing nation. In the case of Israel, however, the political process of educational planning has been an inevitable course of development and the political nature of the society simply has not allowed the situation to be otherwise. Specifically, no provisions have been made for the establishment of clear educational goals, specification of which is vital in carrying out sound educational planning activities.

Yet Israel is a developing nation whose educational achievements have served as guideposts for other developing nations. As a consequence, it is quite possible that for a developing nation the absence of educational planning activities which are both technically supported and free of political considerations may not be necessarily bad. It may just be true that the latent⁴³ functions of educational planning may be found in no other arena but in the political one. It is also highly probable that the successful accomplishment of such functions is strongly facilitated in this arena.

⁴¹Hans-Joachim Arndt, *West Germany: Politics of Non-planning* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1966), Chap. III.

⁴²C. A. Anderson, *The Social Context of Educational Planning* (Unesco: International Institute for Educational Planning, Turin, Italy, 1967), p. 19.

⁴³Latent functions of planning (subtle and somehow unintended contributions of planning to the social order) are being distinguished from manifest functions of planning (expected and intended contributions). See Robert Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure* (New York: The Free Press, 1949), Chap. I.