# A STUDY OF SUPERVISION

# I N

# THE PUBLIC PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

# O F

# S Y R I A

By

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A Thesis

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# P R E F A C E

To the writer's best knowledge, no thorough study of educational supervision has been made yet in the whole Arab Near East. The inspectorate, as an instrument of educational control in the Arab countries, still performs its traditional functions of examining the work of teachers, correcting their faults and rating their efficiencies in a routine and subjective way. It is high time that a preliminary study of the prevailing inspection of instruction be made, with the aim of catching up with the modern theory and practice of educational supervision in the West.

The work is confined to inspection in Syria, in order to escape the possibility of a superficial treatment. However, since the centralized system is a common denominator for all the educational set-ups of the Arab countries, a critical study of the Syrian Inspectorate may have a generalized effect on the other sister nations as well.

The study, moreover, emphasizes supervision of instruction, though it describes, incidentally, administrative inspection. This emphasis is justifiable, for the common practice of inspectors in Syria is to neglect the professional aspect of supervision of instruction and to spend most of their time and effort in routine administrative inspection of materials, equipment, conditions of school buildings and things which can be left to less qualified personnel than the experienced supervisory inspectors.

press, all of which have brought the west very near to the Arab East.

New horizons flash now around the Syrian youth. New concepts of science, technology, economics, politics, sociology and culture are unfolded to the Syrian Arab. Democratic political life, compulsory free primary education, emancipation of women and secularization are some of the important achievements which owe their very existence to the process of modernization. Industrialization, wholesome relations between the sexes, and such manifestations of "social justice" as equitable distribution of wealth, freedom of the press and old-age insurance are pressing issues of the present which cause heated discussions among Syrian groups. In brief, the new generation is made more akin to western life than to eastern life. The Syrian adolescent[1] is uneasy about the old ways, impatient with his elders, challenging the authority of home, mosque and government.

To relate nationalism to modernization, one can say that the educated Syrian Arab almost invariably finds himself in conflict torn between seemingly opposite forces, the one belonging to the deep-rooted past, and the other to the newly acquired present. His early background conditions him to remain loyal to Arab tradition and culture, and therefore he clings to many aspects of his old Arab civilization. At the same time he gets an open window to the west through first-hand as well as vicarious experience, and while looking from this window he cannot

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1. Refer to Mr. Tajo's unpublished thesis, "The Conflict Between Parents and Their Adolescent Children in the Moslem Syrian Family," A.U.B. Library, 1951.

liminary one that needs to be complemented by others. The writer hopes that it will serve as a stimulus for students of education to make fuller studies of the many important aspects of educational supervision in the whole Arab world.

In closing, I wish to express my acknowledgment to the Syrian Ministry of Education, my gratitude to Dr. H. Kurani, Prof. J. Katul and Prof. L. Zahner of the Department of Education at the American University of Beirut, and my thanks to all those who assisted me in rendering this piece of work possible.

Kh. F. Krimly

Beirut, June 1952.

C O N T E N T S

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# A N  A B S T R A C T

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A Study of Supervision in the Public Primary and Secondary Schools of Syria.


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The Syrian Inspectorate is taken as an example field study to provide the stimulus for students of education to make fuller studies of the many important aspects of educational supervision in the whole Arab Near East.

The needs for the study are obvious from the educational background of Syria. Amidst the changing life brought by the impacts of nationalism and westernization, the teacher as the seer of the new generation stands in need of guidance of the trained and experienced supervisor, who extends the boundary of education to cover all the vast areas of life. The lack of capable teachers in Syria constitutes a further need for supervision. Besides, there will always be the need for highly

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trained supervisors to make good practice more widely known, to enlighten the teaching staff on the rapid advances in education, to encourage them to grow professionally and to discover potential leadership.

The Results.

The above needs are met inadequately by the Syrian Inspectorate which, in subordination to the central administration, is burdened with the responsibility of executing the educational plans and syllabi laid down by the technical committee on education and instruction. The specific functions of the inspectors are:

1. To superintend the work of principals and teachers and evaluate their efficiency.

2. To guide them along better understanding of syllabi and in complying with the instructions outlined by the Ministry.

3. To assist them along better methodology and technique.

4. To correct faulty ways, eliminate ineffective efforts and establish sound ones.

5. To coordinate the work of different schools and teachers.

6. To report to the Ministry about present conditions and proficiency of education and instruction in

schools.

7. To study the educational needs and the required provision for different areas of Syria - urban and rural - and report about them.

8. To make publicity for education.

It is evident from the foregoing that at best the present aim of inspection in Syria is conceived as the correction of teachers' faults and the estimation of their efficiency and worth. Accordingly, the inspector is required to spend most of his time in visiting teachers at work and rating them in his reports. As a result, the majority of the Syrian teachers portray the personality of the inspector as an authoritarian dictator, a harsh critic, and one who snoops for the examination of petty things to the neglect of genuine progressive guidance.

In addition to the coercive approach, the Syrian inspector of education manifests whimsical subjectiveness and lack of purposefulness while carrying out the duties most commonly expected of him. For example, the mean of the annual number of inspectoral class visits per teacher is 1.08 for primary schools and 1.22 for secondary schools, and the duration of the visits is planned in terms of minutes instead of in terms of lesson units and purposeful guidance. The average length of the post-visitation conference between the

inspector and the individual teacher is 11.70 minutes in primary schools and 12.38 minutes in secondary schools, and counseling lacks planning. Moreover, the lengthy forms of inspectoral reports are filled with vague and judicial adjectives, such as "good", "fair", "poor" etc....

Suggestions.

The suggestions that can be put to immediate use are the following:

1. It is recommended that the Syrian authorities should hold a committee to re-study the whole organization of national education and adaptation which takes into consideration the advantages of both the centralized and decentralized systems. Not until the State withdraws the rigid control it still exercises on education in Syria can one expect to find the inspector who is "to advise, consult, stimulate and gather information rather than control and dictate".

2. Another suggestion is to raise the qualifications of inspectors. On the affective side, the inspectors should be characterized by enthusiasm in their work, friendly affection towards the group of teachers they are to work with, and integrity in recognizing leadership among them. On the intellectual side, the primary school inspector should have a special university preparation in an integrated program consisting of education,

psychology and sociology courses in addition to some academic specialization in one field of study, and the secondary school inspector should have a graduate preparation in one academic subject as well as in the teaching of it. From amongst both kinds of inspectors, the Ministry of Education is advised to send the potential leaders abroad for getting new practical experience in supervision.

3. Thorough planning is needed for improving the prevalent inspectoral practices. For example, teachers have to be visited more than once in a year according to their needs, the duration of the visits should be lengthened and planned in terms of lesson units or components, and room should be left to invited and consultative visitations. A pre-requisite for this is an increase in the number of both primary and secondary school inspectors, and in the case of the latter two headquarters should be founded - one in Damascus and another in Aleppo. Varying purposeful outlines of classroom observation notes should also be formulated by inspectors before visitation, so that their observations would be careful and objective. Moreover, the reports prepared by the inspectors and filed in the Ministry, should be descriptive instead of being judicial. Finally, counseling should follow almost each visitation, and the inspector should prepare for it in advance, so that the end result would be the professional growth of the teacher conferred with.

In the future, it is hoped that the Syrian inspector, earning the new title of "supervisor" or "consultant", will not limit his effort to class-room observations and post-visitation conferences. He will try to go about the task of supervision in accord with what the teachers prefer and choose as helpful procedures and cooperative techniques.

The following are some of the possible group opportunities that the Syrian supervisor may arrange:

1. He may assist the teachers to organize themselves into committees, associations and panels to study problems of education and discuss recent ideas and practices of instruction.

2. He may convince the central and local administrations to provide an adequate professional library of education in every school or at least in every city.

3. He may lead in arranging model teaching programs, where a cooperative and experimental approach to the practice of instruction can be adopted.

4. He may help in providing summer seminars and workshops for teachers as a group to develop.

After the mass work, there should come the individual follow-up and care. Here the following suggestions may be worthy of consideration.

1. The supervisor may very well resort more and more to individualized conferences, where a fair chance is given to the teacher to express his personal problems, to point out to possible procedures for solution and to evaluate these procedures on the basis of experimentation and vicarious experience provided democratically by the supervisor.

2. The supervisor may find it useful to arrange for individual teachers to visit eminent colleagues in neighboring schools, and to refer them politely to certain books or periodicals.

3. Finally, the supervisor may motivate teachers to advance by recognizing their efforts through various means such as oral praise, a letter of congratulation, publication of teachers' successful results, exhibits of teachers' collections of illustrative materials and salary promotion.

Thus, supervision as democratic leadership is the logical consequence for the independent democratic Syrian Republic. The supervisor manipulates situations and provides educative opportunities, which stimulate teachers to progress and grow out of their own accord. Teachers, in turn, play their active roles and become contributing partners in the determination of what the Ministry of Education wants to achieve, conceiving of the task of supervision as that of fostering the dynamic spirit of professional leadership.

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# C H A P T E R  I

## THE EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF SYRIA AND THE NEEDS FOR SUPERVISION

Supervisory service is essential to all complex undertakings. All difficult human endeavours need consultants or expert supervisors. This is a principle of efficiency which is put into practice all over the modern world. In administrative bureaus, in business offices, in factories, in every complicated operation, the need for directors, superintendents, or foremen is fully recognized. But the field of education is certainly no less complicated than the other undertakings, and possibly even more intricate and demanding than most of them. The result of faulty teaching may not show up immediately, but its slow cumulative effect leads to disastrous consequences. Moreover, the educational process is work with growing children and maturing adolescents, and what is more precious than human personalities! Hence the importance of good teaching. Surely, if the importance of supervisory consultation is recognized in all other complex endeavours, it must be acknowledged also in the intricate and serious enterprise of education.

It is regrettable that the Arab world is not fully aware of the importance of supervision in education. Unfortunately, a

good many of the Arab students of education have adopted a laissez-faire attitude toward this question. They have been prejudiced against the process by the implications of the term "Tufteesh", as inspection is labelled in Arabic to denote something equivalent to what is cynically referred to in the West as "snoopervision."

Hence, it is well to make clear at the start the social and educational background of Syria against which the urgent needs for supervision of instruction stand out sharply.

A. Syria in Transition.

The changing life of Syria creates a real need for educational supervision. Nationalism and modernization have their effects on the minds of Syrians. In times of transition from an old type of life to a new, there is unrest, turmoil and uncertainty. The need becomes very great for defining the large aims of life, for clarifying the ideals of the good citizen and for understanding the rightful places of religion, culture and science. The teacher, who is supposed to be the seer of the new generation, should know the problems of his country and the aspirations of society, and therefrom should formulate some opinion about the pressing aims of education. In all these responsibilities, the Syrian teacher stands in need of the cooperation and guidance of the supervisor.

1. The Story of Nationalism - To understand adequately the issues and demands of the transition, one is obliged to seek

the help of History. So the question arises, "Through what stages did Syria go under the Ottoman, Sherifian, mandate and independence regimes to reach its present state of instability?"

During the Ottoman[1] reign, the number of educated people was quite small, for there were no adequate facilities of schooling. Until 1833, education, totally left to the charitable persons and religious foundations, was not considered a State affair. The prevalent schools were of two kinds: the Koranic schools (Maktabs) and the Theological seminaries (Madrasahs). The former, attached to mosques and very elementary, taught the Koran and the fundamental processes of reading, writing and counting in Arabic. The latter, the theological seminaries, gave a post-elementary education in Arabic grammar, syntax, rhetoric, style and logic, theology and studies related to the Koran, Sunna (deeds and sayings of Mohammad) and Islamic jurisprudence. Thus, the educational system of Syria, until the middle of the nineteenth century, was very meager in its opportunities and totally religious in content.

Meanwhile, Syria began to feel the impact of the West through Egypt and Lebanon. Turkey itself, immediately after the declaration of the Ottoman Constitution of 1908, began to have real interest in education as a tool for consolidating the Empire which was on the verge of disruption. While the old schools were

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1. For details concerning conditions during the Ottoman reign in Syria refer to Babikian's unpublished work, Civilization and Education in Syria and Lebanon, A.U.B. Library, pp. 80-82. Also refer to

هيئة الدراسات العربية، العرب والحضارة الحديثة، ص ص ٦٨-٧٥.

left untouched, new public elementary schools, higher primary schools (Rushdiah) and preparatory secondary school (I'dadiah) were established in Syria. Very soon the latter were replaced by lycees (Sultaniyyah) after the French model. In short, the characteristics of the new system were: (1) centralized administration to inculcate loyalty for the Ottoman Empire; (2) the supremacy of Turkish as the language of instruction; (3) the addition of the curriculum of modern subjects such as science, mathematics and geography for military purposes; and (4) the introduction of French, German and English as foreign languages in the lycees.

Scarcely had the twentieth century opened than the western movements of nationalism fascinated the Syrian intelligentsia. They plunged themselves into the secretly organized societies of al-Fatat and al-'Ahd. It was they who gave a great deal of their time and effort for laying down the national aspirations and policies for Sherif Husein, while he was bargaining with McMahon before the eve of rebellion.[1] The most energetic among them went so far as sacrificing their own lives at the hands of Jamal Pasha, giving the Arab national cause its martyrs.

Next, with the establishment of the Syrian Arab government by Faysal, the son of the Sherif of Mecca, in 1919, the Arabic language and history were enthroned in the curricula of schools. Faysal's new Minister of Education, Sati' al-Husri, started working on the policy of returning the new generation of

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1. Antonius, The Arab Awakening, pp. 157-159.

Syria to their Arab culture.[1] He founded a special committee for selecting and originating technical terms that were needed by teachers, and for translating and writing textbooks for schools. Teachers' conferences began to be held, and training programs were organized. In spite of the fact that this independent Arab government did not last for more than one year, the spirit of Arab culture revival had already been rooted in the bosom of Syrians.

As the French entered Syria in 1920, they attempted with success to run education in accord with French ways. They organized a centralized system of public schools. Primary education consisted of six academic years, and the program as prescribed by the central authority included Arabic, French, Arithmetic, History, Geography, Drawing, Physical Education, General Science, Object lessons, Morals, Hygiene and Religious instruction. Towards the end of primary education, there was the official public examination for granting the elementary certificate, without which no student was an eligible candidate for any public secondary school ~~position~~ Place. The public system also provided seven years of studying French, Arabic, another modern language (usually English), Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, Psychology, Philosophy, Religion and Ethics. At the completion of six secondary years there was a public examination for the Baccalaureat certificate, Part I, and after one more academic year there was the next public examination, for the Baccalaureat, Part II.

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1. الحصري، دولية الثقافة العربية، ص ٧٧.

The administration being rigidly centralized, the French adviser was really the one to make decisions on any issue pertaining to the Ministry of Education. Though instruction was partly conducted in Arabic, the French language had an esteemed place even in the first primary class. Its study was obligatory throughout the primary and secondary grades. Its mark was considered as constituting one third of the total mark of the "certificat d'etudes primaires." That is to say, "the value of the marks for French in this examination was more than the combined total for history, geography, arithmetic and geometry."[1] It goes without saying that the curricula of both primary and secondary public schools emphasized the history and culture of Europe in general and France in particular. French foreign schools were encouraged to open, and French certificates were considered equivalent to the certificates of the Syrian Ministry of Education. Scholars studying abroad were invariably sent to France, and upon their return they held key administrative positions. In fact, no professor was employed in the Faculty of Law or the Faculty of Medicine, unless he had obtained the doctorate degree from France.[2] Enough Syrians, however, were still available to express their steadfast loyalty to the Arab culture.[3]

In 1941, "a great hour in history was struck," said General Catroux as he declared Syria independent nominally, for

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1. University of London, Institute of Education, The Yearbook of Education, 1949, p. 440.
2. ~~Op. cit.,~~ Ibid, p. 440.
3. الحصري، حول الثقافة العربية، ص ٧٧.

still as yet the Syrian government was not given real powers nor was an independent constitutional life permitted.[1] It was with the elections of 1943 and the resulting victory of the nationalists at whose head was Shukri al-Kuwatly as President, that the French had to resort to negotiation in order to assure themselves a privileged position in Syria as before. They prepared in 1944 a project for an Educational Agreement[2] between Syria and France, in which they asked the Syrian government to consider the French language obligatory in all public schools beginning with the third primary class, that is at the age of nine. They wanted the government to assign more than one-fourth of the total hours of study to French, and to value the French grade for no less than one-fourth of the total grades of written examinations. Moreover, the proposed agreement made it necessary for the Syrian Ministry of Education to consult with the French cultural representative and the French headmasters and teachers on all educational problems in general and in matters connected with private instruction in particular. Syrian inspectors were to be accompanied by French inspectors when visiting French private schools. Finally, the French certificates were to maintain prestige equal to that of the government certificates. These were the main ingredients of the program as drawn up by the French authorities for negotiation.

The answer of Syria was very practical. A new Educational Law was passed in Parliament towards the end of 1944. Right from the start, the first article defined the task of the

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1. Hurani, Albert, Syria and Lebanon, p. 242.
2. المصري، تقارير ١٩٤٥، ص ٧١-٨٢.

independent Ministry of Education as

> "to impart to the rising generation an adequate education from all points of view, physical, moral and intellectual, so that each individual should grow devoted to his country, attached to his nation, conscious of his duties, armed with skills necessary in his life, and capable to serve his country."[1]

The second article went on to point out a specifically nationalistic task of education,

> "to establish and strengthen cultural relations between Syria and her sister-nations in order to create one unified culture in all Arab countries."[2]

Then came the clash of May 1945 between the Syrians and the French who bombarded Damascus. This led to boycotting French foreign schools, which in any case had to close since they could not satisfy the conditions required by the new Education Law in submitting to governmental inspection and in following the assigned curricula in Arabic, Arab history and geography of the Arab lands.[3]

Thus, Syria began to direct education along nationalistic lines and for the preparation of the new Arab Syrian generation. The courses[4] of study in the public primary and secondary schools were revised and given a strong national bent. The syllabi for history were carefully prepared with the aim of reviving the Arab heritage and inculcating Arab nationalism. The French language was not only omitted from the primary program, but also at the

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The Yearbook of Education,

1. Op. Cit., p. 442.
2. Ibid.
3. Mathews and Akrawi, Education in Arab Countries, p. 326.
4. Refer to Ibid, table 62, p. 359, for the primary course of study, and to table 63, p. 367, for the studies for secondary schools.

secondary level it was left on equal footing with English.

Meanwhile, some Syrian delegates were meeting in Alexandria with other Arab delegates to discuss the idea of an Arab League. On the twenty-second of March, 1945, in Cairo, they signed the constitution of the Arab League. The result was that the Arabs could meet occasionally to coordinate their political, economic and cultural policies and to cooperate with each other. In the first Arab cultural conference, sponsored by the Arab League and held in Lebanon from the second to the eleventh of September, 1947, cultural unification was given serious attention. As a result of the conference two volumes containing all the speeches and reports dealing with the possibility of a unified core in Arabic, Arab history, geography and civics were published.[1] To the best of the writer's knowledge, no practical step was taken, though the Syrian Ministry of Education had already drawn up an Arab national program of studies for the young generation.

Finally, the Palestinian catastrophe, the national strifes of Iraq, Morocco, Egypt and Tunisia rendered Syrian youths very nationalistic and antagonistic to western imperialism. If students in Syria were on political demonstrations and strikes every now and then, listless, and unconfident of their political leaders, it is not to be wondered at.

2. The Story of Modernization. - So far only the political development and its impact on education has been outlined.

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1. جامعة الدول العربية ، الادارة الثقافية ، المؤتمر الثقافي العربي الأول .

There is in addition another story that comes under the historical development of Syria, that of social modernization after the impact of the west. Modernization or westernization as a problem is stated by Hurani in the following words:

> "An old way of thought and life, which has gone unchallenged and fundamentally unchanged for some hundreds of years, finds itself in some ways opposed, in others inescapably transformed by the new civilization of the west."[1]

In Syria, modernization touches all of the distinct three societies: the desert society which is characterized by nomadic pasturage and loyalty to the tribe or clan, the rural society in which the economic structure is wholly based on agriculture and the prevailing social relationship is a feudalistic type of loyalty between the peasants and their landowners, and finally the urban society in old historical towns where trade and industry have deeply influenced the social structure and the ways of life.

While the first and second societies have not been left untouched by the impact of western modernization, it was the third type, the urban society, that really has undergone a turmoil of change. The towns have always been open to foreign merchants and tourists. Beginning with the middle of the nineteenth century and on, the western missionaries have been busy erecting new types of schools. Syrian intelligenzia have been encouraged to follow their higher studies in the universities of the west. The masses, too, have been influenced by the cinema, radio and

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1. Hurani, Syria and Lebanon, p. 59.

This study is also limited to the supervision of public schools, because here the great majority of students receive their education. Moreover, the private schools are inspected in the same way with regard to the teaching of Arabic, history, geography and civics. Thus the scope of the present work is narrowed to include only the study of supervision of instruction in the public primary and secondary schools of Syria, as it actually is in the form of coercive inspection, and as it ought to be in the form of democratic consultation and leadership.

The arrangement of the study follows the following plan. The first chapter presents the urgent needs for supervision of instruction as they sharply stand out in the foreground against the social and educational background of Syria. The second chapter objectively surveys how these needs are actually met in Syria, that is to say, how the inspectoral staff is organized, how the functions of inspectors are defined and what the prevailing activities of the inspectorate are. Such a presentation of factual material is significant in that it provides the data for any independent investigator, in the future, to evaluate for himself the Syrian Inspectorate. A personal evaluation of the writer, moreover, is undertaken in the remaining two chapters. In the third chapter the underlying concepts of supervision in Syria are contrasted with western evolving concepts. In the light of this contrast, criticism of the prevalent techniques and suggestions for the improvement of the practices of the Syrian inspector are given in a final chapter.

It should be reiterated that this study is merely a pre-

but admire many aspects of the modern western civilization. This state of affairs can be dangerous if it means a dual personality for the Syrian youth. It too often leads him to live in a divided world, partly in one culture, partly in another, never fully committed to either one. It is also dangerous if the youth attempts to solve the conflict by neglecting his origins and plunging into imitation, thus neither remaining a Syrian Arab nor becoming a westerner. A third possibility of danger may be the case of those who get ~~as~~ so much absorbed in the socially undesirable influences of the west that they throw away the socially desirable elements of the Arab heritage, with the probable result of becoming human drifters.

3. The Implied Problems for Supervisors. - All this account of the changing life of Syria is given in order to indicate that indeed great and pressing is the need for educational supervisors who do not lose their sense of proportion while dealing with the manifested details of the classroom. Education is as vast as life itself, and therefore the supervisor has to cope with the political and social aspects of life. Never should he forget or ignore the past and present important issues which shape the future of Syria. Great indeed is his role in the solution of the problems of nationalism and modernization.

The demands of the changing life of Syria present the following thorny questions that must be met by every Syrian supervisor of education.

(1) How far does Islam go in providing the ethos of Syrian Arab nationalism?

(2) How can Arab nationalism be defined articulately, and transformed from passion to practical programs?

(3) What are the forces that threaten Syrian solidarity or disrupt Arab unity?

(4) What are the factors of solidarity and union?

(5) Does nationalism for Syria imply necessarily some degree of anti-westernization?

(6) What special relationship with the west, if any, distinct from the general relationship of the Arab world, should Syria have?

(7) What should be preserved and renewed in the Arab heritage?

(8) What should be ignored of the past, and how much assimilation from the west could take place without fear of loss of originality?

(9) How should the social structure of the nation be organized so as to assimilate a selected and guided westernization?

(10) By what processes can the Arabic language best be adapted to the demands of new terminology?

It is granted that these questions are likely to provoke heated discussions. Nevertheless, the Syrian supervisor of instruction should boldly face them and try to conceive of a clear idea of aims and a sense of direction. To be really active in the reconstruction of the Syrian society, the teacher needs the guidance of the supervisor who is more experienced and more prepared for the challenging task of keeping some roots in the

past while extending fresh shoots into the future. Thus, in planning the educational programs for the welfare of Syria, the need for the cooperative work of the supervisor and the teacher is pressing.

B. Present Education Provision.

Let us next examine the conditions of provision for education in Syria and raise some of the problems of public education. Here, too, we shall see the urgent need for the leadership of the supervisor of instruction.

1. Public Primary Schools. - According to Article eleven of the new Education Law,[1] five years of primary education are provided in Syria. Four of these constitute a full graded program, and the fifth year is complementary to it. Schools which have provision for only four years are referred to as "elementary schools." The others, which complete the five years, are the "primary schools" proper. In a few cities, however, children between the ages of three and six can be sent to the kindergartens.[2]

In theory, in accordance with articles 13 and 15 of the Education Law, primary education, beginning with children at the age of six, is both free and compulsory. But what are the hard facts of the situation? Of a total population of 3,500,000

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1. العصري ، مجلة الثقافة العربية ، ص٩٨.
2. For example, according to the statistics of 1949-50, as recorded in the Ministry of Education, there are two kindergartens in Damascus, one in Aleppo, two in Homs and two in Deir al-Zour, making a total of seven and providing room for 116 children.

in Syria, around three-quarters of a million are nomadic Beduins, about a million and a quarter are villagers and around a million and a half are city dwellers.[1] From the Beduins, it is estimated that there are around 65,000 children having a legal right to education. Of these only 238 are getting it through the eight schools provided.[2] Being sons of Sheikhs, many of these, moreover, migrate to town afterwards. Thus, the need for the educational supervisor or inspector to devise ways and means of educating the nomads, children and adults, can be foreseen when the Ministry is ready to finance a program of literacy for all the Beduins.

What about village conditions? The statistical account of the Syrian Ministry of Education estimates for the academic year 1948-1949 that only 850 villages out of 6000 had schools.[3] It is granted that these schools were in the larger villages. However, most of these village schools do not have facilities for more than three or four classes, and one single[4] teacher is in charge. Moreover, absentees in these schools constitute a large percentage, especially in the months of March and April, when practically all the older children are busy helping their parents in the fields.[5] These conditions of the village raise at least four problems for the careful consideration of the supervisor.

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1. عيسى عبد السلام ، "التربية والتعليم في سوريا" المعلم العربي ، ص ٢٢٩ ، عدد ٤ ، ١٩٥٠ .
2. Ibid.
3. الدكتور كامل عياد ، "أهداف التربية والتعليم في سورية" المعلم العربي ، ص ٧ ، عدد ١ ، ١٩٤٩ .
4. In the academic year of 1945-46 the schools run by one teacher constituted a percentage as high as 44.2 of the total elementary schools. [الحصري ، مجلة الثقافة العربية ، ص ٢٠].
5. حافظ الجمالي ، "من ذكريات المفتش" المعلم العربي ، ص ٥٨٠ ، عدد ٥ ، ١٩٤٩ .

The first is to make an inquiry into the number of children who leave school after three or four years of education. Closely allied to this is the need of finding out the number of years of schooling required for permanent literacy and the means of helping the new literates to grow into better educated citizens. The importance of such an inquiry may better be realized if the reader is reminded that the literates in Syria do not exceed twenty percent of the people.[1] The third problem for the supervising inspector is to give the village teachers guidance in the task of teaching more than one class group at a time. Finally he must face with others the need for devising a school time-table and a curriculum which will be in accord with the life and environment of the village.

Coming down to towns, big and small, we find the Ministry facing each year a crisis caused by the shortage of primary school buildings and teachers. As soon as it declares the availability of new places a large number of applicants rush to fill them. Some of the extremely poverty-striken boys, even if admitted into a school, find it hard to stay, for there are incidental financial requirements for every student, such as the cost of clothing, textbooks, notebooks and miscellaneous supplies.

The primary school crisis in towns was indeed at its peak[2] after the Franco-Syrian clash of 1945, when French primary schools with an enrolment of 19,503 students had to close. The

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1. الدكتور كامل عياد ، "اهداف التربية والتعليم في سورية" المعلم العربي ، مجلد ، عدد ١ ، ١٩٤٩ .
2. Mathews and Akrawi, Education in the Arab Countries.., p. 327.

measures taken by the Ministry were quick and effective. It opened 52 primary schools and managed to increase the number of classes and divisions in some of the old schools. In addition, it encouraged by financial grants private national schools to open.

Perhaps the most concise way to show the rate of progress in public primary schooling is to resort to the objective language of statistics. It is evident from Table I that the rate of increase both in the number of schools and the number of students, between the academic years 1935-36 and 1940-41, is not very significant. The numbers are more than trebled between the academic years 1940-41 and 1950-51. Provision for primary education made by private national and foreign schools, compared to that made by public schools, can be seen very sharply from Tables II and III.

2. Public Secondary Schools. - After the primary certificate is obtained by a child, he may go to a secondary school. The Education Law of 1944 has reduced the public secondary ladder from seven to six years. These have been organized in two stages, the intermediate stage consisting of four academic years, and the preparatory stage made up of two more academic years of specialization in literary or scientific divisions.[1] Fees are still being charged, but exemption of over one-third of the students has prevailed since 1946.[2]

1. According to a very recent legislative decree, dated Jan. 27, 1952, the preparatory stage is made up of three years, restoring the old total of seven years of secondary education.

2. Mathews and Akrawi, Education in the Arab Countries.., p. 344. [المعلم العربي، ص ٢٩١، عدد ٤، ١٩٥٢]

TABLE I - The Growth of Public Primary Schools.

| | Year | Schools | | | Students | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Male | Female | Total | Males | Females | Total |
| x | 1935-36 | 354 | 64 | 318 | 27589 | 11336 | 38952 |
| x | 1940-41 | 346 | 91 | 437 | 41837 | 17038 | 58875 |
| x | 1945-46 | 607 | 130 | 737 | 73137 | 26566 | 99703 |
| * | 1950-51 | 1205 | 258 | 1463 | 154430 | 51913 | 206343 |

TABLE II - Private National Primary Schools.

| | | | ~~Mixed~~ | Mixed | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| * | 1944-45 | 158 | 40 | ? | ? | 28800 | 14210 | 34010 |
| + | 1945-46 | 122 | 39 | 151 | 312 | 30639 | 16585 | 47224 |
| x | 1949-50 | 115 | 36 | 147 | 298 | 30522 | 17645 | 48167 |
| * | 1950-51 | 106 | 42 | ? | ? | 30885 | 17719 | 48604 |

TABLE III - Foreign Primary Schools.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| + | 1944-45 | 127 | 19877 |
| + | 1945-46 | 31 (No French schools) | 3207 |
| x | 1949-50 | 40 | 6524 |
| * | 1950-51 | ? | 6715 |

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+ Dr. Saliba, Yearly Report on Education, 1946. [صليبا، التقرير السنوي، ١٩٤٦]

* From a talk of Syrian headquarters' inspector, Dr. Habal, delivered to A.U.B. students of education on 25/3/1951.

x Statistics of the Syrian Ministry of Education.

TABLE IV - The Evolution of Public Secondary Schools.

| | Year | Schools | | | Students | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Male | Female | Total | Males | Females | Total |
| o | 1935-36 | ? | ? | ? | 1364 | 200 | 1564 |
| o | 1940-41 | ? | ? | ? | 2695 | 662 | 3357 |
| + | 1945-46 | 18 | 10 | 28 | 6252 | 2024 | 8276 |
| * | 1950-51 | 27 | 17 | 44 | 16539 | 5730 | 22269 |

TABLE V - Distribution of Secondary School Students by Classes. (1945-1946) +

| Class | No. of Students | Percent in relation to all secondary students. |
|---|---|---|
| 1st class | 2536 | 30.75 % |
| 2nd class | 2074 | 25.15 |
| 3rd class | 1229 | 14.80 |
| 4th class | 1052 | 12.70 |
| | 6891 | 83.40 |

TABLE VI - Percentage of Different Secondary Schools and Students. (1949-1950) x

| Kind of School | Percent of Schools | Percent of Students |
|---|---|---|
| Public | 38.3 % | 65.5 % |
| Private (National) | 46.2 % | 25.5 % |
| Foreign | 15 % | 9 % |

o . الحصري ، طولية الثقافة العربية ، ص ٤٢

+ Dr. Saliba, Yearly Report on Education, 1946.

* From a talk of a Syrian headquarters' inspector, Dr. Habal.

x Statistics of the Ministry of Education.

It is evident from Table IV that the increase in the number of schools has not kept pace with the increase in the number of students. Part of the explanation lies in the fact that there are many more class divisions in any one school. For example, in the academic year of 1945-46 there were 231 divisions, of which 77 belonged to five schools in Damascus and 50 to five schools in Aleppo.[1] Some of the public secondary schools have literally one thousand students.[2] Their distribution follows the general rule that the lower the class in the secondary level, the greater the number of students, as Table V shows. At present, most of the pressure is in the intermediate classes, and therefore around two-thirds of the existing schools do not have more than four secondary classes.[3] Most of the incomplete secondary schools will no doubt build up new classes in course of time.

Table VI summarizes all the provision - public, private and foreign - for secondary education. It will be noted that the percentage of public schools is rather low, while the percentage of students attending these schools is quite high. Still the future is more challenging for the resourcefulness of the supervising inspector, for as the law of compulsory free primary education approaches fulfilment the number of students eligible for secondary education increases, and with it the need for supervision.

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1. الدكتور حبلبا، التقرير السنوي ١٩٤٦، ص ٤.
2. From a talk of a Syrian inspector, Dr. Habal, delivered to A.U.B. students of education.
3. According to the statistics of the Syrian Ministry of Education.

3. The Consequences. - Under such circumstances, when public primary and secondary schools are the main institutions for learning and when the demand is so pressing, inadequacy is to be the characteristic of the state provision. The number of schools provided by the state is all too likely not to be enough. The inadequacy, moreover, tends to be pervasive, affecting the physical plant, the playgrounds, the laboratories, the libraries, the visual aid equipments and the textbooks. Even more serious is the inadequacy of the staff, both in number and in quality. Hence the administrators of education - whether through central directors, provincial directors or principals - must cope with all these deficiencies in cooperation with the supervising inspectors.

C. Status of Teachers.

The lack of capable staff in Syria constitutes a further need for supervision. Adequate professional preparation is wanting. For example, the provincial directors of education are not well suited for the requirements of their positions except in clerical, financial and business routines. Many of the principals of schools are not graduates of teacher training institutions and do not possess enough of the professional spirit of educational leadership. Not all teachers are trained for the art of teaching and guiding children and adolescents in their growth.

Since the teachers are the backbone of instruction, let us examine more carefully their status, particularly as evidence

of the need for supervision that will provide in-service training.

1. Public Primary School Teachers. - No primary school teacher, in theory, is to be appointed to his post unless he is a graduate of a teacher training institution.[1] But what is the actual fact about the multitudes of teachers staffing the primary public schools all over the Syrian provinces. Most of these teachers are non-trained intermediate school graduates or holders of the Baccalaureat, and quite a number of them are merely graduates of primary schools.[2] Seriously handicapped by lack of training, they are in great need for the assistance of supervisors.

The prevailing[3] method of teaching in primary schools is teacher-centered. The teacher enters the classroom with the aim of imparting some rudiments of knowledge within a curriculum which is already devised by the Ministry. He presents the lesson at best in a Herbartian way, using lavishly the five known steps of introduction, presentation, comparison, generalization and application. Towards the end of the lesson he asks his students questions in order to hear them give back what he has tried to teach them. Most of the questions are factual, needing only short and quick responses. Thus, the average Syrian teacher seems not to be aware of the fundamental educational principle of Froebel that the child is creative and not receptive by nature; nor does he seem to abide by Dewey's principle, "learning by doing," which

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1. وزارة المعارف السورية، قوانين وأنظمة، صفد، قانون رقم ١٢١ بتاريخ ١٩٤٨/٨/١٠ قانون الاول ١٩٤٨.

2. ادهم عبدالوهاب، "من مشاكل التعليم الابتدائي"، المعلم العربي، صفد، عدد ١-٢، ١٩٥١.

3. The description is offered from first-hand observation of the writer, while visiting teachers at work.

means not impression from the teacher but expression and free activity of the individual student. Instead, it is not rare to find the teacher who resorts to the reading and re-reading of the textbook by the students in class.

The teacher may even rationalize for his poor methodology by a naive faith in the children's faculty of memory which, he claims, should be early trained and made use of, for it weakens later on with age. Unfortunately the problem is aggravated by popularly narrated anecdotes about the Abbasid Caliph al-Ma'mūn who, it was said, used to memorize long poems after hearing them only once, and the blind great Arab poet al-Ma'arri who, it was related, delivered satisfactorily from a trained memory an orally given message in a foreign language which he did not know. Teachers should be warned by supervisors against rationalizations of this sort.

The seriousness of such bookish learning by rote, prevalent in Syria, is brought up by a fascinating article written by Dr. Khaldoun al-Kan'ānī.[1] He speaks of an interesting case of a child in the first primary class who actually memorized by heart the two volumes of the reading textbook. The teacher considered him to be one of the best students in the class, even though he was not able to distinguish the letters of the words he pronounced. The writer of the article goes on to say that he was told by a provincial director of education that a boy was found uttering, in parrot-like fashion, the right definition of a plateau; and

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1. الدكتور خلدون الكفاني، "تخييب الدروس"، المعلم العربي، ص ٢٢٧، عدد ٤، ١٩٥٠.

upon being asked to point out at the real plateau in the vicinity of the school, he completely failed to do so! It is clear that the teacher in the latter case did not only violate the principle of going from the concrete to the abstract, but he did not demand application; he sufficed himself with hearing the young repeat the abstract idea in nonmeaningful words.

Moreover, in nearly all occasions, the teachers who conceive the two-fold process of teaching and learning as the pouring out of water from a full jug into an empty receiving one, do not pay any attention to individual differences. They see their tasks as covering ground and finishing the assigned subject matter. All students must be subjected to the same content of education, and all of them must run with the same pace. No time, no patience, no motivational art is there with most of the public primary school teachers in Syria.

2. Public Secondary School Teachers. - Having presented the gloomy conditions of public primary school teachers, we are ready now to scrutinize the conditions of the public secondary school teachers. Here again there is a special law[1] which states that no teacher is to be appointed in intermediate or preparatory public secondary schools unless he is a graduate of the teacher training college or has followed a university preparation in the special subject he wants to teach. The law, however, goes on to make two reservations: first, in case of great need unqualified teachers will be accepted temporarily, to be replaced by qualified

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1. وزارة المعارف السورية ، قوانين وأنظمة ، ص ٦ .

ones as soon as possible; second, teachers of special subjects - like physical education, music, drawing and domestic science - are appointed without regard to the academic degree they hold.

The reason for the inadequacy of the secondary school teaching staff lies in the inability of the Ministry of Education to strike a balance between the horde of students allowed to enter the public secondary schools and the funds and time necessary for preparing teachers. Before the new education reform the number of students who had the right to enter the secondary schools was limited to the able ones who passed the Elementary Examination with a mark of "bien," while after the reform this limitation was discarded.[1] The Ministry was obliged to open new secondary schools and new divisions in the old schools, in order to cope with the rushing tide of students. The change was sudden and abrupt. The Ministry could find neither the time nor the money for a vast program of teacher training.

Hence one finds many non-academically trained teachers of the primary schools assigned to meet the demands in the intermediate classes of the secondary schools. The writer wonders if this policy is not to the detriment of both primary and secondary schools, for most of those newly appointed to teach in the intermediate secondary schools were originally the best teachers of the primary schools. These teachers lack the academic requirements of secondary schools. They are not familiar with the different atmosphere of the secondary schools, nor are they fully aware of

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1. الدكتور جميل صليبا، "مشاكل التعليم الثانوي"، المعلم العربي، ص٤٤، عدد ٤، ١٩٤٩.

the aims and procedures of such schools. In brief, they constitute a large inadequate group for the supervising inspector to orient and guide.

On the other hand, the general tendency for the academically trained teachers is to go on lecturing in abstract language, or at best make use of the board for complicated drawings of machines and difficult mathematical derivation of a formula in physics or chemistry. Students are so accustomed to these theoretical ways of lecturing that they expect it from every teacher. It is interesting to quote in this connection a Syrian science teacher who wrote:

> "While I was showing my students the parts of a flower and speaking about its anatomy and functions in a direct way, I was astonished to hear a girl student asking me impatiently, 'When are we going to take up the lesson?'"[1]

Thus secondary school students are set to hear lectures in classrooms and take down in summary form whatever the teacher say. When the lectures are not followed carefully there is still the possibility of having the students resort to memorizing the phrases of textbooks. Indeed it is not uncommon to find students attempting before examinations to memorize the theoretical essentials of each course of study, so that they may be able to pour out in the examination papers all that they acquired, and then go out to their original poverty of experience after having forgotten the temporarily acquired verbal facility.

3. Conditions of Trained Graduates. - The inadequacy

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1. الدكتور محمد كمال الهاشمي ، "تدريس العلوم الطبيعية" العلم العربي ، ص٧٨ ، تشرين الثاني ١٩٥٠.

of the untrained teachers in Syria may be taken for granted, but what about the graduates of teacher training institutions? Do they need the assistance and guidance of supervisors? The answer depends partly on how far the training schools are adequate.

For training prospective primary school teachers there are at present two institutions in Damascus - one for men and the other for women - and two corresponding ones in Aleppo. The applicants have to hold the intermediate secondary school certificate and to pass the selection interview given by an assigned board. Usually as a boarder, the accepted student spends three academic years, at the end of which, if he successfully completes all requirements, he is certificated as an adequate teacher for primary schools. Table VII shows the ingredients of the curriculum in these institutions.

The following remarks may be raised in criticism of the training program offered at these institutions. The professional courses are few in number. Besides they are general, or rather superficial, in content. They constitute less than one-fifth of the study hours offered. The rest of the program is spent in purely academic subjects and some light aesthetic and manual work, very similar to the program for the academic preparatory schools. It is questionable if so scarce a professional preparation will have with student-teachers a desired and lasting effect.

For the purpose of training teachers for the intermediate classes of the public secondary schools one High Institute of Teacher Training has been founded at Damascus. The applicant has

TABLE VII - The Distribution of the Hours of Study per Week in the Primary Teachers' Training Schools.[1]

| Course of Study | 1st Year | 2nd Year | 3rd Year |
|---|---|---|---|
| Religion | 1 | 1 | - |
| Arabic | 5 | 3 | - |
| Foreign language and translation | 5 | 3 | - |
| History | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Geography | 2 | 2 | - |
| Arithmetic | 4 | 4 | - |
| Physic and Chemistry | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| Science, agriculture and hygiene | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Sociology | - | - | 3 |
| Psychology and Logic | - | 3 | 2 |
| Principles of Education & Instruction | - | 3 | 4 |
| Teacher training (Practice) | - | - | 8 |
| Drawing | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Handwork | - | 2 | 2 |
| Physical Education | 2 | - | - |
| Music | 2 | - | - |
| Penmanship | 2 | - | - |
| Agricultural work | - | 3 | 6 |
| Total hours per week | 34 | 34 | 34 |

1. From الحصري، مدرسة المعلمة العربية، ص ١٤٤

to be a holder of the Baccalaureat and has to pass the requirements of the interview. The academic side of the preparation is taken care of in the four years of any specialized Faculty of the Syrian University, whether it be the Faculty of Arabic studies, the Faculty of History and Geography, the Faculty of Sciences, or the Faculty of Mathematics. The degree awarded for such academic specialization is the Licence. As to the professional preparation, it is provided only in addition to and at the same time with the academic preparation. Table VIII summarizes the content of the professional preparation at the High Teacher Training Institute.

TABLE VIII - Weekly Distribution of Professional Courses at the High Teacher Training Institute.[1]

| Course of Study | 1st Year | 2nd Year | 3rd Year | 4th Year |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Psychology . . . . . | 4 | 2 | - | - |
| General principles of education . . . . | 2 | - | - | - |
| General principles of instruction . . . | - | 2 | - | - |
| Specialized methods of instruction . . . | - | - | 4 | - |
| History of education . . . . . | - | 2 | - | - |
| Teacher training (Practice) . . . . . | - | - | 2 | 6 |
| Total hours per week . | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 |

Here again the professional preparation comes as secondary to the academic preparation, and something extra to the academic university specialization. The result is that students

1. From العصري، مجلة الثقافة العربية، ص ١٧٢.

find time only to prepare themselves for the stiff academic subjects and consider the professional subjects as recreational work; Putting all their efforts on the hard courses leading to the Licence, they do not give the courses leading to the Diploma of education due attention. Being busy all the time, they naturally cannot visit classes and schools extensively and adequately.

Common to all kinds of teacher training institutions, the financial problem may be raised. The provision of funds allotted to training schools does not allow for adequate laboratory model schools or even for adequate environment and staff. Moreover, as the status of teachers in society is low and their pay inadequate, the best students run away from the profession of teaching, leaving it to the less able ones. No rush of applicants for training schools is noticeable.[1]

Under the circumstances outlined above, it is not uncommon to find graduates of training institutions soon discard the principles of education and start following the line of least resistance, becoming like anyone of the old group in the poorly equipped schools. Thus, the supervisor is needed to stimulate the trained teachers to grow further and share with him the leadership of the in-service training program.

D. Other Needs for Supervision.

We have seen that the changing life of Syria, the crisis of public primary and secondary provision for education and the

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1. According to an interview with two graduates of a Syrian Training Institution.

concomitant inadequacy of teachers have raised pressing needs for supervision. In addition there are other general needs which should not be ignored.

First, there are funds for only a small group to follow extensive and intensive training. Under no circumstance can the Syrian Ministry of Education afford to prepare every teacher to the highest standards of proficiency. Education of superior caliber will require both professional specialization and wide practical experience of long years. Hence, there will always be the need for highly trained and widely experienced supervisors, who have been sent to training colleges abroad and who upon returning start to disseminate the new concepts and practices of education among trained and non-trained teachers.

Second, the rapid advances in education necessitate training throughout the teacher's career. No restricted number of preparatory years is enough today for the rapidly changing concepts and reforms in aim, method, content and organization of education. Current educational and psychological literature is developing, with such rapid pace that even a specialist cannot hope to be entirely up-to-date. Now, if teachers are not to remain still and stagnate, there must be somebody who will attempt to keep abreast of progress and who will try to stimulate able teachers to apply some of the new devices and ideas developed by the experiments and research of the west. Thus the supervising leader is very much needed for educational progress in a world characterized by constant change and growth.

Third, all teachers need to be supervised. It is unfortunate indeed to limit the work of supervision to poor teachers only. This limitation is probably due to the old concept of supervision as policing and inspection. With the new idea of supervision, as cooperative assistance for progressive development in education and instruction, the scope of its work will extend immensely and cover all teachers, adequate and inadequate. The emphasis under the new conception may well be put on the capable teachers, who will cooperate with the supervisor and assume the initiative for professional leadership. In this connection Blackhurst says,

> "Only well-trained teachers are in a position to take full advantage of supervision. Others are incapable of carrying out fully their share of the cooperative undertaking involved in the process."[1]

Thus even in the case of the well-trained teacher the need for supervision still holds.

Fourth, these able teachers crave for encouragement. The teacher who has potentialities to develop into an educational leader needs stimulation. Recognition of his strife for improvement will drive him to exert his best effort to continue improving more and more. This is not usually true of the teacher who works alone unnoticed, unmotivated and ignored. Challenge does not last for long if not accompanied by some kind of success or reward - material promotion, recognition through publication of results, reported recommendations or even a word of praise from

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1. Blackhurst, J.H., Directed Observation and Supervised Teaching, p. 402.

the expert supervisor. Hence the need is great for supervisors to keep the burning enthusiasm of energetic teachers kindled by recognition and encouragement.

Fifth, supervision discovers leadership. The supervisor, in direct contact with the whole staff of teachers, can spot the most promising. Those who are discovered will be given enough attention to develop to their utmost, and to share with the supervisor many of his responsibilities. If in every school the supervisor can find one such potential leader, he can cooperate with him in motivating the other teachers to grow. The supervisor may find ways and means to foster creativeness in this potential leader, helping it to blossom into practical achievements.

In closing, an American teacher, who can be taken as representative of good teachers everywhere, is reported by Briggs to have said,

> "To discontinue supervision would mean a loss to the tax payers of our country in the less efficient work of the unexperienced teachers, the careless work of the indifferent ones, and a loss of inspiration to the hard-working conscientious group... The supervisor is a leader... We find ourselves accomplishing the most difficult things because the supervisor leads us. No teacher can shirk her duty when she has an enthusiastic supervisor for her leader."[1]

The Syrian teacher will say more than this in favor of the supervisory leader when authoritarian inspection gives way to democratic supervision which makes good practice of education and instruction more widely known.

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1. Briggs, Improvement of Instruction, p. 48.

# C H A P T E R  II

## A SURVEY OF SUPERVISION OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN SYRIA.

In the previous chapter the educational status of Syria has been presented and the needs for supervision have been brought out implicitly and explicitly. It is pertinent now to survey how these needs are actually met in Syria, how the supervisory staff in general and the "inspectoral staff" in particular are organized, how the functions of inspectors are understood and what the prevailing activities of the Syrian inspectorate are.

## PART I - STAFF ORGANIZATION

### A. The Supervisory Staff in the Administrative Organization.

To understand the supervisory work in Syria, one must be cognizant of the centralized organization of the Syrian Ministry of Education. This is presented in the new modified legislative decree, No. 86, dated June 30, 1947.

At the top of the central administration is the Minister of Education, whose post is semi-political. Being a cabinet member, he is directly responsible to Parliament for educational decrees and measures. He, moreover, signs the important decisions and instructions, and supervises their execution. Thus the final administrative supervision is in the hands of the Minister, who

is changed with the change of the Cabinet, and who is in most cases not an educationist.

The Minister is aided by a Director General of Education, who is more permanent in his post as a general administrator. He is directly responsible for the efficient working of the different departments at the Ministry and indirectly for the smooth-running of schools. He has the right to issue, whenever needed, notices and instructions to clarify or supplement the policies of the Minister. He appoints officials for the second and third grade positions, whether for central and provincial administrative work or for teaching in secondary schools. He may also pass his recommendations to the Minister concerning the appointment of officials to higher grades. Since his work as an administrative head supervisor is extensive and general he has under him an assisting administrative machinery, and technical specialized bodies and an inspectoral staff. Each will be described briefly.

1. The Administrative Machinery. - The central administrative machinery consists of three directors of education, four divisions and three bureaus.

The directors are: (1) the Director of Secondary Education whose responsibility is to provide for the organization and provision of all kinds of secondary schools, whether intermediate, preparatory, academic or vocational; (2) the Director of Primary Education, whose scope of responsibility is bounded by all matters pertaining to primary education in the whole country; and (3) the Director of Physical Education who directs and organizes

physical education, games, and boy scout activities in both primary and secondary schools.

The four divisions which run the daily administrative routine of the Ministry are the following. First, the Division of Personnel keeps a record, cumulative in some of its details, for all officials and teachers employed. Second, the Division of Accounts controls the expenditure of the Ministry according to the budget distribution for different departments. The accountant of the Ministry is the chairman of the Committee on Purchase, which is made up of two other members appointed by the Director General of Education. Third, the Division of Buildings, headed by an engineer, supervises the construction, repair and renting of school plants. Fourth, the Division of Equipment provides schools with furniture, textbooks and other necessary equipments from its central stores.

The central bureaus are the Bureau of correspondence which handles all the correspondence of the Ministry, the Bureau of Archives that files all documents, letters and publications, and the Bureau of Statistics which keeps running current statistical records concerning schools, pupils, teachers and officials.

Besides the central administration at Damascus there are the provincial administrations. Syria is divided for the purpose of educational administration into ten provinces, each of which has a director of education. The Provincial[1] Director of Education is the representative of the Ministry, and as such

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1. Before 1945, he was referred to as the Provincial Inspector.

he is the highest educational authority for all the schools of the particular province. It is his responsibility to see that laws, decrees, instructions and regulations, issued by the Ministry, are carried out, that the schools in his province are running smoothly with adequate attendance, that the promotions and transfers of officials and teachers are set right and that salaries are paid at the right time. He entrusts the Committee on Purchase, which is made up of the accountant of the provincial administration of education and two other members appointed by him, with the task of buying the necessary equipment of seats, desks, blackboards, paper, etc. Administratively the Provincial Director of Education makes his contacts through both the Ministry of Education and the Provincial Governor. From the Ministry he receives instructions, and through the Governor issues orders and proposals. In all this more or less routine administrative business he is assisted by a chief of bureau, a secretary, an accountant, a clerk and a store man. On the other hand, for supervisory work in the real sense of supervision of instruction, the Provincial Director is responsible mostly for primary schools, and is assisted by primary school inspectors and principals, who report to him directly about all sorts of matters concerning students, teachers and equipment.

2. The Technical Specialized Bodies of the Ministry. - In specialized technical and professional issues of education and culture the responsibilities are shouldered by two central committees: the Committee on Education and Instruction and the

National Committee on Culture. The former performs the following activities.[1]

a) Preparing school curricula, laying down educational plans and making detailed practical instructions and advisory notes for the consideration of administrators, principals and teachers.

b) Evaluating manuscripts and published books for the selection of suitable textbooks and books for school and public libraries.

c) Writing and translating books and articles and issuing educational periodicals necessary for raising the standard of instruction and disseminating culture in general.

d) Collecting data on educational systems and current movements in different parts of the world.

e) Studying the organization of institutions of learning in different countries for the two-fold purpose of establishing the equivalence of degrees and selecting the best institutions for sending the educational bursaries abroad.

f) Preparation of statistical records which the Ministry needs for studying the problems of instruction objectively.

g) Preparing plans and curricula for organizing teacher training institutions and educational conferences.

h) Conducting some experiments for the solution of selected teaching problems and the finding of the best procedures for guaranteeing advancement in education and instruction.

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1. الصري ، هوليه الثقافة العربيه ، ص٩٢-٩٢

i) Studying professional questions that the Ministry poses.

These activities are distributed among three sections: the section on Curriculum, the section on Educational Research, and the section on Translation and Authorship. In accordance with the principle of "economy in money and men,"[1] the Committee on Education and Instruction is made up of a permanent nucleus and some changing members. The nucleus consists of a chairman, who has always been a holder of the doctorate degree, and three permanent members, each of whom is responsible for one of the three sections. This small body has the right to appoint temporary members from amongst the highly trained officials at the Ministry (such as the Central Inspectors), or it can draw from the distinguished teachers of the Syrian University and secondary schools. In general, there should be in the committee "a specialist in every one of the important fields of knowledge and a master in every one of the languages of world culture to ensure that the Committee shall benefit from all the significant cultural and educational publications appearing in Europe and America."[2] The temporary members usually teach for about four hours per week in teacher training institutions or in the Syrian University. Whenever the Ministry feels the need for central inspection, it calls upon the members to help in the visiting of schools and teachers at work.

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1. الحصري، تقارير عن احوال المعارف في سورية ١٩٤٤، ص ٤٦.
2. الحصري، حولية الثقافة العربية، ص ٩٢.

What about the recent committee, the National Committee on Culture? It is made up of the chairman, who is either the Minister of Education or the Director General of Education, a permanent central committee and some temporary secondary sub-committees. The permanent committee is composed of ten members appointed by the Minister to represent the different scientific, literary and artistic activities in Syria, whereas the temporary sub-committees are made up of a number of specialists appointed by the Minister to study some specific problems as the need arises for such studies.

According to the decree No. 1312 of August 11, 1948, they are as follows:

a) Encouraging the scientific, literary and cultural activities in Syria by contacting active academies and bodies, by organizing periodical local conferences, by establishing specialized societies in the different branches of sciences and arts, and finally through the means of cooperation with different world conferences.

b) Preparing for contact with the Cultural Committee of the League of Arab States, studying the questions to be discussed, preparing suggestions towards the solution of these questions, and reporting on the execution of the previous recommendations of the League.

c) Preparing for the cooperation with the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) by means of studying questions raised and thinking out possible lines of

solution that will be in accord with the advice of the Cultural Committee of the Arab League.

As can be seen from the above, the activities of the National Committee on Culture are closely related to educational supervision. In fact the terms "national" and "culture" mean the right to recommend the basic content of education in Arabic, History, Geography, Civics and Foreign languages. Moreover, it is not unusual to find an inspector of secondary school instruction among the participant members of the sub-committees.[1]

3. The Inspectoral Staff. - So far only the technical bodies and the administrative machinery have been mentioned. The former lay down the educational plans, prepare the curricula and offer some advisory instructions for teaching the courses of study. The latter, the administrative machinery, executes the legislation of the former, and looks after the provision of every minute aspect which bears on the environment for schooling. In addition comes the Inspectoral Staff which supervises the running of schools and guides the principals and teachers in their work. In this way the inspectoral department comes as the mediator between schools at work and the professional and administrative departments of the Ministry. On the one hand, the inspector helps teachers to interpret and apply the educational plans and advisory notes for teaching the courses of study, already issued by the Ministry. On the other hand, the inspector is the eyes and ears of the Ministry concerning the educational

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1. The posts of the Chief and the secondary school inspectors are newly founded after 1945. المصري، تقارير ١٩٤٤، ص ص ٤٠-٤١.

status of schools, the needs of schools and the achievements of individual principals and teachers.

What is the organization of the Inspectoral Staff? The central department of inspection consists of a head, called the chief of the Inspectoral Staff, and four other specialized inspectors,[1] each of whom inspects the instruction of the subjects in line with his specialty in all of the secondary schools of Syria. All of them are considered to be natural members of the Committee on Education and Instruction as well as of the National Committee on Culture. However, they are not permanent members; they are only assisting members who are called upon when the need arises for their consultation. The schedule for their visitations of secondary schools throughout Syria is put by the chief of the Inspectoral Staff, and to him the specialized inspectors of secondary schools are directly responsible to report.

The provincial inspectors of primary schools receive instructions from the Provincial Directors of Education who make the visitation schedules for them. The inspectoral reports pass through the Provincial Directors to the Chief of the Inspectoral Staff.

The chief studies the reports of both the secondary inspectors and the primary school inspectors. Accordingly, he proposes recommendations and may issue instructions on certain matters. Next, these reports with the comments of the Chief of the Inspectoral Staff reach one of the central Directors of Education as the case may be for final action. After the due measures

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1. Ibid.

are taken, the reports are returned to the central office of the chief of the Inspectoral Staff to be filed.

4. Councils and Meetings. - The description above may have given the reader an exaggerated atomistic impression about the administrative organization of the Syrian Ministry of Education. As a matter of fact, there are a number of evidences of cooperation between the different central departments, between the central and provincial administrations and finally between the provincial administrations themselves. First, there is the Education Council, whose function as a supreme legislative council is to study and pass proposals suggested by the Minister or the departments of the Ministry, with regard to educational plans, laws and regulations, curriculum and textbooks, the budget and its distribution, etc. Its members are the chairman of the committee on Education and Instruction, the Chief of the Inspectoral Staff, the Directors of Primary, Secondary and Physical Education, all gathered under the chairmanship of the Director General of Education.

Secondly, the ten Provincial Directors of Education meet in Damascus with the central administration once a year, in a council called the Council of Directors. It is composed of the Director General once more as a chairman, the Chief of the Inspectoral Staff, the three Central Directors of Education and the ten Provincial Directors of Education as members. In this way, the voice of the directors of the provinces is heard on the educational needs of their districts, the need for hiring, building, enlarging or repairing school plants, the need for new teaching

staff and other officials, etc. After lengthy discussions, proposals are made concerning the multitude of needs and the allocation of budget to each province in the light of its conditions. These proposals are submitted to the Education Council for final approval and execution.

Thirdly, there is the yearly Council of Provincial Directors, where under the chairmanship of the Director of Education of Damascus the other nine directors meet for integrating policies and agreeing upon the same procedures in administration to be followed in all the provinces.

Fourthly, formal and informal meetings[1] between each of the provincial directors of education and his assisting inspectors may take place from time to time, as may seem fit and necessary. Generally, however, there is at least one such meeting per week.

Still the whole organization is highly centralized, in spite of some new powers enjoyed by provincial directors as a result of the criticisms of al-Husri directed to the slow, inefficient machinery of the Ministry of Education.[2] The spirit of control, however, is nontheless dominant. In fact, a law has recently been enacted for organizing a State Inspectoral Staff to inspect the work of the administrators of all the Ministries of the Syrian state, from the post of the Director General downwards.[3] It has the right to probe into the efficiency of all

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1. The information is from an interview with Mr. Kudsi Hasan, one of the inspectors of Damascus.
2. العصري ، تقارير ١٩٤٥ ، ص ١ - ٢٠ .
3. الجمهورية السورية ، رئاسة مجلس الوزراء ، رئاسة هيئة مفتشي الدولة ، قانون رقم ٩٢

officials, to look into all the files and documents of different state offices, and to supervise specially the work of the Inspectorate of different Ministries.

B. Recruitment of Inspectors of Schools.

It is clear from the above discussion that the actual supervisors of education in Syria are the inspectors of schools, whose main work is the visitation of principals in their schools and teachers in their classrooms. Therefore, most of the remaining pages of the chapter will be devoted to the understanding of the Syrian Inspectorate of the Ministry of Education.

1. Classification of Inspectors. - To understand the standing of the inspectors in Syria, perhaps it is helpful to refer to the new Cadres of the Syrian Ministry of Education, which as put by al-Husri, "divides state officials into twelve levels, from the eleventh at the lowest to the first, with a distinguished level on top. Each of these levels is divided into three grades with a minimum and a maximum salary."[1]

The legislative decree, No. 86, dated June 14, 1947, classifies the personnel of the Ministry of Education according to the Tables. These are given in some detail, for any classification of inspectors is meaningless unless it is taken in relationship to the classifications of other employees.

2. Categories of Inspectors. - Thus there are three

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1. Mathews and Akrawi, Education in Arab Countries, p. 338.

categories of inspectors of education.

a) Inspectors of secondary schools. - They are specialists in the particular field of study whose instruction they inspect, and they have their headquarters at the Ministry in Damascus. At present they are four in number and distributed and qualified as follows:

(1) The specialized inspector of Social Sciences holds the Doctorate degree from America.

(2) The specialized inspector of Arabic holds the Licence degree from Egypt.

(3) The specialized inspector of Science holds the Doctorate degree from France.

(4) The specialized inspector of Mathematics holds the Licence degree from France.

The above third and fourth specialized secondary school inspectors do administrative inspection as well as inspection of instruction. All of them have had more than three years of teaching. Thus they satisfy the qualifications prescribed by the third chapter of the decree, No. 86, for specialized inspectors, being University graduates and experienced teachers. However, because the number of these inspectors is not commensurate with the number of subjects taught in the secondary schools of Syria, some members of the Committee on Education and Instruction are sometimes delegated to the task of assisting in instructional inspection. It must be noted that not only academic secondary schools are inspected, but also all the vocational schools. In

TABLE IX. The Classification of the Central Administrative Staff*

| Kind of Appointment | No. | Level |
|---|---|---|
| Director General | 1 | distinguished |
| Director, 1st class (Chairman of the Com. on Ed. and Inst.) | 1 | 1 |
| Director (member of the Com. on Ed. and Inst.) | 2 | 2 |
| Head Officer (member of the Com. on Ed. and Inst.) | 2 | 3 |
| Director, 1st class (Chief of the Inspectoral Staff) | 1 | 1 |
| Inspector, 1st class | 2 | 2 |
| Inspector, 2nd class | 3 | 3 |
| Director of Secondary Education, 1st class | 1 | 1 |
| Director of Primary Education, 1st class | 1 | 1 |
| Director of Physical Education | 1 | 2 |
| Scout Inspector, 2nd class | 1 | 3 |
| Athletics Inspector, 2nd class | 1 | 3 |
| Inspector of Youth Movement, 2nd class | 1 | 3 |
| Head of Division | 4 | 3 |
| Head of Bureau | 7 | 4 |

TABLE X. The Classification of the Provincial Administrative Staff*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Director of Education, 1st class | 4 | 2 |
| Director of Education, 2nd class | 5 | 3 |
| Inspector of Education, 2nd class | 4 | 3 |
| Inspector of Education, 3rd class | 10 | 4 |
| Assistant Inspector of Education | 11 | 5 |
| Assistant Inspector of Sports, Scouts and Youth Activities | 4 | 5 |

* الجمهورية السورية، قانون العاملين، ملحق بالادارات العامة.. ص ١٩٦.

the latter kind of school there are technical principals besides the administrative principals, so that technical courses of agriculture, industry or teacher training are taken care of in the process of inspection. The need for increasing the number of secondary school inspectors from four to eight, and the need for establishing two headquarters for them, one in Damascus and another in Aleppo, to facilitate transportation, are already recognized by the Chief of the Inspectors.[1]

b) Inspectors of primary schools. - They are general provincial inspectors, who must evaluate both the administrative and professional status of primary schools in each province. They are to supervise the teaching of all the courses of study at the primary level, without specialization. At present they are twenty-four in number.[2] They are distributed and qualified as follows:

(1) The inspectors of the province of Damascus are five men and two women. Four of the men inspectors hold the Normal Certificate, and one has the Certificate of the Superior College of Letters. Both of the women inspectors hold the Normal Certificate.

(2) The inspectors of Aleppo are five men and one woman. One of the men has a Normal Certificate and Licence in Law, another has the Baccalaureat II, Mathematiques, and the rest including the woman hold the Normal Certificate.

(3) The inspectors of Latakia are two, one holding the

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1. The information is from an interview with the Chief himself.
2. The data are from the Bureau of Statistics at the Syrian Ministry of Education.

Licence in Arabic Literature from Egypt and the other holding the Normal Certificate.

(4) The inspectors of Homs are two, both of whom hold the Normal Certificate.

(5) The inspectors of Hama are two, and they also have the Normal Certificate.

(6) The inspectors of the Euphrates are two again, one holding both the Normal Certificate and the Licence in Law, and the other holding the Baccalaureat, Part II, Philosophy.

(7) In the province of Jazirah there is one inspector holding the Normal Certificate.

(8) In Hawran there is one inspector, with the qualification of Baccalaureat, Part I.

(9) In the province of Jabal Druze at Sweyda there is one inspector who holds the Licence from the Syrian College of Literature.

Thus all in all there are 16 provincial inspectors holding the Normal Certificate, 3 holding the Baccalaureat, 3 others holding the Licence and 2 holding both the Normal Certificate and the Licence in Law. A good many of them have worked previously as principals of primary schools, and all of them have taught for at least five years, while not a few of them have spent fifteen years in teaching.[1]

c) Inspectors of sports, scouts and youth activities.[2] -

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1. The twenty-fifth inspector has been sent to France for studying the techniques of inspection.
2. The information from an interview with the general inspector of sports and the general inspector of scouts.

Directly responsible to the Director of Physical Education are three general inspectors, with their office at the Ministry in Damascus. One of them is responsible for athletics, the other for scouting, and the third for youth drilling. As for their qualifications they are capable administrators, and they have had years of successful service already. They go out to provinces for inspectoral visits, either accompanying the specialized secondary school inspectors as arranged by the Ministry, or alone when there is a need for them in the schools. Assisting them in the provinces there are five inspectors: one in Damascus, another in Aleppo, a third in Homs, a fourth in Hawran and a fifth in Dayr al-Zour. Once a year the reports of these assistant inspectors go to the general inspectors at headquarters, to be recommended, signed, and finally presented to the Director of Physical Education.

Obviously this kind of inspection has nothing to do with inspection of instruction. In fact, the chief of the Inspectoral Staff does not have any connection whatsoever with it. Lying outside the domains of the present study, it is touched upon only to be dismissed.

Since we are interested in the supervision of instruction we shall therefore limit the following survey to the specialized inspectors of secondary schools and the provincial inspectors of primary schools. Thus only the Inspectorate under the headship of the Chief of the Inspectoral Staff will be taken up as the frame of reference from the third chapter onward.

## PART II - FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE INSPECTORATE

What are the major purposes for which the educational Inspectorate in Syria stands? What are its functions and activities? What possible answers to such questions can we find?

### A. The Functions as Suggested by al-Husri.[1]

In his Reports of 1944, Sati' al-Husri criticizes the work of the Syrian Educational Inspectorate as being merely the eyes and ears of the Ministry, always on the look out, watching and inspecting schools, principals and teachers, and being satisfied with submitting reports to the Ministry. While he keeps this aim of the Inspectorate, he adds to it two more purposes: guidance of teachers and publicity for education. He goes on to expand his suggestions in the following manner.

The task of "inspection" consists of:

1) Studying and watching the proficiency of education and teaching in schools.

2) Estimating the worth and the degree of efficiency of individual principals and teachers.

3) Defining the needs of schools with regard to material and professional requirements.

4) Studying the needs of cities and villages for the

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1. الحصري، تقارير ١٩٤٤، ص ١٨٢ - ١٨٤.

establishment of new schools.

The second task of "guidance" consists of:

1) Advising principals and teachers on the understanding and application of regulations and syllabi.

2) Acquainting them with the best methods and techniques of education and instruction.

3) Correcting their faulty ways and guiding their work in all matters related to education, instruction and administration.

Finally, the third important task, in the opinion of al-Husri, is that of spreading educational propaganda among the Syrian people. The inspector should seize every opportunity to propagate interest in education. He must make the parents realize the importance of schooling, so that they may send their children to school regularly, and participate in the establishment of new schools.

These suggestions of al-Husri are described in some detail because they provide the basis for understanding the concise articles, in the educational decree, with respect to the functions of the Inspectorate.

B. The Functions as Stated by the Decree.[1]

It is sufficient, here, to enumerate the functions as legally stated in the decree, and in the same wording as much as translation allows. The functions are as follows:

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1. وزارة المعارف للجمهورية السورية، قوانينه وانظمه، قانون المعارف العام لسنة ١٩٤٥، ص ١٨.

1) To superintend the work of principals and teachers and evaluate their efficiency.

2) To guide them in the understanding of syllabi and in complying with the instructions outlined by the Ministry.

3) To assist them along better methodology and technique.

4) To correct faulty ways, eliminate ineffective efforts and establish sound ones.

5) To coordinate the work of different schools and teachers.

6) To report to the Ministry about present conditions and proficiency of education and instruction in schools.

7) To study the educational needs and the required provision for different areas of Syria, urban and rural, and report about them.

8) To make publicity for education.

Such are the functions of the Inspectorate as legally pronounced by the Ministry of Education. It will be noted that most of them, if not all, are suggested by al-Husri either explicitly or implicitly.

C. The Functions as Checked by Inquiry.

How do the activities of the educational inspectors appear from a pragmatic point of view, that is, from a totally practical side? The writer will attempt to answer the question by means of personal probing and inquiry, though it may not be fully adequate. On the basis of numerous interviews, formal and

informal[1], with the chief of the Inspectoral Staff, the four specialized inspectors at the headquarters and four other inspectors of Damascus province, and on the basis of a questionnaire[2] answered by Syrian teachers, the results of the inquiry are as follows:[3]

1. The Administrative work of the Inspector. - The Syrian inspector of education, during the Mandate and shortly after, used to take administrative duties a lot more than at present. Six[4] of the provincial inspectors carried out in reality the specialties of the director of education, running all the administrative business of the primary schools in their provinces. For that reason they were found spending most of their time in correspondence with schools, employing teachers and paying them, in cooperating with the Major, and preparing the different recommendations for the Ministry. What remained of their time they spent on superficial visitation of certain schools, ignoring others completely.

Though this grave situation is being avoided at present, still some of the inspectors are asked to help the provincial directors in their administrative work. At least all the provincial inspectors and half of the specialized secondary school inspectors have a role to play in supervising equipment, supplies

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1. In formal interviews, the items of the inquiry are partly inspired by Barr's work, An Analysis of the Duties and Functions of Instructional Supervisors, pp. 19 - 49.
2. Refer to appendix.
3. Information in current literature concerning education in Syria has also been made use of.
4. التقرير المصري ، ١٩٤٤ ، ص ٤٠

and buildings of schools. In the general report on each school, the inspector checks the conditions and deficiencies of seats, desks, blackboards, teaching aids, tools for handwork and the like. He also reports on the plans of buildings, with drawings, speaks about the condition of classrooms, playgrounds, etc. with regard to health and efficiency, and recommends improvements when necessary.

Inspectors also assist administrators in the selection, promotion and transfer of teachers. To be selected as nonpermanent teachers in the primary schools, for example, candidates sit for a competetive examination conducted by the director of education in the province, who usually seeks the assistance of his inspectors in both putting the questions of the examination and in making the final selection. The candidates for permanent teaching posts, whether in primary or secondary schools, however, are to sit for an examination conducted by the Committee on Education and Instruction. Even in this last case the assistance of the specialized secondary school inspectors is sometimes sought. Finally, the reports of inspectors contain ratings of teachers and estimates of their worth. These remarks are taken into consideration by administrative heads, the central directors of education, who are entitled to promote, transfer or expell teachers in the public service.

These are some of the ways in which the inspectors render themselves serviceable to the administrators.

2. The Inspector's Contribution to the Content of Education. - The direct contribution to the content of education is

left to the central authorities, but the inspector enjoys sometimes indirect influence on curriculum construction, selection of textbooks and control of external examinations. Let us examine the role of the inspector in each of the three undertakings.

a) The role of the "inspector" in curriculum construction is practically nil in the case of provincial primary school inspectors, and quite significant in the case of specialized secondary school inspectors. The present primary school curriculum is a simplified version of al-Husri's nationalized curriculum, worked out almost by himself alone in 1944. The Ministry of Education is still thinking of drawing up a new curriculum. To that end it has already opened the doors for criticism and recommendations. The teachers, accordingly, are giving their opinions to the principals who pass them to the provincial directors. The latter, in turn, report to the Committee on Education and Instruction. Then committees are formed by the Ministry, each consisting of prominent primary teachers, some specialists in the field of the particular course of study, a specialized secondary school inspector and a member of the Committee on Education and Instruction. The Committees report to the Committee on Education and Instruction, which has the final professional say about the content of the program. The adoption of the new syllabi has to await the order of the Education Council, for it is the supreme legislative body in the administrative machinery of the Ministry of Education. Thus no mention is given to the primary school inspector in the whole task of curriculum construction and

the preparation of advisory notes on the instruction of each course of study.

On the other hand, the secondary school inspector, being a specialist in his field of study and supervision, a central officer at the headquarters and a natural member of the Committee on Education and Instruction, enjoys great powers in curriculum construction and the preparation of instructional advisory notes, for the secondary schools as well as for the primary schools.

b) In the task of evaluation and selection of textbooks the primary school inspector once more does not participate, leaving the leadership to the four secondary school inspectors. All that the former does is to hand in, with his general report about a school, a list of the number of the textbooks and library books found, and to pass a judicial remark on the degree of their successful use.

Textbooks are produced and selected in the following manner. Authors submit their manuscripts for the consideration of committees, consisting of a few prominent primary school teachers and some secondary school teachers who are specialists in the different fields of the courses of study. Such committees are appointed by the Ministry to report on the evaluation of textbooks. The final comparative evaluation of two or three approved textbooks in each course of study is proclaimed by the Committee on Education and Instruction, and the choice is left to the schools. Then the Ministry fixes the price for the textbooks, and the books are published by the authors or their publishers.

Since the academic year of 1950-51, the Ministry has followed a policy of nationalizing the publication of textbooks, beginning with the reading textbooks of the lower classes of the public primary schools. Thus, the primary school inspector has no role to play in the evaluation and selection of textbooks.[1]

The role of the secondary school inspector is not the same. Being a specialist in one or more of the courses of study, he is a member, if not the leader, of one of the standing committees on evaluation of textbooks. Moreover, being a natural member of the Committee on Education and Instruction, he has the right to cast his vote, which may shape the final verdict regarding the selection of textbooks. Even in the preparation of lists of books for school libraries, the secondary school inspector may participate with the Committee on Education and Instruction.

c) In the task of controlling the content of education by external[2] examinations, both the primary school inspector and the secondary school inspector contribute their share, though the role of the latter is still greater than that of the former. In the case of the preparation of the external examination for the Elementary Certificate, the questions are sent by principals of schools to a committee of teachers appointed by the Ministry. The committee studies the questions, classifies the model questions and reports to the Committee on Education and Instruction. Here

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1. This policy of nationalizing the publication of textbooks for public schools will soon be applied to the secondary schools too.
2. External examinations are the ones conducted outside the school by the state itself.

the specialized members set the final questions, each in the particular course of study related to his field of specialty. Among them may be found secondary school inspectors, for they are specialists in their fields and they are the prospective supervisors of the secondary education awaiting the successful candidates or students. All that the primary school inspector does with regard to the examination of the Elementary Certificate is to head a committee on correction. As such, he prepares the scale of points for each question and each item in the question, inspects the teachers while correcting, and makes graphs to show the success and failure of schools.

As to the role of the secondary school inspector, he not only supervises corrections and classifies the results of eight external examinations, but also has almost the sole role of setting all the questions of the subject matter under his supervision. In fact, beginning with May throughout the Summer until the starting of the new academic year, he works on examinations and publication of their results.

3. The Efforts of the Inspector Along Group In-Service Training of Teachers. - There are few in-service teacher training activities, which are conducted by the leadership of the inspectors. Though most of their time and energy are exhausted in the visitation of classrooms and the preparation of reports, nevertheless very recent movements, specially in Damascus and Aleppo, are promising.

Once every month a demonstrative teaching period takes

place in every primary school in Damascus. The demonstrator is by turn one of the teachers of the school, and the spectators are his colleagues and the principal. After the demonstration is over, a session is arranged for discussion and evaluation under the chairmanship of the principal. A secretary is appointed to take down the minutes of the meeting, so that when the inspector comes later for visiting the school he can go over the minutes and offer his guidance.

Meanwhile, the primary school inspector himself arranges for demonstrative teaching with the help of some able teachers. He selects the best teachers in the districts of the province for the task of ideal demonstrations, and plans with them the lesson units. Principals of primary schools are asked to arrange for the duties of the teachers who are to attend the observation and the conference right after it. In this program, which is executed once every week or two in Damascus, the leadership lies in the demonstrating teacher and the advising inspector. The first gives the demonstrative teaching, and the second directs the discussion as a chairman of the conference. Such intervisitation program has an additional advantage. The teachers of different schools see the teaching visual aids and other devices of the school in which they meet. In this way, they gain new horizons suitable for application in their own schools.

Then every summer educational exhibits are prepared in Damascus and Aleppo by the respective directors of education with the assistance of their inspectors. Visual aids and outside

reading books prepared by teacher; beautiful manual works and neatly organized notebooks made by students are all collected and arranged for exhibition at the office of the director of education. To stimulate and encourage teachers and principals, rewards are distributed to the winners.

Moreover, the Ministry planned for the Summer of 1951 to organize a training seminar for the non-trained primary school teachers. In the summer before, demonstrations of model teaching in the primary courses of study and illustrations of good management and organization of the school had been presented by the Ministry with the assistance of able principals and teachers under the supervision of inspectors. This training conference lasted for fifteen days, and attendance was obligatory only for the new non-trained teachers, while it was optional for the rest of the primary school teachers.

As to the specialized secondary school inspectors, they confer with the teachers of the different divisions of one class in any one school, so that efforts might be integrated and values somewhat standardized. In rare cases, depending on the personal initiative of the specialized inspector, a lecture might be given to a group of teachers on the methodology of teaching a particular course of study in the secondary schools. Attendance is optional for all. For the sake of extensive dissemination of educational ideas, the lecture may be published in the Ministry's educational periodical, The Arab Teacher.[1] Such articles are used sometimes

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1. المعلم العربي

as reference material by the inspector. Other reference materials are rarely made use of, though in every school there are some education books on the shelf of the principal.

These are the prevalent group activities for in-service teacher training in Syria, which are sometimes led by the inspector.

4. The Inspector Visiting Individual Principals and Teachers at Work. - After the group guidance comes the individual follow-up of school principals and teachers, one by one to be inspected, directed and evaluated. Let us then accompany the inspector in his visits to schools and classrooms.

The number of times a year that the provincial inspector visits each public primary school teacher varies from one inspector to another. Some public schools are visited only once, very superficially, while others are visited two or three times per an academic year. Some teachers are not visited at all, whereas some others are visited twice or even more in the same year. According to a questionnaire, the average number of visits that each primary school teacher experienced in the academic year 1950-1951 was 1.08, while the average number of visits that each of secondary school teacher experienced was 1.22.[1]

Generally the visits of the inspectors to schools are sudden, without the previous knowledge of the principals and teachers. The inspectors sometimes purposely do not follow any arranged schedule for visitations, in order to keep everything

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1. Principals of primary schools visited each of their teachers 4.21 times, while principals of secondary schools visited each of their teachers .58 times on the average for the academic year 1950-51. See Appendix A.

in its natural setting, to inspect things as they actually are.

These visits are of three kinds:

a) First, there are the early visits conducted at the beginning of the academic year. They are characterized by quick sweeping movements from one school to another. The aim is rather routine mechanical inspection of things such as the employees of the schools, the absorbing capacity of schools for candidate students, the conditions of the buildings, equipment and supplies. In very few cases, depending on the initiative of the inspector, this opportunity is seized to establish rapport and understanding with the principals and teachers of the schools under his supervision. The inspector may discuss with individual principals and teachers the policies and directions put out by the Ministry, or whatever he prepares concerning the methodology of teaching the special subject matter or every course of study. However, the most prevalent characteristic of this kind of early visit is quick administrative inspection, in which notes are taken in the following manner. In the thick notebook of the inspector, pages are assigned for each school. The first right-hand page is devoted for the employees of the school. The arrangement of data follows the pattern of Table XI . In the opposite left-hand page the impressions of the inspector concerning the school in general are recorded. Something is mentioned about the physical plant, its rent, drinking and lavatory water, the necessary repairs, the general cleanliness of the school, the banner and boards, the chimneys and coal, the record book for equipment, the school

supplies and the teaching aids and the cooperative fund. Thus, the first early visit is nonprofessional and is rather for making sure that the school environment is conducive to teaching and learning.

b) Second, comes the lengthy kind of tour, in which the inspector in general observes individual teachers teaching for the whole session. The writer accompanied one of the Damascus provincial inspectors in such a tour on December 30, 1950, and therefore he might describe his experience to some advantage.

The inspector directly met the principal of the primary school, greeting him and inquiring about the time table of the school. Two classes were chosen for inspection. However, before visiting the classes, the inspector listened to the principal, who spoke enthusiastically about the visual teaching aids collected and made by teachers and students of the school, while presenting the collection happily. Then the inspector, accompanied by the principal, entered a history class, whereupon all students stood up as a sign of greeting and respect. The inspector shook hands with the teacher and sat on the last seat in the corner of the classroom. After a while, the teacher presented to the inspector the notebook of lesson planning which was arranged in a Herbartian order - introduction, presentation, comparison, generalization and application. While the teacher was most of the time questioning the students on facts concerning the biography of the prophet Mohammad, the inspector was quietly taking down some notes. As to the principal he soon left, after introducing the inspector to

TABLE XI - THE PATTERN OF ARRANGING DATA ON EMPLOYEES OF SCHOOLS

NAME OF SCHOOL

| Name of Employees | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Certificates | Date & Place of Birth | Date of Employment as Teacher | Date of Employment in the School | Level & Grade | Basic Salary | Classes Taught | No. of students in each class | No. of Seats | Percentage of Success in examinations | Observations |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |

the teacher and staying with him for a few minutes.

For the sake of giving the writer a varied impression, the inspector left the history class to enter an arithmetic class. Here the lesson was about the area of the rectangle, and the visual aid used by the teacher was a board divided into small units of area for demonstrating the principle of multiplying length by width in finding out the area of a rectangle. Thus the induction method was used to reach the principle, which was put on the board and copied in the notebooks of students. Then application problems were given by the teacher, and the students were left to attempt their solution. Afterwards some students were asked to solve them systematically on the board, and the rest were to correct their mistakes. Finally before leaving, the inspector looked into the homework exercise books which were very neat and orderly. As the inspector was leaving after the end of the session, he congratulated the arithmetic teacher warmly and suggested that the measurement of area of the room and playground be attempted to connect arithmetic with real life. Whereupon, the teacher agreed. This talk did not take more than two minutes.

During the recess period, the inspector met the history teacher, who enthusiastically exhibited the well-made maps of his students. The inspector congratulated the teacher on his good efforts, and suggested that the teacher might use with benefit some of these maps in his history classes, for as students see their works presented and made use of by the teacher they feel respected and are motivated to excell.

Finally, before leaving the school, the inspector met the principal once more and had a friendly talk with him. The principal handed to him the minutes of the weekly discussions on model lessons given by teachers in the presence of the rest of the staff. As the principal was accompanying the inspector to the door for saying good-bye, he showed him the playgrounds and the bulletin boards and the tablet of honor students.

To complement the picture depicted from the previous single practical experience, the minutes of a conference of the provincial inspectors of Damascus and the results of interviews with them will be given, even at the risk of some repetition.

"On Monday, Nov. 13, 1950, at 8 P.M., the provincial inspectors held a meeting under the chairmanship of the Director of Education of Damascus. They discussed in the meeting the procedures of professional inspection in the primary schools. After reviewing their procedures and sharing opinions with one another, they agreed to proceed according to the following plan:

"The inspector visits the teachers of his district, and in principle he observes the teaching of each all throughout a class period. He is to put down in his special notebook the steps of the observed lesson, taking into consideration the following points: the introduction, the material, the method, the questions and answers, the use of the blackboard and the teaching aids, the teacher, the students and order, the summary notes, the application, the teacher's preparation, the general observations, the good points, and the general estimate.

"Then the inspector holds in the administration room of the school a meeting with the principal and the teacher in question. In this meeting the inspector is to expound or present the steps of the lesson, to discuss with the teacher on some general observations, to enumerate the good points with the view of making the teacher always keep up to them, and he is to provide the teacher with guidance and directions which may insure the correction of his faults in accord with the right procedures of education and instruction. The most important of these observations are to be registered in the school inspection book."[1]

According to what is seen by the writer, the organization of the special notebook and the school inspection book is as follows. In the former, after devoting two pages to the employees and impressions about each school as already mentioned, the inspector assigns two pages for every teacher of the school. On the right-hand page the observed lesson is described as it proceeds, more or less in accord with the points brought up above in the minutes. On the opposite left-hand page the good points of the lesson appear in one column, and the faulty points in another beside it. As to the organization of the latter, that is the school inspection book, which is taken by the inspector to the office of the Director of Education, some pages are alloted to the school conditions, and two pages are also assigned for each teacher. In these pages, the provincial inspector usually records only the faulty points of the teacher, on the assumption that the good

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1. مذكرة جلسة التفتيش ، يوم الاثنين في ١٢/١١/١٩٥٠ .

points if mentioned make out of the teacher a pea-cock. The inspection notebook is seen and signed by the provincial director of education, and then returned to the school to which it belongs.

The procedures of the provincial primary school inspectors are described in some detail. What about the procedures of the specialized secondary school inspectors? They are basically the same as those of the provincial inspectors. Nevertheless, an interview with one of the secondary school inspectors will be presented too.

The specialized inspector narrated to the writer the story of the second kind of visits or tours as follows. The inspector enters the classrooms in most cases alone, after having got the time table from the principal. He sits either in the rear or in the middle of the room with the students around him. First, he observes petty things as the voice and personality of the teacher, the position of the board, the seating arrangement of the students in the observed lesson, the procedure used by the teacher, whether it is inductive or deductive, the references used or mentioned by the teacher, the use of teaching aids, the good points and the faulty points of the teacher, tec. All these are observed and notes pertaining to them are recorded in the notebook of the inspector or in a separate draft to be copied later in the notebook in a systematic way. Usually the inspector leaves the teacher to go on with the lesson as he pleases. He interferes only in extreme cases of failure, and even then the interference is indirect by asking one or more of the students a question, from

which the teacher may sense his fault and try to avoid it. Then the inspector meets with the teacher, rarely in the presence of the principal, to discuss together things pertinent to the lesson observed.[1] In most of the cases the inspector's observations and directions are accepted by the teacher, though it happens sometimes that the teacher being counselled has personal opinions concerning methodology and likes to discuss them with the inspector freely. As a result of the discussion they may end or come out with a solution which may be to the side of either one or in the middle of the road.

A copy of observations recorded by a secondary school inspector of Arabic in the school inspectoral notebook ran as follows: "The language used by the teacher in his oral talk to his students is quite good. It is hoped that the teacher might make an effort to get rid of certain few collequial words he seems to be the victim of. The method used is inductive and dynamic. It is hoped that the teacher will increase the oral and written exercises. Being versed in Arabic, the teacher is likely sometimes to be impatient with the students' slow responses and therefore quick in answering himself. It is recommended to leave the learning activities to the students themselves as much as possible. The teacher is also kindly referred to the directions and suggestions published in the periodical of The Arab Teacher.

c) Third, there are the final rather short kinds of

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1. The average time for counseling is 11.7 minutes in the case of primary school inspectors, while it is 12.4 in the case of secondary school inspectors. See appendix A.

inspectoral visits for evaluation and rating. These visits do not extend to whole sessions. The duration of the visits is left to the primary and secondary school inspectors to determine as they see fit for the two-fold task of evaluation. In the first place, the inspectors are to watch the growth of the teachers, the degree of their avoiding the mistakes previously pointed out, and the degree of their abiding by the inspectoral directions and suggestions already received. All these points are to be recorded by the inspector in both his notebook and the school's notebook. In the second place, the inspectors now busy themselves with testing students, orally or in a written form. In this way they see how far the students have grasped the essentials of subject matter, to what extent the teacher has been successful in teaching the course or courses of study delegated to him.[1]

Thus, there is no essential difference between the visitations and note-takings of primary and secondary school inspectors. The differences, when found, are minute. The former, being general inspectors, visit all classes irrespective of the subjects taught. The latter, being specialized inspectors, visit only the classes and teachers connected with their specialties. Two of the four specialized secondary school inspectors do not even pay attention to the general conditions of the schools and their administration, whereas in the case of the primary school inspectors each is supposed to inspect instruction as well as

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1. The results of a testing survey may even be published if found useful as in the case of a survey in primary schools conducted by the Director of Primary Education. Refer to,
بهجة الشهود، "أسئلة توجيهية"، المعلم العربي، عدد ٤، سنة ١٩٥٠، ص ٤٠٢ - ٤١٠.

conditions and administration in the schools he visits. Nevertheless the similarities in visitations between the two kinds of inspectors much outnumber the differences.

5. The Inspector Preparing Reports. - This is the second big task of the inspector besides visiting schools. In fact it is the completion of the visitational work. Its importance is evident from the instructions signed by the Minister of Education himself on February 10, 1947, in which this task is clearly defined in detail.

According to these instructions, the primary school inspector has to present four kinds of reports each year.

First, he has to present two general reports during every academic year about education in the province or in the district assigned to him. One of them is due at the beginning of the academic year after he is through with his speedy tours round the schools under his supervision. The other is due one month before the end of the academic year. In the former the report covers the vacancies in the staff of each school, the deficiencies in its building and equipment, the names of the new schools and the extent of demand for them, and the needs of the schools in general. In the latter report, the points raised are: the general status of education in the district of supervision, its strong and weak points, the important events related to education which took place in the district, the changes and additions suggested, the transfer of teachers, the general needs of the district for schools, the opinions of the administrative officials

of the province concerning its education, the opinions of the people on schools and their attitudes towards education, and any other suggestions which the inspector sees fit to make.

Second, the provincial primary school inspector has to present annually two general reports about each school under his supervision. One is due sometime at the beginning of the academic year, and the other is due shortly after the middle of the academic year, and in it the inspector tries to show the evolving improvement and the reduction of the needs of the school since the first visit. The items of such a report are as follows:[1]

(1) The school building: the space of the classrooms and health requirements, the garden and the playground of the school, the cleanliness of drinking places and lavatories, the halls of manual training and domestic sciences, etc.

(2) Equipment and supplies: condition and supply of seats, desks, boards, maps, diagrams, teaching aids, supplies for manual training, and the deficiencies of laboratory, library and gymnasium, etc.

(3) The number of students in the school and in every class: the number of students registered and attending, the distribution of students to classes, divisions, sport and scout teams, and to different other student societies.

(4) The orderly work of the school: how the instructions and regulations of the Ministry are being carried out, the existing records in the school and the degree of their orderliness,

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1. The writer has in his possession a copy of the report form.

the non-existing records and the reasons for delay, the extent of sticking to the time table, etc.

(5) The health of students: the presence of persons with contagious diseases, the degree of the interest of the school in the formation of clean and healthy habits in its students, the extent of provision for curing the sick.

(6) The teaching staff: the names and the certificates of the teachers in the school, their level and present classification, the courses of study taught by each, brief observations on each, and the strength of the teaching staff in general.

(7) History of the school: the data of its foundation, the total number of its students, the total number of its graduates for the last three years, the reasons for the rush of students to it or for the lack of attraction.

(8) The environment of the school: does its position make it easily accessible to students, does the school meet the needs of the region in which it is located, does it have a good influence on the people around, does it need any expansion?

(9) The suggestions which are presented by the school administration for improving its conditions, for providing for the shortages and for expansion.

(10) The general observations that strike the attention of the inspector. Accompanying the report, a plan of the school building, lists of books in the library and equipment of the laboratory and the museum.

Third, the provincial inspector has to fill a confidential

report form about the person of the principal. The form consists of one leaf of two pages, as shown by the accompanying Copy No. 1. Again twice a year this kind of report is presented, at the same time as the general school reports are due.

Fourth and finally, the primary school inspector has to fill another confidential personal report about the teacher, twice a year. The report is presented on a special form, Copy No. 2.

The writer has referred to about ten reports on teachers, filled up by different inspectors. In almost all of them the inspectors limit themselves in Part A to one or two judicial remarks such as "mediocre, good, very good, not bad." Even in parts B and C, the inspectors economize in their remarks. Below are presented some of the longest samples.

Report X - dated December 30, 1950.

Part B - The Directions and Guidance given by the Inspector:

"He should care for the interests of the students, awaken their initiative and engage them in activities. He should guide the students in preparing the assignments, and improve his lesson planning, must think in advance of the factors that may lead to success. More attention should be paid to writing and reading, and more practical exercises in arithmetic are needed.

Part C - The Observation of the Inspector:

"An active teacher, good in appearance, good in general knowledge, trying to complete his professional education, makes enough effort to teach and educate his students, good in efficiency,

administers an elementary school of two classes.

Report Y - dated December 25, 1950.

Part B - "Should take care to have the language stepped down to the grade of the students, should pay attention to lesson planning, should improve his technique in giving assignments, and should read references on professional education.

Part C - "This teacher, notwithstanding his commendable increased efforts, is poor in efficiency due to lack of professional experience, and is in need of guidance from his principal and colleagues."

Copy No. 1

THE SYRIAN REPUBLIC

THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Confidential

Personal Report

On the Principal of ..... School  City or Village .....

No. of Report .....  Inspector's Name .....

Date of Inspection ....

Name of Principal (full) .....

Date and Place of Birth .....

Date of appointment as a principal of the school .....

Present level and grade .....

Highest academic or professional certificate he holds .....

(Continued on the next page)

Cont. of Copy No. 1

A. His Social Characteristics

1. His relationships with and influence on teachers .....
2. His relationships and cooperation with administrative authorities .....
3. His relationships with parents and guardians .....
4. His relationships with and influence on the people around ....

B. His Administrative Characteristics

1. How he distributes courses of study and classes to teachers....
2. How he distributes the administrative work to teachers .....
3. His organization of school records .....
4. His keeping of the financial records of the school .....
5. His ability to discipline students and to keep order .....
6. His interest in having prescribed curricula completed and in executing regulations and instructions .....
7. The extent of his interest in the cleanliness and health of students .....
8. The extent of his taking care of the school building and its cleanliness .....
9. The extent of his taking care of the equipment and supplies of the school .....
10. The extent of his interest in the school library and in the use being made of it .....

C. His Instructional Characteristics

1. His supervision over teaching in classroom (Does he have a notebook about it?) .....

(Continued on the next page)

Cont. of Copy No. 1

2. The degree of his interest in raising the instructional level in the school .....
3. The degree of his interest in school activities .....
4. The degree of his interest in school lectures and parties .....
5. The degree of his success in the subjects he teaches .....
6. The degree of his interest in spreading the national and ethical spirit in his school .....
7. His suggestions for improving the conditions of the school .....
8. The observations and directions given to him by the inspector .....

D. General Observations.

(General estimation of his personality, ability, initiative, the degree of his success in administering the school, and his reputation outside the school)

Inspector's Signature

Copy No. 2

## Confidential Personal Report

On the Teacher .....

No. of Report .....

Name of Inspector .....

Date of Inspection .....

The School .....

The City or Village .....

Date and Place of Birth of the teacher .....

Date of Appointment in the School .....

His Present Level and Grade .....

His Present Salary .....

The Courses and Classes he Teaches .....

His Highest Academic or Professional Certificate .....

A. <u>The Answers to the following items should be descriptive</u>:

1. The extent of his mastery of the subject matter .....
2. His language and voice .....
3. His preparation for the lessons .....
4. The extent of the students understanding of his lessons .....
5. The extent of his use of teaching aids and laboratories .....
6. His interest in homework and assignments .....
7. The extent of his interest in individual differences of the students .....
8. His efficiency in covering the curriculum .....

(Continued on the next page)

Cont. of Copy No. 2.

9. The influence of his personality in establishing order in the classroom .....
10. His participation in school activities .....
11. His choice of the book or book which he depends on .....
12. His choice of the book or books used by the students .....
13. The extent to which the students benefit from his lessons .....

B. <u>The directions and guidance which were given to him by the inspector</u>.

C. The Observations of the Inspector:
(The observations should incorporate a general description of the teacher's personality, his appearance, initiative, behavior, the extent of his cooperation with the principal and with his colleagues, and his reputation outside the school.)

Inspector's Signature.

The reports filled in by the specialized secondary school inspectors are not very different from those of the primary school inspectors. The difference lies in that two out of the four specialized inspectors report about the school and the principal in addition to the report on the teachers. The remaining two inspectors prepare just one kind of report about the teachers' efficiency in teaching the course of study under their supervision. The form of this latter kind of report is quite different from the corresponding report of the provincial inspectors as can be seen from Copy No. 3.

Such are the activities of the inspector, presented as they are actually executed in Syria at present. The writer has purposely avoided any critical comments or statements of opinion in the last two chapters, so that the facts may speak for themselves. In this way, any student of the same problem of educational supervision in Syria can easily get the facts objectively and then proceed for himself to evaluate the organization and functions of the Syrian Inspectorate.

Copy No. 3

The Syrian Republic
The Ministry of Education

No. of Report .....

Inspector's Name .....

Date of Inspection .....

School .....

City

PERSONAL REPORT

(Confidential)

Teacher .....

Nationality .....

Degrees .....

Courses taught .....

Weekly hours .....

Position (in cadre, by contract, responsible for certain hours, delegated) .....

His References .....

The book recommended by him for use by students .....

Degree of his faithfulness towards the work (interest, attendance and punctuality) .....

His relationships with the principal and colleagues .....

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Lesson Class Class-hour

Reviewed Lesson: Assigned Lesson:

The Procedure of the Lesson:

(To be cont.)

Cont. of Copy No. 3

| Faults and Weaknesses | The Good Points |
|---|---|
| | |

Summary:

Inspector's Signature

Observation of the Chief of the Inspectoral Staff:

Date: Signature

# C H A P T E R  III

## EVALUATION OF THE UNDERLYING CONCEPTS OF SUPERVISION

So far two important parts of our subject have been studied, namely the educational background and the survey of instructional supervision in Syria. In the first chapter the needs for educational supervision were pointed out in the light of the prevailing status of education. In the second chapter supervision of instruction was surveyed as it actually is, without comments or criticisms whatsoever. Such a presentation of factual material constitutes a first objective of the thesis, and is significant in itself. The intelligent reader can make use of it in making his own evaluation of instructional supervision in Syria, without going any further in the present study. For the purpose of the writer, however, the previous factual material is necessary in that it provides the foundation for a complementary personal critique. Therefore, the following pages are devoted to a discussion of what supervision could and should be. Such a task requires evaluation of the underlying concepts of supervision, criticising the weak points, emphasizing the strong points and canvassing the practical possibilities for improvement. Here lies the second objective of this study.

It is advisable to start the evaluation by discussing

the underlying concepts of the nature of supervision, because many of the supervisory functions and techniques depend on the philosophy adhered to. The concepts incorporated within the definition of the term, the basic assumptions and consequent implications of the point-of-view taken are guiding posts for any supervisory activity. Thus, it is appropriate to raise the following questions: How is the nature of instructional supervision understood in Syria? What is the philosophy of school inspection in Syria? What are some of the western concepts about supervision? Can Syria profitably adapt some of the foreign concepts to its own needs? The present chapter attempts to answer these questions.

A. Supervision in Syria a Problem of Educational Control.

Right from the start, we have to understand the general assumptions of the national system of education in Syria. Since supervision, or rather inspection, is an integrated part of this system, the whole picture must be seen first. The purposes of the educational set-up should be evaluated.

1. Education a State Affair in Syria. - The progressive idea of mass education, that education is the right of every individual child, is recognized and protected by the Syrian State. A Ministry of Education is organized with the express aim of controlling education for the welfare of the citizens. Public primary and secondary schools are opened and run by funds provided by the state from public revenue. Even private educational bodies are sometimes given grants from the state. The responsibility of

the State, however, is not conceived as being limited to mere meeting the expenditures of education. Rather, the conception is "as the State controls payment it has the right to assume a firm control of education." The history of public education abroad supports the idea that with some payment by the State there is likely to be some control of educational matters by the State.

In Syria the administration of the national system of education is highly centralized and rigidly controlled in the French way. The government, in the form of the Ministry of Education, is to decide upon all the important matters, whether belonging to the externals or internals of education. The following may be given as examples of the external matters that are controlled by the Syrian Ministry: the issue of education decrees and regulations relating to the determination of compulsory attendance age, length of the academic year and some arrangement of an articulated ladder of schooling; the provision of funds for school buildings, furniture and equipment, for paying the salaries of teachers and the employees according to the approved cadre; the determination of minimum conditions for health and educational requirements in school buildings, playgrounds and classrooms; and the protection of the teaching profession by minimum standards of qualifications, salary scales and pensions of teachers. Not only these, but also internal matters of education are controlled. Aims and methods of education, curricula, textbooks, schedules, standards of achievements and classification of grades are prescribed in rigid detail.

The central authority in Syria, as in France, "regards itself as the constituted guardian and interpreter of national culture."[1] Thus, even at the primary level the aim of education is stated by the decree as follows:

> "To provide children with the basic ingredients of culture which they need in life; to train their mental, moral and physical powers; and to foster their nationalistic attitudes and loyalties."[2]

The aim of secondary education is also expressed by the Ministry as being essentially the provision of adolescents with an essential body of knowledge and general culture, which they need in their struggle to succeed in life and to become worthy members of the nation.[3]

To carry out the above aims of education, the Ministry watches the public primary and secondary schools through its inspectors and arranges both a rigid curriculum and a rigid time table to be followed throughout the year without alterations. In fact, every period, in even the lowest of classes, has a definite task assigned for it. The whole set-up of schedule, curriculum and textbook favours rigidity and bookishness. Any deviation from the authorized detailed instructions may result in the failure of the students sitting for the external government examinations. Such examinations are used as instruments to force control and uniformity upon education in the country. They soon become ends in themselves.

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1. Kandel, Compa-rative Education, p. 216.
2. وزارة المعارف السورية ، النظام الداخلي للمدارس الابتدائية .. رقم المرسوم ٦٢٤ .
3. وزارة المعارف السورية ، منهج الدراسة الثانوية ، ص ٥ .

The administrative personnel in Syria, moreover, is made up of a permanent staff, consisting of two groups - "one group with a legal training to conduct the business of the Ministry and another to act as field agents," after the French model.[1] Both groups are charged with the responsibility of supervising the exact execution of the central official regulations to their minutest detail. In other words, the old idea that inspectors are to exercise "rigid control over the work of the teacher,"[2] dating back to 1937, cannot but be perpetuated under the existing centralized system of administration.

2. Justifications for the Centralized System. - Since the Syrian system is borrowed from the French, it is pertinent to deal with some historical factors[3] which still make France hold steadfast to the centralized system. First, there is the tradition of three centuries behind centralization, giving the French a feeling of confidence in an expert bureaucracy. Second, France has been all the time apprehensive of outside and inside aggressions. She has always felt insecure with her unprotected frontiers, and the Republic has lived in fear of the return of the monarchy. Third, the State has had to guarantee national solidarity and common loyalties to combat the disrupting effects of local dialects and narrow regional interests. Fourth, the French people being logical and disciplinary have regarded the

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1. Kandel, Comparative Education, p. 215.
2. American University of Beirut, Statement at the Request of the Syrian Ministry of Education, pp. 12-13.
3. These factors are discussed at length in Kandel's Comparative Education, pp. 262-266.

organized, symmetrical, centralized administration as the most conducive to efficient results. Finally, the French have found in their culture the loftiest contribution to the new generations, and so the central authority has been regarded as the guardian and interpreter of that culture. These have been the reasons for the authoritarian, highly centralized administration of education in France, where the control over public education has been extended to private schools, which could not have been established "without the approval of the Ministry, the academy inspector, the departmental officials, the local mayor, and the public prosecutor."[1] Nevertheless, after the introduction of new plans like that of Langevin Commission and the experimentation of Class Nouvelles, there is at present a tendency in France towards more freedom of initiative and local variation put in the hands of teachers and inspectors, under the central authority's guidance.[2]

Though Syria at present is independent, still its officials serving in key-positions are predominantly the old ones who served under the Mandate. Most of them have had their training either directly in France or under the mandatory regime. Very few, indeed, are the ones who have had any chance to visit or even hear about educational administration run according to a different theory or practice.

It is wrong, however, to assume that the question of centralization in Syria is merely and simply a question of

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1. Kandel, Comparative Education, p. 60.
2. Hans, Comparative Education, pp. 294-299.

imitation. This is an oversimplification, with only a grain of truth. The Ottoman rule has left its print in sectarian fanaticism. The French Mandate has brought to Syria foreign interference and conflicting loyalties. The impacts of westernization and nationalism have thrown the people of Syria in conflict. It is to be expected, therefore, that right after independence the centralized authority should control policies and dictate instructions, in eagerness to provide a strong, solid generation aware of the rights and duties of the new era of independence. The educational status lags far behind the modern world, and there is no time to follow the slow evolution of progress. It is too dangerous to risk any experimental dependence on private and local initiative, when still the teachers and the other educational staff members are not adequately trained. It is more efficient to have a group of authorities to think and devise plans, and the others to execute them under the supervision of the government inspectors. In this way progress is quick and uniform throughout the country. These are the justifications given by some inspectors in defence of the centralized system of education prevailing in Syria.

3. Criticism of the Centralized System. - On the other hand, there are disadvantages in the centralized system of educational administration. As Kandel observes,

> "While it secures uniformity, it breeds inertia and destroys that spirit of initiative which keeps education alive; while it presents superficially a clear-cut and tidily organized scheme of administration, it prevents the development of that adaptation to local differences

which contributes to the progress and advancement of national culture."[1]

Here "national culture" is conceived of not as a statically defined philosophy, but rather as a dynamic growth of free impact of minds and the constantly changing adaptability of the citizens to their regional and global environments. The danger of routine inertia, of perpetuating the past and present and the moulding of the rising generation according to a preconceived rigid pattern are combatted by the decentralized system which supervises only the externals of education, with the purpose of protecting the right of everybody to have adequate opportunities.

It is true that progress under the decentralized system is distributed unevenly from place to place with peaks and dales. Nevertheless, there is some kind of equilibrium in the long run. The advanced areas present the example for the backward ones. Anyway, the decentralized system may lose in uniformity, but it compensates for the loss by gaining "through that vigor and variety which come from a sense of local responsibility and freedom of experiment."[2]

Surely, it is important to have a degree of educational unity and maintain general standards, especially in the first generation of independence. It is doubtful, however, whether centralization as known in Syria is the safest way to reach the aims set. In this connection England and the United States offer some help, for both find in decentralization the right administratio

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1. Kandel, Comparative Education, p. 210.
2. Ibid, p. 223.

for their national systems of education. Despite decentralization in America, there is "a reasonable degree of unity, and certain general standards of education have been maintained," as a Lebanese student of education has observed.[1] But the United States has been known for more variations and experimentations, so that the statement is more true for England, especially after the Act of 1944. The carefully prepared "suggestions for the consideration of principals and teachers," the advice of the specialists concerned, the annual reports on evaluation of results, the adequately trained staff and the spread of educational literature make for a general concensus of opinion on the right kind of unity and standards of achievement. Thus, the responsibilities of the central authority, in a decentralized system, are enhanced, and its functions become as Kandel mentions:

(1) To aid, advise, stimulate, and reward educational effort,

(2) To promote the development of an efficient, articulated system,

(3) To suggest minimum standards to be attained,

(4) To exercise leadership and give guidance without encroaching on the freedom of authorities,

(5) To encourage and promote research and investigation,

(6) To make available accurate information and reports."[2]

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1. Jeha, Adma M., Educational Guidance in the American Public Senior High School..., Unpublished thesis for M.A., p. 137.
2. Kandel, Comparative Education, p. 214.

4. Suggestion. - It should not be understood from the previous discussion that the writer is in favour of transplanting any foreign national system of education in its totality. Syria has its own particular conditions different from those of the rest of the world. But this does not mean that the decentralized system cannot be adapted to the Syrian environment and start growing freely and naturally. One thing is sure, that a rigid centralized system cannot bring about any adequate improvement of supervision. Inspection, besides dealing with external matters, should have as a major goal the improvement of child learning, curricula, methodology, textbooks, standards of achievement and teacher's professional growth - all of which belong to the internal matters of education and instruction. The inspector should be given a free hand and some independence from the centralized authority, so that he may be looked upon as a guide and leader, whose objective is growth of the child and teacher in all respects - social, emotional, intellectual and physical - amidst the perplexing problems of life.

It is recommended, therefore, that the Syrian authorities should hold a committee to re-study the whole system and organization underlying the national education and then reach an adaptation which takes into consideration the advantages of both the centralized and the decentralized systems, reducing to a minimum the disadvantages. Not until the state withdraws the rigid control it still exercises on education in Syria can one hope to find the inspector who is to consult, stimulate and suggest rather than dictate and control.

B. Supervision as Inspection in Syria.

In the light of the general evaluation of the centralized system, we are better prepared to examine in particular the underlying concepts of supervision. Since most of the instructional supervisory work, if not all, is being conducted by the inspectoral staff, the whole evaluation will be specifically connected with inspection.

1. The Concept of Supervision in the Mind of the Inspector. - If one is going to carry the centralized philosophy to its logical conclusion, then he conceives the functions of the inspector as those of an academic policeman. It is safer to assume that the concept of supervision in the mind of the inspector is derived from al-Husri's point of view and from the decree concerning the purposes of inspection. Both of these have already been presented in the previous chapter.

It will be remembered that al-Husri, while adding some new purposes to what already has existed, still keeps in his report the old aim of the inspectorate to serve as the eyes and ears of the Ministry of Education. Thus, the inspector's post is created for inspecting the work of the principals and teachers and estimating the worth and efficiency of their activities. The old aim of inspection as "a rigid control over the work of the teacher,"[1] is also explicitly stated by the decree, especially in items 1, 2, 5 as already quoted. It has been seen, too, that most of the

1. American University of Beirut, Statement at the Request of the Syrian Ministry of Education, p. 13.

time and effort of the inspector is spent on class visitations and detailed reports of different kinds.

Hopefully enough, the same decree states in items 3 and 4 that inspectors should "assist" teachers toward "better method and technique," and should "correct faulty ways..." It is pleasing to find on paper, at least, new tendencies towards supervision, in contradistinction to inspection. In actual practice, however, to carry out this guiding role, the inspector may or may not hold counsel with individual teachers, and if he does the counseling is quick and shallow.

It is clear from the foregoing that supervision in Syria is perceived mostly as inspection, though there is a slight tendency towards some guidance. In fact, there is no known Arabic term, in use, equivalent to the English "supervisor." The only term in common usage is "mufattish" which literally means "inspector," that is the official who examines critically and probes carefully.

2. A Supervisory Administrator Setting the Example of Authoritarianism. - As recently as 1950 the Director of Primary Education wrote, in Arabic, an article under the title of "Guiding Notes,"[1] in which he set the example for inspectors for dealing adequately and firmly with the teachers. The manner of arrangement of the article was first to present the usual "justification" given by teachers when questioned about their faults and then the supposedly "logical answer" of the inspector. It is sufficient

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1. بهجة الشهبندر، "ملحوظات توجيهية"، العلم العربي، كانون اول وكانون ثاني ١٩٥٠، ص ٩٦-٢٠٠.

here to choose a few typical points of the fourteen mentioned.

"Justification: Attendance is not regular. The students come to school one day and are absent for ten days. How can I teach them adequately under such hard circumstances?

"Answer: The absence problem is only limited to a part of the students. It does not extend to all class members. Hence this justification is unacceptable.

"Justification: The students of this class are weak in fundamental foundations. Their teacher of last year seems to have promoted them although they did not meet the required standard. In spite of my best effort, the benefit they are able to get is very little.

"Answer: The teachers themselves are to be blamed for this fault. We cannot accept this justification. The one who complains about the situation might be at the same time complained of by another teacher ..."

"Justification: The excess of the number of students hinders comprehension." This justification has been given by teachers of the first primary class.

"Answer: The teacher who is skillful in organization and who knows the methods of teaching is not affected much by an increase of 15 students or so... The usual number is from 50 to 55 students. With the increase it ranges from 65 to 70. The teacher may give short homework which is easy to correct...

"Justification: The over-loaded curriculum and the obligation to complete it hinders the adequate comprehension of the content by all of the students.

"Answer: The teacher is paid for educating the student and not for finishing the syllabus.

"Justification: The students did not understand the question directed to them. The reason for their failure was the non-clarity of the question.

"Answer: Why was not this justification offered before? Why has it been given only after the results of the students' responses are known and after the failure of the teacher has been shown?"

The reader, no doubt, has easily sensed the authoritarian and terse answers of the above supervisor.

3. Supervision as Conceived by the Syrian Teachers. - Perhaps it is more objective to have the evaluation based, at least partly, on the opinion of teachers who are visited by inspectors from time to time. The results of one set of questionnaire items, answered by 18 secondary school teachers and 72 primary school teachers are given in the Appendix, Part B.

It will be noted that: (1) around one half of the subjects did not agree that inspection enhances the growth of the professional spirit of teachers and helps them to solve their educational problems; (2) more than one half expressed the opinion that the work of the inspector is akin to the work of the detective police; (3) about one-third did not like to have the inspector visit them more often; (4) slightly less than one quarter were frank enough to admit that they feel uncomfortable at the time of the inspectorial visit; (5) and more than two thirds witnessed that inspection in Syria has not reached the stage of guidance, cooperation, and the sharing of experiences.

The results of another set of questionnaire items, presented in Part D of the Appendix, are also indicative of the inspectoral concept of supervision. The inspector is portrayed by the majority of the teachers as an authoritarian dictator and harsh critic, and one who cares for the examination of petty routine things and is rarely zealous about progressive guidance and reform.

4. Summary of Underlying Assumptions of Inspection in Syria. - From the three above points it is easy to infer the

implicit underlying assumptions of the Syrian Inspectorate. First, the teachers are looked upon as negligent workers, who do not exert their best efforts except under the superintendence of firm foreman. Second, the teachers are described as limited in their knowledge of educational theory and practice, and therefore they need the authoritarian experts to tell them what to do and how to do it. Third, the present aim of inspection is conceived as the correction of teachers' faults, and accordingly the inspector is required to spend most of his time in visiting teachers at work in classrooms and rating them in his reports. Thus, suspicion is at the basis of the relationship between the inspector and the teacher.

C. The Evolving Concept of Supervision in English Educational Literature.

Our evaluation of the Syrian Inspectorate may appear more striking when it is done in the light of western experience. By comparing and contrasting things, we may reach to better evaluation of the underlying assumptions of inspection in Syria. The following discussion, however, is by no means intended to be a historical presentation. It is simply an attempt to give a glimpse of the evolving concept of supervision in England and America, in which frame of reference the Syrian Inspectorate is compared and contrasted.

1. The Origin of Supervision as Inspection. - It is sufficient to state that in England, the first two inspectors of

schools were appointed in 1839, according to an administrative principle, namely, "if the state spends money, it has a right to see that it is spent in a manner which it approves."[1] In America towards the end of the last century, the growing size of cities made it necessary for the administrative superintendents to have assistants, some of whom to be ~~delegated~~ given financial and office tasks, and others to be considered as special and general supervisors of instruction.[2] In the beginning, the need for supervisors of instruction arose as a consequence of the special subjects newly added to the curriculum, which meant that some able teachers were chosen to serve as special supervisors, helping teachers to teach the new subjects[3] of music, drawing, physical education, etc. Soon, however, the need for general as well as special supervisors of instruction in all subjects, whether old or new, was established.

Naturally, the oldest concept of supervision, as originally perceived, was equivalent to rigid inspection. To comprehend it, one could look up in the Encyclopedia of Education the term "Inspector."

"Inspector: (1) an official who examines critically one or more aspects of the school and its program, such as instructional activities, building, health... or budget. (2) Sometimes, an official from a state department or college accrediting board

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1. Education in 1949, being the Report of the Ministry of Education ... for England, p. 92.
2. Brubacher, J.S., A History of the Problems of Education, p. 586.
3. Barr, A.S., Burton, W.H. and Brueckner, Supervision, p. 4.

who visits schools for the purpose of rating them."

The Encyclopedia defines another related phraseology as follows.

"Supervision, inspectorial: a plan based on a narrow concept of supervision, usually limited to the rating of teachers and teaching on the basis of classroom visitation."

It is obvious from the definitions above that the Syrian supervision of instruction is very much in line with the concept of the "inspectorial supervision." In fact, the only term commonly used for the supervisor of instruction, as already mentioned, is "mufattish," that is "inspector."

2. Example of the English Inspectorate.[1] - The remarkable history of the English Inspectorate might be suggestive of reforms for Syria. In the 19th century, his Majesty's Inspectors were "inquisitors," who assessed "payment by results."[2] They were inspectors in the literal and rigid sense of the word. They were feared by all, principals, teachers and students. In such an atmosphere of fear and hostility between the teaching officials and the inspectorial staff progress was definitely stultified.

Gradually, however, a revolution was brought about in the attitude of the inspectors. They still concerned themselves with the keeping of regulations and presentation of criticisms. But they went about in such a sympathetic, constructive way that

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1. For somewhat a detailed survey of the functions and conditions of work of the Inspectorate refer to Education in 1949, Being the Report of the Ministry of Education... for England, pp.87-96.
2. Curriculum and Examinations in Secondary Schools, Report of the English Board of Education, p. 50.

they soon came to be known as "collaborators" rather than "auditors."[1] They paid attention to the points of view of the headmasters and the teachers, and they offered their help in the finding of possible solutions for the problems faced by schools. They became agents of cross-fertilization.

A short extract from a letter to the teachers of Sheffield written by Sir Percival Sharp, when he was Director of Education, will show how the authority of the inspector over the headmaster in England was abolished, and how the inspector's function came to be viewed as merely offering suggestions for the consideration of teaching officials.

> "... While it is a function of the officers of the Board of Education and of the Committee's own inspectors of schools to make constructive suggestions by formal report or otherwise for the consideration of head teachers, the responsibility for accepting or rejecting such suggestions must remain with the head teachers themselves..."[2]

As the head teachers were put in the same authoritative footing as the inspectors, and as the latter conceived of their work as simple "liaison officers between the Board, the Local Authorities and the schools,"[3] the supervision of instruction became constructive and sympathetic. The inspectors began to offer advice on a range of topics as wide as the widest conception of education.

Jacks summarizes the revolutionary changes in the Inspectorate and the accruing results very charmingly when he writes,

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1. Ibid.
2. Quoted by Kandel, The End of an Era, Educational Yearbook..., p. 151.
3. Stead, Modern School Organization, p. 17.

> "... instructions began to give place to suggestions, criticism to encouragement, mechanism to humanity, and reactionary obscuratism to progressive enlightenment; the enemy of the days of payment by results became the friend more interested in process than in results. The spy whose advent had been feared became the welcome visitor."[1]

Such changes are not unattainable goals for Syria. If they are realized, school principals and teachers will no longer be bothered by inspection. Why, they may even seek it of their own free will!

3. Some Modern Concepts of Supervision in American Educational Theory. - Elliott around 1914 presented one of the early definitions which revealed some glimpses of modern supervision, when he wrote:

> "Supervisory control is concerned with what should be taught, when it should be taught, to whom, by whom, how and to what purpose."[2]

This definition, seems to be adequate for its time, especially since it incorporates in the realm of supervision all the comprehensive parts of education, from aim to content and method. Only the word "control" is now considered to be too strong to be used for supervision.

Somewhat different from Elliott, Burton advanced in 1922 the following summary:

> "Supervision has to do with:
> 1. The improvement of the teaching act,
> 2. The selection and organization of subject matter,
> 3. Testing and measuring,
> 4. The improvement of teachers in service,
> 5. The rating of teachers."[3]

1. Jacks, Modern Trends in Education, p. 27.
2. Quoted by Barr, Burton and Bueckner, Supervision, p. 4.
3. Burton, Supervision and the Improvement of Teaching, pp. 9-10.

The previous functions of supervision have some points of similarity to the functions of the Syrian Inspectorate. So, let us pay especial attention to the criticism made by Barr and his collaborators. They feel that Burton has overemphasized the idea of direct improvement of the teacher. To them such an emphasis renders Burton's concept of supervision still obsolete.[1] Instead they quote Dunn who sounded in 1925 "a note prophetic of development," when he said,

> "Instructional supervision, therefore has the large purpose of improving the quality of instruction, primarily by promoting the professional growth of all teachers, and secondarily and temporarily by correcting deficiencies of preliminary preparation for teaching by the training of teachers in service."[2]

Though the authors point out the emphasis of Dunn on "promotion of the professional growth," they slightly change Dunn's term "correcting deficiencies" to "aiding the teacher to study his own procedures," and "developing the teacher's power to improve (correct) his work."[3]

It should be reiterated, here, that at least articles 1, 4 and 6 of the Syrian Educational Decree concerning the functions of the Inspectorate are completely out of date according to Barr and his co-authors. The articles, it will be remembered, emphasize the critical examination of the instructional activities of the teachers, the correction of deficiencies or faulty ways, and the reporting to the Ministry about the efficiency and rating of principals and teachers, all of which are in strong contrast

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1. Barr, Burton and Brueckner, Supervision, p. 5.
2. Quoted in Ibid.
3. Ibid.

to the sympathetic words used by Barr and his co-authors. The carefully used words do matter, for they give impressions, mental sets, and accordingly suggest and direct attitude and behavior. Thus in contradistinction to the modern concept of supervision, the underlying concept in Syria seems to look coercive.

a) Supervision as Coercion. - What has American experience to say about supervision as coercion? Such a concept of supervision has originated in recognition of the low professional status of teachers. The claim has been that these teachers needed to be improved, and their deficiencies could not be corrected adequately except through forcing upon them the finest techniques of the supervisors. The concept, moreover, has been the result of the centralized system of educational organization, which conceived of high administrative hierarchies as officials in whom was vested the responsibility to think and the authority to give commands.

The following criticisms have been made against such a concept of supervision as coercion.

> "1. This concept assumes that there are known best methods of doing anything. These are in the possession of the supervisors and may be handed out to teachers. It ignores the precarious, uncertain, and experimental aspects of life and education.
>
> "2. This concept is destructive of personality values, particularly of initiative and originality. Repression, inhibition... may result.
>
> "3. The concept sets up a highly improper relationship between supervisors and teachers. Fear and distruct enter. Insincerety and dishonesty result."[1]

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1. Ibid, p. 7.

All these points are true, and should be considered by the Syrian inspectors and directors of education. Usually the Syrian supervisors are too conscious of the fact that their teachers are not well prepared for the art of instruction. They must realize, however, that coercion has its harmful effects, and that it is not the only way to deal effectively with even the worst prepared teachers.

b) Supervision as Expert Telling.[1] - Closely related to supervision as coercion is another concept of supervision as expert telling, though the latter is a step forward. Here the supervisor is conceived of as an expert. He is to tell the teachers in detail the answers to their problems, and he is to show them how to do things in a skillful fashion and according to ready-made procedures.

Such a concept of the supervisor as an expert technician has some truth in it. The supervisor is a man of experience in educational matters, and can be considered as already mentioned an agent of cross-fertilization. Upon his shoulder lies the responsibility of reading the extensive educational literature, of exploring the possible solutions of instructional problems, and of helping the teachers to correct their deficiencies and add on to their limited experience. For example, there are some essential skills pertaining to everyday teaching, which can be transferred to young inexperienced teachers easily and quickly by

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1. 1946 Yearbook, Association for Supervision..., Leadership Through Supervision, pp. 90-116.

having the experienced supervisor tell and show things efficiently.

This way of supervision, if not overdone, is specially of use to Syria, where slow growth of individual initiative cannot be an efficient procedure for progress, at least in the case of weak and mediocre teachers.

Nevertheless, it should be remembered that telling people what to do has its possible harms. The premise of such a conception of supervision is still authoritarian and paternalistic. It does not square with the ideals of the new independent Syrian Republic. Political democracy should bring with it "a democratic educational theory which sees teachers as robust, able individuals, capable of learning and contributing."[1]

Once more, it may be objected that many teachers in Syria are either ignorant and unprepared or lazy and careless, that the former group should welcome the instructions of the inspector, and the latter group should need to be stimulated by coercion. Those voices objecting may add grimly, "To assume the Syrian teacher to be an ideal loyal worker does not in truth make him so." In answer, the writer quotes Stephen Corey who wrote:

> "Altogether apart from any sentimental notions about democracy, the chief difficulty when teachers are told what to do is that the directions cannot ever be sufficiently explicit because teaching by its very nature requires much individual initiative and resourcefulness. A second difficulty is that the followers of directions are chronically unable to accept personal responsibility for the success of the activity. A third difficulty is that people who are constantly following administrative

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1. Ibid, p. 116.

> directives lose something as persons. They tend like cogs in a machine or automatons on an assembly line - to become things rather than people."[1]

Thus, the Syrian supervisor, or specifically the inspector, must be on guard to fight the temptation to tell teachers and command them to follow definite procedures, even though such a role is expected at present from him as an officer of a centralized system.

c) Supervision as Guidance. - Supervision as guidance is an important step forward. Though the assumption that the supervisors know best is still recognized by this concept, the ideas of coercion and over-telling are done away with. The supervisors start to realize their responsibility as training for the all-round betterment of teachers along ideals, interests, attitudes, skills, techniques, etc. Nevertheless, neither growth by self-development, nor freedom for teacher's experimentation and participation in leadership are fully incorporated in this concept as yet.[1]

More progressive shades of meanings are given to guidance in psychological counseling, which may be borrowed for supervision. Arthur Jones, for example, says,

> "To guide means to indicate, to point out, to show the way. It means more than to assist. A man falls on the street; we assist him to get up but we do not guide him unless we help him to go in a certain direction."[2]

To him, guidance pertains in nature to the help of a good travel guide or tourist guide.

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1. 1946 Yearbook, op. cit., p. 90
1. Barr, Burton and Brueckner, Supervision, p. 7.
2. Jones, Principles of Guidance, p. 60.

> "...On such an expedition he is supposed to have travelled that way before or to know more about the important features of the way than the person guided. His function is to propose places to visit, to indicate desirable ways of reaching the places selected, to suggest things to do and to see, and to give such help from time to time as will make the expedition more pleasant and profitable... Guidance involves personal help given by someone; it is designed to assist a person to decide where he wants to go, what he wants to do, or how he can best accomplish his purpose; it assists him to solve problems that arise in his life..."[1]

Finally, Jones expresses the purpose of guidance very loftily as follows:

> "...To give such assistance as each individual may need and to give it in such a way as to increase his ability to solve his problems without assistance."[2]

> "...To assist the individual through counsel (information, habits, techniques, attitudes, ideals and interests) to make wise choices, adjustments and interpretations in connection with critical situations in his life in such a way as to ensure continual growth in ability for self-direction."[3]

Compared with the previous concepts, such a concept of supervision as guidance in in-service training is very progressive. Though it still retains some impressions of authoritarianism (the guide fully knowing the region of expedition), it uproots many of the coercing and overbearing attitudes. The concept can be taken as the immediate goal for Syria. It is practically applicable in Syria, for it is somehow in line with the mildly authoritarian centralization. At the same time, it is a big step forward, especially when the shades of meanings expressed by Jones are recognized. Moreover, it is a spring-board, or a

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1. Ibid, p. 61.
2. Ibid, p. 81.
3. Ibid, in the frontispiece.

station, from which Syria may be enabled later to reach to the most modern concept of supervision as leadership.

D. Supervision as Leadership - Tomorrow's Ideal.

Perhaps it is useful to glimpse some of the rays of the most modern concept of supervision as leadership or cooperative group work enterprise. It may be of worth also to go into a discussion of the nature of leadership, the different kinds of it and a brief evaluation of each. Such a discussion is of significance to Syria and the other Arab countries, where the popular notion about leadership is dominance. These countries including Syria have suffered a great deal from such domineering leaders, and are in need of truer leaders. It is pertinent, therefore, to start by digging into the nature of leadership.

1. Dominance and Leadership. - Young[1] considers dominance as the key-word in the definition of leadership. By dominance he means any "particular interactional pattern which implies submission or acceptance on the part of another.." He differentiates between two kinds of dominance - a leadership dominance which is more or less voluntarily accepted by the majority of the followers who are controlled, and a headship dominance which is due to institutional arrangements.

Bird calls the latter kind of dominance executive or institutional leadership. He goes on to describe it in some detail as follows.[2] Such leaders have not earned their titles;

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1. Young, Social Psychology, p. 226.
2. Bird, Social Psychology, pp. 371-372.

instead they have received them with the prestige of the position they are entrusted with. They rarely have first-hand face-to-face contacts with their subordinates. They prefer to remain aloof, and so erect barriers between themselves and their followers by means of conferences and committees which plan policies and set up regulations for the lesser leaders to execute or supervise their execution.

It will be observed that both leadership as dominance and headship or institutional leadership are prevalent in Syria. The former is common in political parties, and the latter is known in all governmental departments of centralized administration, especially in the Ministry of Education.

However, there is a great deal of difference between command and leadership. Only popular notions of leadership tend to be expressed in terms of power to command and ability to dominate. The difference between command and leadership is brought out very clearly by Tead. To him,

> "Command is interested in getting some associated action which the commander wants to secure. It is an exercise of power <u>over</u> people."[1]

On the other hand, leadership is:

> "... interested in how people can be brought to work together for a common end effectively and happily. It implies the use and creation of power <u>with</u> people.."[2]

Thus, leadership is not domination or hypnosis, nor is it captivation or exploitation. It is not the exercise of power over people, as coercive supervision is known to be. It is not

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1. Tead, <u>The Art of Leadership</u>, p. 12.
2. Ibid.

even work for or instead of people, as is usually the case with supervision as expert telling. Rather, it is cooperative work with people who are ever continually in a process of growing and self-direction. "It is," as Tead puts it, "a process of helping others to discover themselves in the achieving of aims which have become intrinsic to them."[1]

2. An Experimental Study of Three Kinds of Leaders. - It is more objective and impressive to refer to experimental psychology to support the kind of leadership we want to prevail in supervision.

An experimental study of leadership was conducted in 1939 and 1940 by Ronald Lippitt and Ralph K. White.[2] The purpose of the experiment was to study the effects on group and individual behavior of authoritarian, democratic and laissez-faire variations of leadership in four clubs of eleven-year-old children. Though the experiment was done on children, the results might be suggestive for supervisors dealing with adult teachers.

The role of each variation of leadership was defined and planned. In the case of the authoritarian leadership, policies were made by the leader, detailed directions were given by him, unit after unit, tasks were assigned from above for the group, and in general the leader was a dominating authority who despite demonstrating sometimes remained aloof and above the group without any objective pronouncing of the standard worthy

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1. Ibid, p. 81.
2. Newcomb, Readings in Social Psychology, p. 315.

of praise. With democratic leadership policies were the result of group discussions and decisions, conducted under the skillful guidance of the adult leader, who whenever he sensed the need for technical advice provided it in the form of two or more suggestions from which the group was to choose what it thought most fitting. Moreover, the democratic leader tried to make clear to the group the objective bases for his praise or criticism in a factual way. Finally, there was the laissez-faire type of leadership, where the leader simply told the group about the various available materials and left them to do whatever they liked, with the understanding that whenever anybody wanted to ask him about anything he was ready to help.

Now, what were the conclusive results of the experiment? Those under authoritarian leadership showed two types of reactions. Three of the four clubs leaned on the leader most of the time, without a capacity to initiate group action, and they had levels of frustration and tension. The fourth club, however, showed a great deal of frustration and some apparent degree of aggression channelized towards the leader. Because all the activities were in the hands of the authoritarian leader, many individuals found a kind of esteemed social status in attracting the attention of the leader.

Meanwhile, the groups under democratic and laissez-faire leaders manifested more free and friendly approaches to the group and the leaders. Particularly those under the democratic leader felt more at ease, had more "spontaneous exchanges of confidence"

with the leader about many parts of their personal lives, and were more inclined to share freely in the making of policies.

One more observation is worthy of emphasis. The various leaders were purposely asked to be late to their group meetings for a few minutes, in order to see the responses of the members to the absence of the leaders. In the case of the group under the authoritarian leader there was no initiative to start new activities or finish old ones. With the group under the laissez-faire leader there was some initiative to go on with the work, but their production was lowered. The situation of the group under the democratic leader was just the same as though the leader was present; everybody was working actively at his best.

Therefore, the recommendation that the Syrian supervisor or inspector should look forward to be a democratic leader cannot be overemphasized. The results of the above described experiment voice loudly the value of the democratic ingredient.

3. True Leadership and Its Relation to Supervision. - We left Tead pointing out the difference between command and leadership. We now resume his company in order to reach with him a very lofty definition of true leadership. He writes:

> "...Leadership is the activity of influencing people to cooperate toward some goal which they come to find desirable... The unique emphasis in the idea of leading here advanced is upon the satisfaction and self-fulfilment secured by the followers of the true leader. Today a psychologically and democratically adequate idea of leadership centers as much attention upon the results within the led as on the attitudes or tangible methods of the leader."[1]

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1. Tead, The Art of Leadership, p. 20.

To tap all the vital reserves of energy in the followers, the leader must present them with appealing goals as his objectives. When do objectives have an appeal? The objectives that motivate people to seek and realize are those which they really desire and whole-heartedly want. Everybody wishes to be a respected somebody. All of us like to have a feeling of belongingness and masterfulness. Each seeks that which enhances his selfhood. Human beings need to feel significant, worthwhile and contributing individuals. Tead summarizes the idea very nicely as he says,

> "... The goals which people in groups will willingly serve and the leaders they will gladly follow must appeal to the followers as supporting and extending the latter's efforts to establish their own egos and the concrete demands which enable those egos to grow."[1]

The foregoing discussion brings us to the concept of leadership as inspiration. It is better to relate the concept to supervision, instead of talking in the abstract about general leadership. Supervision as inspiration conceives of the work of the supervisor as that of the coach of athletics.[2] Definitely there are many teachers who do not comprehend exactly their own needs and desires, who are not aware of their own potential aspirations. It is the function of the supervisory leader to inspire them to discover their capacities, to help release their fountains and springs, so that they may rise to their true selves.

However, a word of warning must be sounded in this connection. The idea of the supervisor as one who inspires others

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1. Ibid, p. 61.
2. 1946 Yearbook, Association for Supervision..., Leadership Through Supervision, p. 117.

to selfhood is sound only when the results are the wanted ones. Otherwise, it may be mere sentimentalism from the side of the supervisor who is prone to get excited if he is very sympathetic, and be thrilled easily from anything before waiting for the results. The danger in such a concept of supervision as inspiration is the possibility of having "optimistic impressionists"[1] who make actual defects appear objects of beauty and delight.

Perhaps the safest concept of supervisory leadership is that which conceives the work of the supervisor as "the organizer of opportunities."[2] With this concept in mind, the supervisor manipulates situations and provides educative opportunities, through which teachers may progress and grow. In this way, the teachers play their roles and become partners and sharers in the determination of what they as a group are trying to achieve. The supervisor, on the other hand, according to this concept, believes that direct individual learning by teachers is a must. He perceives his role as being an adviser who contacts teachers directly on the spot and in the field, getting first-hand knowledge about their everyday problems. He may make suggestions here and there to teachers to make them aware of new educational needs which they may not otherwise have sensed. Then, as the teachers start to feel some problems of instruction and as they show great desire to learn the solutions for these problems, the supervisor steps in to organize opportunities and set up situations which are

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1. Anderson, Barr and Bush, Visiting the Teacher at Work, p. 368.
2. 1946 Yearbook, op. cit., pp. 119-120.

conducive to the learning of the teachers by themselves. The supervisor, for example, may refer the teachers to books or periodicals to look up, or may describe to them how different people have solved a problem similar to theirs.

## Summary

Supervision in Syria, in contrast to what it came to be in the west, is still inspectorial, coercive, and at best authoritative telling. Supervision as guidance may be taken as an immediate goal to work towards. A farther ideal, supervision as democratic leadership, is the logical consequence for the independent democratic Syrian Republic in the future.

# C H A P T E R  IV

## TOWARDS IMPROVING THE QUALIFICATIONS AND PRACTICES OF THE SYRIAN INSPECTOR

In the previous chapter our evaluation dealt only with the general concepts of inspection in Syria as compared and contrasted with the concepts in the West. It is appropriate for our study, next, to go from the general to the particular, from the philosophical assumptions underlying the work of supervision as a whole to the qualifications and techniques involved in the execution of the activities of the Syrian inspector.

### Part One - Qualifications of Inspectors

We have already stated that the best kind of leadership is the democratic one. We have also noted that supervision in Syria as authoritative inspection is in direct contrast to supervision as democratic leadership. Now, to bring about any real change in the prevailing negative[1] attitudes of inspectors towards their subordinate teachers, the Ministry of Education should restudy the qualifications required of supervising inspectors. This is important, for essentially attitudes are nothing more than the qualifications at work. Those who are candidates for recruitment in the inspectoral staff must, therefore, meet the qualifications demanded by the delicate task of supervision. The question im-

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1. Refer to Appendix C.

mediately arises: "What are these important qualifications?"

A. The Affective Nature of the Supervisor.

The recommendation that the Syrian supervising inspector be a democratic leader cannot be overemphasized. The adjective "democratic" is important. Among the qualities that go with it, the most outstanding is faith. The basis of democracy is faith in the common sense of the people; it is the strong belief that common men are able in the long run to choose between right and wrong, good and bad, when shown the alternatives and the possibilities. Thus, to be faithful as a supervisor means to have confidence in one's self and to trust the abilities of others who can be growing followers and coworkers. It demands of the supervising leader a cheerful and optimistic view of the future.

To sustain his faith, the supervisor should be clear about the direction of the goal. Without purposeful programs, the attempts of the leader and followers become hazardous, and they lead nowhere. Democratic goals to be directive and purposeful should be definite, clearly comprehended by the followers, arising from the needs of the group, and resulting from cooperative group discussions, where many share in shaping them.

The purposeful goal, to be felt constantly all the time, demands enthusiasm from the supervisor's side. It is rightly said that "~~mind~~ intellect is a mere speck afloat on a sea of feeling[1]." Therefore, the emotional dynamism of the supervisor stirs everybody to feel the goal rather than coldly to comprehend it solely. Everybody becomes hopeful, ambitious to progress, and happy to

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1. Quoted by Bossing, N.L., Progressive Methods of Teaching in Secondary Schools, p. 18.

accomplish his task. This quality of enthusiasm is important for the supervisor and his group of teachers, for it encourages them to work until they successfully reach the common goal of the supervisory program. Moreover, enthusiasm is effective in being contageous, easily spreading out from one to another. Hence, it is the duty of the supervisory leader to initiate genuine enthusiasm.

The democratic supervisor is known also by his friendly affection towards the group of teachers he is working with. Affection does not mean cheap sentimentalism, ability to lubricate everything, or tap-on-the-back type of attitude. It is deep concern for the welfare of the people, getting interested in their personal affairs and aspirations. A penetrating understanding is the result, and very soon the supervisor establishes rapport and enjoys a winning influential way. This qualification is very much needed by the Syrian inspector, for it predisposes teachers to have an attitude of cooperation and live up to the standard he has set. Friendly respect makes them feel that they are needed by someone and that they are wanted for some noble cause.

One more important qualification, still pertinent to the affective nature of the personality, is required of the supervisor. It is integrity. It is the duty of the Syrian inspector to estimate the worth of teachers and principals. Thus he is entrusted with a task which needs the utmost impartiality. Though not very often, still some teachers accuse inspectors of being prejudiced in favor of relatives, acquaintances and party members. Another danger, sometimes heard in Syrian teaching circles, is the terrible practice of taking bribery to enforce the selection and

adoption of a certain textbook. Severe penalties should be exercised against any such insincere inspector. As a preventive measure the writer suggests that inspectors be appointed in places different from their home areas, and that they should be shifted from one place to another every five years or so. In this way the temptation to take sides and be partial in rating is reduced to a minimum. Moreover, there is a strong advantage in having the new inspector start his work in an area outside the home and be transferred from time to time as in England[1]; it maintains some sort of national standards and it spreads the experiences everywhere.

B. The Intellectual Nature of the Supervisor.

So far we have discussed qualities related to the affective nature of the supervisor. Next we come to the intellectual side. The supervisor must evidence professional mastery. He must enjoy a high standard of general culture and a wide range of academic preparation. According to the director of the education of supervisors at the University of Georgia.

> "Superior knowledge in the fields as the following is important: Curriculum and methods, sociology as it is related to rural communities, elementary science, arts and crafts, social science with special emphasis on present world affairs, and philosophy as it is related to democracy and education."[2]

The supervisor must at the same time possess a thorough understanding of educational theories and practices, and a first-hand experience in matters of school administration and in-

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1. Report of the British Ministry of Education., Education in 1949, p. 96.
2. Assoc. for Supervision and Curric., Leadership Through Supervision., p. 95.

struction. Thus, a general body of knowledge and a special concentration on psychology and education with direct experience in matters related to the organization and management of schools provide the basis for the preparatory training of the supervisors.

Now, how near the standard do the Syrian inspectors of instruction come? It has been indicated in the second chapter that most of the provincial primary school inspectors have had a good deal of experience in teaching and administration. All of them had at least five years of teaching before having been appointed as inspectors. Most of them, moreover, had been principals or assistant to principals of public primary schools. But they fall short on the side of academic preparation. Eighteen out of the twenty-five provincial inspectors hold only a teaching normal certificate, and just five of them hold the licence-two in law and the rest in literature and science. As already discussed in the first chapter, the professional preparation of the teacher training institutions is by no means adequate even for teachers, much less for inspectors.

Therefore, it is fitting to recommend in this connection a special university preparation in an integrated program, consisting of education, psychology and sociology courses in addition to some academic courses in one field, and terminating in the degree of licence in education. Instead of this, it can also be recommended that the graduate of a teacher training institute should teach for three years and then undergo once more preparation for one year or two in a special training program, ending with what might be equivalent to the French certificat

d'aptitude à l'inspection primaire[1].

The Ministry of Education in Syria sent last year one of the primary inspectors to France for practical training in inspection. This is a good policy, indicative of real interest in the inspector's training, so that one is hopeful to recommend such bursaries to England and the United States. Those returning from such educative visits will not only be expected to do a good job in inspection, but they can serve also to lead the program for the preparation of inspectors.

What about the Syrian secondary school inspectors? They are qualified as specialists in the course of study they are responsible to supervise. None of them, however, is trained in education. In fact, one of them who holds a doctorate in his specialty told the writer frankly that he could not yet write his advisory notes to the teachers under his supervision for he did not read enough on the art of teaching his specialty. One is justified, therefore, to recommend here something equivalent to the French preparation for the agrégation, where the holder of the degree is advanced not only in the academic study but also in the teaching of the subject matter.

In the meantime until such recommendations as expressed above in connection with both primary and secondary school inspectors can be followed, certain other temporary measures must be suggested. One possible recommendation, which is easy

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1. The name is quoted by Kandel, Comparative Education., p.273.

to apply immediately, is to have the Ministry, through a committee, draw up somewhat detailed advisory notes concerning inspection - its underlying aims andprinciples and its outstanding practices and techniques. These notes will serve to orient the newly recruited inspectors in their delicate tasks. A second practical recommendation is to arrange for periodical conferences conducive to the sharing of experiences of the inspectors with one another. A third temporary measure is to prepare summer seminars in inspection training, conducted by leading inspectors or professors of education. These recommendations, though easy to carry out, are nevertheless big steps towards the improving of inspection of instruction in Syria.

C. The Physical Nature of the Supervisor.

Having spoken thus far about affective as well as intellectual qualifications of the leading supervisor, we come finally to the physical qualities. The supervising inspector must be physically well and energetic, at least above the average. It is hard work, indeed, for the Syrian inspector to travel distances, visit schools in cities and country sides, prepare talks and advisory notes, and arrange programs for counselling. The hard and extended nature of his work takes his physical strength. He is always required to be at his best, for no matter how small and ordinary the school he visits may be, he is looked upon and listened to by its principal or perhaps its only teacher as an educational reformer. His visit is an event of considerable importance, and he has to be always full of energy if he is not to disappoint his followers.

Moreover, physical strength has its effect on the personality of the supervisor. Sympathy, the qualifications already mentioned, cannot be sustained long if the supervisor is not above the average in bodily stamina. To afford to be enthusiastic all the time needs a great reservoir of energy.

Related to the physical and mental aspects is the age of the supervising inspector. He must be mature. He must not be very much younger than the teacher he is to work with. In fact, the average age for inspector's recruitment in England for the last six years has been 43, and very seldom is one appointed before the age of 30[1].

The previous discussion indicates clearly that not any successful teacher can be at the same time a successful supervisor or inspector, despite the contrary belief in Syria. Supervision is leadership and the supervisor should have many traits, psychological, moral, intellectual and physical, besides the mere skill of effective teaching. To take highly superior teachers from their classrooms where they benefit their students most and make out of them mediocre inspectors is not conducive to efficiency. The writer whole-heartedly agrees with al-Husri, when the latter says,

> "It is faulty to consider the task of the inspector to be equivalent to that of the teacher. The harm resulting from such a consideration is aggravated especially when inspectors of primary schools are chosen from the teaching staff of secondary schools who have not worked in the primary school at all. The Ministry should realize very well that the functions of inspection require special qualifications of its own.."[2]

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1. Report of the British Ministry of Education, Education in 1949, pp. 94-95.

2. الحصري، تقارير ١٩٤٤، ص ١٨٦.

The inspector is at least a teacher of teachers, As such he should possess more qualities, if not different, than those required of a teacher of students.

## Part Two - Criticism of Present Practices

Any constructive study of evaluation tries to develop the existing potentialities of the old plant and to build over and above it as much as possible. With the view of reform in mind, the writer intends to criticize some of the common practices of the Syrian inspector, such as the preparation of advisory notes, the visitation of classes, the counselling or the conference with teachers, and the preparation of reports. Each of these practices will be taken up separately for a constructive criticism.

### A. Advisory Notes Imperative.

The advisory notes for the betterment of instruction are given by Syrian supervisors in different ways.

1. Notes of Central Supervisors. - In the first place, the committee on Education and Instruction has incorporated in the final form of the curriculum "general guiding notes" for teachers, "clarifications" on the primary and secondary education curricula, and special guiding notes for the teaching of each subject matter. There is no room in this paper for evaluating the content of these notes. What is important to point out, however, is the spirit in which these notes are prepared. Aims, content and methods for each course of study in the curriculum are outlined in an authoritarian way. Not very rarely one passes by phrases such as,

"It is necessarily required of all teachers to have the following facts and principles always in front of their eyes.[1]"

Even such a debatable issue as a lesson summary is required at the end of every class period. The introductory guiding note sometimes contradicts itself. For istance, it requires each teacher to teach a limited amount of facts "with depth and perfection[2]" rather than teaching an extensive amount with superficiality. At the same time the Note claims that the curriculum prescribed takes into consideration only the basic essentials[3]. This seems to be a warning to the teachers that they cannot ask for less crowded a curriculum, while in the opinion of many teachers, the outlined curriculum is beyond the comprehension capacity of the students.

Moreover, the dictated curriculum and the principles underlying it are formulated by the central authorities with the slight participation of the specialized secondary school inspectors only. In fact, the trend is even to lessen the load of the specialized inspectors by getting them out of the membership of the committee referred to, and hence deprive them of the privilege of sharing in the reconstruction of the curriculum. In this way all inspectors, whether of secondary or primary schools, become officials who execute the plans of the Ministry. While executing faithfully, they cannot but tend to be authoritarian, since, any way, the whole centralized plan is authoritarian.

2. Published Notes of Inspectors. - Another way of

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1. منهج الدراسة الثانوية ، ص
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

presenting the advisory notes is through the lectures and articles of the inspectors. As far as the writer can make out from his readings in the educational periodical ( المعلم العربي ), the specialized secondary school inspectors are mostly the ones who evidence some initiative in this connection. An extract from an article[1] on the teaching of mathematics, written by one of the inspectors after being originally delivered in a lecture, may be given as an example typical of other advisory imperative notes of inspectors.

> "In connection with the drills and problems, I consider it useful that the respected teachers adopt the following procedure:
>
> "a - After dictating the statement (of the problem) the teacher should repeat it once or more until it is understood by heart.
>
> "b - The teacher should ask the students who have (by now) understood the statement what is given and what is required in the problem..., or what the known and the unknown are..., and then what the relations are between known and the unknown...
>
> "c - The teacher should estimate the time necessary for the complete solution by students, so that they may develop the habit of apportioning time in examinations.
>
> "d - When the estimated time expires, the teacher should prevent his students from continuing the work. He should ask one of those who have finished on time to solve the problem on the blackboard. The other members of the class are asked to criticize the work. In case all the members fail to solve the problem then the teacher shows them (the solution).
>
> "e - After finishing the group correction on the board, the teacher should leave enough time for the students to copy the solution, and should roam about to straighten the difficulties of those who still do not get the concepts and steps involved."

It is not my purpose to criticize the content of the extract. Only two points need to be brought out. First, it will be seen that the inspector uses lavishly such authoritarian words as "must", "should" and the like. Second, it can be seen

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1. طالب صبابوني، "تدريس الرياضيات"، المعلم العربي، عدد ٢-٤، ١٩٤٩، ص ٥٨٥ - ٥٨٦.

also from the above extract that the inspector goes to a detailed description of a procedure in teaching problems of mathematics, as though implying that there is one best way of dealing with the situation, and that that way must be followed.

3. Outlined Notes of Inspectors Prepared for Teachers' Conferences. - Here the headlines of the points to be raised in the group conference of teachers are prepared in advance by certain inspectors. As an example, some of the topics recorded by the secondary school inspector of Arabic will be cited. They consist of the following: The notebook for lesson planning, the notebook for grading, the results of examination in the beginning, middle and end of the academic year, the notebooks for assignments and compositions, the teaching of each component of the Arabic language, the care for adequate distribution of the curriculum without going rapidly or slowly, the special emphasis on some parts of the syllabus, the care for silent reading, the way to use the text, the answer to the questions and suggestions of the teachers.

Again here, the inspector goes to irrelevant details and gives very little consideration to the problems and suggestions of the teachers. The technique is still authoritarian.

4. Recommendation. - The writer agrees that the inspector should care for guiding the teachers in the ways of teaching different subjects. Indeed, the inspector should be able to give assistance in such a task as instruction, for he is supposed to be a master in the content as well as the method-

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1. Summarised from the personal outline of the specialized inspector of Arabic.

ology of each subject . The nature of his work makes him come daily in contact with different methods and techniques of teachers. Thus he has a rich and varied amount of experience to draw from and to share with others.

The recommendation that may be worthwhile to make here is to have such guiding notes given in a democratic, instead of an authoritarian, way. The inspector is not to order. He is to suggest, and while doing so he may present varied ways for confronting situations and difficulties. It is for the teacher to choose and adapt a way of his own. In other words, the inspector's suggestions should be worded in the English spirit of "suggestions for the consideration of teachers."

B. Unplanned Classroom Visitations.

If the advisory notes of the Syrian inspector are found to be authoritarian, the classroom visitation and observation lacks thorough planning to say the least. It should be emphasized that any evaluation of the latter activity is in reality an evaluation of the most important task of inspection, a task which takes most of the time of every single Syrian inspector to study carefully and with some detail the mechanics of visitation and the program of classroom observation is of utmost importance.

1. Visitational Mechanics.- The school visit must be carefully planned. As already pointed out in the second chapter, there are three kinds of inspectorial visits in Syria. First, there are the early hasty visits at the beginning of the academic year. They do not deal with the supervision of instruction. Instead, they relate to the routine mechanical parts of inspection,

such as the adequacy of the teaching staff, the conditions of the grounds and buildings, the supplies of the schools, etc. This task, though easy, is very cumbersome. Therefore, the writer recommends to take it out of the responsibility of the supervising inspector of instruction. A new body of inspectorial staff can be created to carry out such a routine work which does not need high qualifications. In this way, the time and effort of the existing supervisory inspectors are preserved for basic educational reform. Such early visits can be used, as is the case at present in rare occasions, for establishing rapport and friendly confidential atmosphere between the inspector and the teachers with whom he works. A group conference in every school can, for example, be held under the chairmanship of the inspector to discuss possible problems that may confront the teachers during the academic year. Thus, the important educational issues become the center of attention, and the teacher right from the start finds himself a co-worker with his friend and advisor, the inspector. A great deal of positive expectancy is gained in these early visits to schools.

Second, the Syrian inspector is required to conduct some lengthy visits to classrooms. In this connection, the reader will remember that as the inspector enters and leaves the classroom, students stand up for greeting him while he shakes hands with the teacher. Sometimes the visitor seats himself in the chair of the teacher in front of the students. Such a glamorous appearance of the inspector besides suggesting an authoritative personality has some serious repercussions. It certainly disturbs

the activity going on in the classroom. Some students will surely busy themselves with contemplations about the new visiting figure, or if they happen to know about inspection they may become interested in observing the emotionality of the teacher and his changing attitudes and methods. The teacher himself may be awe-stricken with the pompousness of the inspector. The wise inspector can very well enter quietly with a smile and a simple nod, sit in the back of the room near a student, listen politely with interest, take as few notes as possible, then slip out in the same quiet manner if the recitation is still in progress, or else he may genuinely but briefly say some nice words to the teacher.

Third, there is the short evaluation visit, in which the inspector attempts to find how far the teachers are successful in avoiding previous mistakes. In connection with this kind of visit, it is common also in Syria that the inspector breaks into the recitation by openly participating in the activity of the classroom. After having listened and observed how things are conducted, the inspector usually asks for the lesson planning. Then once more he observes the rate of progress of the lesson, hears the answers of students and forms an opinion as to the efficiency of the method used by the teacher. Next he may step in to test the students in matters mostly on a level supposedly comprehensible by the average student. In certain rare cases his participation may take the shape of a demonstration lesson.

A warning should be sounded here to the effect that the inspector's breaking into the recitation by participating

in some way or other is a delicate affair. It is embarrassing to the teacher and impairing to his prestige to be in a position of a learner in front of his students. Anderson, in this connection, gives the advice,

> "Always ask the teacher's permission to break into a recitation, even with a question; or if you desire to take the class, always let the pupils feel that you have full confidence in the teacher."[1]

To resist the tendency to interfere, the inspector should ask himself such questions as the following: Is what I am going to say highly valuable, more important than what the students are getting from their teacher? If so, is its value jeopardized by deferring to later consideration in a private counsel? Are the students really harmed by what they are getting from their teacher? Should the remedial work be carried out on the spot? The answers to these questions are very seldom in the affirmative. Moreover, the inspector when interfering by a question or an illustration he should first ask permission from the teacher in command of the class, and second be as brief as possible. Demonstration teaching by the inspector should in most of the cases be planned ahead of time, and the teaching inspector should better consume the whole class period. This practice is specially preferable with new teachers who are usually extra-sensitive. In case for one reason or another, the inspector does not take up the whole period, he is advised to leave the classroom as soon as he finishes in order to avoid any

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1. Anderson, C.J., Barr, A.S. and Bush, M.G., Visiting the teacher at Work, p. 75.

possible embarrassment[1].

The number of the inspectoral visits is not adequately provided for in Syria. Only in theory, do the inspectors refer to three kinds of visits, as expressed above. In reality, the average number of visits per teacher ranges, as elsewhere mentioned, from 1.08 to 1.22. This is mainly because of shortage in the inspection personnel and because of transportation difficulties. It is necessary that there should be enough time for the inspectors to visit each teacher more than once. There is no fixed limit for the minimum, optimum of maximum number of visits. It depends on the needs and problems of each teacher, the responsibility load and the available time of the inspectors, and on the cooperative initiativeness of school principals who are to be considered as permanent inspectors.

However, any number of visits will be insignificant without considering the length of each visit. Usually the Syrian inspectors, because of the lack of time for covering all the teachers under their supervision, drop for ten minutes in one class and fifteen minutes in another. The result is superficiality, and when the inspectos start criticizing and suggesting they are told that their suggestions had been completed and were carried out immediately after their leaving the room.

Cubberly rightly advises the supervisor to extend the duration of his visit to "a complete lesson unit or period or at least most of it[2]." Sometimes, when the purpose of the in-

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1. All the paragraph leans heavily on Briggs, Thomas H., Improving Instruction, pp. 326-327.
2. Cubberly, E.P., The Principal and His School, p. 441.

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spector is to observe the methods and techniques of the teacher in questioning, giving assignments or reviewing, the need arises for consecutive visits of two or more lesson periods. At other times, when the purpose is to observe the teaching of a special subject such as Arabic dictation or reading, the inspector may very well visit the same teacher on different days.

Thus the length of the visits is an important problem for the inspector to consider thoughtfully, if he is to gain the confidence of the teacher. It is really challenging when the teacher confronts inspection with the negative attitude of "How can the inspector estimate my worth in such a short time? Doesn't it ever occur to him that I do other things with the students besides teaching them the solution of a mathematical problem?"

Enough time, may with benefit, be alloted toofor invited consultative visits. This idea of visits by invitation is not yet known in Syria or any other Arab land, where still all the inspectorial visits are sudden and unannounced, so that the teacher is caught in his natural routine setting. If supervision, however, means assistance and guidance, then it should not matter much to have some of the visits announced, if the teacher does not yet show the initiative to invite the inspector. In this way, the teacher is motivated to do his very best. A little success in front of the inspector may give the teacher enough confidence in himself and enough joy to seek more and more success. After having experienced the trouble of self-improvement in some announced inspectorial visits, the teacher

may come to realize that the trouble to varify his procedures and improve his ways is not after all as hard as he once imagined and that the results warrant the endeavour. Realizing this for himself, he may go a step further and assume one day the initiative to invite the inspector into his classroom of his own accord to consult with him. And it is evident that such invited visits will serve a great deal to do away with fear and suspicion in the relationship of teachers and supervisor, and will render Syrian inspection a real cooperative enterprise built on growth occuring from experimentation and consultation. In the future, after the introduction of this recommended innovation, the success of the supervisory program of any inspector might be measured objectively by the number of teachers who would call on him for a consultative visitation.

2. Superficial Program of Class-room Observation. - The program of class-room observation in Syria lacks extensive planning. The inspector does not have a studied plan for his observation. He jots down a few notes in a haphazard way as circumstances inspire him. Only when he comes to recording the observations in his notebook and the school inspectorial notebook does he go to some kind of arrangement. Even there, however, the few lines show a literary composing ability rather than a comprehensive program of objective observation. One does not sense in them the most important purposes of class-room observation, such as knowing the pupils and getting the material data necessary for devising special consultative sessions. The inspectors only superficially spot the strong

and the weak points of the teacher inspected, and they refer generally and briefly to the endeavour of the teacher to abide by the directions previously given. Such a plan of classroom observation is superficial and subjective.

It may be worthwhile to present outlines of varying observational notes as suggestive examples for Syrian inspectors to consider and adapt.

Cubberly presents an example of purposeful scheduled visits, where the main objectives and the supplementary objectives are indicated expressly week by week or month by month. The following is a useful extract.

| | |
|---|---|
| Week of Oct.2-6 | Supervisory purpose: To ascertain the effectiveness and the extent of correlation of the language work instruction, grade by grade, oral work.<br>Main objectives: Is growth regular and constant? are there lapses? If so, where and why? Where are most difficulties? Of what nature?<br>Supplementary Objectives: Art of questioning. Thought provoking instruction. Lesson assignments. |
| 9-13 | Supervisory purpose: Same as preceding week, but concentrated on the written work. Some written test work.<br>Supplementary objectives: Character of the written work, with reference to suitableness, thought-provoking quality, and correlations. |
| | Note: Supervisory results of this and preceeding week to form basis for discussion at teachers' meeting of October 17th[1]. |

Thus, certain definite aims can be set up by the supervisor to be realized week after week or month after month.

A more general plan is presented by Edmonson, Roemer

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1. Cubberly, Ellwood P., The Principal and His School, p. 441.

and Bacon in the following form.

Class ------- Teacher ------- Date ------- Time -------

Types of activity observed: discussion, study, free reading, tests, etc..

Freedom of discussion: scope of problems introduced, limitation of teacher - student response, encouragement and development of inter-student exchange, evidence of student interest and preparation, etc.

Teacher attitudes: self-effacement, stimulation of independent study, encouragement of initiative, impartiality, provision for wide participation, development of student self-appraisal, acceptance of mutuality of problems, etc.

Student attitudes: disposition to participate in group activity, interest in discussion, willingness in mutual assistance, initiative in independent study, absence of loitering and disorder, care of materials, etc.

Evidence of planning: definiteness of activities and procedures, accessibility of materials, transition and sequence in activities, relation to previous work, preparation for next assignment, etc.

Suitability of work: interest and achievement of students, appropriateness of difficulty, applicability to social development and needs, variety of activity, etc.

Physical conditions: seating, ventilation, lighting, cleanliness, orderly arrangement, etc.[1].

Buckingham approaches the matter in a very highly objective way. He lists the following topics as the content of an observational note.

I Matters that may be expressed by time:
  A. The time required
     In review of the previous work, in discussing the day's topic, in trying to get one pupil to understand -
  B. Division of time between teacher and pupils
II Matters that may be counted:
  A. The number of pupils who participated
     1. By answering questions: (a) When called upon (b) Voluntarily.
     2. By doing something: (a) When called upon (b) Voluntarily.
     3. By asking a question

1. Edmonson, J.B., Roemer, J., and Bacon, F.L., the Administration of the Modern Secondary School, p. 423.

4. By paying attention
B. The number of responses correct or satisfactory
C. The number of responses incorrect or unsatisfactory
D. The number of questions asked by the teacher
1. The number of leading questions
2. The number of "yes" or "no" or other alternative questions
3. The number of factual questions
4. The number of questions requiring thought

III Presence or absence of:
A. Statement of aim
B. Summary
C. Serious digression or wandering
D. Serious interruption
E. Adherence to schedule
F. An assignment

IV Quotation:
A. Of good questions - and of bad
B. Of forms of expression technical to the subject

V Other objective facts:
A. Additional readings, if any
B. Material other than reading or apparatus used
C. Sample papers, for example (perhaps 10 chosen at random)
1. Homework 2. Done in class

Finally, since the Syrian inspectors are fond of using a column for strengths and another for weaknesses of teachers, it might be illuminating to quote Anderson, Barr and Bush here.

Strengths

Did the lesson lead the pupils to see the value of supplementing the text from experience?

Did the lesson bring out clearly the danger of hasty conclusions based upon meager evidence?

Weaknesses

Memory was emphasized in the recitation.

Teacher did the organizing instead of the pupils.

One or two pupils did all the talking.

Subject matter was treated as if all facts were of equal importance.

Teacher passed judgment upon the correctness of statements robbing the pupils of this privilege.

Pupils were not the actors; they were passive spectators.

There was no problem - solving; hence, little or no reflective thinking.

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1. Quoted by Briggs, Thomas H., Improving Instruction, pp.332-333.

> The pupils did not ask questions. Pupils who are really thinking ask questions.[1]

These varying plans are presented to serve as suggestions, from which the Syrian inspectors may draw to formulate their own personal programs. The task of classroom observation cannot be afforded to be vague and superficial depending on the whims of the situation.

C. Subjective Judicial Reports.

While the Syrian inspector may sometimes find justification for not holding counsel or conference with the teacher visited, he cannot escape reporting the results of his inspection to the Ministry. The task of reporting is second only to the task of visiting classroom in its demands on the inspector's effort. But are the reports so useful and necessary as to justify their being a major task of the inspector?

The chief conceivable purposes of reporting are two: (1) to know about conditions and requirements of schools to take the necessary steps for adequate provision, and (2) to have available data about principals and teachers to be made use of in transfer and promotion of personnel. Accordingly each inspector is requested to hand yearly to the Ministry two reports of the first kind and two reports of the second kind.

With regard to the administrative reports the writer prefers to create a post for new administrative inspectors who do not need to be as highly prepared as the inspectors of instruction. The role of the latter is that of leadership and counseling, and not of being the eyes and ears of the Ministry.

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1. Anderson, C.J., Barr, A.S., Bush, M.G., Visiting the Teacher at Work, pp.12-13.

As to the other reports of the inspectors concerning the rating of principals and teachers, they are subjective and judicial, especially in the case of primary school inspectors, who, as mentioned in the second chapter, fill the forms by such objectives as "good","not bad", "fair", etc..These terms are very vague, and what is rated "very good" by one inspector may be considered only "good" or "fair" by another. In the case of the secondary school inspectors no such judicial remarks are used. A brief description of the observed lesson with a summary of strengths and weaknesses of the teacher is given. Why not combine both ways, starting by the descriptive part and ending by rating? Anyway, this work should not tax the time and effort of the Syrian inspectors of instruction, whose chief task is that of educational leadership and consultation.

D. Counseling or Post-Visitation Conference.

All the previous mechanics of classroom visitation and observation is preliminary to the task of guidance and counseling. The question in order, then, is: "What are the problems of inspectorial counseling, and what possible improvements can be effected?"

The writer would like to confess that he does not have enough data on counseling or the post-visitation conference as conducted by Syrian inspectors. There are no available published records of counseling conferences similar to those found in western educational literature.[1] It is earnestly urged that the

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1. Refer, for example, to Kyte, Problems in School Supervision, pp. 105-108, and also pp. 113-115.

Syrian inspectors, in the very near future, start the practice of publishing the conversations which take place between them and teachers. In this way the inspectors will study carefully teachers' reactions to different approaches and thus share their experiences amongst themselves. At the same time they may make use of these records to estimate the strengths and weaknesses of their inspectorial programs.

Is every visit of the inspector to a classroom followed by a counseling conference? Though in principle the minutes of the meeting of the provincial inspectors of Damascus speak of a conference after each classroom observation, the practice is far from it. They usually satisfy themselves with writing a few notes for the teachers in the inspectorial notebook of the school.

It cannot be overemphasized that the supervisory conference between the individual teacher and the inspector is a very useful means of improving instruction and reforming school life. In counseling the inspector gets to know the teacher better as an individual person and as a co-working instructor. The conference, moreover, provides the inspector with the chance to develop in his teachers confidence, enthusiasm, ambition and responsibility by giving them due recognition and commendation. Here lies the opportunity to assist teachers in formulating a long range plan for growth. Therefore, there should be at least one conference for each inspected teacher per year.

As to the procedures of counseling in Syria, they are left to the inspector's discretion and temperament during the short session of the conference. The average time for the

session is 11.70 minutes for the primary school inspectors and 12.38 minutes for the secondary school inspectors, as already mentioned. Usually, the inspector assumes command and speaks most of the time, while the teacher listens in submission to authority. In most of the cases the inspector is either a severe critic with "eyes that see only faults," or a sentimental optimistic impressionist who is full of "insincere praise[1]." In both cases he is not a constructive cooperative leader, and he does not allot enough time for the planning of the conference in advance.

1. Preparation for Conference. - If the importance of counseling as a constructive cooperative work is realized, then it should be clear that the personal conference needs real preparation. Before the conference, the inspector must recall the observed lesson and list the strong as well as the weak points, after referring to his special supervisory note lists that he has developed from experience. Such reference may suggest to him new avenues for evaluation. Next, the inspector should review the records of old visits and conferences to see wherein the teacher has applied successfully previous suggestions and advices, wherein he is still weak, what new weaknesses are apparent, and what new strengths are to be added to the cumulative record. Lastly, it should be realized that only a few salient points can be discussed in the conference with profit. Here comes the value of selection, according to the importance of the point educationally and the readiness of the teacher to respond to the point raised.

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1. The quotations are taken from teachers' responses to a questionaire conducted by the writer.

In this way, the inspector prior to the conference has all the facts of the situation prepared, the procedures planned and the logical and psychological reasons thought out before hand. He is ready to sit helpfully with the teacher to share with him his problems. Such a prepared plan, however, should not be used as a crutch. Circumstances may raise the need for some alteration and modification. The inspector should feel free to make them. Sometimes, it may be wise to ignore most of the plan, if not all, when for example the teacher is found full of ideas and problematic questions. The prepared plan is not meant to be rigid; rather it is meant to be indicative of careful study.

2. Counseling Techniques. - After having prepared for the conference, the inspector is ready for counseling, with the attitude that counseling is not giving advice, or entering into debate, or passing judgments. It is assisting the teacher to analyze his work and construct a program for growth by himself.

The first task that confronts the inspector in counseling is establishing rapport. Rapport is the feeling of intimacy and ease between two individuals or more, so that a fine release of expression goes on. It is important for counseling because the final steps of insight and reconstruction depend on an honest bold portrayal of the teacher's activities and procedures. The inspector who seeks rapport should hold ready the points worthy of praise. The commendation, however, has to be sincere, or else the teacher will consider it a hypocritical flattery. Good points worthy of emphasis are always found at

hand, if the concept of the good is rendered flexibly relative. What the mediocre teacher has of commonplace good is his capital. Therefore, the inspector should recognize it to stimulate the teacher to grow at least on that one line. As the teacher develops confidently in one phase of school activity, he may become more and more receptive to suggestions for his improvement in other phases[1].

Next, the inspector might ask for self-analysis on the side of the teacher. The latter should be given the chance to express himself and be heard, before being required to listen to the inspector. It is interesting to note in this connection that the etymology of the word "conference" indicates the existence of two parties. "Suppressed expression of ideas," as Briggs says, "closes the ears"[2].. The teacher likes to talk, and so why not make use of human nature by listening carefully to the teacher's problems and difficulties? The inspector can find many devices to stimulate free expression from the side of the teacher, such as asking for the aim of the lesson and for self-criticism. The questions can be objectively put to the teacher in the following fashion: "What do you think of the lesson? Where do you think you succeeded? If you were to teach the lesson over again,what modifications would you propose? Don't you think we grow by reflecting on our mistakes and successes?[3]" Another way of helping the teacher to evaluate his own teaching is by giving him an outline form of the basic points in any recitation to be considered

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1. Briggs, Thomas H., Improving Instruction, p. 357.
2. Ibid, p. 374.
3. The questions are inspired by Briggs, Improving Instruction, p. 357

by the teacher for self-criticism.[1] Thus, the conference should be conducted in the light of both the observation of the inspector and the self evaluation of the teacher. A very fruitful discussion takes place as a result, and the teacher is encouraged to grow through his own effort and will. Without building self-reliance in the teacher, the Syrian inspector cannot expect much from his scarce visits and conferences.

Throughout the progress of discussion in a conference, respect for the differing opinion of the teacher should be given by the inspector. "The teacher's self-respect should be increased," as Flinker says, "not diminished as a result of this objective discussion."[2] Respectful objectivity is specially important in educational matters, where there is always the possibility of a grain of truth in the other's opinion and judgment. There might be two or more procedures for achieving the one and the same thing. Anyway, the inspector must escape heated debate which may result in a defensive mind, hostile and ego-involved. The teacher would not follow a method that he disagrees with. One has only to refer to Thorudike's findings to realize the influence of satisfaction on learning and doing. "Visitation followed by annoyance tears down," while as Anderson and others say "visitation followed by satisfaction builds up."[3] Therefore, the advice that must be given to the Syrian inspector is: Never debate when there is a great difference between your opinion and

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1. Anderson, and others, Visiting the Teacher at Work, p.44.
2. Flinker, Irving, "Supervision can be Dynamic," Education and Administration, p. 345, Oct. 1948
3. Anderson, and others, Visiting the Teacher at Work, p.41.

the teacher's. Instead, stimulate the teacher from the start to experiment for himself and find out the better way, if there is any one way.

It should not be understood from the previous discussion that criticism be avoided by the inspector. There is ample place for the constructive commendation. Earnest teachers are not satisfied with praise only. They want also to have their faulty habits and practices pointed to them by a sympathetic reformer. However, the inspector before indulging in criticism should be sure that there is no wall separating the teacher from him, and that the teacher's mind is set right to receive the criticisms in an objective manner. This advice is specially given to the Syrian inspector, for unpleasant experiences of previous years have made the teachers prejudiced against even the honest criticism of the inspector. The latter, by his understanding and good will, can attempt to change the negativistic attitude of teachers. He can for instance be very careful in choosing his words while criticizing, so that the teacher will not have the slightest feeling that his person is being involved in the criticism. The inspector's criticisms should be limited to the teaching-learning process, without extending to personal faults of appearance and dealing. Such faults may be left to the principal to deal with.

The criticism should not be confined, if it is to be constructive, to indicating the faults only. Rather it should be complemented with suggesting possibilities of procedure. The following are som of the modern approaches in offering suggestions for the consideration of teachers.

The suggestion: "If I were you....."
The question : "Have you ever tried...?"
The reference : "Now, in Rochester they..."
The reminiscence: "I had good luck once by..."
The recall: "Do you remember the lesson we saw...?"
The anecdote: "Did you ever hear the story about..?"[1]

The inspector becomes in this way definite, specific and constructive. According to Charles Wagner, there are three criteria of good counseling to be observed by the counselor: he commends the good; he condemns the unsatisfactory; he suggests the better.[2] Perhaps, one may go one step further to evaluate the counseling, by asking himself such questions as: What alterations in the prepared plan for counseling have been necessary? What are the good points in the conference? Wherein lie the weak points? How can they be improved? What are some of the recommendations for the next conference? All this information may be filed and a cumulative record for each teacher can be made.

Summing Up.

The prevalent inspectoral practices tend to put the teacher, somehow and in some degree, in an embarrassing situation. The recommendations given are very practical, for they aim at improving conditions within the frame of reference of the present system, without the necessity of a revolutionary change in the institutional organization of the Ministry of Education. The practicality of the suggestions, however, does not belittle their value in the least. It is rather an asset to them, provided that the basic qualifications discussed are found in the persons of the inspectors. Indeed, it is the hope of the writer that if

1. Quoted in Briggs, Improving Instruction, p. 376.
2. Stated in Anderson, op.cit., p.47.

the suggestions are put to immediate practice by qualified inspectors supervision in Syria will go a long way forward, and pave the ground for real educational leadership.

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## A F I N A L S T A T E M E N T

To bring our study to an end, let us have a closing panoramic view of the subject of supervision of instruction as it is and as it ought to be. In order not to lose our sense of proportion in the details of the previous chapters, we better conclude with a final wholistic statement.

It will be recalled that the educational background of Syria presents a multitude of basic needs for supervision. There is the changing life from an old to a new type, under the western infiltration of ideas of nationalism and modernization, with all the transitory consequences of unrest, turmoil and uncertainty. The teacher, as the over-seer of the new generation, stands in need of the guidance of the trained and experienced supervisor, who extends the boundary of education to cover all the vast areas of life. Next, there are the conditions of educational provision that raise difficult problems of public primary and secondary education - in tribal, agrarian and urban areas - all of which call for the energetic efforts of the supervisor to help in their solution. The lack of capable staff in Syria constitutes a further need for supervision, since the primary school teachers are still recruited mostly from the holders of the Baccalaureat. Neither are the conditions of graduates of teacher training institutions very satisfying, for it is questionable if so inadequate a professional preparation

as given will leave with student teachers a lasting desired effect. Besides, there will always be the need for highly trained and experienced supervisors to make good practice more widely known, to enlighten the teaching staff on the rapid advances in education, to encourage the able craving teachers, and to discover potential leadership among their rank.

These needs are met inadequately by the Syrian Inspectorate which, in subordination to the central administration, is burdened with the responsibility of executing the educational plans and syllabi laid down by the technical committee on Education and Instruction. It is evident from the items of the Educational Decree pertaining to the functions of inspection, stated in chapter two, that the old aim of the Inspectorate to serve as the eyes and ears of the Ministry is still preserved, and that at best the present aim of inspection is conceived as the correction of teachers' faults and the estimation of their efficiency and worth. The teachers are looked upon as negligent workers, who do not exert their best efforts except when forced to do so by the supervision of strictly firm foreman. The teachers are described as limited in their knowledge of educational theory and practice, and therefore it is claimed that they need the expert inspectors to tell them what to do and how to do it. Accordingly the inspector is required to spend most of his time in visiting teachers at work and rating them in his reports. As a result, the majority of the Syrian teachers portray the personality of the inspector as an authoritarian dictator, a harsh critic, and one who swoops for the examination of petty things to the neglect of genuine progressive guidance.

In addition to the coercive approach, the Syrian inspector of education manifests whimsical subjectiveness and lack of purposefulness while carrying out the duties most commonly expected of him. For example, there is lack of planning in the schedule for class-room visitation. Few teachers are visited by the inspector more than once in a year, though on paper there are three kinds of visits. The duration of the visits is planned in terms of minutes instead of in terms of lesson units and purposeful guidance. No time is alloted to the establishment of rapport between the inspector and the teachers before the actual visitation of the class-room, nor is room left to invited consultative visits where teachers out of their own accord seek the help of the supervising inspector. The need for increasing the number of supervisors is obvious.

The program of class-room observation also lacks extensi planning. The inspector jots down a few notes in a haphazard way as circumstances inspire him. Varying purposeful plans are presented in Chapter Four to serve as inspiring suggestions, from which the Syrian inspectors may draw to formulate their own personal outlines and programs.

Moreover, the reports prepared by the Syrian inspectors are judicial and subjective. The forms are filled with vague adjectives such as "good", "fair", etc. A brief description of the observed lesson with a summary of strong and weak points of the teachers visited is much better. Anyway, this work should not tax the time and effort of the supervisor whose chief task is that of educational guide and consultant.

Finally, counseling or post-visitation conferences are scarce, short in duration and lacking in planning. If the importance of counseling, as a useful means of improving instruction and reforming the school life, is realized, then it should be clear that the personal conference needs real preparation.

All these prevalent inspectorial practices evaluated are at best teacher - centered, and therefore somewhat embarrassing for the teacher. The recommendations to improve them are practical in that the frame of reference of the present centralized system is left untouched. It is tomorrow's task, however, to bring about certain fundamental changes in the Inspectorate, after the enlightening experience of the west has been taken into consideration.

In the West a movement for in-service teacher training has been going on for a quarter of a century. It aims at the development of the professional spirit of the teacher while he is at work in the school. The supervisor responsible for the in-service growth of teachers does not limit himself only to classroom observations and post-visitation conferences. He tries to go about the task in accord with what the teachers prefer and choose as helpful procedures. His experience indicates for him that "frequent use of cooperative techniques seems to be the better procedure.."[1]

The writer recommends that such a movement which enhances teacher's growth should start very soon in Syria and in

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1. Assoc. for Supervision and curric., Leadership Through Supervision, p. 87.

big strides. An extended program may be launched by group work, to be complemented by individual follow-up.

The Syrian inspector, if relieved from routine snooping, can with benefit allot half of the academic year to devising varied helpful measures for groups of teachers to be assisted in their professional development. The group work does not only save time, but it also has many other positive advantages. The concept of supervision as a cooperative democratic enterprise is fully realized. The initiative and the self-realization of teachers are motivated in a group atmosphere, where there is social facilitation and interaction of minds. Moreover, any discussion about common faulty practices is not personal, and hence it is less likely to have ego-involvement. Finally, there will be built in the group a relatively common basis of standards which will make it easier for both the teacher and the inspector to go on with the complementary task of individualized in-service growth.

Now, what are some of the possible group opportunities that the Syrian inspector may arrange?

First, he may assist the teachers to organize themselves into committees, associations, and panels to study problems of education and discuss recent ideas and practices of instruction. It is encouraging, in this connection, to recall that the specialized secondary school inspectors confer sometimes with teachers of different divisions of one class. We can build on this and demand that all inspectors, secondary and primary alike, should make real use of group conferences, at least in the beginning of each academic year. There are also in Syria

some rudimentary conferences of teachers, sponsored by the teachers' Syndicate, for the protection of the rights of teachers. In fact, in some important cities like Damascus and Aleppo there are teachers' societies which mostly indulge in recreational activities. These existing associations of teachers, with a little cooperative effort from the side of inspectors, can introduce into their programs the professional spirit of progressive growth and development. Besides capitalizing these existing agencies for the in-service teacher training, inspectors may cooperate with the principals of schools to bring about fruitful teachers' meetings in every single school in Syria. They may also motivate teachers to establish new educational committees and panels which may concern themselves mostly with the investigation of educational matters in their vastest scope.

Second, and closely related to the encouragement of teachers' associations, is the provision of an adequate professional library of education in every school, as a part of the group in-service teacher training program. Associations and committees are very limited means when they degenerate into emotional debates or arm-chair authorizations of aggressive inspectors, principals and teachers. To gain effectiveness the group discussions should be based on at least vicarious experience. Such an experience comes mostly from reading some of the educational literature. Thus the inspectors, backed by financial aid from the Ministry of Education, should select some of the best classics of education either in the original foreign language or in Arabic translation. Periodicals of education in

Arabic, French and English should be provided also. If this proves too expensive for the Ministry, then there should be at least one such adequate library in every Syrian city. There is also the possibility of starting a small growing library of education in each school, financed by local group and individual grants. In this way, the responsibility for reform will be shared by the government and the conscious citizens. Not only the professional spirit is heightened by the execution of this suggestion, but also the civic consciousness is enhanced after a publicity effort from the side of inspectors and principals.

Third, model teaching programs may be emphasized more and arranged in a better way than usually prevalent in Syria at the present time. An experimental approach to the study of problems of instruction can be adopted in these programs. It becomes the inspector's task to prepare the teachers for adequate observation before visitation and to assist them after visitation to evaluate the conducted experimental teaching. The emphasis that should be put here is not on the number of such visits as much as on the cooperative effort needed for organizing and planning the educative atmosephere which may inspire many a teacher to experiment for himself and evaluate his techniques in a critical way.

Finally, the inspector may help in providing Summer seminars and workshops for teachers as a group to develop and grow. Fortunately, such a suggestion is not completely new for Syria. The Ministry of Education has started since the Summer of 1950 such a program by holding a conference in Damascus, lasting for

fifteen days. The logical consequence should be the popularization of this work in every province so that all teachers, trained in teacher training institutions or untrained, may find available opportunities in the rich and varied programs to develop and grow professionally. Inspectors, professors of education, principals of schools and leading teachers can cooperate together to render this service successful and interesting. For the untrained teachers, the Teachers Training Institutions may conduct a special seminar for two months or so. As to those teachers who are interested in sports and co-curriculum activities, special workshops may be arranged to assist them in gaining more experience and skill. In fact, even a schedule of excursions to the different parts of Syria may be useful. The important thing, here, is the diversification of the Summer programs of in-service training, so that they represent different pertinent interests and cover a variety of experiences. The Ministry cannot force teachers extrinsically to participate in these training opportunities. Only when the opportunities make claim to the intrinsic nature of man do the teachers genuinely participate in the programs.

After the mass work, there should come the individual follow-up. Many teachers may not have grasped all the ideas and practices presented and discussed in the group conferences. These ideas and practices may have been general, while some of the teachers have their own more or less specific problems. As there are individual differences among students, so is the case with the members of the teaching staff. Every single teacher is a unique individual to be dealt with, in accord with his potentialities

and interests. Supervisory guidance, in the last analysis, is following-up the individual, stage by stage, in his development as a growing teacher.

The Syrian inspector, instead of merely observing teachers in classrooms and rating them in his reports, may very well resort more and more to individualized conferences, or counseling, where a fair chance is given to the teacher to express his problems, procedures for the solution of the problems, evaluation of the procedures and possible new lines of attack. The counseling, recommended here, is not giving advice, nor entering into debate or passing judgments, as is the case with many of the Syrian inspectors at present. It is assisting the teacher to analyze his work and construct for himself a purposeful program for growth. Establishing rapport, asking for self-analysis, respect for the different opinions of the teacher and honest constructive criticism are the essential ingredients of good counseling. Thus the supervisor has a very delicate role in counseling, that of commending the good, condemning the unsatisfactory and suggesting the better.

In his individualized contacts with teachers, the Syrian inspector may find it useful to arrange for some to visit eminent colleagues in neighboring schools, and to refer others politely to certain books or periodicals. At times he may put at the disposal of teachers his personal experience in preparing visual aids, solving disciplinary problems, diagnosing the difficulties of retarded students, etc. At all times, however, the inspector has to devise means, direct or indirect, to start teachers to evaluate their activities by themselves, face their faults courageously and get inspired to solve their own problems adequately.

Then, recognition of leadership among teachers is at the base of individual enhancement. As teachers exert their efforts to improve educational situations, they like to be recognized. Therefore, it behoves the inspector to find ways of rewarding those who are worthy of reward. He can at least be ready with sincere oral praise. He may write a personal letter to the leading teacher, congratulating him and stimulating him to further advance. He may also publish successful results of teachers who have the initiative for experimentation. Exhibits of collections of illustrative material, of neat notebooks and student works may be arranged, with the names of the leading teachers mentioned in recognition. Contests for encouraging teachers to participate in the writing of educational articles, with financial awards for winners, may be used with benefit. Perhaps, the best way to encourage the growth of individual teachers is to improve the system of salary promotion, so that not only years of service may be recognized, but also leadership may be given its right value.

All these suggestions for the modernization of the Syrian Inspectorate will be sterile if the qualifications of inspectors are not raised. On the affective side, the inspector should be characterized by faith in the common sense of the people, clarity about the direction of the educative goal, enthusiasm in his work, friendly affection towards the group of teachers he is to work with, and integrity in recognizing leadership among them. On the intellectual side, there are also some qualifications demanded by the task of supervision. The inspector should enjoy a

high standard of general culture and a wide range of academic preparation. He should, at the same time, possess a thorough understanding of educational theories and practices and a first-hand experience in matters of school administration and instruction. Most of the Syrian primary school inspectors, however, fall short of adequate preparation, for the great majority of them hold only a teaching normal certificate. As already discussed in the first chapter, the professional preparation of the teacher training institutions is by no means adequate even for teachers, much less for inspectors. Therefore, it is seen fitting to recommend a special university preparation in an integrated program consisting of education, psychology and sociology courses in addition to some academic specialization in one field. For secondary school inspectors, who are found lacking in professional training, a post-graduate preparation in one academic subject as well as in the teaching of it is suggested. From amongst both kinds of inspectors the Ministry is advised to send the potential leaders abroad for getting some practical experience in supervision.

Finally, it cannot be hoped that, in the future, any underlying change - from authoritarian or coercive inspection to cooperative supervision - be made, while the present centralized system of education prevails. Not until the state withdraws the rigid control it still exercises on education in Syria can one expect to find the inspector who is "to advise, consult, stimulate and gather information rather than control and dictate."[1] It is strongly recommended, therefore, that the Syrian authorities

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1. Kandel, Comparative Education, p.215.

should hold a committee to re-study the whole organization of national education and reach an adaptation which takes into consideration the advantages of both the centralized and decentralized systems.

As the authoritarian hierarchy of the centralized system gives way to mild decentralized flexibility, tomorrow's assignment to render the Syrian Inspectorate up-to-date is indeed great. Supervision as coercive inspection or authoritarian over-telling will quickly vanish. Even supervision as guidance will not be a satisfactory aim, for neither growth by self-development nor freedom for teacher's experimentation and participation in educational leadership are fully incorporated in this concept as yet. Nay, supervision as democratic leadership is the only logical consequence for the independent democratic Syrian Republic. With this concept of supervision as leadership in mind, the supervisor manipulates situations and provides educative opportunities which stimulate teachers to progress and grow out of their own accord. In this way, the teachers play their roles and become contributing partners in the determination of what they are trying to achieve through education. The supervisor, on the other hand, perceives his role as being a consultant who may make suggestions here and there to teachers to make them aware of new educational needs which they may not otherwise have sensed. As teachers start to feel some problems of instruction and as they show great desire to find the solutions for these problems, the supervisor steps in to organize opportunities which are conducive to the learning of teachers by themselves. Thus

supervision becomes a cooperative enterprise in which both the supervisor and the teacher share together experiences and efforts for the purpose of perpetual growth for all parties concerned in education. This is tomorrow's task for Syria in the realm of educational supervision.

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# A P P E N D I X

Here are the objective results of a questionaire of four parts, answered by 18 secondary school teachers and 72 primary school teachers.

The distribution of the number of teachers representing the different provinces of Syria is as follows:-

| Province | No.of Prim.Sch.Teachers |
|---|---|
| Damascus | 27 |
| Aleppo (including Idlib) | 19 |
| Latakia | 14 |
| Euphrates | 7 |
| Homs | 5 |
| Total no.of prim.sch. teachers. | 72 |

| Province | No.of Sec.Sch.Teachers |
|---|---|
| Aleppo (including Idlib) | 7 |
| Latakia | 6 |
| Euphrates | 3 |
| Damascus | 2 |
| Total no.of Sec.sch. teachers | 18 |
| Final Total of all Teachers | 90 |

## APPENDIX - PART A

### COMPARATIVE STATISTICAL FINDINGS (1950-51)

1. The mean of the annual number of the inspectoral class visits per teacher is 1.08 for primary schools and 1.22 for secondary schools.
2. The mean of the annual number of the principal's class visits per teacher is 4.21 for primary schools and .58 for secondary schools.
3. The average length of the conference between the inspector and the teacher is 11.70 minutes in primary schools and 12.38 minutes in secondary schools.

## APPENDIX - PART B

### ATTITUDES OF TEACHERS TO INSPECTION

| | No.of Teachers | |
|---|---|---|
| | Yes | No |
| 1. In my opinion, the visits of the inspector stimulate the teacher to plan his lessons and improve his methods. | 66 | 24 |
| 2. I do not find in inspection any benefit. | 22 | 68 |
| 3. The old teachers and the trained teachers do not have to be inspected. | 27 | 63 |
| 4. Inspection enhances the professional growth of teachers. | 46 | 44 |
| 5. The work of the inspector is akin to the work of the detective police. | 48 | 42 |

| | No. of Teachers | |
|---|---|---|
| | Yes | No |
| 6. I would like to have the inspector visit me more often. | 56 | 34 |
| 7. I do not feel comfortable when the inspector is visiting my class. | 23 | 67 |
| 8. I agree to extend the rights of the inspector in matters of promotion, transfer and dismissal of teachers. | 35 | 55 |
| 9. I believe in the worthwhileness of inspection, despite of its shortcomings at present. | 76 | 14 |
| 10. Inspection in Syria has reached the stage of cooperative sharing of experiences. | 26 | 64 |

## APPENDIX - PART C

## SOME ANNOYANCES OF INSPECTED TEACHERS

| | No. of Teachers | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Never | In some Degree | Much |
| 1. I am annoyed by the inspector who makes his comments in front of students in my class. | 11 | 12 | 67 |
| 2. The report of the inspector worries me. | 62 | 16 | 12 |
| 3. I am disturbed by the inspector who takes notes in front of me. | 55 | 16 | 19 |
| 4. It annoys me to have an inspector visit my class and disappear without conferring with me. | 9 | 14 | 67 |

## APPENDIX - PART D

### THE PERSONALITY OF INSPECTORS AS DESCRIBED BY TEACHERS

| | | No. of Teachers | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Seldom | Some Times | Often |
| 1. | The inspectors are sympathetic and pleasant. | 23 | 41 | 26 |
| 2. | The inspectors are strict, harsh and awful | 33 | 23 | 34 |
| 3. | The inspectors have strong and influential personalities. | 40 | 33 | 17 |
| 4. | The inspectors tend to become dictatorial and authoritarian. | 23 | 16 | 51 |
| 5. | The inspectors are versed in matters of education and instruction. | 33 | 38 | 19 |
| 6. | The inspectors are too haughty to listen to teachers. | 38 | 22 | 30 |
| 7. | The inspectors are zealous for reform and guidance. | 39 | 35 | 16 |
| 8. | The inspectors seem to care for pretty and superficial things. | 16 | 23 | 51 |
| 9. | The inspectors are impartial in their estimation of the efficiency of teachers. | 36 | 33 | 21 |
| 10. | The inspectors like to show off and attract the attention of students. | 40 | 15 | 35 |
| 11. | The inspectors are fault-finding critics. | 18 | 29 | 43 |

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