

## CHAPTER III

APPRAISAL OF THE EXISTING SECONDARY  
SCHOOL INSPECTION SYSTEM IN INDIA

The survey of the growth and development of the inspection system of secondary schools in India in the first two <sup>e</sup> preceding chapters underlines one fact viz., the inspector has a two-fold duty - administrative and academic. So long as he had a few schools to deal with, he could perform his task successfully. But with the rapid expansion of secondary education, neither the strength of inspectorate in States proportionately increased, \* nor did the system of inspection undergo necessary changes to meet the demands of education. However, mere strengthening of the school inspectorate in States will not do, for the changing interpretation of the inspector's function has exposed a central conflict right <sup>at</sup> to the heart of his role. The inspector

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\*Vide Tables in Chapter V.

can no longer satisfy himself with his function as a watch-dog of the public money given to schools by way of grant-in-aid. He has another vital function, namely guidance. Now the question is whether an inspector of schools, who has a large number of secondary schools to inspect annually could carry out his dual role: administration and guidance. Here is a profound and fascinating problem for us to study. Some progressive thinkers on the subject, whom the writer interviewed suggested that they considered the removal or diminution of the inspector's role in the matter of administration as an absolutely necessary condition if he is to carry out his 'guidance' function successfully.

In developing countries like India where the inspector's second function is all the more important, the present inspection system which is dominated by its administrative function calls for considerable changes and improvements. With regard to this, the writer has attempted to present here the appraisal of the school inspection system in India on the basis

of the empirical evidence collected through questionnaires and interviews.

Views Expressed in Replies to the Questionnaires

Five types of questionnaires ( vide appendices 1 to 5 ) were distributed to 14 Directors of Education, 30 School Inspectors, 30 educationists, 30 headmasters and 30 teachers. The response, however, did not meet the expectations of the investigator since it was a little over 50% only. 68 subjects participated in this project: eighteen from the State Education Departments, twentyeight from headmasters and teachers of various States, and twentytwo from well-known educationists of the country. Their replies relating to criticisms of the inspection system are analysed under three major aspects of school inspection in the following paragraphs ( their replies to other items of the questionnaires, which are of informative nature, are studied, summarised and embodied in Chapter 2 ).

Organisation of Inspectorate.- Virtually all the respondents agree that the inspector's jurisdiction is far too wide and that his administrative work is

too much to afford him sufficient time to guide teachers in teaching and to help school management in finding solution to their administrative problems. In this connection, the thirty eight respondents maintain that if the purpose of inspection is to help and guide teachers, the number of schools per inspecting officer should not exceed fifty at the most and the fourteen respondents suggest that in order to enable the inspecting officers to carry out their inspectional duties satisfactorily - this includes guidance to teachers and ensuring follow-up work - the number of secondary schools per inspecting officer should not be more than 30/40 and teachers 200/250. Another suggestion to relieve the inspector of some of his administrative responsibilities is made by more than half the respondents that a qualified accounts officer should be attached to a district inspectorate and that an assistant inspecting officer should be in charge of grants-in-aid work.

In replies to the question whether it is necessary that inspectorates for primary and secondary education should be organised entirely separate, all the

respondents are in favour of a separate inspectorate for secondary schools and suggest that it should include subject specialists. Lack of continuity of inspecting staff in the same district or division has been felt by several respondents who criticise that the inspecting officers change so often that they are not able to watch the progress of a particular school for over a period of time. Hence they plead that continuity of the inspecting staff should be ensured. About the rigid attitude of the inspectors towards the enforcement of school syllabuses, some respondents have expressed their displeasure saying that this has resulted in discouraging schools in their initiative and experimentation in teaching.

The inadequacy of the strength of the district inspectorates has been strongly criticised by all the respondents. One educationist from Assam criticises that the inadequacy of inspecting staff is so much experienced by the fact that some schools in turn are not inspected annually at all. Most teachers, who have replied, strongly ask for a considerable

increase in the strength of the inspecting staff, while several respondents have wished to see some regulations by which inspecting staff increases with the increase in the number of schools or teachers. Lastly, an inspecting officer from Rajasthan complains that as certain geographically backward areas have poor transport facilities, inspecting officers have to spend considerable time in travel. These officers should be given generous transport allowances so that they may afford to have their own transport facility.

Selection and Qualifications of Inspectors.-

Eighty per cent of the respondents hold the view that the existing system of selection of inspectors needs to be revised since promotion dominates selection at present. Many inspectors, they point out, still follow the old methods of inspection and do not offer adequate guidance to teachers. This happens because the inspectorate often lacks well qualified personnel. Therefore, there should be a proper and careful selection of inspectors.

Most respondents experience that many inspecting officers do not have good academic qualifications and sufficient experience of teaching and administration at the secondary school level. This they feel, because of promotion of primary school inspectors to the posts of secondary school inspectors. A teacher from Jammu and Kashmir expresses his view that some inspectors still insist the teachers on their following the outdated methods of teaching. When inspectors themselves do not seem to keep abreast with the ideas and trends in modern education, how can teachers working particularly in rural areas get adequate guidance to improve their professional standards? Some respondents suggest that an inspector should be thoroughly conversant with a wide range of knowledge both general and professional. They expect that the inspector should possess the knowledge of the modern methods of teaching and educational trends not only in the different states of the country but also in other advanced countries of the world. For this purpose they suggest that the inspectors should be given chance to go and see what

is going on educationally in other parts of the country and also abroad. Inspectors should get opportunity to secure state scholarships to go abroad particularly to study the inspection system in foreign countries. In this connection, some educationists suggest that inspectors should be transferred temporarily to the training colleges where they could explore with the fund of their knowledge of secondary schools in their areas, the means of bridging the gulf between theory and practice of teaching in secondary schools.

Since the district school inspector is an educational leader of ~~this~~<sup>his</sup> area, some headmasters insist that his selection should be made with the utmost care. Some respondents particularly in Rajasthan complain that some inspectors are unable to inspect certain technical and vocational subjects and yet they are supposed to inspect them as there are no such specialists appointed for this purpose. They, therefore, strongly place emphasis on the appointment of specialist inspectors to help the district inspector to inspect multipurpose

schools more effectigely. This sort of need is also felt in the Punjab where they call for the appointment of specialist inspectors for subjects such as agriculture, domestic science, physical education etc. so that schools may get technical guidance and advice from these specialists. This opinion is also supported by some respondents particularly from Assam saying that the traditional system of only one inspector supervising the teaching of all the subjects in a secondary school is now wanting because secondary schools now provide specialised courses particularly in higher classes. Furthermore, these critics suggest for the appointment of supervisors to guide teachers in their work regularly.

As regards the direct recruitment of district inspectors, sixteen respondents do not favour the selection by recruitment only, arguing that a newly appointed inspector is hardly able to assume charge of a district, so he must work as an understudy before he is placed in charge of a district. In some States notably in Kerala headmasters or teachers or

lecturers serving only in Government institutions are selected for inspecting posts. As a result, they feel that though there are talented persons in the aided schools and colleges, they do not have the opportunity of being appointed to the inspectorate. One of the reasons they ascribe to this sort of injustice to those serving in private schools and colleges is that there is no provision for promotion in private institutions whereas in government schools and colleges the officers have opportunity for their promotion. So these critics demand a remedy for removing this anomaly in respect of promotion. They suggest that posts of inspectors should be open to the qualified and experienced men and women irrespective of their service in a government or private schools or colleges.

Most of the educationists in their replies place considerable emphasis on the need for the arrangement of adequate training in educational administration and methods and procedures of school inspection for not only newly appointed inspecting officers but also

occasionally for those who have achieved their higher position in the inspectorate by promotion. Furthermore, they suggest for the organisation of refresher courses and seminars for the inspecting officers so that they may receive and enrich their knowledge. This should enable them to disseminate new ideas and practices.

Methods of inspection.- All the respondents have shown keen interest in answering the questions on the methods of school inspection. They hold the view that inspection is inadequate, mechanical and rather formal, that it concerns itself far more with the administrative aspects and tend to neglect academic aspects and pays little or no importance to the co-curricular activities of the schools. Not a single respondent objects to the inspection of the school, even if necessary it may be held without notice; but what is not acceptable to them is the prevailing methods and procedures of school inspection. In their opinion the chief purpose of school inspection should be to guide and not to criticise only; that is to say inspection must have a positive, and not negative approach. Over ninety five per cent of the respondents make a major complaint against the

inspection system - regarding the inspector's lack of friendliness, sympathy and understanding and his hasty criticism, his apathy and his complex - either superiority or inferiority. This has, it seems, hindered his mixing freely with headmasters, and teachers and his discussing, with the open mind, their administrative and academic problems. Several headmasters believe that if the inspectors' main role is to inspect academic aspects of the school, the first thing he must do is to find enough time to inspect the methods of teaching in schools so as to bring about a higher level of efficiency and achievement in teaching. They suggest that the inspector should guide schools by pointing out sympathetically their short-comings and make such suggestions as are practical and within the means of the schools to carry out.

Over fifty per cent of the respondents favour the introduction of full inspection which, they feel, will meet with most of their complaints against the system. It is obvious that a full inspection of a large secondary school requires a team of specialist inspectors

to spend three to four days at the school, to supervise a good number of lessons in different subjects and to study the problems regarding school discipline, organisation of syllabuses prescribed by the Department, continuity, security and welfare of the school staff, and the management's interests in the academic and organisational matters of the school. He should be able to find time to meet individual teachers, the headmaster and the members of the management committee of the schools and finally to hold a meeting of the staff and discuss all the academic points that have arisen in the course of the team's inspection of the school. These respondents suggest that such full inspections of schools may be held not annually but at an interval of three, five or seven years, but they lay stress on the need for the inspector's regular visits to schools every year in order to see whether the schools have been able to carry out his suggestions and what difficulties they have in doing so.

It is emphasized by several headmasters in their suggestions for improvement of the inspection system

that there should be greater contact between inspecting officers and teachers so that they could freely and frankly discuss academic matters. The inspector should find time not only to give professional guidance and advice to schools for their academic improvement but also to come in contact with the community of the area in his charge, so that he could better understand the educational problems that confront his area and so that he could better explain the official policy to the public whose co-operation for the fulfilment of any official plan is absolutely necessary. Some respondents mainly from Bengal criticise that the prevailing method of judging the progress of the school on the inspector's impressions which he forms in his mind by his hurried visits to the classroom is far from satisfactory, and therefore they suggest the introduction of objective evaluation criteria for measuring progress in the standard of education in secondary schools.

Comments on the Views Expressed by the Respondents

The major criticisms levelled against the

organisation of inspectorate by the respondents in the preceding pages centre round the following short-comings of the inspectorate: (i) the inspector's jurisdiction is far too wide and his administrative load is too heavy to find sufficient time for his inspection of instruction in schools and his guidance to teachers in raising their professional standards; (ii) since the district or divisional or regional inspectorate is concerned with all forms of education ( except collegiate ) in its area, the inspection of secondary education does not receive the full attention of the inspectors; (iii) the inspector's rigid attitude towards the schools in their interpretation of syllabuses prescribed by the Department results in discouraging schools in their initiative and experimentation in teaching; and (iv) inadequacy of the strength of inspecting officers has been responsible for lack of interest on the part of the inspecting officers in both curricular and co-curricular activities of the schools.

These criticisms have no doubt been widely supported by all those concerned about education in our country. Nevertheless the efforts of the State Departments of Education in respect of reducing the jurisdiction of the educational units, strengthening the inspectorates and emphasizing the importance of a good secondary education for the success of democracy in the country cannot be under-rated. But what the investigator believes is that these government measures have largely proved short of the total requirements for providing a good and efficient inspection system.

With regard to the selection and qualifications of the inspecting officers, the chief criticisms are: (i) promotion still dominates selection; (ii) Inspecting officers' academic and professional qualifications are not high enough; (iii) owing to the lack of specialist inspectors, the inspecting officers are not able to inspect various academic as well as other practical subjects having a vocational or technical bias; and (iv) again, selection is often confined to those serving only in government schools

and colleges.

All these criticisms are, strictly speaking, not true. It is admitted that the percentage of promotion from the serving inspecting officers who are often more concerned with and capable of inspecting primary education is still not low; but having studied the trend in this respect in recent years the writer is convinced that direct recruitment is fairly high and if this trend continues the need of having highly qualified inspecting personnel will soon be realised. Again it is not absolutely true to say that specialist inspectors particularly for the inspection of vocational and technical subjects are not appointed. The present need is to appoint specialist inspectors for the improvement of academic subjects such as English and Social Sciences, because they need a new approach. However, the last criticism regarding the selection of those working in government institutions for promotion to inspectorships is justified. Many able persons serving in aided schools and colleges should have an equal opportunity to compete their counterparts in government schools.

Finally the strong criticisms on the methods of inspection need careful analysis. The main weaknesses in the methods of inspection is perhaps the fact that inspection is too mechanical and formal. While not defending this weakness, let it be remembered that the old philosophy, attitude and outlook of the inspecting officers who have been long accustomed to the bureaucratic behaviour in their dealing with the public institutions cannot be got rid of in a short time. Again the word 'formal' needs clarification. It concerns more the inspecting officers' approach to inspection than the actual supervision of subject-teaching. There are a good many inspectors who have changed their attitude, outlook and formal approach with the change of time. The respondents' suggestion for a 'full inspection system' needs to be put into practice. This is particularly needed for newly established schools which are ill-equipped and have inexperienced teaching and administrative staff.

#### Views Expressed by the Interviewees

The writer has gathered the views of about 50 persons associated with secondary education in the

country. They were teachers, headmasters, principals, inspectors, educational officers, professors and other educationists. The interviews were mostly of the informal type conducted in the spirit of free exchange of personal views and discussion. The basis of the interview was mainly the questionnaire which was sent in advance. As the interviewees preferred to remain unidentified, their views are summarised briefly below according to the category they belonged to.

3. Views of Educational Inspectors.- The six out of fifty interviewees were the district inspecting officers. They had long experience of inspection of secondary schools in West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Madras, Maharashtra and Gujarat. One of the points of discussion was, whether an external controlling agency like the government inspectors was needed in free India. All the six inspecting officers felt very strongly that school inspection could not be done away with, without endangering secondary education in the country. In India, secondary

education is mostly a private enterprise. The private schools have not yet developed the high sense of dedicated work, fair dealing and even honesty. Unless some of these schools are watched and supervised closely by the inspecting officers, the quality of education and standard of admission, promotion and discipline in them might degenerate.

In the course of the discussion, they did admit the fact that in every district, there were about ten to fifteen per cent of first class schools and they need not be inspected annually. Only brief visits by the inspectors are enough for them.

All the inspecting officers attempted to impress the writer that their approach to schools is friendly and educative. They did not assume the air of superiority or of a fault-finding dictator on the whole. They behaved strictly or applied departmental rules rigorously only in the case of some school managements because the situations and practices in those schools warranted such an approach. They could not help taking the management

to task when they found unpardonable laxity and irregularity in school admissions, promotions, school accounts etc.,

These officers also admitted the fact that most of them had neither the special training nor the experience of being able to provide in-service education to teachers. Very few of them had been able to keep themselves acquainted with the newer developments, practices and researches in teaching. With the expansion of facilities for the M.Ed. degree courses, they came across a number of teachers and headmasters who were better informed in education than they were. Two of these inspectors felt that they should be given opportunities to spend two to three months in a training college to enable them to revise and refresh their knowledge of educational theory and practice; or some special seminars should be organised for them periodically by the Government with the assistance of the selected personnel from teachers' colleges so that they keep abreast with the modern trends in education.

As regards the present practices of the selection and recruitment of secondary school inspectors, some of them expressed divided opinions. Some held the view that there should not be direct recruitment to the vital posts of district educational inspectors, but the inspectors be drawn from the class of experienced teachers, headmasters and lecturers of training colleges who have distinguished themselves as teachers and who show insight into the problems of secondary school teaching. They should invariably have a good bachelors~~or~~ master's degree in a school subject as well as a good degree in educational administration. In reply to a suggestion whether a special training course should be organised for secondary school inspectors, four interviewees were not sure of the value of such a course, whereas the other two favoured such specialised professional training. One inspecting officer suggested that the Government should pay them a special allowance to be able to subscribe to some good educational journals or buy recent educational books.

In reply to a further query whether interchange of the staff of inspectorates and that of the training colleges should improve the outlook and academic equipment of inspectors, the five interviewees said that it would not work in Indian situation, as all training colleges are not government institutions, and the exchange of personnel in the case of non-government institutions would involve many administrative difficulties. The two inspectors did not seem to have any views on the proposition.

All the interviewees agreed that their work would be considerably effective if they were given assistants to relieve them of some of the routine type of work that they had to do. They said that they would enjoy the academic work more than the work of checking school records and accounts. The Government may appoint their own auditors or certify certain auditors to check school accounts and a special assistant to the inspector, may determine the school grant-in-aid on the basis of admitted expenditure.

§. Views of the Educationists.- The ten educationists who were retired officers or headmasters and teachers and whom the writer approached for their frank and informal views on the present inspection system in India, admitted the fact that the school inspectorates have not been functioning well. In their opinion many of the district inspecting officers were neither first class administrators nor were able schoolmasters. Promotion is one of the causes for lack of qualities such as vision, enthusiasm, scholarship and insight in work. They held the view that more than sixty per cent of the inspecting officers should be recruited by direct appointment. They also favoured professional training for the recruited inspecting officers.

Four of the educationists expressed themselves strongly in favour of the subject specialist inspectors. They suggested that a team of specialists should spend at least three days in every school and thoroughly evaluate school work. They also supported the suggestion for developing detailed

evaluative criteria for assessment of school progress. They admitted the fact that the present inspection forms are too mechanical and unimaginative so as to be useful as evaluative forms.

In respect of training of the secondary school inspectors, most of them suggested the periodical meetings of the inspecting officers of a group of districts or the State, where common problems should be discussed. As one educationist bitterly said, "These inspecting officers themselves should develop interest in their own in-service education. They should not wait for the Department to whip them into such a forced interest." Another aired his views in the same manner. "Now in almost all districts we have Department of Extension Services which frequently organise excellent in-service education programmes for teachers. How many of our District Inspectors have bothered to inquire of these programmes, let aside attending them or visiting the centres!"

The essence of their suggestion was that the reform of secondary school inspection lies in the direct recruitment of young and qualified inspectors

rather than the existing practice of appointment more by promotion than by direct recruitment.

One educationist also expressed subdued resentment at the 'pressure' and 'communal interests' used in the promotion of the departmental persons to the vital posts of educational inspectors, and even in the direct recruitment to these posts.

3. Views of the Teaching Staff of the Graduate Teachers' College.- Ten members of the college staff were interviewed. Six of them did not favour the concept and practices of 'control' associated with school inspectorates. They felt that the Education Department has been trying to control school teaching, school examinations and school activities rather too much through the school inspectorates. This does effect the enthusiasm of schools and teachers to provide creative instruction for children. All of them stressed a basic change in the role of the inspecting officers: The inspecting officers have now to provide leadership to schools and teachers. They must be in search of new ideas and practices in schools, and pass on such information to schools.

As they represent the government authority which wields considerable power on schools through their grant-in-aid rules and conditions, they are in a favourable position to exercise creative leadership. An inspector should know the strengths and weaknesses of all the schools in his charge, get new ideas from good schools and enthuse the poor schools to improve their standard of teaching, school administration and organisation. One professor felt that the inspector should create such conditions in his district that headmasters and teachers associations would come forward to discuss improved teaching methods in schools. His leadership, enthusiasm, skill and knowledge should, in fact, be intensive enough to inspire schools to explore better ways to provide improved schooling to children.

Eight of these interviewees said that most of the school inspectors that they knew were of an ordinary calibre, hardly competent and qualified to provide creative leadership to schools. They also stressed the need for direct recruitment of young officers for this vital job. They also suggested

specialised professional training for them with courses in organisation, planning, leadership, human relationships, action research or educational research. Some of them also felt that long service in the Education Department makes one's attitude stiff and views rigid and takes away one's creativity, so that very few persons from the Department promoted as Educational Officers on the basis of their seniority turn out to be creative inspectors.

Most of them also favoured a team of inspectors specialised in different subjects to help the schools to determine their strengths and weaknesses and undertake improvement on the basis of inspectors' comprehensive suggestions to them.

Three of them favoured including at least 25% to 50 per cent of the inspecting team members from the pool of good teachers made from the district. They argued that teachers with creative ideas from private schools should also be associated with the supervision of schools within the district; the gain will be on all sides; moreover, this practice will help in toning down the authoritarian atmosphere of school

inspection. However, seven of the interviewees were doubtful whether such a supervisory team from private schools could be built up and actually used without causing jealousy, resentment and even protests.

All of the professors agreed that if the school inspection is to be really effective, it should be thorough and should be done in a completely friendly atmosphere. They suggested a three to five days inspection of a school followed by a half-day session of discussion between the inspecting team and the school faculty. Each of the observations of the team should be presented first to the school, and the latter should have an opportunity to explain their view-point or even difficulty, if any, in implementing them. The inspection report should be written only after such a frank and full discussion. One professor put forward a proposal for grouping not more than 25 secondary schools under an inspecting officer or an inspecting team for inspection and supervision purposes. They felt that creative inspection will be feasible only if the group of

schools is manageable. Only then, several in-service activities like seminars, workshops would be possible where an inspector can exercise his creative leadership. They advocated the idea of smaller secondary school districts, each under a Grade I inspecting officer.

All of them favoured the idea of developing comprehensive evaluative criteria and using them as both tools of evaluation and grading of schools and also as diagnostic tools to determine and suggest remedial programme for individual schools.

Six of the interviewees welcomed the idea of exchange between the staff of the inspectorate and that of the training college. They felt that, if such an exchange can be worked out administratively, it would help both the training colleges and school inspectors. The remaining felt diffident of the feasibility of such an exchange in the present rigid government set up in education.

One professor suggested ~~that~~ the publication of an all-India Journal or regional journals on school inspection and supervision. He felt that the publication of such a journal will be the first step

towards the inservice training of secondary school inspectors.

Another professor doubted the wisdom of continuity such a controlling authority as the school inspectorate in a free and democratic country. The office of the inspector, he said, may be allowed to continue only for collecting necessary information and data about secondary schools. It should not have any authority to dictate schools and control school syllabuses, school teaching and examinations. However, the rest of the professors did not share this view, and felt that school inspectors can also play a friendly and co-operative role in determining and maintaining high standards in secondary education in India in the present conditions.

4. Views of Secondary School Headmasters.- Ten headmasters of secondary schools were interviewed. Most of the headmasters seemed to be taken aback at the question of whether they favoured the continuation of the secondary school inspectorate, as they seemed to have taken the century old institution of school

inspectorate for granted and did not think of its abolition at all. Most of them at least seemed to have reconciled themselves to the idea of school inspection and the existence of school inspectors.

Eight of the ten headmasters interviewed did not think that most of the school inspectors they knew<sup>h</sup> had any high qualities or qualifications to be able to exercise any educational leadership in the district. They said that some of the inspectors were good in one or two subjects, but their scholarship was not to the extent that they could be really educational leaders and others were hardly better than some of their senior assistant inspector. Their observations stressed the need for carefully selecting versatile and experienced teachers and headmasters who can command the respect of other teachers, as school inspectors. Most of the headmasters pointed out that the present inspectors generally try to hide their inadequacies through the authority they enjoy, and schools also tolerate them because their grant-in-aid depends on their recommendations.

They also pointed out that there had been marked deterioration in the academic and professional equipment and calibre of educational inspectors in the last decade and a half. They said that scholar-inspectors are now a rarity.

Nine of them expressed the view that the present practice of promoting departmental persons to the posts of district school inspectors on the basis of seniority is not likely to give schools able inspectors. These selected persons have their views and attitude all fossilised by the time they rise high to the posts of district inspectors. It would be too much to expect of them vigorous, fresh, flexible and experimental outlook. School inspection becomes a routine business both for the school and the inspector, and none benefits professionally. They supported the argument that the district school inspectors be directly recruited from among well-qualified young men and women and be given thorough professional training before they assume a full responsibility.

Six of them suggested that a district school inspector should have a committee of advisors drawn

from management, headmasters and teachers; the committee should be rotating every year so that fresh blood can enter the advisory committee, the other five headmasters, however, did not feel that such a committee could function happily and harmoniously, without creating jealousy and animosity in the district. They said that there could be various subject teachers' committees and other programme committees that can meet periodically and work out units or plans of work which may be followed by the schools in the district; and the inspector or his assistants may work as chairman to those committees and guide their work.

The school headmasters also supported the idea of thorough and comprehensive inspection spread over three to four days through a team of subject specialists under the leadership of the district school inspector. Half of them further supported the idea of inviting well qualified teachers and headmasters from the district to serve on the teams, and stressed the need for organising a number of such supervisory teams. Two principals said that if such an arrangement could be worked out, it would be an

excellent means of in-service education for teachers and principals and would help in recognising competent teachers. However, the others questioned the practicability of such a measure in Indian conditions. They said : " More harm than good will be done to the morale of school teachers and harmony among school management." All of them stressed the need that the inspector should meet the entire teaching staff and discuss all his observations and suggestions with them and management before he puts them in writing.

Most of the headmasters interviewed disapproved thoroughly of the minute and unimaginative control exercised by the inspector and his office over schools. They pointed out that the inspector's office be properly oriented in courteous correspondance<sup>e</sup> and affable human relationships. The school heads and the teachers be accepted as respectable partners in the administration of secondary education, rather than mere subordinates of inspecting officers, as is the case now. They also advocated curtailing unnecessary correspondance<sup>e</sup> forced upon them by the inspector's office. In response to an enquiry whether they would

suggest an assistant to the inspector to check up school accounts, the school heads said that some easy and quicker devices should be developed to screen school items of expenditure for the purpose of determining grant-in-aid to schools.

A general reaction of all these headmasters was that there has been too much control exercised on them by the inspector; they have very little freedom in syllabuses, selection of school textbooks and sometimes even in experimenting with the newer methods of teaching and testing. They showed resentment at being required to seek the inspector's permission for even a trifle deviation from the prescribed courses of studies and textbooks. They suggested that the school inspector should now be oriented to the idea of academic freedom to a school and that no school reform is possible without granting freedom to schools in curriculum, teaching methods and examinations.

These headmasters' views about the present procedures of secondary school inspection, is that they are mechanical, hurried, superficial and not of much use from the point of guiding schools. They

doubted the validity of the inspector's assessment of teaching and co-curricular activities of the school on the basis of his three to four hours of hurried visit to classrooms. According to these headmasters, the inspectors seemed to be more concerned with filling up of their inspection reports than with understanding of the school and its achievements and providing practical or effective guidance. They stressed again and again the point that the inspectors should develop the attitude of looking for the strengths of the schools, and not have a Police Officer's outlook for gathering evidences for the failures and short-comings of schools. One headmaster compared the attitude of school inspectors towards teachers and headmasters to that of a capitalist to labourers.

Eight of the headmasters said that the Education Department should not treat all schools on the same basis and need not inspect all schools. They should develop some comprehensive evaluative criteria which should be used in grading schools. The inspecting officers should give more attention to

weak schools and help them to correct their deficiencies and short-comings. They should recommend for larger grant-in-aid to them so that they too try to come up to the level of other 'good' schools. They also suggested that the name 'inspector' should be dropped and some expression like 'extension officers', 'co-ordinators' or 'field-advisors' be used. Perhaps the change in their designation would help in changing their outlook and work, they concluded.

5. Views of School Teachers. - Fifteen teachers were interviewed. Their views are briefly summarised below:

The teachers felt that school inspection was necessary; it prevented them from their being irregular or lethargic in their work. Most of them said that they learnt much from friendly and helpful inspectors; but their experience was that many of the inspectors who visited their classrooms had practically nothing to offer to them by way of concrete and creative guidance and suggestions. They admitted that inspection was necessary to

prevent school management from becoming autocrats and dictators, and headmasters from becoming either too much exacting or too much slipshod in their supervision of the work of assistant teachers. However, most of these teachers lamented that inspecting officers hardly came forward to demonstrate the effective teaching techniques they recommended so they felt that inspectors should be first rate teachers. Most of these teachers also remarked that the inspecting officers whom they knew had old ideas and approaches to teaching, and were not prepared to accept the 'other side' of the views. They applied foot-rule techniques in screening teachers' composition work, classwork in mathematics or pupils' laboratory work. Four teachers said that the inspectors hardly met the teachers after their school inspection work was over; and when they met, there was not a free exchange of views, but it was just like a 'press conference of a political leader.' All of the teachers interviewed remarked that the inspectors appeared reluctant to shake off their 'authoritarian

air' while dealing with them and that they just could not forget their old mentality of superiority. Five of the interviewees suggested that there should be a camp life for inspectors, teachers and headmasters so that inspecting officers could learn to forget their artificial superiority and become as co-workers in the field of education.

Comments on the Views Expressed by the Interviewees.

Having had full discussions with the inspecting officers, educationists, headmasters and teachers on various points connected with the school inspection system in India, the writer could clearly perceive that on one side the inspecting officers are defending themselves by saying that their approach to the inspection of schools is friendly and educative, and that they do not adopt a fault finding method of school inspection; while, on the other side, the headmasters' reaction is that there has been too much control exercised on them by the inspector, stating that they have <sup>very</sup> ~~busy~~ little freedom in syllabuses and even selection of text-books etc. Both headmasters and teachers consider the inspection of school

( the manner in which it is carried out ) to be mechanical, hurried, superficial and not of much use as they receive little guidance from it.

The views expressed by both the groups are, in a way, correct. The inspectors are not policy makers but are executive officers. It is the directorate that formulates the policy. Accordingly, the inspectors control the schools. Nevertheless it is true that the inspectors can interpret the policy in a liberal way, and not rigidly. They should, of course, supervise closely some of the schools which, in their opinion, run inefficiently.

Furthermore, the inspectors should realise that they are the liaison officers between the headmasters and the Department of Education. They ought not only to take headmasters into their confidence by explaining the Government policy with regard to their duties of ensuring the public that schools provide a good education for their children, but also to make the State Director of Education aware of the difficult circumstances in which many voluntary agency schools play their part in providing

education. For example many aided schools do not have enough financial resources of their own for the purpose of having a modern building and other amenities for the welfare of their pupils and the staff.

As a result, they are unable to secure either the services of well qualified and capable teachers or achieve and show certain tangible results. Here is the inspector's duty to see that such needy schools get greater assistance from the Government in terms of money and good staff by allowing the school to pay enhanced salary for well qualified staff. Once the headmasters realise that the inspector is truly sympathetic and understanding, cordial relationship will easily be maintained between them. So much for the inspector to understand this, and act accordingly.

But it is also the time for the headmaster and teachers to realise that in a democratic country like India where secondary education has to be provided not for the favoured few but for the vast masses of the young people of the country. This

means the expansion of secondary education is bound to increase fast. Then should they not raise their professional behaviour and standard to such an extent that they need not, for their academic guidance and supervision, depend upon the inspecting officers so much, whose strength in comparison with the rapid progress of education is bound to be inadequate ? No doubt, the country needs more specialist inspectors for the help of the schools which they need for their higher school certificate classes.

The teachers' criticism that the inspectors themselves often are not aware of the new methods of teaching has a grain of truth; but it is not owing entirely to the inspectors' fault or weakness. They have an administrative function which takes a lion's share from their working life. The only solution for the problem, it appears, is the provision of interchangeability between the headmasters and inspectors as well as between lecturers of teachers' colleges and inspectors. Some interviewees questioned

the feasibility of this proposal, thinking of an impossibility of participation by voluntary schools and colleges. This difficulty can be overcome if the Unified Teaching Service ( U.T.S. ) can be introduced at both school and college level in each State. The writer as Education Officer has witnessed the success of such arrangement of transferring the staff from the Government to the voluntary educational institutions and vice versa in Tanzania. India can adopt this Unified Teaching Service with advantage.

Some interviewees suggested the change in the designation of the inspector who should be known as a co-ordinator or an adviser. The change in the name would not make a much difference unless the title accompanies the appropriate spirit and perception; or unless the whole system is revised whereby the inspector is practically made free of his administrative function.

To sum up, the various defects and weaknesses of the inspection system in India, which the respondents and interviewees have pointed out could be classified

under two major headings: (1) organisation and administration of inspectorates; and (2) methods and procedures of inspection. The next two chapters are devoted to these aspects and some proposals are made.

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