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Battle Over the Chicago Schools: The Superintendency of William Mcandrew

Arthur Norman Tarvardian
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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

BATTLE OVER THE CHICAGO SCHOOLS:
THE SUPERINTENDENCY OF WILLIAM MCANDREW

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND POLICY STUDIES

BY

ARTHUR NORMAN TARVARDIAN

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

MAY 1992

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Finally, I would like to dedicate this work to the memory of my mother, Anna Harutunian Tarvardian.

VITA

The author, Arthur Norman Tarvardian, was born in Chicago Illinois. Mr. Tarvardian attended the Chicago public schools. He received his Bachelor of Science Degree from Loyola University of Chicago, with a major in history. The author holds a Masters Degree conferred by De Paul University, with a major in English, and another Masters Degree conferred by Loyola University of Chicago, with a major in administration and supervision.

Mr. Tarvardian has been employed by the Chicago Public Schools since 1966. He is married to Pauline Margaret Abraham Tarvardian, Ph.D., and has three children, John Abraham, A.B. Xavier University of Ohio; Paul Arthur, A.B. Loyola University of Chicago; and, Madeleine Anne, A.B. Boston University.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
VITA	iii
CHAPTER	
I. EVOLUTION OF THE OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS	1
Introduction	1
Historical Perspective	2
The Growth of Chicago	8
Advent of the Chicgo Public Schools	11
The Office of the Superintendent of Schools ..	17
Defining the Superintendent's Role: 1854-1898	20
The Harper Report - 1898	34
The Creation of a Strong Superintendency	40
The Otis Bill - 1917	43
II. POLITICAL MANIPULATION OF THE SCHOOLS: 1915-1923	53
The Mayoralty of William Hale Thompson	53
Genealogy	53
Early Life	57
Entry into Politics	58
Mayoral Primary of 1915	68
Mayoral Election of 1915	72
Precedent for Political Intervention.....	75
Political Domination of the Superintendency ..	77
Competing Board of Education	79
Ouster of Charles E. Chadsey	88
III. THE ERA OF REFORM	102
The Mayoralty of William E. Dever 1923-1927 ..	103
Genealogy	103
Entry into Politics	104
Dever's Political Emergence	106
Dever School Board Appointments	116
IV. THE SUPERINTENDENCY OF WILLIAM MCANDREW	120
Background	120

Educational Philosophy	127
Close Supervision	129
Efficiency in the Schools	133
Full Utilization of the School Plant	136
The Platoon School	139
Junior High Schools	142
Teachers' Councils	146
V. THE SEEDS OF REVOLT	161
Strife Over Junior High Schools	162
Advent of the Platoon Schools	182
Demise of the Teachers' Councils	188
The Battle is Engaged	190
VI. THE FALL FROM GRACE	203
The Election Campaign of 1923	203
The 1927 Mayoral Primary	206
Denouement	212
Epilogue	222
BIBLIOGRAPHY	224

CHAPTER I

EVOLUTION OF THE OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

INTRODUCTION

On 9 January 1924, William McAndrew was elected the thirteenth superintendent of the Chicago public schools in the hope that he would restore confidence in a school system wearied by years of strife and scandal. Forty-four months later, the man whose selection was described as an act of inspiration,¹ was charged with insubordination, peremptorily suspended and subsequently tried by the board of education on a charge of insubordination. Although McAndrew's tenure represented a single era in the history of Chicago's schools, his conduct of the office and the events which precipitated his removal did not occur in historical isolation. Therefore, to give the events perspective, it was necessary to examine the genesis of the office of superintendent of schools, the evolution of the authority of superintendent of the Chicago public schools from professional manager to chief executive officer, the historical events which preceded his incumbency and the unique political and social milieu in which the perspectives, practices and policies McAndrew championed led inexorably to his ouster.

¹Chicago Tribune, 11 January 1924.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

When the Constitution of the United States was ratified in 1789, the common school had not developed, unified school districts had not evolved and the office of superintendent of schools had not been created. Most urban educational systems of the early nineteenth century had begun as loosely structured village schools with few students, a rudimentary curriculum and minimal operating expenses. The initial administration of these early urban schools represented a "legacy of village patterns of control"² in which school governance was in the hands of legally elected boards of education which involved themselves in the operations of the schools.³

As the nation's population increased, the number of schools and the complexity of operation also increased and the village control of schools functioned less effectively. When management responsibilities expanded to include the supervision of teachers, pupils, instruction and finances, school committees were formed to assist those charged with the administrative operation of the school. Accountable to those who had appointed them, the primary duties of these

²David B. Tyack, The One Best System (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), 28.

³Thomas McDowell Gilland, "The Origin and Development of the Power and Duties of the City School Superintendent" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1935), 264.

committees were to supervise and inspect the work of the schools at regular intervals. With the growth of cities, this administrative structure also began to function less effectually, for as the number of schools increased, the visitations and inspections of schools took more time from the business interests of committee members than they were willing to invest.⁴

Between 1790 and 1850, when the nation's population increased five-fold, the character of American life underwent striking change as the nation became increasingly urban. When the first census was conducted in 1790, fewer than 160,000 people, or 3.9 percent of the population, lived in communities of 5,000 or more people. By 1820, when the population stood at 9.6 million, an increase of 145 percent in thirty years, city populations had burgeoned, increasing by more than 243 percent.⁵ This period of unabated urban growth paralleled the development of manufacturing when waves of immigrants were drawn to the nation's cities by the availability of work. By 1850, the population of the United States had increased 140 percent, but the population of urban centers had increased by 410 percent. Although rural America grew by 139 percent in

⁴Ibid., 72, 264.

⁵The Statistical History of the United States from Colonial Times to the Present (Stamford: np, 1965), 24.

the period 1790-1820, its rate of population growth had declined to 119 percent by 1850.⁶

The administrative organization of schools which functioned effectively when the nation was sparsely settled could no longer meet the educational demands imposed by the rapid growth of cities during the first half of the nineteenth century. As school enrollments rose, school facilities became inadequate and the management of teachers and students became too arduous for local school committees. Increasingly, these committees sought relief through the appointment of legally constituted committees or boards to share their duties and responsibilities. Ultimately, the entire administrative responsibility for the schools devolved upon boards of education. Their efficiency was impaired, however, since members usually served one year terms, rendering boards ill equipped to cope with the increasing complexities of school administration because they lacked both continuity and permanence. Acknowledging that they could no longer manage the operation of the schools, school committees sought appointment of a person who would bring continuity and personal commitment to the administration of a city's schools. The person selected to play that role was destined to be the superintendent of schools.⁷

⁶Ibid., 28.

⁷Gilliland, 264.

Though etymology of the noun superintendent as it applies to school systems is uncertain, its application to school systems derived from governmental authority. The Massachusetts legislature empowered the school committee of Tisbury to superintend the schools and the Congress of the United States, in 1804, conferred upon the city council of Washington D. C., the power to provide for the establishment and superintendence of public schools.⁸ In 1847, the Brooklyn, New York city council committee on public schools sought appointment of a superintendent:

for the more efficient direction of the activities of the board of education. We run a serious risk of having incompetent supervisors and a divided responsibility, as it must be in such a case, which amounts generally to neglect. We have always to apprehend either this, or worse, that clothed with a little brief authority, and almost necessarily totally ignorant of their duties, they will legislate to the serious injury of all concerned.⁹

Schools boards in Louisville, Providence and St. Louis were the first cities to hire a superintendent of schools, in 1837, 1839, and 1839, respectively. Within twenty years, fifteen cities, including Chicago, had also created the position.¹⁰ When the office was created, the superintendent

⁸Theodore Lee Reller, The Development of the Superintendency of Schools in the United States (Philadelphia: By the author, 1935), 31.

⁹Report of the City Council Committee on Public Schools, 1847, 9-10. Quoted in Theodore Lee Reller, The Development of the Superintendency of Schools in the United States (Philadelphia: By the author, 1935), 41.

¹⁰Gilland, 34.

was not considered the chief executive officer of the school system and boards of education frequently hired or used officials other than a superintendent to administer their schools. Until 1840, Chicago benefited from the services of the Cook County Commissioner of School Lands who distributed state school funds.¹¹

When the superintendency was established, the duties of the office were not carefully defined and expectations for the role of the first superintendents of schools differed from city to city. The school board in Baltimore wanted a superintendent who would carefully scrutinize the adoption of books instead of entrusting this decision to laymen who might succumb to the influence of friends or book agents. The San Francisco school board instructed its superintendent to rent or otherwise to obtain an adequate number of buildings for schoolhouses and to prepare them for operation. In Buffalo, the school board was so poorly informed about its schools, the superintendent was instructed "to ascertain where the schools were situated" and to do so, he was sent out with horse and buggy to make inquiries.¹²

The growth of strong central school boards and the appointment of superintendents ultimately gave rise to a

¹¹Joseph M. Cronin, The Control of Urban Schools: Perspectives on the Power of Educational Reformers (New York: Collier-Macmillan Publishers, 1973), 54.

¹²Ibid.

meritocracy of policy makers and highly paid city school administrators.¹³ In 1882, the Public Education Association of Philadelphia made explicit the model of centralized authority which would distinguish the office of superintendent:

The Board of Education holds the same relation to the public schools as a Board of Directors holds to a bank or a railroad. It would be as reasonable to argue that the Board of Directors of the Pennsylvania should run the road, and dispense with a President, as to argue that the Board of Education should assume the duties of superintendents.¹⁴

Increasingly, the rationale for a strong central administration was espoused by a civic elite who served as members of school boards in many industrial cities and it was this viewpoint which gave currency to the growing belief that a school system could and should be run like any other industrial bureaucracy. Many educational strategists advocated for the creation of a central bureaucracy as the "one best system of education" to meet the pressing internal problems that sheer numbers and chaotic conditions had wrought in the schools of villages that were becoming large cities.¹⁵

¹³Ibid., 59.

¹⁴Public Education Association of Philadelphia, Annual Report, 1882, 8-9. Quoted in Joseph M. Cronin, The Control of Urban Schools: Perspective on the Power of Educational Reformers (New York: Collier-Macmillan Publishers, 1973), 59.

¹⁵Tyack, 30.

Superintendents also came to believe that there was one best system of education for urban populations. Impressed with the order, rationality, continuity, efficiency and impartiality of industrial organizations, they sought to replace confused and erratic means of control with the careful allocation of power and functions.¹⁶

Gradually, superintendents created a more bureaucratic system as their recommendations to hire supervisors and assistants, to make system wide rules and to treat teacher and parent requests objectively and impersonally won acceptance.¹⁷ The administrative role of the superintendent of the Chicago Public Schools was shaped by the city's growth, and as the school system expanded to meet the needs of a growing city, the task of managing the school system also increased in scope.

THE GROWTH OF CHICAGO

Growing from fewer than 30,000 inhabitants in 1837, Chicago's population soared 500 percent to 1.5 million inhabitants by 1900 because its geographic location on the southern shores of Lake Michigan favored the city as a transfer point between East and West.¹⁸ The effects on

¹⁶Ibid., 28-29.

¹⁷Cronin, 58-59.

¹⁸Henry Justin Smith, Chicago's Great Century: 1833-1933 (Chicago: Consolidated Publishers, Inc., 1933), 34-35.

Chicago's population due to the mass migrations across the continent following the opening of the Oregon Trail in the 1840s and the discovery of gold in California in 1849 were profound. With the coming of the railroads, the growing metropolis became a rail hub and the commercial center of the midwest.¹⁹ During this period, Chicago also became a city of families as the percentage of single males declined and the percentage of women and children increased. From fewer than 10,000 families in 1854, the number of families rose to almost 60,000 by 1872.²⁰

In less than a generation, Chicago had grown from a tiny frontier hamlet to a boom town by the autumn of 1871. Wheat, corn, cattle, hogs, railroads, farm machinery, lumber and shoes and a dozen other industries made Carl Sandburg's "city of the broad shoulders" the fastest growing in the United States. Spread across 23,000 acres, the city boasted more than 334,000 residents and 59,500 structures valued at more than \$620 million. Much of Chicago's phenomenal growth was reduced to ashes on Sunday, 8 October 1871, as the most destructive fire in American history swept the central city. When the flames were finally drowned by a steady rain on Tuesday, 10 October, more than 2,000 acres lay in charred ruins. Property losses exceeded \$200 million; 18,500

¹⁹Ibid., 35.

²⁰Bessie Louise Pierce, A History of Chicago (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1940), 2:5.

structures and 15 schools had been destroyed; three hundred were dead; and, more than 100,000 were homeless.²¹

The vigor and the extravagant scale which Chicagoans brought to the immense task of rebuilding the city were captured by historian Alfred T. Andreas' eyewitness account:

It is common to see ten or a dozen or fifty houses rising at once, but when one looks upon, not a dozen or fifty, but upon ten thousand houses rising and ten times that number of busy workmen coming and going, and listens to the noise of countless saws and hammers and chisels and axes and planes, he is bewildered.²²

Within three years, all traces of the devastation visited upon the city by the Great Fire were gone. Formerly a city of wood, reconstruction was carefully regulated and architecturally impressive stone structures rose from the ruins. Land values again soared and trade and commerce resumed in a new business district relocated to the southern end of the city. The population continued to increase and Chicago became a cosmopolitan city whose inhabitants represented every conceivable nationality. To accommodate Chicago's growing population, numerous outlying towns were annexed. Between 1871 and 1893, the city's corporate limits increased more than 425 percent, from thirty-five square miles

²¹David Lowe, ed., The Great Chicago Fire (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1979), 1, 5.

²²A. T. Andreas, History of Chicago (Chicago: A. T. Andreas, Publisher, 1884), 3:54.

to more than one hundred eighty-five square miles.²³ The implications of such phenomenal growth on the Chicago's educational programs were pronounced for increased enrollments posed difficult administrative problems. Notwithstanding the need for the unified administration of the schools, the superintendent's efforts to manage a growing school system, circumscribed by the legal restrictions placed upon his role from its inception, prevented him from functioning as the administrative head of the school system.

ADVENT OF THE CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

On 6 February 1835, the Illinois General Assembly provided for a special school system for Township 39 north, Range 14 east of the Third Prime Meridian, the area of which constituted the boundaries of the city of Chicago. By terms of the charter, a modified Massachusetts district system was established in which control of schools was shifted from county commissioners to the township. Voters were empowered to elect, on the first Monday of each June, five or seven school inspectors, the duties of whom were to examine teachers, prescribe text books, visit schools and recommend

²³Joan Duck Raymond, "The Evolution of the Chicago Public School Superintendency" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 1967), 22.

to the County Commissioner the division of the township into districts, and other supervisory tasks.²⁴

Moreover, the voters within each district were to elect three Trustees of the Common Schools whose duties were to hire teachers; to insure that the schools remained free; to manage school buildings within the district; and, to administer the school finances of the district. The trustees were also authorized to levy and collect taxes for school operations, excepting teachers' salaries. The tax levy was limited to .5 percent on taxable property and authority to levy additional taxes resided with the voters.²⁵

Authority over educational policies was vested in the three district trustees who were required to provide school programs which met with approval the of the inspectors. Though charged with management of the schools, the school inspectors' powers were restricted by the district trustees. Since both offices were elective, both were governed by decisions of the voters.²⁶

²⁴Frank Lucente, Jr., "The Administrative Organization Structure of the Chicago Public Schools: 1837-1949" (Ph.D. diss., Loyola University of Chicago, 1987), 27.

²⁵Shepherd Johnston, "Historical Sketches of the Public School System of the City of Chicago," Twenty-fifth Annual Report of the Chicago Board of Education for the Year Ending 31 July 1879 (Chicago: Clark and Edwards, Printers, 1880), 4.

²⁶Ibid., 5.

When the Illinois General Assembly adopted the charter which incorporated Chicago as a city on 4 March 1837, the charter of 1835 was superceded. The voters lost their franchise to establish policy and to control operation of the schools and legal administrative control and management of the public schools was vested in the common council, the city's legislative body.²⁷ Section 83 of the charter heralded "an epoch in the history of the public schools, for the management thereof, excepting the control of the funds was, by the provisions of the charter, vested in the Common Council of the City of Chicago,"²⁸ which:

shall, by Virtue of their office, be Commissioners of Common Schools in and for the said city, and shall have and possess all the rights, powers, and authority necessary for the proper management of said schools.²⁹

Exercising their authority as ex officio commissioners of schools, the common council appointed the first board of school inspectors on 12 May 1837. The common council lacked the authority to reorganize the administration of the public school system which was inadequate and in which twenty-one teachers struggled to teach 1,919 students.³⁰ Although the charter of 1837 abrogated their franchise to elect school

²⁷Lucente, 30, 27.

²⁸Andreas, 1:209.

²⁹Johnston, 5.

³⁰Mary J. Herrick, The Chicago Schools: A Social and Political History (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1971), 29.

inspectors, the voters still retained their power to elect the three district trustees of the common schools and to have a voice in the organization of the districts. These vestiges of voter control were abolished in 1839 by special legislation of the General Assembly which transferred jurisdiction of public schooling in a township to local municipal governments.³¹ In Chicago, the act vested jurisdiction over the township's public schools in the common council which gained taxation powers to augment the school fund, the right to appoint not only the school trustees but also the district trustees, and the right to prescribe the duties of both.³²

By 1850, however, it was apparent that the public schools were not serving the needs of Chicago's 13,500 school aged youth who represented 45 percent of the city's 29,963 inhabitants.³³ In an attempt to meet this need, the Illinois General Assembly, on 16 February 1857, amended the charter of 1837. Provisions of the new charter "denominated and styled"³⁴ the board of school inspectors the board of education; increased its membership from seven to fifteen; abolished the office of district trustee, thereby abridging the last vestige of voter control; and, transferred the trustees' functions to

³¹Lucente, 34.

³²Ibid., 1:350.

³³Herrick, 27.

³⁴Johnston, 35.

the newly constituted board. These changes consolidated the schools into one system and devolved complete administrative authority over the schools in the board of education.³⁵

The Illinois General Assembly granted the city of Chicago its third charter on 13 February 1863. Intended to provide a broader base for municipal government, the new charter weakened the common council's firm hold over the city's public school system but vested authority to control the school fund and school lands in the city of Chicago:

The common council shall, at all times have the power to do all acts and things in relation to said school lands and school fund which they may think proper to their safe preservation and efficient management, and sell and lease these lands . . . Provided that the proceeds arising from such sales shall be added to, and constitute a part of, the school fund.³⁶

The charter granted the board of education exclusive governance to operate the schools, and the power "to enact ordinances as necessary for proper management of the schools."³⁷

When the charter of 1863 was amended by the General Assembly in 1865, greater administrative control of the schools was vested in the board of education. Section 16 of the amended charter transferred authority to appoint the school agent to the board, thereby giving jurisdiction over

³⁵Lucente, 28-45.

³⁶Laws and Ordinances Applicable to Schools in the City of Chicago (Chicago: Cameron, Amberg & Co., 1876), 4.

³⁷Ibid., 38.

the school fund, which previously had been administered by the common council, to the board.³⁸

Enactment of the Cities and Villages Act by the General Assembly in 1872 delineated the relationship between the common council and the board. Intended for cities with populations of 100,000 or greater, the Act strengthened the board of education and granted it, with concurrence of the common council, power to erect or purchase school buildings; buy or lease school sites; and, issue bonds upon credit of the city for the purchase or lease of buildings or lands and for capital improvements. Powers granted exclusively to the board were the authority to maintain, build, support and furnish schools; to employ teachers and to use school taxes if necessary to pay teachers' salaries; prescribe books and courses of study; and, to divide the city into school districts and alter or create districts as necessary. The Act specified that the common council had no power to dismiss the superintendent or to exercise powers delegated to the board of education; that real estate conveyed to the city was to be held in trust for use by the schools; and, that the city treasurer was to issue warrants signed by the mayor and city clerk for the release of school funds.³⁹

³⁸Henry Everet Dewey, "The Development of Public School Administration" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1937), 13-14.

³⁹Laws and Ordinances Applicable to Schools in the City of Chicago, 38.

In designating the board the jurisdictional body for the administration of the schools, the Cities and Villages Act denigrated the role of the superintendent to that of an advisor to the board of education. Henceforth, though the superintendent had charge of school business and educational duties, he was neither the administrative head of the schools nor was he legally empowered to serve in that capacity.⁴⁰ Ironically, in a prophetic report dated 14 January 1841, the Committee on Schools of the Common Council recommended that:

In order to have the schools managed as they should be, some man or body of men must have the control, and entire management of the same, so that some regular system can be adopted, and the whole proceedings in relation to schools known to those who have the control thereof.⁴¹

THE OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

The impetus to seek a professional manager to supervise the city's seven schools and three thousand students came from the board of school inspectors in an attempt to introduce order and unity to the system. Unable to resolve the numerous professional problems which daily arose in the schools, the inspectors requested the common council to promulgate an ordinance to provide for appointment of a superintendent to work under their supervision.⁴² At its creation in the mid-nineteenth century, the office of superintendent of the

⁴⁰Raymond, 54.

⁴¹Johnston, 8.

⁴²Dewey, 11.

Chicago Public Schools was designated "for the more convenient discharge of duties assigned by the law to the board of school inspectors, and to aid them in performing same. . . ." ⁴³ In that capacity, the superintendent was only one of several agents who served at its direction. Subordinated to the board of school inspectors, the office held neither power nor prestige.

Historically, the legal entity known as the office of superintendent of schools was created 20 November 1853, when it was:

ordained by the Common Council of the City of Chicago, For the more convenient discharge of the duties assigned by law to the board of school inspectors, and to aid them in the performance of the same, that the office of superintendent of public schools be and the same is hereby created, and there may be appointed by the board of inspectors, subject to the approval of the Common Council, a suitable person to fill the same. . . . Such appointment shall be made by the board of inspectors whenever a vacancy occurs in said office. The superintendent shall act under the advice and direction of the board of inspectors . . . and may at any time be removed by a vote of two-thirds of the council. ⁴⁴

In 1855, authority to remove the superintendent was vested in the board of schools inspectors by terms of the ordinance which provided for the city's first high school. Henceforth, the superintendent was no longer subject to

⁴³The Charter and Ordinances of the City of Chicago together with Acts of the General Assembly relating to the City, and other Miscellaneous Acts, with an appendix (Chicago: D. B. Cooke and Company, 1856), 388-389.

⁴⁴Ibid.

removal by the common council and the term of office was established as two years, appointments being biennial.⁴⁵

The ordinance which created the office did not stipulate qualifications of the "suitable person" selected "for the more convenient discharge of duties assigned by law to the board of school inspectors" for the management of the city's schools.

The first to legislate the qualifications of a superintendent of schools was the state of Wisconsin which, on 19 March 1859, empowered the Milwaukee school board to appoint a superintendent who was either a graduate of a college or normal school or the holder of a certificate granted by the state superintendent of public instruction. The legislation also stipulated that the person selected be "of suitable learning, experience, skill in the art of instruction and practical familiarity with the best methods of instruction and . . . the best methods of organizing and conducting a system of city schools."⁴⁶ Although the ordinance which created the office of superintendent failed to specify qualifications, the board of school inspectors, in one of its more important acts before being denominated and restyled a board of education in 1857, looked to the northeast for an

⁴⁵Laws and Ordinances Applicable to Schools in the City of Chicago, 244.

⁴⁶Annual Report of the Board of Education of the City of Milwaukee (Milwaukee: Board of Education, 1869), 81.

experienced educator to be the first superintendent of schools.

DEFINING THE SUPERINTENDENT'S ROLE: 1854-1898

The first person selected for the superintendency was John D. Philbrick, principal of the State Normal School in New Britain, Connecticut. Elected superintendent of schools on 30 December 1853 at an annual salary of \$1,500, Philbrick declined the appointment.⁴⁷ The position was then offered to John Clark Dore of New Hampshire and a graduate of Dartmouth College in 1847. Dore first taught and then served as principal of the Boylston Street School in Boston "where he gained golden opinion as a thorough educator."⁴⁸ His renown having reached Chicago, Dore was elected superintendent on 6 March 1854 to "introduce order and unity into the school organization and methods."⁴⁹

The situation to which Dore came in May 1854 was worse than he had anticipated. Unlike Boston, Chicago's school system was totally devoid of organization and the only authority the superintendent held over seven schools, 35 teachers and the 3,086 students in their charge was that given

⁴⁷Johnston, 33.

⁴⁸Biographical Sketches of the Leading Men of Chicago (Chicago: Wilson & St. Clair, Publishers, 1868), 485-488.

⁴⁹Hannah B. Clark, The Public Schools of Chicago: A Sociological Study (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1897), 18.

him by the board of inspectors.⁵⁰ In his first annual report as superintendent, submitted to the board in 1854, Dore described the anarchy of a system in which the schools in each district were unsupervised, ungraded, lacked a general promotion policy, uniformity in methods, curriculum and books, and in which no records of either student attendance or progress were maintained. He deplored the fact that parents kept their children out of school for "frivolous reasons," and veiled a recommendation with the comment that "a truant law in some Eastern states has had a wonderful effect." Dore also criticized the lack of teacher training, stating:

It has long been conceded that to become proficient in any art or profession, an apprenticeship is necessary, but by some unaccountable oversight, the art of teaching has been considered an exception, or rather, has received no consideration at all. School agents or trustees have not exercised the same judgment in the employment of teachers that they exercise in their own affairs.⁵¹

In his second annual report in 1855, Dore criticized methods of instruction, citing reliance on rote memorization with too little regard for instruction in the application of principles and too much choral reading. Dore urged parents to visit the schools to support the work of its teachers, for as an advocate of the common school, he was disturbed by the low regard in which the public schools were held:

⁵⁰Johnston, 33.

⁵¹Chicago Board of Education, First Annual Report of the Superintendent of the Public Schools of the City of Chicago for the Year Ending 31 December 1854 (Chicago: Chicago Daily Press, Book and Job Print, 1855), 12.

Shall there be an inferior class of schools which the more fortunate will not patronize because they can afford to pay high tuition, and which the less fortunate but proud spirited will not patronize because they are the schools of the common people? Or shall it be a class of schools so elevated as to be worthy of the patronage of the whole community?⁵²

Dore instituted many reforms, but his efforts were limited since actual control of the schools remained in the hands of the common council and the inspectors who routinely appointed or dismissed teachers without consulting the superintendent who himself could be removed from office at any time by a two-thirds vote of the council. Despite the deficiencies, he praised the advent of a high school in Chicago, an event he described as historical and innovative because it would be one of the first high schools west of the Alleghenies and it would enroll both boys and girls.⁵³

On 15 March 1856, after twenty-three months of service, John Dore resigned to pursue other interests. During his tenure, he instituted examinations to re-classify students and determine promotions, organized departments, introduced uniform text books, official class registers and attendance records. When he left office, school enrollment had doubled to over 6,100, forty-six teachers were employed, four new schools, including a high school, were built and the total annual expenditure for operation of the public schools was

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Lucente, 43.

fewer than \$29,000.⁵⁴ Dore was appointed a member of the Board of Education and served as president from 1860 to 1861.⁵⁵

William Harvey Wells, Chicago's second superintendent of schools, was born on a Connecticut farm in 1812. He received his professional training at Andover Teachers' Seminary which had been established in 1823 as the first teacher training institution in the nation. After completing his studies in 1834, Wells taught at Andover for eleven years. He resigned from the Andover faculty in 1845 to accept the principalship of the Putnam Free School in Newburyport, Massachusetts. He remained until 1854 when he was elected principal of the Westfield State Normal School which he resigned to succeed John Dore. Between 1845 and 1856, he served as the first editor of "Massachusetts Teacher," president of the Essex County Teachers Association and of the Massachusetts State Teachers Association.⁵⁶

During his eight year tenure, Wells refined the educational role of the superintendent. He instituted a promotion policy, student and teacher schedules, and reduced class sizes in primary rooms from 150 in 1856 to 77 by 1860. His professional achievements included inauguration of Chicago's first high school which opened 8 October 1856,

⁵⁴Clark, 34.

⁵⁵Andreas, 2:103.

⁵⁶Herrick, 39.

grading of the entire school population, implementation of A Graded Course of Instruction with Instructions to Teachers, a monumental course of study for each grade published in 1862, and restructuring the Saturday teachers' institutes established by ordinance of the common council in December 1850. The ordinance required teachers to hold institutes under the direction of the board of school inspectors and board rules required the teachers to meet the first three Saturdays of the month for a minimum of two hours. Teachers observed the requirement in the breach despite a reduction in the number of required sessions to two and then to one in 1856. Attendance at the institutes improved markedly after Wells became superintendent. Unlike the school inspectors, Wells valued his teachers and made the institutes participatory, in the belief that they were an "opportunity for the Superintendent to communicate freely with the teachers on all matters of general interest to the schools."⁵⁷

Perhaps his greatest single contribution was his abiding faith in his staff. In his last address as superintendent, Wells told his teachers:

I have never known a more competent, laborious and successful body of teachers than that which I meet today. You are also appreciated by the Board of Education and they intend to give you substantial evidence of this. . . . May every blessing attend you in your continued efforts to elevate and improve the public schools, and

⁵⁷Third Annual Report, 1856-1857, 9.

may a generation of children be made wiser and better by your self sacrificing labors.⁵⁸

Within five years, Wells had reorganized 14,199 students into five primary and five grammar grades plus the high school grades and had reassigned 123 teachers to teach these separate grades using the course of study he had written.⁵⁹ Management of the reorganized program required closer supervision and in his 1860 annual report, Wells complained that the duties of the superintendent were so arduous that he had insufficient time either to consult with teachers or to do the work assigned to him by the board.⁶⁰ Though a clerical assistant was hired in 1859,⁶¹ it was apparent to Wells that the rapid growth enrollments and coordination of school programs was reaching dimensions impossible for one man to manage, he requested additional assistance from the board:

The number of schools is now so much increased that a considerable portion of my time is consumed attending to the condition of the buildings and grounds, the various supplies, employment of janitors, etc. I have often been obliged to give my time to these matters when it was greatly needed in discharging other duties of pressing importance to the schools. I beg leave to inquire whether the time has not arrived when it will be economy for the Board to employ a competent agent who shall

⁵⁸William Harvey Wells, 1812-1885, In Memoriam (Chicago: Fergus Printing Co., 1887), 42-44.

⁵⁹Herrick, 42.

⁶⁰Seventh Annual Report, 1859-1860, 5.

⁶¹Johnston, 53.

devote his whole time to the special care of buildings and grounds.⁶²

The board complied in 1863 and hired James Ward, a former member, as the first building and supply agent.⁶³ Though the board provided an assistant, Wells resigned on 7 June 1864. In his letter of resignation, he stated that managing a school system which was increasing so rapidly was too taxing on his health and that he intended to enter a field in which the duties would be less demanding.⁶⁴ After leaving the school system, the common council elected Wells to the board of education on which he served as a member until his death in 1885, and of which he was president from 1872 to 1874.⁶⁵

Between the resignation of William Wells in 1864 and the appointment of E. Benjamin Andrews in 1898, the Chicago Public Schools had four superintendents. Josiah L. Pickard, formerly the Wisconsin State Superintendent of Schools, was appointed in 1864 and served for thirteen years. Pickard resigned in 1877, alleging that he was forced out by the board who wished to replace him with Duane Doty, his assistant. Doty, who had come from Detroit in 1875 as assistant superintendent, denied Pickard's claim that he had "marked out for himself an

⁶²Ninth Annual Report, 1862-1863, 29.

⁶³Dewey, 123.

⁶⁴Raymond, 63.

⁶⁵Chester A. Dodge, Reminiscences of a Schoolmaster (Chicago: Ralph Fletcher Seymour, Publisher, 1941), 37.

independent course of action . . . without asking the consent of or approval of the superintendent." Despite Doty's assurances to the board that there would be no cause of complaints in the future, Pickard refused to withdraw his resignation.⁶⁶ Doty's appointment two weeks later elicited an editorial response that "for once, vaulting ambition leaped just about the right height."⁶⁷ Doty served as superintendent only three years. George Howland, elected the fifth superintendent in 1880, started his career in 1858 as a teacher in the Chicago High School and came to the office with more than twenty years of experience as a principal. Howland resigned after ten years as superintendent and thirty-three years of service to the schools. Albert G. Lane, a member of the first two year normal program in the Chicago High School when it opened in 1856, succeeded Howland as superintendent in 1891 and served until 1898.⁶⁸ Due to the opposition of board member William Rainey Harper, President of the University of Chicago, who cited Lane's lack of formal education and Mayor Carter Harrison II, who "wanted the best for Chicago," Lane was replaced in July 1898 by E. [Elisha] Benjamin Andrews, President of Brown University.⁶⁹

⁶⁶Twenty-Third Annual Report, 1877-1878, 87.

⁶⁷Chicago Tribune, 14 September 1877.

⁶⁸Dodge, 37-61.

⁶⁹Herrick, 80.

Brought to Chicago to implement some of the reforms of the 1897 Harper Report through administrative means, Andrews proved inept. Instead of tightening the superintendent's authority, Andrews antagonized teachers and alienated the board from the very beginning of his regime. Assuming that his ideas and personnel recommendations would be accepted with the deference due his office and his learning, Andrews issued directives to the board which he passively expected to be obeyed. His authoritarianism caused continual discord and the board, ignoring both the Andrews and his directives, continued to dictate appointments and promotions and to conduct committee meetings without consulting him. His autocratic actions also alienated his subordinates, including Ella Flagg Young, who resigned in protest over Andrews' attempts to centralize authority. He proved so deficient in tack and political acumen that his selection as superintendent was soon brought into question:

It will not take long for the teachers, or even the board of education, to choose between old and well tried servants and a new and reckless one, whose mistakes are so frequent and annoying that even his acknowledged abilities cannot longer atone for them.⁷⁰

Resentful of his condescension, the board tendered Andrews a leave of absence two months before his term was to expire in 1900, whereupon he resigned and returned to the academic world

⁷⁰"Chicago Schools: Superintendent Andrews and the Chicago School Board," Chicago Teacher and School Board Journal 1 (January, 1899), 27.

to become president of the University of Nebraska.⁷⁰ At Andrews' departure, the board of education maintained 318 schools and rented space in 332 other buildings. Student enrollment had risen to 236,239 students; the teaching staff numbered 5,268; and, the schools' annual operating budget of \$6,785,501 exceeded the total cost of any other city agency.⁷¹

The authority which the board of education executed over the schools accumulated through years of practice as the school system expanded. The increasing demand for educational services overburdened board members who extended their administrative reach by creating additional positions rather than delegating power to the superintendent. Between 1865 and 1898, the board added the offices of school agent, attorney, clerk of the board of education, architect, superintendent of construction, auditor, chief engineer, and business agent to replace the office of building and supply agent which was abolished.

Increasing demand for educational services overburdened the superintendent as well and the board provided staff with specific duties, including school agent, attorney, business agent, assistant superintendent of high schools, eight general assistants, eight special assistants to oversee evening schools, modern languages, compulsory education, physical

⁷⁰Ibid., 28.

⁷¹Forty-Fourth Annual Report, 1897-1898, 38.

culture, singing and drawing.⁷² Though intended to assist the superintendent, this staff was under the direct supervision of the board. The superintendent, whose status was equal to that of his assistants, was relegated to the role of a chief-of-staff with no authority for the general administration of the schools.⁷³ Therefore, school superintendents, professors of education and other professional educators were arguing for the "professionalization" of the superintendency. These advocates of professionalization wanted a separation of powers between the lay board and the expert professional.

By 1897, operation of the school system was becoming too complex and too detailed to be managed by a citizen school board. While board members did not feel incompetent to conduct all the affairs of the schools, public sentiment was growing for a professionally trained executive to administer the educational policies adopted by the board. Since the early superintendents were neither experienced nor trained in all domains of public school administration, those elected to the position were not immediately clothed with all the executive and managerial powers discharged by the board of education.⁷⁴ Additionally, because the city ordinance which created the office did not mandate that administrative

⁷²Forty-First Annual Report, 1895-1986, 32.

⁷³Raymond, 65-66.

⁷⁴Gilland, 37.

authority be delegated to the superintendent, there was no separation of administrative and policy making functions between the board and the superintendent. That there was the need for a separation of authority was clearly evident to Josiah Pickard:

A system of public schools has two sides at least, the business and the instruction side, distinct and yet allied in defensive and offensive operations. Each needs a watchful care that neither may trench upon the province of the other. . . . In our larger cities there is a favorable opportunity for an entire separation of these two elements in administration . . . that the action of each side should be entirely distinct, free from direct interference with the specific work of the other, and yet understood as affording moral support.⁷⁵

Though lacking conferred administrative authority, superintendents influenced administrative change through recommendations made to the board in their annual reports. From John Dore's First Annual Report in 1855 advocating a Chicago High School to Albert Lane's 1896 recommendation to train teachers in the Cook County Normal School building, recommendations made by superintendents effected policy changes which reduced overcrowding in the schools and the pupil/teacher ratio, inaugurated the high school, manual training, and kindergartens programs, reduced principals' teaching duties to permit time for supervision, improved student attendance, implemented a graded system, raised

⁷⁵The Charter and Ordinances of the City of Chicago,
278.

achievement standards, and provided more adequate supplies and equipment.

Notwithstanding their influence, the rules and regulations of the board of education which governed the role of the superintendent had not changed from 1854 when the office was created. The system of school administration did not recognize the superintendent as the executive officer and to invest the him with administrative powers would require a radical departure from the established standard. Recommendations by board presidents in the board's Annual Reports for 1885-85, 1887-88 and 1896 to increase the superintendent's authority were never adopted. Though change would come, it would be strenuously opposed by those with vested interests who were accustomed to legislate and administer.

By 1898, management of the public schools had become inefficient and was in need of reorganization. The brief terms of board members precluded long term planning and the committee system adopted by the board proved ineffectual. The proliferation of standing and school committees, which stood at 100 in 1889 and to which were delegated specific duties, proved unwieldy. Often committee responsibilities overlapped and many decisions were made without the consent of the full board.⁷⁶ Business referred to committee was often

⁷⁶Lucente, 79.

neglected and the frequent delays interfered with the successful operation of the schools. Some committee members believed it incumbent upon them not only to legislate but also to administer, thereby performing duties for which a superintendent was being paid.⁷⁷

Public frustration, stoked by controversies over school revenues, curriculum, instructional methods, a teacher shortage and overcrowded schools, was vented on members of the board of education:

It is hardly necessary to say that members of the present school board are not up to standard. Many of them are uneducated, if not absolutely illiterate. They have been extravagant in the expenditure of people's money and teachers have been hampered by demogogical interference with the course of studies carried on in the schools.⁷⁸

This indictment of the board of education omitted the superintendent for whom sentiment was growing to place him at the helm of the public schools:

Were he given more freedom of action, selection of his assistants, and greater influence in the determination of courses of study, the office would become more attractive to educators of strong characters and independent views. . . . It is conceivable that the future character of the city . . . could be largely shaped by the policy outlined by the superintendent of schools. In actual fact, however, the position is only a restricted one, with conventional duties.⁷⁹

⁷⁷Reller, 68.

⁷⁸Chicago Tribune, 10 June 1886.

⁷⁹Clark, 95.

THE HARPER REPORT 1898

Responding to pressure by civic organizations, the newspapers and prominent Chicagoans, Carter H. Harrison, on 3 December 1897, requested the city council for permission to establish a blue-ribbon educational commission to investigate and report on the state of public education in Chicago. In obtaining city council approval for a thorough study of the school system, Mayor Harrison focused official attention on a growing public concern. In his plea, he expressed his dissatisfaction:

That the system in operation for the government and supervision of the public schools of Chicago is not giving a measure of results commensurate with the generous financial resources furnished by the people, is generally acknowledged.

With the continual growth of the city, additional burdens keep coming to the door of the board of education, which is seriously handicapped by having to deal with new conditions and difficult developments in the harness of antiquated methods.

A change is needed, a change is essential in regard to the educational and the business conduct of the school system. . . .⁸⁰

The commission was the culmination of earlier calls for reform in which school policy would be made by a small, non-partisan board of education that entrusted administration to a centralized staff of experts whose professionalism would assure efficiency and accountability.⁸¹ In 1893, Joseph Mayer

⁸⁰Report of the Educational Commission of the City of Chicago, by William R. Harper, Chairman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1899), vii.

⁸¹Tyack, 6, 7, 126-129.

Rice's survey of urban schools, The Public School System of the United States, identified Chicago as one of the cities most in need of organizational reform. His critique of the city's school system inspired formation of the Public School Committee of 50 in 1893 which proclaimed the right of the people of Chicago "to inquire minutely into the workings of the public school system, because if the criticisms are true there is grave cause for mortification and alarm."⁸²

The council promptly approved the request and Harrison appointed eleven members to the "Educational Commission of the City of Chicago" in January 1898; the board of education gave its approval for the commission in May.⁸³ Harrison's appointees to the commission included three city councilmen, two members of the board of education and one former board member. The most notable omission was the exclusion of teachers.⁸⁴ William Rainey Harper, the former board member, was selected to be chairman of the commission which soon became known as the "Harper Commission."

Harper, a classical scholar and dynamic leader, was selected by John D. Rockefeller in 1892 to preside over the founding of the new University of Chicago. Described as an academic empire builder, Harper was determined to make the

⁸²Chicago Tribune, 26 April 1893.

⁸³Report of the Educational Commission, vii-viii.

⁸⁴Herrick, 83.

University of the Chicago the best in the nation, if not the world. This ambition did not deter him from continuing to teach classes, edit journals and textbooks, and to conduct academic conferences. Harper, who was also keenly interested in public education, disregarded the trustees' warnings that the university demanded his full attention. Between 1894 and 1898, he not only served on the board of education but also accepted appointment as the first chairman of the education committee of the Chicago Civic Federation and the educational commission.⁸⁵

Once established, the commission worked diligently throughout 1898. To ensure public participation, the commission ordered that a letter of inquiry be "widely circulated among all classes of the community, insuring to all who desired, an opportunity to offer suggestions."⁸⁶ The commission also investigated other large urban school systems to make comparison with Chicago. Before concluding its investigation, the commission sought critical review of its recommendations by fifty of the nation's foremost educators, including the presidents of the nation's thirteen most prestigious universities and the superintendents of schools of fourteen of the largest cities.⁸⁷ The Report of the

⁸⁵Dictionary of American Biography, 1932 ed., s.v. "Harper, William Rainey," by Paul Shorey.

⁸⁶Report of the Educational Commission, viii-ix.

⁸⁷Ibid., viii.

Educational Commission of the City of Chicago was praised by prominent national educators, including Nicholas Murray Butler, who hailed the commission's findings as:

. . . at once the most complete and most illuminating document on the organization and administration of the school system of a large American city that has ever been published. It may be commended to students of educational administration at home and abroad as representative of the broadest knowledge, the highest skill, and the wisest experience that America has to contribute to the discussion and understanding of this important subject.⁸⁸

The Report indicted the administrative organization of the public school system and stated that its basic flaws were attributable to the city's phenomenal growth and the retention of an archaic administrative structure which "although good for a city of moderate size, is entirely inadequate for one of nearly two million."⁸⁹ When the commission began its investigation, responsibility for the schools was vested in the board of education whose members were appointed by the mayor with city council concurrence. The board, enlarged to twenty-one members in 1891 following several annexations, conducted school business through seventeen committees, a practice which the commission considered a major weakness. Besides making inordinate demands of members' time, the committee system encouraged opportunism and charges of graft and mismanagement in the purchase of supplies, school sites

⁸⁸Nicholas Murray Butler, "Educational Progress of the Year," Educational Review 18 (September, 1899), 263.

⁸⁹Report of the Educational Commission, xiii.

and buildings were frequent. In its appraisal, the Report declared:

The machinery of the school system requires radical improvement, for while Chicago has good schools, she has them in spite of grave defects in the present plan of administration. Although the board of education has usually acted in the interests of the people, this has come from no lack of opportunity or even of suggestions to act otherwise, because successive mayors have generally appointed worthy men and women to fill these places. The joint authority of the city council and the board of education in the purchase of sites and the erection of buildings has caused undue delay and, in some cases, has aroused public suspicion in the matter of school accommodations. The administration of school affairs through committees of the board of education has proved on the whole unsatisfactory; on the business side, it has from time to time resulted in the appointment and retention of unnecessary and inefficient employees, and has occasioned unwarranted difficulty and expense in the securing of school supplies.⁹⁰

Article I of the Harper Report, which considered the organization of the board, contained nine recommendations of which seven would increase the powers of the board of education at the expense of the city council: [1] continue appointment of board members by the mayor with the concurrence of the city council; [2] reduce the number members from twenty-one to eleven; [3] increase the term of office from three to four years; [4] restrict the board to a legislative role; [5] empower the board to condemn sites, purchase sites and erect building; [6] reduce the number of standing committees to three and prohibit their power of independent operation; and, [7] empower the board to select its own

⁹⁰Ibid., 19.

president, secretary, superintendent of schools, business manager and auditor.⁹¹

In addressing the system of school supervision, the Report viewed the superintendent as serving two roles: Firstly, as:

. . . the executive officer of the board in all its educational functions; . . . [he] should be granted much larger powers; he should have not only the initiative, but the determination of all purely educational questions, his action being subject to revisions by the majority of the board of education.⁹²

Secondly, the Commission considered the superintendent a cabinet officer:

. . . to formulate and put in operation the educational policy of the board, and to assist the latter in their efforts to educate, interpret and make effective the desires of the people in regard to their schools. On him should definitely rest the responsibility for the educational system, and to him should be given a very large measure of power.⁹³

The Report also recommended that the superintendent's term of office be extended to six years and that:

His relation to the board . . . should be defined, and his duties and powers clearly indicated with necessary limitations. As long as he possess the confidence of the board and is retained as a superintendent, he should be left unrestricted and untrammelled in his efforts to establish and administer the schools along the lines of a sound educational policy.⁹⁴

⁹¹Ibid., 1-2.

⁹²Ibid., xvi, 37.

⁹³Ibid.

⁹⁴Ibid., 41-42.

The Report of the Educational Commission of the City of Chicago, submitted to the city council in January 1899, focused its recommendations for reforms on the public schools. The Report, which emphasized the role of the superintendent as the administrative head of the schools, advised enhancing the superintendent's powers to include responsibilities for implementation of educational programs, selection of books and the appointment, promotion, dismissal and supervision of the teaching staff. The Report's recommendations were incorporated into a bill presented the General Assembly in 1899 which was defeated because of strenuous opposition mounted by the Chicago Teachers' Federation and numerous civic groups. None of commission's recommendations which required legislative action to elevate the role of the superintendent were effected until 1917 when the General Assembly enacted the Otis Bill which mandated administrative reorganization of the schools.

THE CREATION OF A STRONG SUPERINTENDENCY

Edwin G. Cooley's election as the eighth superintendent of schools marked the beginning of a central bureaucracy under the immediate control of the superintendent. Unlike his predecessor, Cooley was far more adroit politically and from the beginning of his tenure he determined to increase the effective authority of the office. Originally from a small town in Iowa, Cooley was the principal of the Lyons Township

High School in La Grange. Though he had no formal education, Cooley earned a degree at the University of Chicago which granted him three years of credit for that which he had taught himself. Despite a failed campaign for county superintendent, Cooley's reputation as a capable and efficient administrator brought him to the attention of the board of education which was seeking a successor to Francis W. Parker who had resigned. Expecting election as principal of the Normal School, in a surprise move, the board elected Cooley superintendent of schools instead. Cooley tightened the administrative structure of the school system and, through bureaucratic fiat, made the superintendent the chief educational policy maker.⁹⁵

When he assumed office in the summer of 1900, much of the power of managing the schools was shared by fourteen district superintendents and the board of education. The district superintendents operated fiefdoms in which they exercised virtually absolute authority over the educational programs and the appointment of teachers. To nullify their control, Cooley persuaded the board to reduce their number to six and then he regularly shifted them from district to district to restrict their ability to build independent power centers. To further consolidate his authority, Cooley appointed three assistant superintendents and created a central office staff. Responsible directly to him, the

⁹⁵Forest Crissey, The Making of an American School Teacher (Chicago: C. M. Barnes, Inc., 1906), 45-47.

assistant superintendents operated from the superintendent's office and their authority superseded that of the district superintendents.⁹⁶

Shortly after his appointment, Cooley also acted to establish his authority to appoint and promote teachers. In prior years, the district superintendents and members of the board drafted the appointment and promotion list, a process which offered numerous opportunities for favoritism or graft. To preclude abuse, the Harper Report recommended that the superintendent make appointment and promotion decisions. Since the recommendation was never legally enacted, Cooley convinced the board to adopt a resolution stating that teacher selection and promotion was a function of the superintendent. Introduced by board member Chester Dawes, the resolution also required that the superintendent publicly list the name of any official who attempted to influence his recommendations. Cooley later shocked the board of education by listing the names of eight members as having been among those who had tried to influence his selection of candidates.⁹⁷

Finally, Cooley intervened directly in the activities of the board of education by insisting that the number of committees, which stood at seventy-nine, be sharply reduced.

⁹⁶Truman A. De Weese, "Two Years' Progress in the Chicago Public Schools," Educational Review 24 (November 1902), 326-328.

⁹⁷Ibid., 324-326.

Although the board had always relied on the committee system to operate the schools, the inordinate number of committees resulted in confusion and the duplication of assignments among members and committees. Under Cooley's direction, the number of committees was reduced to four, responsible for school management, buildings and grounds, finances and compulsory education. Cooley exercised considerable skill in assuming the reins of authority and was awarded an unprecedented five year contract in 1902. Cooley's relationship with the board eventually weakened and his relationship with the Chicago Teachers Federation became increasingly adversarial, but his tenure established both the perception and expectation that the superintendent was the executive officer of the board and that his role was to initiate policy decisions.⁹⁸ Though Cooley had secured administrative centralization of the schools in the office of the superintendent, legislative endorsement would not come until 1917.

THE OTIS BILL

Genesis of the Otis Bill was the struggle between the board of education and the Chicago Teachers' Federation over the right of public employees to organize as trade unions. On 1 September 1915, the board of education adopted the regulation which became known as Loeb Rule 1 by a vote of 11 to 9. Proposed by Jacob M. Loeb, Chairman of the Committee

⁹⁸Ibid., 328.

on Rules for the Board of Education, the regulation forbid membership by teachers:

. . . in labor unions or in organizations of teachers affiliated with a trade union or federation or association of trade unions, as well as teachers' organizations which have officers, business agents, or other representatives who are not members of the teaching force.⁹⁹

Teachers were given three months to sever organizational ties and any who failed to comply with the ruling was subject to fine, suspension or dismissal.

Loeb admitted that "the proposal was aimed directly at the [Chicago] Teachers' federation," because professionals should not affiliate with organized labor. Denouncing CTF activities as rebellions intended to destroy school harmony, Loeb maintained that the only school issue which concerned the federation was salaries and that young teachers were indoctrinated with the slogan, "not children first, but the teachers first."¹⁰⁰ The Federation sought injunctive relief in the Superior Court of Cook County against board enactment of the ruling. On 14 September 1915, Judge John M. O'Connor granted a temporary injunction made permanent by Judge Denis

⁹⁹Chicago Board of Education, Sixty-First Annual Report, 1915-1916, (Chicago: Board of Education Printing Plant, 1916), 734.

¹⁰⁰Chicago Tribune, 24 August 1915.

E. Sullivan on 29 November, 1915. The Illinois Appellate Court upheld the lower court ruling on 1 May, 1916.¹⁰¹

In an attempt to reverse the injunction, Loeb Rule 1 was amended to apply specifically to the federation which the board depicted as "hostile to discipline, prejudicial to the efficiency of the teaching force, and detrimental to the welfare of the schools." On 29 September, the board voted 11 to 8 to adopt Loeb Rule 2 which asserted the board's right to determine to which organizations teachers might belong. As amended, the rule stated:

Membership by teachers in labor unions, or in organizations of teachers affiliated with a trade union or a federation or association of trade unions, is inimical to proper discipline, prejudicial to the efficiency of the teaching force, and detrimental to the welfare of the public school system, therefore, such membership or affiliation is hereby prohibited. Membership in some teachers' organizations which have officers, business agents or other representatives who are not members of the teaching force, is inimical to proper discipline, prejudicial to the efficiency of the teaching force, and detrimental to the welfare of the public school system, therefore membership in such of said last mentioned organizations as this Board hereafter shall determine are inimical, prejudicial or detrimental as aforementioned is hereby prohibited.¹⁰²

The CTF appealed Loeb Rule 2 in the Illinois Supreme Court. Sustaining the rule, the Court found that:

No person has the right to demand that he or she shall be employed as a teacher. The Board has the absolute

¹⁰¹James W. Errant, "Trade Unionism in the Civil Service of Chicago 1895 to 1930" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1939), 50.

¹⁰²Chicago Board of Education, Official Report of the Proceedings of the Board of Education of the City of Chicago, 29 September, 1915, 885-886.

right to decline to employ or reemploy any applicant for any reason or for no reason at all. . . . Questions of policy are solely for the determination of the Board, and when they once have been determined by it, the courts will not inquire into their propriety.¹⁰³

Following this decision, and upon the recommendation of John Fitzpatrick, president of the Chicago Federation of Labor (CFL), the CTF withdrew from the CFL, the Illinois State Federation of Labor, the American Federation of Teachers and the Women's Trade Union League.¹⁰⁴ When Jacob Loeb learned of the decision, he exclaimed, "This is the happiest day of my life, there will be no more labor unions in the public schools."¹⁰⁵

With the teachers now impotent before the board, Loeb intended to destroy the CTF. He compiled a list of seventy-one teachers whose contracts he recommended should not be renewed because "some were inefficient, some insubordinate and some mentally unsound."¹⁰⁶ When John D. Shoop, Superintendent of Schools, requested re-election of the entire teaching staff, Loeb, now board president, allegedly promised board members the opportunity to recommend their friends for some of the positions which would become vacant, in exchange for their support. On 27 June 1916, the board voted on the

¹⁰³The People v. City of Chicago, 278 Ill. 318 (1917).

¹⁰⁴Errant, 51.

¹⁰⁵Chicago Tribune 16 June 1917.

¹⁰⁶Proceedings, 27 June 1915, 3080-3090.

retention list and sixty-eight teachers failed re-appointed.¹⁰⁷ This action, as with the Loeb rules, was aimed directly at the federation; thirty-eight of those dismissed were federation members, including all eight of its officers.¹⁰⁸ Loeb justified the board's action, remarking that it served notice to "politicians, agitators, intriguers, and incompetents that the schools were to be administered for the sake of the children."¹⁰⁹ When the sixty-eight reported to their schools in September, they were barred. The CTF instituted legal action against the board in the Illinois Supreme Court, and also paid the salaries of those who had been ousted.¹¹⁰ The court's decision, handed down in April 1917, found for the board:

The board has the absolute right to decline to employ or to re-employ any applicant for any reason whatever or for no reason at all. The board is responsible for its action only to the people of the city, from whom, through the mayor, the members have received their appointments. It is no infringement upon the constitutional rights of anyone for the board to decline to employ him as a teacher in the schools, and it is immaterial whether the reason for the refusal to employ him is because the applicant . . . is or is not a member of a trade union The board is not bound to give any reason for its actions. It is free to contract with whomever it chooses. Neither the constitution nor the statute places any restriction upon this right . . . and no one has any grievance which the courts will recognize. . . . Questions of policy are solely for the determination of the board, and when they

¹⁰⁷Ibid.

¹⁰⁸Chicago Tribune, 28 June 1916.

¹⁰⁹Ibid.

¹¹⁰Chicago Tribune, 10 September 1916.

have once been determined by it the courts will not inquire into their propriety.¹¹¹

Though the dismissals animated public rebuke, the board remained adamant and refused to reexamine its action, described as the "greatest single blow at the integrity of popular education Chicago has seen in a generation."¹¹² Loeb's methods were condemned as being "fraught with danger" that could result in "terrorism, injustice and political pull."¹¹³ The impasse between the school board and the federation continued throughout the summer of 1916 and unleashed forces which would culminate in the reorganization of the Chicago public school system.

The storm of protest which broke upon the board over the firings galvanized public response. The Chicago city council authorized the Committee on Schools, Fire, Police and Civil Service of the City of Chicago to prepare recommendations for the reorganization of the Chicago public schools; the spokesmen of twenty-eight civic organizations founded the Public Education Association (PEA) to support the teachers' federation; and, the Illinois Manufacturers' Association formed the Public School League (PSL) to support the board and the Loeb rule. In the early months of 1917, the battle was

¹¹¹People ex. rel. Fursman v. City of Chicago, 278 Ill., 318.

¹¹²Chicago Herald, 28 June 1916.

¹¹³Ibid.

joined. The PEA, PSL and Alderman Robert Buck, chairman of the city council Committee on Schools, each sponsored bills in the Illinois legislature to resolve the debate over the administrative structure and control of the public schools. The bill which ultimately emerged from House committee and which was adopted by the legislature reorganized the structure of Chicago's public schools and centralized administrative authority in the superintendent as the administrative officer of the board of education.¹¹⁴

Though board member Ralph C. Otis voted for the Loeb Rule, he opposed the dismissal of sixty-eight teachers without charge or hearing, a patently illegal violation of the Dawes rule. Realizing the consequences of such a policy, Otis collaborated with Angus Roy Shannon, board attorney and Louis Larson, board secretary, to draft a bill incorporating the recommendations in the Educational Commission's report of 1898.

The Principals' Club, of which Chester Dodge was chairman, also drafted a bill granting the superintendent a term of four years and greater administrative authority. Also pending in the Education Committee of the General Assembly was a bill introduced by Senator Percevel Baldwin of Oak Park to reduce the size of the board of education from twenty-one to nine members. A compromise bill which also incorporated a

¹¹⁴Herrick, 134-136.

clause on teacher tenure proposed by Margaret Haley was drafted and submitted to the Education Committee of the House.¹¹⁵

The Otis bill nearly failed passage because of a dispute between board attorney Shannon and Representative Miller who threatened to invoke the House rule which provided that a bill voted out of Committee without a majority vote may be killed on the floor by a single committee member. In exchange for Shannon's promise that he would not attend any future Education Committee meeting in Springfield, Miller agreed to support the bill. Miller also suggested that the best procedure to ensure passage was to retain the enacting clause of the Baldwin bill and add the provisions of the Otis bill as an amendment. As amended, the Otis Bill was enacted and signed into law by Governor Lowden on 1 May 1917.¹¹⁶

The Otis Law altered the administrative organization of the Chicago Public Schools. Though the appointment of board members remained vested in the mayor with city council approval, the board was reduced from twenty-one to eleven members; the term of office was increased from three to five years; and, the board was given responsibility for the organization, maintenance and administration of the schools. Other provisions of the bill established three autonomous

¹¹⁵Dodge, 86.

¹¹⁶Ibid., 84-87.

administrative agents, the superintendent, business manager and attorney; provided for the tenure of teacher after a probationary period of three years; and, installed a board of examiners comprised of three members including the superintendent to be responsible for the certification of teachers.

Of most significance was modification of the role of the superintendent. Prior to 1917, authority to govern the schools had been vested in the board of education which delegated some of its responsibility to the superintendent as its administrative agent. The Otis Bill vested power to administer the schools in the superintendent, with board approval:

The superintendent of schools shall prescribe and control, subject to the approval of the board of education, the courses of study, textbooks, educational apparatus and equipment, discipline and conduct of the schools, and shall perform such other duties as the board may by rule prescribe pertaining to the education department. Appointments, promotions and transfers of teachers, principals, assistants and district superintendents, and all other employees in the teaching force, shall be made, sites shall be selected, school houses located thereon and plans for the same approved, and textbooks and educational apparatus and equipment shall be adopted only upon the recommendation of the superintendent of schools, unless it be by a two-thirds vote of all members of the board.¹¹⁷

The superintendent's role was further modified by the grant of tenure:

The appointment and removal of the superintendent of schools, the business manager and the attorney, and all

¹¹⁷The School Code of Illinois with Additional Acts Affecting Schools c. 122, sec. 34-11.

assistant attorneys, shall not be subject to the Civil Service Law. The superintendent of schools, the business manager and the attorney shall be removed during the term of employment only for cause, by a vote of not less than a majority of all members of the board, upon written charges to be heard by the board after thirty days notice, with copy of the charges to be served upon the person against whom they are preferred, who shall have the privilege of being present, together with counsel, offering evidence, and making a defense thereto; but pending the hearing of such charges, the person charged may by a like majority vote be suspended by the board, provided, however, that in the event of acquittal, such person shall not suffer any loss of salary by reason of the suspension. The action and decision of the board in the matter shall be final.¹¹⁸

Though the major provisions of the Otis Bill were intended to insulate the superintendent of schools from the political arena, events which unfolded following passage of the Otis Law were on a scale unparalleled, even for Chicago. The process of centralization begun by Cooley was interrupted by the election of William Hale Thompson, Jr. who, as mayor, became the architect of the political invasion of the schools. During his first two terms, court battles, plundering of the educational fund, a lawsuit by one superintendent against the board, a grand jury investigation and the indictment and subsequent jailing of several board members for corruption transcended management of the schools. Following the defeat of Mayor Thompson, the process of centralization would resume and with the election of William McAndrew as superintendent of schools in 1923, centralization resumed with a vengeance.

¹¹⁸Ibid.

CHAPTER II

POLITICAL MANIPULATION OF THE SCHOOLS 1915-1923

WILLIAM HALE THOMPSON

GENEALOGY

William Hale Thompson descended from ancestors who were among the first American colonists to test the authority of the English crown. Robert Thompson, the first to emigrate to the New World, arrived in Boston from England circa 1700 and settled on the frontier near Durham, New Hampshire. Acclaimed as an Indian fighter, the Provincial Assembly at Portsmouth awarded him five pounds for Indian scalps and encouraged him toward more forays. Instead, Thompson occupied himself with warfare against colonial magistrates who alleged that his great landholdings were obtained with dubious New Hampshire land grants. Thompson held his lands and by 1837, when his son Ebenezer was born, Robert Thompson was a rich and respected citizen.¹

A physician by vocation, Ebenezer Thompson displayed more interest in politics than leeching and in 1757, when twenty years of age, was elected a Durham selectmen and served for

¹Lloyd Wendt and Herman Kogan, Big Bill of Chicago (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. Inc., 1953).

nine years. In 1766 he was elected Durham representative to the New Hampshire General Assembly and incurred the wrath of John Wentworth, the king's governor, when he asserted that he had been elected to serve the people and not George III. On 14 December 1774, in one of the first overt acts of the War of Revolution, Ebenezer led a raid on Fort William and Mary in Newcastle to seize the garrison's powder stores. Indicted for treason, he eluded capture and in 1775, he was one of five commissioned by the insurgent General Assembly to "draw up a plan for the government of the Colony of New Hampshire during the contest with Great Britain."² With the onset of hostilities, Ebenezer served successively as Councillor of State for the colony of New Hampshire, a member of the Committee of Safety and finally as New Hampshire secretary of state. After the war he was appointed a judge of the New Hampshire Superior Court, though he had no legal training, and as a presidential elector, Ebenezer Thompson helped to elect the new republic's first president.³

Ebenezer, Jr. served as an officer in the New Hampshire militia and resisted attempts by the state of New York to preempt ownership on the authority of royal patents. As his grandfather before him, Ebenezer refused to recognize New York' claim. Ebenezer III, the son of Ebenezer, Jr. and

²Ibid., 14.

³Ibid.

Elizabeth Hale, continued the family tradition of opposition to the English crown and served as a captain in the United States Navy in the War of 1812. Captain Thompson's son, William Hale, Sr., born in 1838, continued the seagoing tradition and served on the Emily Farnum. Severely injured by a fall into the ship's hold when at dock in San Francisco, he returned to Boston and worked in the counting room of Cummings and Lee East India commission merchants.

At the onset of the Civil War, William Hale Sr. was a member of the Boston Tigers Regiment of the Massachusetts militia, but did not serve with his unit. At the urging of his uncle, Senator John P. Hale, chairman of the United States Senate Naval Commission, he applied for a naval appointment. Second in his examinations, he was commissioned a lieutenant, and on 2 October 1861, reported for duty as paymaster on the sloop-of-war Mohican. In June 1862, William Hale, Sr. was assigned to the staff of Admiral David G. Farragut as paymaster of the fleet. Promoted to lieutenant commander, he resigned his commission with honors in 1866.⁴

In January 1864, Commander Thompson married Medora Eastman Gale, whose family was prominent in Illinois. Her father, Stephen, one of the thirty-eight who incorporated Chicago as a town in 1833,⁵ also organized and captained the

⁴Ibid., 14-15.

⁵William H. Stuart, The Incredible Twenty Years (New York: M. A. Donohue & Co., 1935), 7.

first volunteer fire brigade.⁶ Her grandfather, Theophilus Smith, had been a justice of the Illinois Supreme Court. William Hale Thompson, Jr. was born on Beacon Street, Boston on 14 May 1867, the first son and the second of five children.⁷ During a visit to Chicago in 1868 to settle his wife's inheritance, William Hale, Sr. was awed by the sumptuous homes and legendary fortunes of Potter Palmer, Marshall Field and Cyrus McCormick. Chicago was a boom town and he decided to settle here and to make his fortune in real estate as had William Ogden, Isaac Walton and Walter Newberry. In 1869, William Hale, Sr. liquidated his holdings in the East and moved his family to a spacious home at 48 Sangamon Street.⁸

In 1871, as the Great Fire which devastated the city swept toward his properties, William Hale, Sr. gambled and bought leases and properties that might soon lay in ashes. The fire stopped short of his holdings; with his properties unscathed, the elder Thompson began to amass his fortune by extracting exorbitant rents and purchasing land and leases from those less fortunate. By the time William Hale, Jr. was of school age, his father's net worth approached one million

⁶John Bright, Hizzoner Big Bill Thompson: An Idyll of Chicago (New York: Jonathan Cape & Harrison Smith, 1930), 9.

⁷Wendt and Kogan, 14, 16. After Thompson entered politics, he gave his birth year as 1869.

⁸Ibid., 16.

dollars.⁹ Like his forbearers, Thompson, Sr., a staunch Republican, also developed a taste for politics and was elected to the Illinois General Assembly. In recognition of his efforts to establish a state militia, Governor Shelby M. Cullom appointed him his military aide with the rank of colonel, a title which he used until his death in November 1891.¹⁰

WILLIAM HALE THOMPSON, JR. EARLY LIFE

Although Colonel Thompson had expectations that his son would attend his alma mater, Phillips Exeter Academy, and eventually enroll at Yale University, William, Jr. had few intellectual pursuits beyond reading tales of the western range. A lackluster student, his formal education ended in the sixth or seventh grade when he attended the Skinner School. Accused of attacking another student, he was sent home by Mrs. Ella Flagg Young, the principal, who told him to return with his parents. Instead, he got a job as a messenger in the Board of Trade.¹¹

In the fall of 1881, Bill was attending Fessenden Preparatory School as a prelude to Yale University which he did not want to attend; he wanted to go west and become a

⁹Stuart, 7.

¹⁰Wendt and Kogan, 15-16.

¹¹Chester C. Dodge, Reminiscences of a School Master (Chicago: Ralph Fletcher Seymour, 1941), 95.

cowboy. His mother and father eventually acquiesced, provided that he return home each winter for additional schooling at Metropolitan Business College. Though not yet fifteen years of age, Bill left for Cheyenne, Wyoming where he was hired by the Standard Cattle Company as an assistant to the cook of the 101 Ranch cook at twenty dollars a month. For the next six years, Bill spent nine months on the Wyoming range and, after he completed business college, he worked winters as a brakeman for the Union Pacific Railroad.¹²

In 1888, Colonel Thompson bought a 3,800 acre ranch in Ewing, Wyoming which Bill managed until the winter of 1891; his father's death from pneumonia ended Bills's carefree life in the West forever. As the Reverend Dr. John Milsted, pastor of Unity Church, conducted the funeral service, Bill's mother extracted his promise that he would remain in Chicago and manage his father's vast holdings which included more than two million dollars in real estate.¹³

ENTRY INTO POLITICS

In 1900, Bill Thompson was widely know and well liked. His early success in the real estate business, his jovial personality and his flair for the sporting life favorably disposed people toward him. He was deferential toward women

¹²John W. Leonard, ed., The Book of Chicagoans (Chicago: A. N. Marquis and Company, 1905), 569.

¹³Wendt and Kogan, 16-17.

and his adequacy with the whiskey flask was the envy of his friends. Everybody liked Bill, particularly because he was a good sport and a big spender. "Certainly, a logical person to enter politics with avidity and relish."¹⁴ Thompson's political debut in 1900 as a candidate for alderman of the Second Ward was inauspicious. Eugene Pike, his boyhood friend, had often attempted to coax Bill to enter politics, the greatest of American sports, and join him in the city council¹⁵, Thompson had always refused until the proposition was made a sporting wager. While at the Chicago Athletic Club, George Jenny, another boyhood friend, bet Pike a fifty dollar bill that Thompson was afraid to enter the fray. Allegedly, Thompson reached across the table, seized the money, and strode into the political arena, an adventurer on a dare.¹⁶

In 1900, the Second Ward extended from the south branch of the Chicago River to the lake. On the east, the "Gold Coast" embraced the residences of the city's millionaires, including the Thompson home on Sangamon Street. On the west, in their mean dwellings, lived the wretched, the destitute and large numbers of blacks. Along the ward's southern limits lay the Levee, a seamy district whose denizens trafficked in white

¹⁴Bright, 13.

¹⁵Stuart, 9. In 1900, the city had 35 wards, served by two aldermen elected in alternate years.

¹⁶Bright, 14.

slavery and opium, which was replete with saloons, gambling parlors and sordid hotels dedicated to the oldest pleasure of the race.¹⁷

In the evening of Friday, 1 February 1900, the night before William Hale Thompson, Jr. announced his candidacy, the most elegant and costly brothel in the world opened its portals in the Levee. Established by sisters Ada and Minna Everleigh in a refurbished mansion at 2131 South Dearborn street, the club's furnishings were magnificent, its cuisine superb, and its girls comely and gracious. While none believed that the Levee should be eliminated, the ostentatious grandeur of the Everleigh Club personified a level of indulgence which the "Silk Stockings" of the east side could not ignore and a cry for reform rang throughout the Second Ward.¹⁸

William Hale "Big Bill" Thompson, Jr. formally announced as a Republican candidate for alderman of the Second Ward on Saturday, 2 February 1900. Though viewed as a reformer, his candidacy was endorsed by the Municipal Voters League only because he was the son of a prominent citizen and he could finance his own campaign. Indeed, the Municipal Voters League stated that if Bill Thompson were elected, he could do no harm and that "the worst that you can expect of him is that he is

¹⁷Ibid., 13.

¹⁸Wendt and Kogan, 37-38.

stupid."¹⁹ Big Bill's candidacy for Second Ward alderman also gladdened the malevolent hearts of First Ward Democratic aldermen Michael "Hinky Dink" Kenna and John "Bathhouse" Coughlin who had long desired to add the politically rich Levee to their domain. Their prize had eluded them because the Second Ward was dominated by State Street confectionery merchant Charles F. Gunther, who had the support of Mayor Carter H. Harrison II and Democratic boss Bob Burke.²⁰ That the Second Ward's alderman was also a Democrat did not dissuade Hinky Dink and Bathhouse from their enterprise. Though they did not actively support Thompson, they intimated that Gunther would probably lose and adamantly refused to help.²¹

Mayor Harrison was reluctant to support a Republican, but he was indebted to the First Ward aldermen whose council votes defeated traction baron Charles Tyson Yerkes' attempt to obtain a streetcar franchise at terms unfavorable to the city. Harrison's victory in the council saved the citizens forty-six million dollars, but more importantly, Hinky Dink and Bathhouse John's votes established Harrison's political supremacy over west side Democrats led by Roger Sullivan, his chief rival for power. Since Harrison needed his alliance

¹⁹Emmett Dedmon, Fabulous Chicago (New York: Random House, 1953), 285.

²⁰Stuart, 9.

²¹Bright, 16.

with Kenna and Coughlin, he could not afford to lose it in an effort to save Gunther.²²

While 1900 was not a mayoral election year, Harrison bore the attack on Democratic candidates for the city council. Margaret Haley, the fiery spokesman for the Chicago Teachers' Federation, went from ward to ward excoriating Harrison and the iniquities of his regime while officers of the Commercial Club, many of whose members were the Silk Stockings from the Second Ward, characterized the mayor's administration as a sinkhole of iniquity.²³ Harrison's retort that the Commercial Club's members were millionaires who looted the people as they criticized him was mortal for Gunther. Though the Second Ward was controlled by the Harrison machine, the east precincts shifted their support to Thompson whom they considered one of their own. Additionally, the ward's businessmen announced that they would close their doors on election day to garrison the polls for Thompson.

As the incumbent's support in the wealthy precincts waned, Thompson's popularity increased; he canvased the saloon precincts buying twenty-cent drinks and exploited his father's Civil War role to cut slavery's chains to marshal the south precincts' black vote.²⁴ Alarmed, Gunther complained that

²²Wendt and Kogan, 38.

²³Ibid., 42.

²⁴Bright, 15.

Thompson "talks church, home and civil service in Hyde Park; in the first and second wards it is 'I am for prize fights, dice games, and jobs for you colored boys.'"²⁵ A few days before the election, Mayor Harrison came to Gunther's aid. He called Thompson a "Willie Boy

. . . who would do nothing in the City Council except labor for the repeal of the cigaret (sic) license ordinance."²⁶ Thompson, who described Harrison as the "biggest 'fake' that was ever perpetrated into the Mayor's chair . . ." promised that "before I get through with him I'll make him think I'm an awfully big and lively 'dude' and the huskiest 'Willie boy' he ever laid eyes on."²⁷

The aldermanic election was one the most quiet in the Second Ward; businessmen closed their shops as threatened and Thompson defeated Gunther 2,516 votes to 2,113 with the majority of his 403 vote victory margin from the black precincts. Once in the city council, Thompson's interest in city government was only moderate. He was not present when the Republican caucus appointed him to serve on various council committees and he was usually absent during the summer months, preferring to spend his time on his boat. His most notable accomplishment as alderman was to sponsor a measure

²⁵Stuart, 14.

²⁶Chicago Tribune, 11 April 1900.

²⁷Ibid.

which appropriated \$1,200 to build the city's first public playground at Wabash and 24th Street in the heart of the black ghetto.²⁸

In December 1902, Thompson committed a political blunder which not only cost him his aldermanic seat but also made credible the Municipal Voters League's original assessment of his political perspicacity. Hinky Dink Kenna and Bathhouse Coughlin, who had waited patiently to annex the Levee, proposed an ordinance to redistrict the First Ward, extending its boundaries south into the Second Ward to 31st Street. Eugene Pike and Thompson, the 'reform' Republicans voted for the measure which passed the council 43 to 23. Their aye votes created an uproar among the Second Ward's businessmen who questioned their acumen by voting for an ordinance whose passage would deny them re-election. Realizing that he had been duped, a humiliated Thompson rashly pledged to run for alderman of the First Ward, to which the Chicago Daily News editorial commented: "Alderman Thompson's threats are taken lightly in the First Ward. It is pointed out that a man cannot commit political suicide twice."²⁹

William Lorimer, the "Blond Boss" of Republican politics in Illinois³⁰, provided Thompson the occasion to avenge the

²⁸Wendt and Kogan, 42.

²⁹Chicago Daily News, 12 December 1902.

³⁰Stuart, 203.

humiliation Kenna and Coughlin had caused him. Discouraging Thompson from attempting to defeat Bathhouse John Coughlin in the 1902 aldermanic elections, Lorimer slated him for county commissioner. Representing himself as a reformer, Thompson railed against the Democrats but excoriated Kenna, Coughlin and Harrison, whom he charged with villainy and corruption: "We've got crooks in City Hall because we haven't got the guts to throw them out. . . . Put Bill Thompson on the county board and I'll show you clean, liberal government."³¹

Thompson's exculpation was absolute; as a result of his campaigning skill and increasing popularity, he led the Republican ticket with 129,130 votes. His patron Lorimer, who scarcely won re-election with a plurality of just 413 votes, discreetly suggested Thompson as a future mayoral candidate. Thompson abjured any mayoral ambitions, but his response to conjecture indicated that he was assuredly interested:

I have no political ambition, at least not so far as the mayoralty is concerned. I have been a member of the city council and have just been elected to another office. . . . The public is tired of a negative government and that is what Chicago has been given by Harrison. This is a young man's age and if a clean, liberal bright young man of broad ideas and with a desire to give Chicago a business administration is given the nomination in the spring he can be elected. While I am not a candidate I am more than anxious to do my part toward supporting and aiding in the election of such a man.³²

³¹Wendt and Kogan, 47.

³²Chicago Daily News, 7 November 1902.

Following his two year tenure as county commissioner in 1904, Thompson held no public office but when William Lorimer was elected to the Senate in 1909, speculation grew that Thompson would be the next mayor. Upon his return to Chicago from a Caribbean cruise, Thompson declared, "I will do all I can to build Chicago. I will support good men for office. But I do not plan to run for office myself. I am finished with active politics."³³

Thompson may have remained politically inactive and captained his yacht Valmore in the annual Mackinaw races were it not for William Lorimer who aspired to the United States Senate. Prior to the Seventeenth Amendment, Senators were elected by state legislatures.³⁴ In 1909, neither Democrats nor the Republicans in the Illinois General Assembly could garner the 108 votes needed to elect a candidate to the seat vacated by Albert J. Hopkins, whose term expired 4 March 1909.³⁵ After months of stalemate, William Lormier, who initially was not a contender, announced his candidacy and within ten days of his declaration, had won election with fifty-three Democratic and fifty-five Republican votes.

³³Wendt and Kogan, 75.

³⁴Mary J. Herrick, The Chicago Schools: A Social and Political History (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1971), 121.

³⁵Joel Arthur Tarr, A Study in Boss Politics (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1971), 301.

His victory created a sensation. James Keely, managing editor of the Chicago Tribune, incredulous that fifty-three Democrats would elect a Republican to the federal senate, assigned his best reporters to investigate. On 30 April 1910, the Tribune published the confession of state representative Charles A. White who disclosed that he had been paid \$1,900 to vote for Lorimer. Within the week, three other legislators made similar admissions and others revealed that a \$100,000 fund had been raised to elect Lorimer to the senate. The Tribune demanded an investigation and on 9 January 1911 a Senate committee began an inquiry into the charges. In March 1911, on recommendation of the committee, the Senate voted to exonerate Lorimer but amid renewed allegations of graft and corruption, a second Senate committee was convened in June 1911. This investigation continued for nearly a year and though the committee again recommended exoneration, the advice was rejected. By a fifty-five to twenty-eight vote, William Lorimer was expelled from the United States Senate 14 July 1912.³⁶ The Chicago Tribune exulted: "Truth wins; Justice is done!"³⁷

Despite Lorimer's disgrace, Thompson was resolute in his support of the man whom he described as the victim of a foul plot hatched by the Tribune. Thompson organized a Michigan

³⁶Tarr, 301.

³⁷Chicago Tribune, 15 July 1912.

Avenue parade and Orchestra Hall rally for his fallen friend and among those in attendance was Congressman Fred Lundin, a Lorimer friend and political ally. Though he knew that the "Blond Boss" was finished politically, Lundin was impressed by Thompson's political oratory and commented to a friend: "I think we've got a man to go places with. He may not be too much on brains, but he gets through to the people. I think maybe we can do something with Bill Thompson."³⁸

MAYORAL PRIMARY OF 1915

The election of Woodrow Wilson in November 1912 left the Republican party in disarray nationally and the fall of William Lorimer divided the party in Illinois. Not only did Fred Lundin believe that a new and charismatic political personality was needed to restore party unity but he also concluded that William Hale Thompson would compose dissident Republicans and that he could be managed and controlled to Lorimer's and the party's advantage. To achieve his goals, Lundin vowed that William Hale Thompson, Jr. would be elected the next mayor of Chicago in the 1915 election.³⁹

The 1915 mayoral campaign marked William Hale Thompson's emergence from political obscurity to political prominence. In the evening of 11 November 1914, after two years of intensive effort by Fred Lundin to build a new Republican

³⁸Bright, 79.

³⁹Ibid., 82.

organization, the Thompson candidacy was unleashed. In the Grand Ballroom of the Sherman Hotel, Fred Lundin presented "Chicago's next mayor, Commodore Bill Thompson," who declared to the assembled 800 precinct captains:

Let the people rule! That's going to be my platform. Let the people rule! You my good friends, are going to be the bosses of Chicago if I become your mayor. And with you bossing the job, I am going to clean up the dirt of the rotten administration in power.⁴⁰

The Republican faction which opposed Thompson in the primary, led by former Governor Charles S. Deenen, did not name its primary candidate, Harry Olson, Chief Justice of the Municipal Court, until January 1915. Thompson seized the advantage and campaigned eighteen hours a day among the social mavens, the saloon crowd and Chicago's women who had been granted the right to vote for statutory offices by the Illinois General Assembly in the 1913 legislative session.⁴¹

The women's vote, an unknown factor, was seen by some as the key to victory since the 1915 mayoral primary was their first opportunity to exercise their franchise. Though it was believed that women would follow their husband's example and vote for Judge Olson,⁴² Fred Lundin was determined "to present

⁴⁰Wendt and Kogan, 89-90.

⁴¹Robert Louis Reid, "The Professionalization of Public School Teachers: The Chicago Experience, 1895-1920" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 1968, 161.

⁴²Chicago Tribune, 21 February 1915.

his virile protege to robust advantage"⁴³ because women represented 282,000, or thirty-six percent, of the city's 769,000 eligible voters.⁴⁴ Praising women for the "sense of economy they would bring to public life,"⁴⁵ Thompson pledged that:

The mothers of Chicago have a right to know whether members of the school board to be appointed by the next mayor will be taken from members of a political machine on account of their ability to control wards in order to perpetuate the power of political bosses for financial profit to themselves. I pledge to appoint members of the school board whose qualifications fit them for the guidance and well being of the children of our city.

I will keep my promise of giving to the mothers of Chicago greater representation on the school board. Political influence will have no bearing upon my selection."⁴⁶

Thompson campaigned extensively in the Second Ward, and to ensure a sizable plurality, courted black voters with his promise to "give your people the best opportunities you've ever had if you elect me."⁴⁷ Thompson kept his pledge and in his first term as mayor, appointed Archibald Carey to a post in the city's law department and named Edward Wright and Louis Anderson assistant corporation counsels. To those who denounced the appointments, Thompson replied:

⁴³Wendt and Kogan, 87.

⁴⁴Reid, 162.

⁴⁵Douglas Bukowski, "Big Bill Thompson: The "Model" Politician," in The Mayors: The Chicago Political Tradition, ed., Paul M. Green and Melvin G. Holli (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1987), 62.

⁴⁶Chicago Tribune, 18 February 1915.

⁴⁷Wendt and Kogan, 98.

The persons appointed were qualified for the positions. In the name of humanity it is my duty to do what I can to elevate rather than degrade any class of American citizens. I am under obligations to this people for their continued friendship and confidence while I have been in this community.⁴⁸

Though Tribune political writer Henry Hyde predicted that a coalition of regular Republicans and the Progressives would defeat Thompson, Hyde conceded that Thompson was a great campaigner with:

great physical vitality and a fighting spirit. There is nothing about him which would suggest a student. Good or bad, there will always be something doing if William Hale Thompson is elected mayor. His old fashioned boon talk is loosely expressed and not carefully thought out, but his listeners like it.⁴⁹

Olson assumed that Thompson, who lacked support of the Republican organization, could not win and he conducted a dignified campaign "of laboratory exactness and chill efficiency that transformed Thompson into an attractive candidate."⁵⁰ Just before the election, the school issue was compounded when Thompson's supporters distributed thousands of leaflets charging that Olson would destroy the public school system because his wife was a Catholic. Olson denied the allegation but his denial came too late.⁵¹

⁴⁸Ibid., 168.

⁴⁹Chicago Tribune, 28 February 1915.

⁵⁰Bukowski, 62.

⁵¹Reid, 162.

On a cold Tuesday, 23 February 1915, William Hale Thompson, Jr. narrowly defeated Judge Harry Olson, with a 3,591 vote plurality. Thompson's victory demonstrated his tremendous influence with black voters whose support for him was overwhelming. In the Second Ward, Thompson's 6,782⁵² vote plurality not only carried the ward but also eroded Olson's lead elsewhere in the city.⁵³ Robert Sweitzer, the Democratic candidate, received 182,534 votes and defeated incumbent Carter Harrison II with a plurality of 77,551 votes. Democrats cast 289,669 votes to 176,002 for Republicans and Progressives combined and captured sixty percent of the women's vote.⁵⁴ Though Thompson selected two Progressives for city treasurer and city clerk, Harold L. Ickes, the Progressive's leader, announced that his party would select its own candidate. Thompson's primary victory did not guarantee election in the 6 April mayoral election; a third party candidacy would capture Thompson votes and ensure a Democratic victory.

MAYORAL ELECTION OF 1915

Fred Lundin's expert handling of Thompson won the municipal election of April 1915 which the Chicago Tribune

⁵²Chicago Tribune, 28 February 1915.

⁵³Alex Gottfried, Boss Cermak of Chicago: A Study of Political Leadership (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1962), 80.

⁵⁴Chicago Tribune, 24 February 1915.

described as "the fiercest and most spectacular mayoralty campaign in Chicago's history."⁵⁵ An astute politician, Lundin had been right in every maneuver and element of campaign strategy. When advised to talk about the greed of the gas trust and a full dinner pail, Thompson carried the wards in which blue collar workers lived. When urged to cultivate women voters with a promise to install a mother on the Board of Education, Big Bill captured sixty-three percent of the women's vote.⁵⁶ When urged to capitalize on the angry resentments of minority groups and immigrants, Big Bill overwhelmed Sweitzer in these wards.⁵⁷ The Tribune concluded that "Mr. Thompson appeared on the impatient voters' horizon bulging and shining like a full dinner pail and ringing like a dinner gong."⁵⁸ Tactics similar to those used in the primary were invoked in the mayoralty campaign. The Illinois Guardian, in April 1915, portrayed Sweitzer, a Catholic, as the "sworn enemy of the public school," and urged Chicagoans to "heartily support Mr. Thompson."⁵⁹ Suspicioned, Thompson repudiated responsibility for introduction of the religious issue in the campaign and intimated that the Democrats were trying to cover their tracks:

⁵⁵Ibid., 6 April 1915.

⁵⁶Stuart, 16.

⁵⁷Wendt and Kogan, 114-115.

⁵⁸Chicago Tribune, 7 April 1915.

⁵⁹Reid, 162.

The religious issue injected into the campaign by Robert M. Sweitzer is simply a continuance of the contemptible brand of campaigning waged by his friends throughout the recent Democratic primary campaign. Every one knows that circulars pertaining to religion were sent out against Carter Harrison. They were certainly not sent out by Harrison to injure himself. Of course they were sent out by his enemies.

Harrison's opponents at the primary are now my opponents for the election. They are trying to continue the same sort of campaigning. . . . The man who does it is not true to American institutions and is unworthy of an election to an American office.⁶⁰

The Democrats also injured themselves in the primary with their appeal to the ethnic vote. A Harrison supporter charged that Sweitzer, a German, chose membership in the Ancient Order of Hiberians rather than a German society. To ensure the ethnic vote, Sweitzer distributed a handbill to the city's one-half million Germans in which he stated that "You, your relatives and friends can be of great assistance to Germany and Austria next Tuesday by electing Robert Sweitzer . . ." ⁶¹ Denouncing the German candidate, Lundin distributed thousands of the German Fatherland letter in ethnic enclaves which harbored hatred of Germany and its predations in World War I.⁶² The German letter exacerbated ethnic friction and

⁶⁰Chicago Tribune, 27 March 1915, Sec. AI, 5.

⁶¹Bukowski, 63.

⁶²Ibid.

Sweitzer lost the Bohemian, German, Jewish, Swedish and black vote.⁶³

The mayoral election was held Tuesday, 6 April 1915, and William Hale Thompson, Jr. defeated his Democratic opponent by a margin of 390,901 to 251,502 votes.⁶⁴ The 1915 mayoral election established two records: firstly, the vote total of 669,309 represented the largest number of ballots ever cast in an American municipal election; and, secondly, Thompson's 139,189 vote plurality was the largest ever accorded a Republican in a mayoral election in Chicago.⁶⁵ Though the mayor stated that "this is not a political administration in any way, except that it will be entirely run for the best interests of the people of Chicago,"⁶⁶ Thompson forgot his pledge to put a mother on the school board and to give the schools a business administration. Instead, he placed political hacks into important school jobs and when his demands were resisted, he appointed new board members.

PRECEDENT FOR POLITICAL INTERVENTION

The Otis Law of 1917 was designed to strengthen the role of the superintendent and to vest greater power in the Board

⁶³John Allswang, A House for All People: Ethnic Politics in Chicago (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1917), Table A2, 42.

⁶⁴Chicago Tribune, 7 April 1915.

⁶⁵Stuart, 16.

⁶⁶Ibid.

of Education. Paradoxically, because of its provision that the Board of Education be reduced from twenty-one to eleven members, the Otis Law became the instrument by which Chicago's political powers invaded the schools. The potential for political interference was first recognized by John McLaren, president of the board in 1892-93, who cited the dangers following creation of the twenty-one member school board in 1891. At that time, McLaren stated:

While I think that these influences are not so strong in Chicago as they are in some other large cities, still the tendency is growing toward the exercise of political influence in the management of our schools. . . . In my experience on the board, I have found many teachers and employees who evidently had more faith in their political influence for promotion or retention than they had in doing their work well and earning favors by merit alone. This condition should not be permitted for one moment.⁶⁷

Board president Harris, who succeeded McLaren, also believed that the schools should be free of political interference, but unlike McLaren, he recognized that the venue for interference was within the board itself:

There are men in the board who have strong political convictions and ardently espouse the cause of their respective parties outside of and beyond the Board of Education. Politics has not been and never ought to be found within the confines of the service.⁶⁸

⁶⁷Chicago Board of Education, Annual Report of the Board of Education of the City of Chicago, 1892-1893 (Chicago: Board of Education Printing Plant, 1894), 18.

⁶⁸Ibid., 17.

POLITICAL DOMINATION OF THE SUPERINTENDENCY

Though management of the public schools was not an issue during the 1907 mayoral campaign, upon his election as mayor, Fred A. Busse directed his attention to the Board of Education. On 20 May, advised by counsel that the right of removal of board of education members was implied in the Villages and Cities Act of 1871, Busse summarily discharged seven members of the board whom he claimed "had fomented friction . . . abused their authority, bred insubordination and served personal factional, and partisan ends."⁶⁹ In protest, five other board members resigned and Mayor Busse swiftly named twelve new members to the board. Challenged in the courts, Busse's action was declared illegal and on 17 December 1907, the Illinois Supreme Court directed the immediate reinstatement of the ousted members. The Court ruled that the 1871 Act which empowered the mayor to appoint board members for a full term, did not empower the mayor to remove board members prior to expiration of their terms of office.⁷⁰

In 1909, Busse was succeeded by Carter H. Harrison II who was elected to his fifth term as mayor. When he assumed

⁶⁹George S. Counts, School and Society in Chicago (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., 1928), 249.

⁷⁰Chicago Board of Education, Official Report of the Proceedings of the Board of Education of the City of Chicago for the Year 1906-1907, 398-400.

office, the board of education had four vacancies and, to evade the law, Harrison required that, prior to appointment, his four nominees proffer their undated resignations, which stated: "I hereby tender my resignation as a member of the Board of Education of the city of Chicago, to take effect at your pleasure."⁷¹ Harrison executed the resignations in 1913 to ensure the reelection of Ella Flagg Young who had again resigned as superintendent in December. Mrs. Young first resigned in July 1913, but Mayor Harrison coerced his board appointees to persuade her to withdraw her resignation and on 30 July 1913 the board voted 14 to 1 to ask for her return.⁷² Five months later, in December 1913, Young resigned again when the board split on whether to reelect her superintendent.⁷³ Mayor Harrison acted decisively and removed the board members who had voted against Mrs. Young and she returned to office. Harrison's action was challenged and on 17 July 1914, the deposed members were reinstated by the Illinois Supreme Court which ruled that the mayor could not make board appointments contingent upon proffered letters of resignation.⁷⁴

⁷¹Counts, 250.

⁷²Joan K. Smith, Ella Flagg Young: Portrait of a Leader (Ames, Iowa: Educational Studies Press and the Iowa State University Research Foundation, 1979), 196.

⁷³Ibid., 198.

⁷⁴Proceedings, 1913-1914, 917-923.

COMPETING BOARD OF EDUCATION

As required by the Otis Law, William Hale Thompson, as mayor of the city of Chicago, was required to create a new Board of Education comprised of eleven members who would serve for terms of five years. Jacob Loeb, president of the old board, allegedly asked Thompson for re-appointment to the new board and confirmation by the council prior to the other appointments so that he might continue as president.⁷⁵ Consequently, on 23 April 1917, Thompson designated Loeb and Frances E. Thornton as his first appointments to the new board.⁷⁶ Confirmed at the first council meeting following passage of the Otis Law, they continued to serve on the old board of nineteen remaining members, pending reorganization of the board to eleven members.⁷⁷

Mrs. Thornton's appointment was requested by Dr. John Dill Robertson, Commissioner of Health; Loeb's appointment was granted for services rendered by him and the Public School League to defeat reform Aldermen Robert Buck and Charles E. Merriam in the 1916 Republican primary which the Chicago Tribune asserted focused on "the little red school house." William Fetzner, the Thompson candidate, claimed that the major

⁷⁵Dodge, 97.

⁷⁶Proceedings, 23 April 1917, 23.

⁷⁷Henry Everet Dewey, "The Development of Public School Administration" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1937), 13-14.

issue was the attempt by "insidious forces" and "professional politicians" to make "a gigantic political machine" out of the school teachers with passage of the Buck bill.⁷⁸

Following the defeat of Buck and Merriam in the primary, Thompson assured Loeb that the Public School League would be consulted on all future school board appointments. However, when Thompson named nine additional nominees to the school board on Saturday, 19 May 1917, neither Loeb nor the Public School League had been consulted as promised. Enraged, Loeb convened a special meeting of the twenty-one member board on Tuesday, 22 May 1917, "to save the schools from political domination and piratical despoliation . . ." by "laying before you the facts and in order that we may together consider the situation which confronts our schools."⁷⁹ Reading from a prepared statement, Loeb delivered a jeremiad against the mayor for betrayal of his pledge "not to make new appointments without giving the League an opportunity to investigate and pass on their fitness. . . ." Loeb charged:

That William Hale Thompson, mayor of Chicago, broke faith with the Chicago Public School League. He had repeatedly promised this body of unbiased and disinterested citizens an opportunity to investigate school board candidates before appointment. He repudiated these promises and he did so at the direction of Fred Lundin. He resented the well intentioned advice of men of the highest standing in the business and professional world. He respected the dictation of a political boss. His promises to Lundin he held sacred. Those to representative citizens of Chicago, he held profane. What was "all right" with

⁷⁸Reid, 195.

⁷⁹Proceedings, 22 May 1917, 1854, 1857.

Lundin was "all right" with the Mayor. What was "all right" with the citizens and school children was a matter of indifference to both.⁸⁰

Loeb also alleged that Lundin had confided that Thompson intended to fill administrative posts in the school system with patronage appointees: "We want to put real live fellows over there, our fellows who are loyal and true."⁸¹ Loeb concluded his remarks with a challenge to Fred Lundin:

What political piracy is this you propose? Would you and your band overtake the school ship, board, and then scuttle it? Not on your life, Lundin! Play fair with the schools or I fight, fight as I have always fought, in the open and to win! For four years I have battled to keep one type of politics out of the schools. If necessary, I'll battle forty years to keep out any other type and most of all the type which looks like loot, Lundin. Like another, I, too, am weary. But understand, Lundin, I shall resign neither my position nor my life. I will remain. You and your kind shall not plunder the Chicago Public School system. You will charge me with betraying political confidences. That is not true. The truth is that you mistook me for a confederate and an accomplice whom you could use for your nefarious purposes. But you misjudged your man.⁸²

Thompson retorted that he would appoint men and women to the school board who were "free from unworthy influence and temptation." He denounced Loeb as "a dishonest ingrate, crook and liar" and castigated his supporters on the old board as minions of the city's business interests:

For about a quarter of a century the business affairs of the Board of Education have been directed by a coterie of men representing a few rich and powerful interests of this city. In the last few years this closed corporation

⁸⁰Ibid., 1856.

⁸¹Ibid.

⁸²Ibid., 1857.

has been spending twenty-five million dollars per year of taxpayers' funds without being required to account to anybody for their official acts. Places on this board, although paying no compensation have been eagerly sought by the representatives of "big business." Why?⁸³

On 18 June 1917, Mayor Thompson appointed an entirely new board. After the council moved to confirm the nine, a motion to reconsider was followed by a by a motion to lay the motion to reconsider on the table. When the resolution was reconsidered on 22 June, the council withdrew confirmation. Since the council's action cast doubt on the legal status of the new board, a legal opinion was sought from the state's attorney. He ruled that the new board was legal since the Otis Law required the old members to hold office only until the new members had been qualified.⁸⁴ Chester E. Cleveland, assistant corporation counsel, argued that under Council Rule 29, the council had no authority to reconsider confirmation:

A motion to take any motion or other proposition from the table may be proposed at the same meeting at which such motion or proposition was laid upon the table, provided two-thirds of the alderman vote thereof . . . We therefore beg to advise you that it is your clear duty to rule that the City Council has no power to reconsider or rescind the action taken by them on June 18, 1917, and that if the City Council should attempt to so their action would not only be a mere idle ceremony but in direct violation of the law.⁸⁵

Donald R. Richberg, Special Counsel for the City Council of the City of Chicago argued that the new members could not

⁸³Chicago Tribune, 23 May 1917.

⁸⁴Proceedings, 23 June 1917, 7.

⁸⁵Ibid., 10, 13.

be removed from office before expiration of their terms; that the Otis Law was not in effect until the their appointment; and, that the new board was a duly constituted body politic and corporate under the Otis Law:

It was and is therefore, my opinion that all actions of the former Board of Education, assuming to exercise the powers of the new Board, are void. It is my opinion that the new school law did not become operative in Chicago until eleven members were appointed and qualified as members for the Board of Education under that Act. When the new Board of Education came into being, by virtue of the appointment and qualification of eleven members, a new body politic and corporate came into being, having the power and duty to organize and act under the new school law.⁸⁶

Their status affirmed by legal opinion, the Thompson appointees assumed control of the school system and proceeded to transact business as a regularly constituted Board of Education, whereupon the members of the old board appealed. Argued in the circuit court, Judge Charles M. Walker upheld the opinions of the state's attorney and corporation counsel. Walker ruled that the old board was not a body politic and corporate but merely a department of the city and that all acts of the new board were legal and binding.⁸⁷

Walker's decision was appealed and 20 June 1918, Mr. Justice Dunne delivered the opinion of the Illinois Supreme Court which upheld the action of the City Council:

The action of the defendants was in error in assuming the offices the next day while the question of their confirmation of their appointment was pending in the

⁸⁶Ibid., 9.

⁸⁷Proceedings, 7 August 1917, 230-231.

Council and in afterward exercising the powers and duties of the offices did not have the effect of giving them any title to the offices. The effect of the motion to reconsider the vote to concur in the appointments was to suspend all action based upon that vote until the reconsideration was acted upon. The vote to reconsider at the meeting of June 22nd was an annulment of the previous vote and the subsequent vote was effectual to disapprove the appointments.

The judgments of the Appellate Court and the Circuit Court are reversed and the cause is remanded to the Circuit Court.⁸⁸

The court found that, excepting Loeb and Thornton, the other nine members of the eleven member board had not been legally confirmed by the city council and on 26 October 1918, the Honorable Kickham Scanlan, Justice of the Circuit Court of Cook County entered a judgment of ouster and reinstatement of the twenty-one member board.⁸⁹ With his appointments repudiated, Mayor Thompson again appointed eleven members to a new board which did not include Mrs. Thornton or Jacob Loeb.⁹⁰ Loeb sued and the judge of the circuit court ruled the appointments illegal since Thompson had appointed eleven persons to fill nine vacancies.⁹¹

The twenty-one member board was reinstated and served until Tuesday, 27 May 1919 at which time Thompson appointed eleven members to a new board. Summoned to the office of the Corporation Council of the City of Chicago, the eleven, who

⁸⁸Proceedings, 13 November 1918, 16.

⁸⁹Ibid., 17.

⁹⁰Counts, 252.

⁹¹Proceedings, 13 November 1918, 17-18, 21-26.

were immediately confirmed by the City Council, "met for the purpose of organizing said body politic and corporate."⁹² Jacob Loeb, having lost the mayor's favor, was again excluded.⁹³ Loeb appealed, charging that he was entitled to board membership because his appointment to the first eleven member board had been declared valid by the Illinois Supreme Court in June 1918. On 16 October 1919, the circuit court ruled that Loeb and Thornton had been legally confirmed for the twenty-one member board and the 1917 eleven member board and were to be reinstated. Thompson then drew up another list of eleven names which included Loeb and Thornton, and for the third time, requested city council approval.⁹⁴ On 20 October 1919, their inclusion was confirmed and Loeb, succeeded by Edwin S. Davis as board president, became the leader of the anti-Thompson faction on the Board of Education.⁹⁵ Finally, two and one-half years after passage of the Otis Law, a Board of Education whose membership was not contested assumed control of the Chicago public schools.

Parallel to the chaos of competing boards of education was the issue of the superintendency and Mayor Thompson's

⁹²Meeting to Organize the Board of Education of the City of Chicago, a Body Politic and Corporate, Under the Act of the Legislature of April 20, 1917, Proceedings, 13 November 1918, 1.

⁹³Counts, 252.

⁹⁴Proceedings, 20 October 1919, 853.

⁹⁵Herrick, 138.

determination to prevent the old board from selecting a superintendent from outside the school system. The first Thompson board had re-elected John D. Shoop superintendent of schools in June 1917 and upon his death 9 August 1918, elevated assistant superintendent Peter Mortenson to interim superintendent.⁹⁶ On 8 January 1919, the twenty-one member board under Jacob Loeb's presidency appointed a committee of nine civic leaders to select Shoop's successor,⁹⁷ which after a national search, recommended the appointment of Dr. Charles E. Chadsey, superintendent of the Detroit public schools, who was elected by the board on 5 March 1919.⁹⁸ Chadsey, who had been superintendent of schools in Denver, Colorado prior to his tenure in Detroit, had also served in the department of superintendence of the National Education Association.⁹⁹ Chadsey was familiar with the management practices of Chicago's schools, having appeared before the Committee on Schools, Fire, Police and Civil Service of the City Council. Established by council resolution on 30 June 1916 and chaired by Alderman Robert M. Buck, the committee's mission was to:

make a thorough investigation into the causes, methods of adoption, purposes and results of the so-called

⁹⁶Proceedings, 12 August 1918, 475.

⁹⁷Proceedings, 8 January 1919, 109.

⁹⁸Ibid., 5 March 1917, 232.

⁹⁹Report of the Committee on Schools, Fire, Police and Civil Service of the City Council, by Robert M. Buck, Chairman (Chicago: Proceedings of the City Council of the City of Chicago, 1916), 23.

Loeb rules, adopted by the Board of Education and to investigate the actions of the Board of Education and other bodies or persons contributing to, or responsible for, the present disorganization in the management of the public schools. . . .¹⁰⁰

Chadsey, whose appearance was recommended by University of Chicago professors Charles H. Judd and George H. Mead, testified before the committee on 24 October 1916, and "described an intensely interesting period of transition of the school system of his city, where rapid progress is being made under his leadership."¹⁰¹ Questioned by Chairman Buck, school board member Max Loeb and CTF secretary Margaret Haley, Chadsey's recommendations concerning reorganization of the Chicago school system included: delineating the exclusive powers of the Board of Education and the superintendent of schools; delegating greater authority to the superintendent to manage the entire school system; establishing a term of office for the superintendent longer than one year; hiring civil service personnel for non-teaching positions; consulting teachers on school policies; reducing the size of the Board of Education from twenty-one to seven members; and, electing school board members at large.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰Ibid., 1.

¹⁰¹Ibid., 23.

¹⁰²Ibid., 23-42.

OUSTER OF CHARLES E. CHADSEY

It was during the 1919 mayoral campaign that the Loeb controlled twenty-one member Board of Education elected Charles E. Chadsey to replace Peter Mortenson as school superintendent. The appointment proved to be a boon for Thompson who had sought desperately for a campaign issue with which to ingratiate himself with the public. Invoking local pride against "the gentleman from Detroit,"¹⁰³ Thompson seized upon the public indignation which Chadsey's \$18,000 annual salary, the highest of any public official in the nation, had aroused.¹⁰⁴ Despite having neglected his vow to put a mother on the school board and his disregard of the perception that "the Board of Education was packed with henchmen of the city hall and the political machine,"¹⁰⁵ Thompson charged that the Loeb board's selection of Chadsey had destroyed the morale of the school system at exorbitant cost.¹⁰⁶ Thompson vowed that if reelected, he would throw Chadsey out and the school issue helped him win reelection. Though Thompson again defeated Robert Sweitzer 251,888 to 240,288 votes, his popularity had seriously eroded. Unlike his decisive victory in 1915,

¹⁰³Bright, 188.

¹⁰⁴Reid, 199.

¹⁰⁵Counts, 7.

¹⁰⁶Charles Judd, "The School Situation in Chicago," School and Society 9 (14 June 1919), 718-719.

Thompson's plurality in the 1919 election was only 11,000 votes.¹⁰⁷

Once inaugurated, Thompson asserted that Chadsey, who had been in office a scant two months, had been appointed illegally and that under advice of counsel, the twenty-one member board which had elected him had not been constituted by the provisions of the Otis Law:

that the old Board, being without any authority to exercise the powers conferred upon the new body politic and corporate . . . in assuming to do so proceeded without warrant of law and its acts in doing so are all void.¹⁰⁸

To effect Chadsey's ouster, Thompson then made his second attempt to organize a legal eleven member Board of Education. When the second Thompson board convened 28 May 1919, Chadsey was not recognized as the superintendent of schools and Jacob Loeb, a stalwart Chadsey advocate, was not recognized as a member of the board and was replaced as board president by Edwin S. Davis, whose actions were dictated by Thompson, was elected board president. In defiance of the circuit court which had reinstated the twenty-one member board in October 1918, the second Thompson board refused to recognize Chadsey's election and demanded his resignation. To ensure his removal, the board asked the police department to lock him out of his

¹⁰⁷Chicago American, 2 April 1919.

¹⁰⁸Proceedings, 7 August 1917, 23.

office. Over Chadsey's spirited protest, Mortenson was elected superintendent for the second time.¹⁰⁹

Chadsey took his case to the circuit court and, on 8 November, he was reinstated. Judge Kickham Scanlan ruled that the actions of the old board were legal and, excepting a hearing and trial on written charges, the superintendent could not be removed from office until his four year term had expired. Scanlan's decision was appealed by corporation counsel Samuel A. Ettelson and on 12 November the appellate court upheld the lower court's ruling.¹¹⁰

During the interim, the third Thompson board had been organized. Confronted by the order to reinstate Chadsey, on 25 November the board voted 7 to 2 to amend Board Rule 12 to transfer the superintendent's authority to select textbooks, promote or transfer teachers and select school sites to Assistant Superintendent Mortenson.¹¹¹ Humiliated, Chadsey tendered his resignation on 26 November but before he left to assume his new position as dean of education at the University of Illinois, he removed his name from the superintendent's office door with wood alcohol.¹¹² As "the life and works of the school board proceed with the restraint of a Hottentot war

¹⁰⁹Ibid., 6-7.

¹¹⁰Counts, 251.

¹¹¹Proceedings, 25 November 1919, 994.

¹¹²Wendt and Kogan, 175.

dance,"¹¹³ a special board meeting was convened 28 November 1919 to accept Chadsey's letter of resignation, which was not entered into the minutes. Peter Mortenson was then elevated to the superintendency for the third time.¹¹⁴

In his resignation statement, Chadsey delineated the extent to which the Board of Education and the office of the superintendent were dominated by political interests:

The courts have unqualifiedly established that on March 12, 1919, I was legally elected superintendent of the schools of Chicago for the statutory term of four years commencing March 17, 1919, and that the action of the board last May, ignoring that election and assuming to elect another to the office, was illegal.

Immediately following the decision on Wednesday, November 12, 1919, by the appellate court, the board, in form, pretended to acquiesce in the judgment of ouster entered by Judge Scanlan. In substance however, there was no acquiescence at any time.

The action of the Board on November 25, 1919, in denying to me my statutory right to participate in the discussion and in passing rules, taking from me all my statutory rights as superintendent, leaving me no power or responsibility, is in my opinion criminally illegal, in open defiance of decisions of both the Appellate and Circuit Courts, and without question, court action would restore to me my rights as a matter of law. However, it is perfectly evident that no effort will be spared by the Board, whether legal or illegal, to prevent my rendering any service to the schools of Chicago. The board having accomplished this purpose, the question of punishment for its defiance of court orders and violation of the criminal code is one for the courts, and the officers charged with the enforcement of the criminal law, to handle. I assure them both the utmost aid I am capable of furnishing in everything they may do to uphold the dignity of the courts and the law.

So far as the schools are concerned, the objects which induced me to enter into the litigation, lately concluded, now have been upheld by the courts. The most important of these was to establish as a matter of law

¹¹³Chicago Tribune, 26 November 1919.

¹¹⁴Proceedings, 28 November 1919, 999.

(even though that did not establish the same as a matter of fact, under the present municipal administration) that municipal political officeholders -high and low- have no right to interfere with the administration of the public school system.

The public recognizes the fact that the present city administration has in many ways, from the time I was appointed, made it perfectly evident its unrelenting hostility to me as superintendent of Chicago's schools. It, the city administration because of the decisions of the courts, now persists in that attitude, fiercely intensified; stands sponsor to, and accepts the responsibility for, the actions of the Board of Education and certain of its officials and employees as to the policy adopted and the treatment being accorded me as the superintendent.

The public school system should be free from a condition which makes possible its control and organization in the interests of city hall politics. I am hopeful that the unpleasant publicity which has attended the various stages of this controversy, to which I have been compelled to be a party, may result in an awakening of public conscience and a conviction as to the necessity for the for the enforcement of legislation which will effect a complete separation of the school management from municipal political control, and thus make possible a reorganization of the schools in the interest, not of individuals desiring power and political influence, but purely and simply in the interest of the most efficient training of the young people of the city.

I recognize the futility of any individual, no matter how excellent his intentions, accomplishing any real educational service for Chicago, even under existing laws, when he has incurred the hostility of so powerful a political machine as that which now governs the city. No self-respecting educator wishes to carry on his duties when an overwhelming majority of the Board which he is supposed to advise as to all that concerns the welfare of the schools, recognizes him as superintendent merely because a court of justice has compelled such recognition and only so far as that board is advised it is necessary to recognize him in order to avoid punishment for contempt of the court's judgment. This board has now overstepped that line and has acted in open defiance of the courts.

I, therefore, in order to terminate an episode which, in my judgment, will serve to draw public attention to the necessity for a fundamental revision of the attitude of the citizens of Chicago toward the observance and enforcement of our school laws, tender my

resignation as superintendent, the same to take effect immediately.¹¹⁵

On 17 December 1919, Peter Mortenson was elected superintendent for the fourth time¹¹⁶ but Thompson's victory over Chadsey was not without cost, however. State's attorney Maclay Hoyne instituted contempt proceedings against those who had participated in the ouster and they were tried in the circuit court; Kickham Scanlan, whose order to reinstate Chadsey had been evaded, presided. Judge Scanlan was severe in his judgment:

Tested by said rule of evidence, it is clear and patent . . . that each of the respondents found guilty was engaged in the conspiracy charged . . . and that said acts were calculated to prevent, frustrate, and interfere with the operation of, and cause to held for naught, the judgment entered in this court November 8, 1919, and to being the authority and dignity of this court into disrepute as charged in the information.

The prominence of the guilty respondents - all but one of them are members of the Board of Education of the City of Chicago, and that one is the attorney of said board; several of them are lawyers, and therefore officers of the Court . . . tend to aggravate the seriousness of the offense committed. Law and order will never prevail in the community while persons of standing and authority, like these guilty respondents, in concert of action treat with open contempt and disobedience the mandate of a court.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵School Review, Vol. XVIII (September, 1920, 467-488). Quoted in George S. Counts, School and Society in Chicago (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1928), 254-257.

¹¹⁶Proceedings, 17 December 1919, 1049.

¹¹⁷Circuit Court of Cook County, Chadsey and Mortenson vs. People. Quoted in George S. Counts, School and Society in Chicago (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1928), 257-258.

On 22 June 1920, nine members of the Thompson school board and the board attorney who had circumvented the decisions of the circuit court were found guilty of contempt and conspiracy. "All of the defendants were present and were given moral support by the presence of Mayor Thompson, who sat at the rear of the court room."¹¹⁸ Those sentenced included: William Bither, board attorney, five days in jail and \$500 fine; Albert H. Severinghaus, board vice president, three days in jail and \$300 fine; George B. Arnold, trustee, two days in jail and \$300 fine; Hart Hanson, trustee, three days in jail and \$300 fine; Frances E. Thornton, trustee, \$750 fine; Dr. Sadie Bay Adair, trustee, \$750 fine; trustee Lulu Snodgrass, \$750 fine; Dr. Boleslaus Klarkowski, trustee, one day in jail and \$300 fine; James Renzy, trustee, one day in jail and \$300 fine; Francis E. Croarkin, trustee, one day in jail and \$300 fine.¹¹⁹ Though not convicted, Scanlan's censure of Mortenson was searing:

Counsel for the informant very strenuously contends that the evidence proves that the respondent Mortenson was a party to the conspiracy charged If the answer of other respondents would be considered, there would undoubtedly be merit in the contention of counsel. But where the question of guilt or innocence of the respondent Mortenson must be tested only by his own answers . . . the respondent Mortenson must be found not guilty. That he had knowledge of the conspiracy to prevent Doctor Chadsey from holding the office to which he was legally entitled, and that he was perfectly willing that the conspiracy should succeed, appears clearly. While legally he must be found not guilty, from

¹¹⁸Chicago Tribune, 23 June 1920.

¹¹⁹Stuart, 162-163.

an ethical and moral standpoint he presents the meanest figure in the case.¹²⁰

Chadsey's ouster directed attention to the political exploitation of the school board with the assent of its members and domination of the superintendency:

The political interference with the schools of Chicago is one of the worst exhibitions of politics that the country has witnessed in many years. The most disquieting part of the matter is that the school people of the city have in very large measure sympathized with the efforts of the city hall to misinterpret the law.

Whether Mr. Chadsey can be persuaded to come back and wrestle with a situation so thoroughly bad as this remains to be seen. In the meantime, the citizens of Chicago and the country at large have been witness to one thoroughly wholesome lesson administered by the mayor. When the legislature of the state of Illinois passes a school law and puts it in operation, the mayor of the city of Chicago or any other individual looking to political ends cannot set aside this law or put upon it such artificial interpretations as may suit his purpose.¹²¹

After the members of the board who had served jail sentences returned to office, "the way was clear for a raid upon the schools that for boldness and unabashed cupidity has had few parallels in the written record of public education in the United States."¹²² Although the public schools in New York were also under complete political domination, the situation was considered worse in Chicago.¹²³ Despite

¹²⁰Counts, 258.

¹²¹Elementary School Journal 20, (November, 1919), 173.

¹²²Counts, 259.

¹²³School Review: A Journal of Secondary Education 18, (September, 1920), 486.

Mortenson's disavowal of political influence, the Thompson machine had put him into office and his administration was marked by corruption including fraudulent contractors' bids, real estate deals, excessive school supply costs and political teachers' appointments. The revelation that the board had charged \$8,714,065 to unitemized "incidentals" aroused public suspicion that the educational treasury lay open to the greed of the political machine.¹²⁴ Despite attempts by city hall to contain the scandal, sentiment endorsing judicial action crystallized:

The plundering crew grew more daring and ambitious in their schemes. Plans were formed to seize for the board the sole power of selling . . . valuable school lands to fortunate friends for real estate speculations which would bring millions to the ruling favorites. In their eagerness, they caused Attorney Bither of the school board to spend weeks at Springfield lobbying for this amendment. The school teachers were told that, if the proposed law did not pass, their salaries would be cut \$500,000 a year. Angered and aroused at this attempt at intimidation, the teachers went to the public with the story, and the amendment after passing the house was beaten in the senate. Nothing daunted, the ring turned to the quick and big profits to be made on the purchases of school and playground sites.¹²⁵

One of the trustees revealed irregularities in the board's purchase of the Forestville school site and secret board meetings at which its open actions were planned. In May 1922, State's attorney Robert Crowe promised an

¹²⁴Herrick, 142.

¹²⁵Municipal Voters League, Twenty-Seventh Annual Preliminary Report, 1923, 9. Quoted in George S. Counts, School and Society in Chicago (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., 1928), 259-260).

investigation and a grand jury was sworn in July. Its inquiry disclosed gross irregularities and extravagances in the conduct of the board. That the grand jury did not vote any indictments seemed inexplicable, and its seeming incompetence infuriated the Chicago Tribune editorial board:

The report of the July grand jury . . . is a strange and unprecedented document . . . that finds that the public money has been unconscionably wasted and that improper practices have been pursued. But so far as the grand jury's findings take us, the public must assume that while unlawful acts were done, no one did them. It would seem they did themselves.¹²⁶

In August 1922 another grand jury was sworn and after a cursory investigation voted true bills against several board employees. In September, a special grand jury sworn to continue the inquiry, was opposed by powerful forces arrayed against it: unable to get funds to continue the probe, the state's attorney Crowe considered asking for contributions from the public; two school engineers were jailed for refusing to give evidence; and, at least one juror was threatened.¹²⁷ Despite these obstacles, the September grand jury continued its hearing and on 26 January 1923, voted true bills against Fred Lundin and thirty-eight others for conspiring to loot the school treasury of more than \$1,000,000. Indicted with Lundin were Virtus Rohm, his nephew and assistant; Edwin S. Davis, former board president; Albert Severinghaus, former board

¹²⁶Chicago Tribune, 31 July 1922.

¹²⁷Counts, 191.

vice president; Charles Forsberg, former business manager; William Bither, board attorney under sentence for deceptive land deals; Charles Ward, a Thompson speech writer; Patrick J. Moynihan, state commerce commissioner and Thompson committeeman; and, a host of minor officials of the Thompson-Lundin machine.¹²⁸ The indictment charged that:

the conspirators "unlawfully, fraudulently, maliciously, wickedly and wrongfully did combine, conspire, confederate and agree together with other persons corruptly to favor certain firms in the matter of purchases to the arbitrary and corrupt exclusion of all other competitors."¹²⁹

One of the first witnesses the grand jury called against Lundin, who slouched in a chair near the counsel table fingering his black windsor tie, was Jacob Loeb. Eager to repay Lundin and Thompson for the misery they had caused him, Loeb branded them as responsible for the school officials who had plundered the school treasury with its annual income of \$55 million. Loeb's testimony centered around his diary and his speech to the Board of Education on 22 May 1917 in which he charged that Lundin proposed to raid the schools, to wreck the civil service and to inject the lowest type of politics into the school system.¹³⁰

The trial was set for April Fool's day but was postponed pending motions to dismiss the indictments. The motions were

¹²⁸Wendt and Kogan, 208.

¹²⁹Chicago Tribune, 30 January 1923.

¹³⁰Chicago Tribune, 4 January 1923.

denied and on 5 April 1923, proceedings were begun against fifteen of the original thirty-nine who had been indicted, including Fred Lundin, Edwin S. Davis, William Bither and twelve others. Charged with conspiracy to defraud, the State declared:

The means alleged in the first ten counts of the indictment have reference to false, fraudulent or collusive sales of diverse goods, wares, merchandise, materials, supplies, labor and insurance to the Board of Education . . . in which sales and transactions it was or was to be falsely represented and pretended to the said Board of Education that the goods, etc., so to be purchased were of the quality, kind, character and quantity ordered when in fact the goods, etc., were to be of inferior quality and of less quantity than called for and at exorbitant and noncompetitive prices and in excess of the fair and reasonable market value of said good, etc.¹³¹

The prosecution asserted that the defendants had sought to establish a dictatorial reign over all school affairs, from the classrooms to the business offices and had secured graft payments through direct shakedown and bribery and had demanded campaign funds from all those who did business with the board. The State also alleged that non-existent companies got huge contracts; that school principals were directed by calls from board members to order unneeded equipment at quadrupled prices; and, that furniture taken from schools to the summer homes of board members was replaced at costs like \$107.00 for one kitchen table.¹³²

¹³¹Chicago Tribune, 5 April 1923.

¹³²Herrick, 142.

The trial lasted more than twelve weeks during which time chief prosecutor Hobart Young's case was destroyed by the effulgent polemics of Lundin's attorney, Clarence Darrow, who depicted his client as the victim of social hysteria and persecution. To rebut the prosecution's attempt to paint his client as a demoniacal corrupter of his fellow man, Darrow summoned character witnesses whose testimony under oath would bring into relief the injustice of the accusations against Lundin. Among those was William Hale Thompson, "whose reputation for veracity had not been impugned even by his bitterest enemies."¹³³ Thompson, who had been succeeded as mayor by William Dever, returned to Chicago from Honolulu "to come to the aid of his old friend Fred Lundin and the members of the school board who had caused him so much trouble during his two administrations as the mayor of Chicago."¹³⁴

Thompson, who vigorously asserted Lundin's innocence, remarked that, "in talking of public policies Lundin always has taken the position that the Republican Party should guard against politics in the police and on the school board. It was a religion with him."¹³⁵ Lundin took the stand in his own defense on 10 July 1923 and his testimony, guided by Darrow, was a masterpiece of adroit persuasion. The case went to the

¹³³Bright, 193.

¹³⁴Chicago Tribune, 7 July 1923.

¹³⁵Ibid.

jury on Friday, 13 July and, after four hours of deliberation, returned a verdict of not guilty.

The school board scandals and the denunciation of his administration for waste and corruption had seriously damaged the mayor's status. In late January 1923, Thompson learned the details of the case which state's attorney Robert Crowe was presenting to the grand jury. Realizing that disclosure of the scandals which plagued the school board would destroy his bid for a third term, Thompson withdrew as a candidate on 25 January 1923, one day before the grand jury announced its true bills against the conspirators. Though Thompson made no public comment on the indictments, he complained:

My friends have crucified me. I believed in them and I did everything I could to help them make good to the people. And they betrayed me. I am happy in one thing, and that is that I have given Chicago the best administration it ever had.¹³⁶

¹³⁶Chicago Tribune, 26 January 1923.

CHAPTER III

THE ERA OF REFORM

Following the tumult of the Thompson incumbency, Chicago, which was ready for reform and quietude, elected William Emmett Dever, a judge with impeccable reputation, mayor. In addition to restoring public confidence in city government, Dever restored public confidence in a school system which, under Big Bill Thompson, had been compromised by political incursions and financial mismanagement. Dever gave the schools four years of freedom from political interference and nominated competent and concerned citizens to the board of education. Dever promoted education. He supported efforts to increase funding for the schools; he used his influence to improve tax collection procedures; and, he kept his campaign pledge not to interfere in the daily operation of the schools. To the board which Dever appointed fell the task of selecting a new superintendent who would use this freedom to strengthen the educational authority vested in the office, to stop the waste of funds and to improve educational standards. The man they chose, William McAndrew, formerly associate superintendent of schools in New York City, was warmly received by the teachers and Margaret Haley, business manager

of the Chicago Teachers' Federation, who said that he was one of the three outstanding educators in the United States. In Mr. McAndrew resided the hope that the schools would improve the education of children. Within three years of his arrival, the policies and practices of the "gentleman from New York" plunged the schools into a maelstrom which swept him from office and heralded the triumphant return of Big Bill Thompson.

THE MAYORALTY OF WILLIAM E. DEVER 1923-1927

GENEALOGY

William Emmett Dever, the third child and first son of Patrick and Mary Lynch Dever, was born into affluence on 13 March 1862 in Woburn, Massachusetts. His father owned one of the area's largest tanneries and his mother was the daughter of Martin Lynch, one of Boston's early Irish ward bosses. The Devers were "lace curtain" Irish who did not experience the poverty typical of Irish immigrants who worked as laborers or domestics.¹ Since Woburn did not have a Catholic school, Dever attended the city's public schools, a fact later emphasized in his political biographies. He quit high school after one year and at the age of fourteen entered the Patrick Dever Company where he worked for five years.² Dever left

¹John R. Schmidt, William E. Dever: A Political Biography (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1983), 6-7.

²Ibid., 7.

Woburn in 1882 and spent two years on the road working in tanneries in New York state and along the Great Lakes. In 1885, he married Katherine Conway, the daughter of a merchant with whom he had conducted business for his father. The Devers lived in Boston briefly, and then returned to Woburn where they remained until August 1887, at which time they came to Chicago where tanners were earning twenty-four dollars a week. The Devers settled in West Town, a gritty workingman's community, and Dever took a job at the Superior Tannery Company on nearby Goose Island. He began attending night classes at the Chicago College of Law from which he graduated in 1890 to begin a new career as a neighborhood lawyer.

ENTRY INTO POLITICS

During the 1890s, Dever began to participate in political discussions at Chicago Commons, the West Town settlement house founded in 1894 by the Reverend Graham Taylor. Determined to bring reform to the West Town neighborhood, Taylor formed the Seventeenth Ward Council, a nonpartisan political club, which in 1898 sought to defeat Frank Obendorf who had gained a reputation as one of the worst members of the City Council.³ Taylor and the Seventeenth Ward Council approached Dever to persuade him to run for alderman but he declined. However, when approached in 1900, Dever agreed to seek the aldermanic

³Louise C. Wade, Graham Taylor, Pioneer for Social Justice, 1851-1938 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 129-130.

seat as a reform Democratic candidate. Though endorsed by the Municipal Voters' League and Mayor Carter H. Harrison, II, the Republicans, led by James Burke, were ready for the election and Dever was defeated, 1,978 to 1,633. Despite this loss, he was anything but an irresolute aldermanic candidate in 1902 at which time he defeated Obendorf by a margin of three to one.

The defeat of Mayor Harrison and the accession of Edward Dunne in 1905 brought Dever to the throne of power. In 1906, as Dunne's council floor leader, Dever believed himself ready for higher office but he was defeated in three successive elections in 1906, 1907 and 1908. Two years later, Dever had another opportunity to hold high office when the bickering factions of the Democratic party, in 1910, formed an alliance to produce a "harmony ticket." Since Dever had remained a partisan Democratic, he was slated for a judgeship in the Superior Court of Cook County and though the alliance splintered soon after the election, Dever was elected to the bench on which he would remain for twelve years. With the exception of the sensational fraud trial of William Lorimer who had been ousted from the Senate in 1914, Dever's decisions on the court attracted little attention and his name appeared less often in the press. The "Dever for Mayor" booms which marked his years as alderman of the Seventeenth Ward also became less frequent until they too eventually stopped. By his sixtieth birthday in March 1922, Dever had built a solid,

albeit undramatic, career in local politics but his position as a Superior Court justice had relegated him to a status of prestigious obscurity.

DEVER'S POLITICAL EMERGENCE

Even though he had become politically invisible, Dever's emergence in the 1923 mayoral election occurred because he was the right person in the right place at the right time. By the 1920s, the quest for municipal reform had been blunted by preoccupation with World War I and the eight years juggernaut of irresponsible, demagogic Thompsonism. However, sensing victory in the public's disillusionment with Big Bill's regime, the reformers marshalled on the advent of the 1923 mayoral election. A few days before Christmas 1922, as hearings into the alleged misappropriation of school funds by the Thompson school board were being conducted by the grand jury, the Reverend Graham Taylor and Mrs. Kellogg Fairbank, a local novelist and political activist, convened a forum of reform advocates at the City Club. Among these who addressed the forum's topic, "What Are the Issues and What Kind of a Man Do We Need for Mayor?," was Clarence Darrow, who delineated the kind of mayor the reformers sought:

Chicago needs a mayor who has the courage to say 'no,' and say it to all his best friends . . . The mayor of Chicago should treat the city the way he would treat his own business. That is a popular phrase, but no one carries out the idea.⁴

⁴Chicago Daily News, 19 December 1922.

They did not, however, naively believe that overt partisan politics could be vanquished completely. While "politics as usual" might not be the ideal, it could be endured if the greater good were served. The fault with the Thompson administration was not "politics as usual," but its waste and inefficiency:

New York's greatness is given it by a wise political organization. Tammany levies and takes it percentage, but it gives the people a return. It built subways and a great harbor. Its public works add to the splendor of the city and ensure its future. Our [machine] levies and takes, but it does not give.⁵

Convinced that the time had come for action, a group of business executives and clergymen, led by Thomas D. Knight, director of the Better Government Association, assembled at the Morrison Hotel the day after Christmas, 1922. The group, which named itself the Committee of One Hundred, joined in a concerted drive to oust Thompson and to elect a businessman as mayor. Since the Committee was comprised primarily of Republicans, it directed its efforts at the Republican party to which the Committee would offer one candidate to anti-Thompson Republican leaders. As a caveat, the Committee stated that if its choice were spurned it would run its own candidate. Though the Committee intended to lobby only among Republicans, it was hopeful that its action would encourage

⁵Chicago Tribune, 3 January 1923.

the Democrats to select a blue-ribbon candidate for their own party.⁶

Spurred by the formation of the Committee of One Hundred, the original reform group led by Taylor and Fairbank decided to form its own organization to map a strategy to defeat Thompson. On 3 January 1923, this group held a luncheon at the City Club to which one hundred-fifty political activists were invited. Establishing itself as the Nonpartisan Citizens' Mayoralty Committee, the group organized a twenty-nine member executive committee, with Mrs. Fairbank as its head.⁷

The Nonpartisan Committee pledged to work for the election of a "competent, progressive, and honest mayor" who would cut government waste and protect the public schools. To accomplish these goals, the Nonpartisan Committee would lobby both the Republicans and Democrats to nominate, in their respective mayoral primaries, two "outstanding men of proved ability and integrity" to be selected from a list of five or ten persons of suitable qualifications whom the Nonpartisan Committee would recommend. If neither party heeded its counsel, the Nonpartisan Committee, like the Committee of One

⁶Chicago Daily News, 26-29 December 1922; 2 January 1923.

⁷Chicago Daily News, 4 January 1923; Chicago Tribune, 7 January 1923.

Hundred, would consider running an independent candidate.⁸ A week later, on 11 January 1923, amid much fanfare, the Nonpartisan Committee recommended two Republican and five Democratic mayoral candidates, including superior court judge William E. Dever.⁹

While the politicians pondered the merits of the would-be mayors, the newspapers seized the opportunity to speculate, to nominate and to elect a different man in each edition. Just about any Democratic politician who was under ninety and not incarcerated was considered prime mayoral timber, including Carter Harrison II.¹⁰ Though not endorsed by the Democrats or any organization, Harrison, who had served five terms as mayor, not only stated that he could have had the nomination if he had asked, but also that as an Independent, he would have "won in a walk."¹¹

The primary was scheduled for 27 February, but neither the politicians nor the press, which had named an array of eighteen Democrats including Dever who was considered a dark horse, knew who the candidates would be.¹² Of the eighteen

⁸Chicago Daily News, 4 January 1923.

⁹Chicago Tribune, 11 January 1923.

¹⁰Chicago Daily News, 15 December 1922.

¹¹Carter H. Harrison, Stormy Years: The Autobiography of Carter H. Harrison (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1935), 479.

¹²Chicago Daily News, 12 December 1922.

names submitted to the Democratic Party Managing Committee on 22 December 1922, Dever's name was not among the "top ten." The Democrats were so undecided as to whom the candidate should be that the date of the formal slating conference was repeatedly postponed on the excuse that George E. Brennan, Democratic party boss, was recovering from surgery on his bad leg.¹³ The strongest Democratic contender was Anton J. Cermak, President of the Cook County Board of Commissioners, but a Cermak candidacy presented serious disadvantages. While his skills, his force of character and his fierce ambition to be mayor were recognized by his associates, Cermak was not recognized as mayoral timber by the press. Despite Cermak's identification as "Mr. Wet," and his large personal following, a Bohemian immigrant was considered too ethnic for some of the city's WASPish voters and his rise from humble origins to become a man of considerable wealth also made him suspect. Though no impropriety had ever been proven, suspicions about Cermak's wealth compromised his candidacy. Finally, his opposition to Prohibition, while an advantage in most areas of the city, was a distinct disadvantage in others. If the Democrats hoped to defeat the Republicans, they needed a candidate without hint of impropriety to be an effective

¹³Chicago Daily News, 22 December 1922.

contrast to Thompson. With Cermak out, Brennan began to consider superior court justice William E. Dever.¹⁴

Dever had been touted as a future mayoral candidate when he served as alderman of the Seventeenth Ward, during which time he was respected for his sincerity, honesty and advocacy of the causes of the common man. A loyal Democrat, Dever had supported Mayor Edward F. Dunne in the fight for municipal ownership of the transit lines and in 1907, was one of twelve aldermen who voted to sustain Dunne's veto of the traction settlement ordinance which cost Dunne re-election in 1909.¹⁵

In 1915, the Democratic mayoral primary contest between Carter Harrison II and County Clerk Robert Sweitzer had become so inimical that a third candidate was considered by the Dunne Democrats. Though spokesmen for Dunne, who was then governor of Illinois, believed that Superior Court Judge William E. Dever should be advanced as a candidate for the Dunne Democrats, Dever said that he was "by no means disposed to enter the race."¹⁶ The first serious mention of Dever as a mayoral candidate in 1923 appeared in the Chicago Herald and Examiner which stated that he had "stood true blue from the beginning of the traction fight of 1907; had a "sterling

¹⁴Alex Gottfried, Boss Cermak of Chicago: A Study of Political Leadership (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1962), 60, 117, 133-134, 369.

¹⁵Chicago Daily News, 3 March 1907.

¹⁶Chicago Tribune, 12 January 1915.

record on the bench;" and, that he had "kept close touch with political and social affairs."¹⁷

With approach of the 1923 mayoral election, the Democrats had long been planning for the campaign and had discussed candidates for more than a year. County Clerk Robert Sweitzer, twice defeated by Thompson in 1915 and in 1919, was eliminated as a contender. While the Democrats knew that Thompson was vulnerable because his administration had become notably corrupt, the divisiveness among the party's desperate factions precluded selection of a candidate. Though party boss George Brennan was determined that the Democrats would capture the mayor's office, neither he nor the party stalwarts had any particular candidate in mind as late as December 1922. Whether the Progressive Republicans, Harrison-Dunne Democrats, Municipal Voters' League or the Nonpartisan Citizens Mayoral Committee first advanced William Dever's nomination is uncertain, but a Dever candidacy appealed to Brennan for several reasons: he offered an honest alternative to Thompson; he was popular with reformers and independents; and, he had built a career based on honesty, hard work and good relations with all groups.¹⁸ Dever, "the trained executive and experienced municipal statesman"¹⁹ was the logical Democratic

¹⁷Chicago Herald and Examiner, 15 December 1922.

¹⁸Schmidt, 62-66.

¹⁹Chicago Journal, 2 March 1923.

candidate who would unite the party while giving the city honest efficient government. On 19 January 1923, William E. Dever, who vowed to rid Chicago of the scourge of Thompsonism and return City Hall to Democratic control, was officially nominated as the party's candidate for mayor.²⁰

Mayor Thompson's startling announcement on 25 January 1923 that he would not seek a third term created pandemonium; the Republicans had not groomed a successor and, with Thompson's withdrawal, three candidates contended for the Republican primary: one Republican, an independent endorsed by actor Rudolph Valentino,²¹ and one alleged to have Ku Klux Klan support.²² The mayoral primary was held on 23 February and Postmaster Arthur C. Leuder, who had declared his candidacy on 16 January,²³ received 130,350 votes and emerged the Republican candidate. Judge Dever, unopposed in the Democratic primary, received 169,435 votes.²⁴

Unable to wage an anti-corruption campaign against the incumbent, Dever established himself as a candidate with a definite program. Among the issues which he enumerated to give the people of Chicago a cleaner, better, safer, and

²⁰Chicago Tribune, 19 January 1923.

²¹Chicago American, 21 February 1923.

²²William H. Stuart The Twenty Incredible Years (Chicago: M. A. Donohue & Co., 1935), 186.

²³Chicago Daily News, 16 January 1923.

²⁴Chicago Tribune, 27 February 1923.

greater city was his concern for the deplorable situation of the Chicago public schools. Dever pledged to appoint a quality school board and to institute a massive building program so that students would not be packed together like so many sardines in a can. In addition to seeking increased school funding, Dever pledged to monitor closely the manner in which school funds would be spent, stating that he was appalled that "one group of experts receives \$3 million, and at the same time we haven't enough money to furnish electric lights for the schoolchildren."²⁵ Since it was difficult to argue with Dever's objectives, Leuder portrayed himself as the nonpolitical businessman in politics "who will devote his time to his duties as mayor of Chicago, and not to building up a political machine. What this city needs is not a reformer, but a regenerator."²⁶

The election was held 3 April and Dever, supported by a united Democratic party and Independents, gained an early lead. While Leuder received nominal Republican support, he received none from the retiring mayor. That Thompson said nothing and did nothing required no further instructions to his loyalists. Leuder was the candidate of the Brundage faction of the party and the Thompson Republicans voted for

²⁵Chicago Tribune, 23 January 1923.

²⁶Chicago Post, 20 March 1923.

the Democrat.²⁷ Dever overwhelmed Leuder with a plurality of 105,319 votes and his vote total of 390,413 was the largest ever recorded for a Democrat in a Chicago election. Dever carried thirty-two of the city's fifty wards and his victory margin was surpassed only by the 147,477 vote plurality Thompson had won in 1915. Dever's plurality was concentrated in ten inner-city wards which he carried with 66,784 votes.²⁸ Though the majority of Leuder's votes came from historic Republican areas of the city, he did not receive, as had Bill Thompson, support of the black community whose shift in black party loyalty was striking. Whereas the proportion of blacks voting for a Democratic mayoral candidate stood at nineteen percent in 1919, it increased to fifty-three percent in 1923.²⁹ Though Thompson maintained public silence, he may have dampened black support for Leuder because Thompson's black associates, Second Ward Alderman Oscar De Priest and Assistant Corporation Counsel Louis B. Anderson, openly supported Dever.³⁰

²⁷Stuart, 187.

²⁸Chicago Journal, 4 March 1923.

²⁹John M. Allswang, A House for All Peoples: Ethnic Politics in Chicago (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1971), 42.

³⁰Chicago Tribune, 25 March 1923.

DEVER SCHOOL BOARD APPOINTMENTS

With disclosure of the plundering of the Chicago public schools and the subsequent indictment and imprisonment of board of education members, including board president Edwin Davis, Mayor William Hale Thompson was repudiated and the school board he appointed, "built for politics, and not for administration,"³¹ was discredited. Though civic groups favored an elected school board, Dever declared that the board should be appointive, smaller, and that the mayor should have the power to remove trustees.³² Shortly after he assumed office, an unforeseen opportunity enabled him to appoint a virtually new board of education, which under normal circumstances, would have taken six years because board members served staggered terms. While poking through old files, Dever found six undated letters of resignation which former Mayor Thompson, in one of his intrigues, had persuaded his loyal trustees to submit. The resignations were never executed because Big Bill changed his plans and decided to keep them in office. Dever, who at once grasped the implications, penciled in the date and then informed the five board members still serving that, somewhat belatedly, he was accepting their offers to quit.³³ When the ousted members

³¹Chicago Tribune, 4 January 1923.

³²Chicago Daily News, 10 February 1923.

³³Charles E. Merriam, Chicago: A More Intimate View of Urban Politics (New York: Macmillan Co., 1929), 258-259.

sought injunctive relief to prevent the dismissals, the mayor dispatched a squad of police to deny them access to school board chambers for the 23 May board meeting. At 2:00 p.m., as Charles Moderwell convened the meeting, Edwin Davis and Charles Severinghaus, both under criminal indictment, and Dr. Sadie Bay Adair and Pauline Struwing, both charged with malfeasance in office, were denied entrance. Despite the demand of attorney Chester E. Cleveland, legal counsel for the ousted members and former assistant corporation council who used to charge the city \$150 per diem during the Thompson incumbency, the former members were denied access by police sergeant Charles McGurn.³⁴ The court eventually dismissed the lawsuit and upheld the mayor³⁵ who, with five enforced resignations, two expiring terms and one existing vacancy, could make eight appointments to the eleven member board. Dever met with Charles E. Merriam, professor of political science at the University of Chicago, Graham Taylor, Director of Chicago Commons, and other reform opined friends to create a board of education radically dissimilar from the Thompson menage of opportunists and political stooges.³⁶ Those who emerged from their discussions, though apolitical, comprised prominent spokesmen of the white social, religious, cultural,

³⁴Chicago Tribune, 24 May 1923.

³⁵Chicago Tribune, 23 August 1923.

³⁶Barry D. Karl, Charles E. Merriam and the Study of Politics (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1974), 142.

ethnic and business interests of the city. The group included Charles M. Moderwell, Republican coal company owner elected board president; Grace Temple, past president of the Chicago Woman's Club; James Mullenbach, social worker and labor arbitrator; Julius F. Smietanka, Polish attorney and former board member under Mayor Busse; Helen Heffernan, prominent Catholic clubwoman; Edgar N. Greenbaum, banker and leader in the Jewish community; William K. Fellow, architect; and Hart Hanson, educational book publisher whose term was expiring. Hanson and Lewis Coath, whose term was to expire, were both retained because they had been vocal critics of Thompson's school policies.³⁷ With council confirmation to board membership of his slate of progressive, distinguished, businesslike and independent nominees, Dever served notice of his resolve to keep his campaign pledge to take politics out of the public schools.³⁸

The test of this resolve came in August 1924 with the announcement by Superintendent Peter Mortenson that he would retire on 17 December when his term expired. Although Mayor Dever had not interfered with the actions of the board, he notified board president Moderwell that he favored the selection of a Chicagoan for the post:

As a Chicagoan I should be chagrined if Chicago could not furnish a superintendent for its own schools. Certainly

³⁷Chicago Daily News, 19 April 1923.

³⁸Chicago Daily News, 23 May 1923.

a well qualified man, the equal of any in the country, can be found in the school system or in one of the colleges or universities here. Of course, the preferable selection would be that of a member of the school system. If a suitable man can be found in the schools, neither religion nor politics should stand in the way of his nomination for the post. No interests other than the best interests of the schools and the school children should control, and they must not.³⁹

Notwithstanding the mayor's charge, the Dever board of education, to restore public confidence in the schools, on 9 January 1924, elected William McAndrew, the spade bearded, autocratic, obdurate, efficiency oriented educator from New York city to be superintendent of schools. McAndrew was not the unanimous choice of board members, many of whom favored the election of either William Owen, dean of the Normal College or William J. Bogan, principal of Lane Technical High School. Though Owen had the support of the Chicago Teachers' Federation, Bogan expected strong support from the mayor, a personal friend, to assure him of the position.⁴⁰ However, Dever remained aloof and Bogan was denied the post, allegedly after warnings by Protestant leaders that many of Dever's Protestant supporters would resent a Catholic mayor who appointed a Catholic as the superintendent of schools.⁴¹

³⁹Chicago Tribune, 30 November 1923.

⁴⁰Chester C. Dodge, Reminiscences of a School Master (Chicago: Ralph Fletcher Seymour, 1941), 100.

⁴¹Stuart, 189.

CHAPTER IV
THE SUPERINTENDENCY OF WILLIAM MCANDREW
BACKGROUND

William McAndrew was born in Ypsilanti, Michigan on 20 August 1863, the second son of William and Helen Walker McAndrew. McAndrew's father, who had emigrated from Scotland, was engaged in the furniture business until he joined his wife, the first woman physician in the state of Michigan, in the management of the sanitorium which she had established. The elder McAndrews were political liberals who regularly held Sunday afternoon forums at which suffragette Susan B. Anthony and John B. Gough were frequent participants.

McAndrew demonstrated the traits of temperament which were to mark him as a dynamic, if not always a favored, administrator as early as his college days. While a freshman at the University of Michigan, McAndrew wrote a paper on educational mismanagement; as an upper classman, he wrote trenchant notes to his professors on the value of their courses. Elected to Phi Beta Kappa, McAndrew received his A.B. in 1886 and earned an M. Pd. from the State Normal College at Ypsilanti in 1916. After graduation from the University of Michigan, McAndrew was named superintendent of

schools in St. Clair, Michigan and served from 1886 to 1888, at which time he came to Chicago to accept a teaching position at Hyde Park High School.

In 1889 he was named principal of Hyde Park but served only two years. He failed reelection because he refused to inscribe his name to the diploma of a publisher's son who had failed botany, despite being told by Superintendent Howland that, since the course was not a ^{requisite} perquisite for college, it was not required to graduate from high school. Daniel R. Cameron, chairman of the high school committee and later board president, warned McAndrew that if he did not do as Howland directed, he would not retain the post. McAndrew retorted that the superintendent could issue the diploma if he choose, but he would not sign it.¹

Disillusioned, he left education in July 1891 to become advertising manager and district passenger agent for the Great Northern Railroad. In 1892, he accepted the principalship of the high school of the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York, which, with the Cooper Institute in New York City and the Drexel Institute in Philadelphia, were supplementary education agencies which operated as independent organizations within the International Association of Young Men's Christian Associations. Each institute employed its own director, offered a technical and commercial vocational curriculum, and

¹Dodge, 101.

issued certificates of proficiency to those who satisfied the stringent academic standards of the institutes.² McAndrew served at the Pratt until 1902, at which time William Henry Maxwell, superintendent of the New York public schools, asked him to establish and organize the Washington Irving High School as a girls' technical school. During McAndrew's twelve years tenure as principal, Irving became the most publicized secondary school in New York city. As an advocate of the fundamental principles of the social efficiency movement, which stressed a practical education for social control and social service, the curriculum which McAndrew implemented fostered the production of habits and beliefs consistent with practical studies.³ "Tired of the restrictions of an unproved curriculum," his ideas on the study of social amenities that make life more pleasant and friendship more enjoyable,"⁴ discipline, pupil self-governance, exhibits of infant care and a host of other topics were publicized by the New York state board of education and the press.⁵ McAndrew held that it was

²Elmer Ellsworth Brown, The Making of Our Middle Schools: An Account of the Development of Secondary Education in the United States (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1905), 401-402.

³Edward A. Krug, The Shaping of the American High School 1880-1920 (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 249-283.

⁴Ibid., 279.

⁵Robert Livingston Schuyler, ed., Dictionary of American Biography (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), s.v. "McAndrew, William," by Carter V. Good.

incumbent on the schools to prepare youth for citizenship to justify the support of public education with taxes and "to magnify the desire to obey law, to promote the general welfare, to practice justice, courtesy and fair dealing" in a democracy.⁶ In 1912, he was offered the position of superintendent of the Detroit public schools,⁷ but declined. In 1914, McAndrew was named an associate superintendent of the New York city public schools by Superintendent William L. Ettinger, who stated:

He has been a tower of strength in the school system. He has had much difficult work and has always done it loyally and efficiently. The present building of the Washington Irving High School is largely a monument to his efforts.⁸

Dr. McAndrew is a wonderful organizer. He is a hard worker, efficient, and dependable at all times. . . . his work as associate superintendent of should place him in charge of all 'extension activities,' including evening schools, community centers, and physical culture. In all of these newer branches of education he has been a leader and organizer.⁹

McAndrew served in the New York post until 31 January 1924, at which time he assumed his duties as superintendent

⁶Department of Education, Annual Report of the Superintendent of Schools for the Year Ending June 30, 1924, 16.

⁷That McAndrew was offered the Detroit superintendency was referenced in the Dictionary of American Biography only. This fact was not corroborated in other biographical information or in McAndrew's obituaries published in the Chicago Tribune and the New York Times.

⁸New York Times, 10 January 1924.

⁹Chicago Tribune, 10 January 1924.

of the Chicago public schools. He had few illusions about Chicago's political system or its schools, and little doubt about that which was needed to set them right. McAndrew agreed to come to Chicago "to put the schools on their feet," but only after repeated assurances by the board of education that it would "clean up" the administration of the schools.¹⁰ To McAndrew, clean-up meant that the board of education would concede that the superintendent, because of his professional training and expertise, was the singular and undisputed authority to determine the city's educational priorities; and, that his educational decisions should be implemented through a strict line-and-staff organizational system.

McAndrew, who believed that the chief fault of the Chicago school system was the board's failure to understand the role of the superintendent, referred to the situation in Chicago prior to his appointment as a "tragi-comedy," the origin of which was "the outworn fallacy that a superintendent is the board's . . . executive to carry out their policies. He isn't."¹¹ He was adamant that the superintendent was the final authority in the management of the schools and that neither the teachers, nor the board of education nor the

¹⁰William McAndrew to Charles H. Judd, April 12, 1927, C. H. Judd Papers, Special Collections, University of Chicago Library. Quoted in David John Hogan, Class and Reform: School and Society in Chicago, 1880-1930 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 212.

¹¹Ibid.

parents had license to interfere with the superintendent's efforts to maximize the efficiency of the schools,¹² "to produce a human, social unit, trained in accordance with his capabilities to the nearest approach to complete social efficiency possible in the time allotted."¹³

McAndrew's selection as superintendent was a compromise; the board was divided between McAndrew and Bogan, the latter favored by four members who wanted a Chicago educator elected to the post. On the decisive ballot, McAndrew was denied a unanimous vote by Dr. John Dill Robertson, formerly board president: "Mr. Chairman, I am not convinced that we have not Superintendent timber in the school system of Chicago; therefore I pass my vote."¹⁴ Helen Hefferan, who had supported Bogan remarked, "I put aside my feeling that we should have a Chicago man and vote 'Aye' on the election of Mr. McAndrew."¹⁵ Though he possessed the qualifications, and notwithstanding Mrs. Hefferan's opinion that "we know his strength, his personality and his background," McAndrew was, in reality, unknown to them. None of the board members were familiar with his activities in New York; none had visited him

¹²William McAndrew, "The Principal," Chicago Schools Journal 7 (November 1924):81-85.

¹³_____, "What Schools Are For." Women's City Club Bulletin 15 (February 1926), 197-200.

¹⁴Proceedings, 9 January 1924, 454.

¹⁵Ibid.

prior to his election; and, none had interviewed him for the position. In fact, when President Moderwell was asked who had first suggested McAndrew for consideration, he did not recall: "I really do not know. I was attracted by his magazine articles on education. I met him in New York and invited him to come and see me. He did not know that he was being measured to whether he would fit the job."¹⁶

Consequently, when McAndrew assumed his duties as superintendent, neither the depth of his convictions about efficiency nor the implications of these convictions were immediately evident. Nevertheless, he was warmly welcomed by teachers and citizens alike as the educational leader who would restore confidence in a school system wearied by years of strife and scandal. Teachers and organized labor, pleased that the reign of the Thompson board had ended, greeted McAndrew's appointment with optimism.¹⁷ Margaret Haley, business agent of the Chicago Teachers' Federation, remarked:

He always felt proud of being kicked out the back door of Chicago's school system; now he came back through the front door. He had backbone then and we who have watched his career feel that he still has it. He ranks as one of the three foremost educators in the country.¹⁸

However, the support which McAndrew enjoyed changed to animosity due to his quick determination to concentrate power

¹⁶Chicago Tribune, 10 January 1924.

¹⁷George S. Counts, School and Society in Chicago (New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, Inc., 1928), 71.

¹⁸Chicago Tribune, 10 January 1924.

convictions about efficiency; and to his frequent and acerbic remarks about the incompetence and laziness of the teachers.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

McAndrew immediately made his ideas known and his sharp temperament felt. A proponent of structural reform, he had no patience with dawdlers, loafers or incompetence. His slogan was "Every man on the job!" He reduced the number of holidays for teachers and students and instituted time checks for all employees of the board of education. He started a program of 100 percent mastery of reading, writing, spelling, punctuation and arithmetic after surveys which he conducted revealed that elementary students made appalling progress in those basic subjects. Vehement in his opposition to political interference, any supplicant who petitioned for special favors for a teaching applicant was summarily ushered out of his office. The schools were being operated more efficiently, but his swift revolution won McAndrew the enmity of many teachers, principles and of Margaret Haley, leader of the powerful Chicago Teachers' Federation who charged that McAndrew, whom she considered a "carpetbagger," had "played the devil in the schools."¹⁹

The ideals of social efficiency, the prerogatives of the superintendent and close supervision dominated McAndrew's

¹⁹Robert L. Reid, ed., Battleground: The Autobiography of Margaret A. Haley (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982), 209.

administration of the Chicago public schools. When he became superintendent, he assumed that slackness, indolence and general inefficiency typified conduct of the schools, a status which he attributed to the demoralizing influence of World War I, the style of administration which had evolved over years and the incursion of political influence in the management of the schools.

In June 1924, four months after his arrival, McAndrew submitted his first annual report to the board of education in which he assessed the situation of the schools and in which he presented a comprehensive program of reforms which recommended the service center concept of the school in which instruction in citizenship, civic service and character ideals were to be stressed; the use of experimental classes, the Winnetka plan of individual instruction and vocational education; increased utilization of research, test data, teacher observations and ratings to improve teaching; greater interest in religious and moral education; increased attention to physical training; and reorganization of the administrative structure of the schools to include assistant and district superintendents for closer supervision. As an advocate of practical studies, McAndrew also recommended that the value of classical studies, particularly Latin, be explored because

he did not care "a picayune for the horrible nightmare . . . called the scansion of Latin verse."²⁰

McAndrew was not prepared for the maelstrom into which he inadvertently plunged the schools. The opposition which his policies engendered resulted from his inability to discern that the desire of the public, organized labor and teachers, to have a measure of participation in the conduct of schools, did not compromise his prerogatives as superintendent. Of the many policies which he advocated, those which he pursued and which ultimately led to his removal from office included his emphasis on business efficiency, the rating of teachers, close supervision, implementation of the platoon plan, organization of junior high schools and the abolition of the teachers' councils.²¹

CLOSE SUPERVISION

McAndrew's regime of close supervision introduced a series of reforms which required teachers to check a report sheet four time a day, initiated fixed performance criteria which made no allowance for the size of classes or children's backgrounds, and introduced standardized tests and a system of line and staff supervision to ensure strict compliance with his policies. His "Official Notice on Teacher Efficiency" for

²⁰William McAndrew, "Success in School," School Review 19 (November 1911), 593.

²¹Annual Report, 1924, 5-25.

the 1925-1926 school year approximated Superintendent Edwin Cooley's promotional scheme in which efficiency grades for teachers, which were kept secret to avoid comparisons, were determined by the principal. The McAndrew plan measured teachers in six categories: knowledge of subject, 10 percent; ability to teach, 20 percent; progress of pupils, 30 percent; cooperation with pupils and community, 10 percent; cooperation in school management, 15 percent; and professional standing, growth and adaptability to suggestion for professional improvement 15 percent. The plan also had a category for "demerits" which allowed a principal, for any reason at all, to deduct as many points as he wished. McAndrew informed principals that they had "the iron hand" and should use it.²² McAndrew believed that school management was hierarchical: educational policies and processes were formulated by the superintendent and principals and were carried out by the teachers, as directed by the principal. Accordingly, neither their opinions nor their advice were needed or warranted:

We have the American instinct of resistance to authority and . . . the feeling that educational service is missionary work and immune from firm discipline. . . . The teaching service is a paid one involving the expenditure of citizens' money earned by labor and contributed with sacrifice. The responsibility is imperative that supervision be strict, insistent upon hard work, obedience and productive results. . . . The few loud-speaking ones of us who stir up strife and

²²William McAndrew, "Official Notice," Chicago Schools Journal 8 (1925-26).

discontent attract more notice than is for the public good.²³

Although McAndrew flatly opposed efforts by teachers, politicians, or businessmen to dictate educational policy, he was receptive to businessmen and their interests, insisting on a "100 percent mastery program" in the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic favored by businessmen. Though he solicited their opinion on the efficiency of the schools by sending out letters to members of the Association of Commerce under the heading "Customers' Estimate of Service," similar letters were not sent to leaders of the labor movement or to parents who sent their children to school.²⁴ McAndrew's interest in the efficient operation of the schools and in support from the business community was purely pragmatic: efficient operation saved taxpayers' money and students with entry level skills met the demands of the marketplace. While McAndrew accepted that employers had a vested interest in the schools, they were not to be entrusted with control:

The business avarice that first brought Africans as slaves to our shores, and then Chinese and now Italians,

²³Annual Report, 1924, 18.

²⁴William McAndrew, "Speaking to This and That," Chicago Schools Journal 8, (December, 1925), 121-144; "Association of Commerce Representatives Visit Schools: Superintendent of Schools Extends Invitation," Margaret A. Haley's Bulletin, June 25, 1925, 74.

because their labor is cheap, is scarcely the power to be trusted with the direction of any public schools.²⁵

In May 1926 McAndrew organized the first in a series of "Citizens Sampling Days" to demonstrate to the school system's "stockholders," the quality of the schools' "human output" and the degree to which their "human output" satisfied the "requirements" of the stockholders. On the appointed day, representatives from business, the Chicago Association of Commerce, the Union League Club, the City Club, the Women's City Club, the Chicago Bar Association, and other groups assailed the children with questions and tests of skill.²⁶ John Fitzpatrick, President of the Chicago Federation of Labor did not attend, but as far as he was concerned, there could be no doubting the meaning of "Citizens Sampling Day:"

I cannot understand what you and your stockholders are thinking about when you talk about 'output customers, Stockholders and Sampling Day' unless you imagine that you are running some kind of a mill or factory while you are grinding out a certain kind of product or material and you are going to get the 'stockholders and customers' together and bring forth 'samples' as an exhibit of your 'output.' . . .

Thus 'sampling day,' as you present it, is nothing more or less than an exhibition of the effort and result of eight years' schooling to make the youngsters think and act alike. . . . And the customers will be shown that the products of our public schools jump when the string is pulled, and they will be splendid material to

²⁵ _____, "Industrial Education from a Public-School Man's Point of View," Educational Review (February, 1908), 128.

²⁶Chicago Board of Education, Citizens Sampling Day: Chicago Public Schools (Chicago, 1926)

draw upon for employees in stores, offices, shops, factories, or elsewhere.

The parents are not consulted as to whether or not they are satisfied with the kind of schooling their children are getting. But why should they be consulted? The schools are not being run for them but for the 'stockholders and customers.'²⁷

EFFICIENCY IN THE SCHOOLS

The unprecedented expansion of industry in the United States during closing decades of the nineteenth century imbued the American psyche with business values and industrial practices. Consequently, with industrialism and capitalism in positions of prestige, the stature of the laissez faire entrepreneur increased and he emerged as the personification of American leadership. Since the values of industry became imbedded in the nation's social fabric, it was inescapable that they would affect the nation's public schools which mirror the culture of which they are a part.

In 1911, America was awed by a new approach to industrial administration conceptualized by Frederick W. Taylor in The Principles of Scientific Management.²⁸ Often referred to as the Taylor System, the principles of scientific management which Taylor defined were intended to increase efficiency by eradicating the interrelated causes of low productivity:

²⁷Chicago Federation of Labor, Federation News, June 12, 1926.

²⁸Raymond E. Callahan, Education and the Cult of Efficiency (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), 1-2.

faulty management and soldiering by workers. Management was at fault because it permitted workers to use unscientific methods for production; workers were at fault because they deliberately did less than they were capable of doing, an evil Taylor called "soldiering", of which he identified two types: "natural", the innate laziness of men; and, "systemic", the deliberate slowing of production while giving the appearance of working at full speed. Taylor argued that, to increase efficiency and eliminate waste, management had to assume new duties which constituted the four fundamental principles of the scientific management system: [1] to develop a science for each element of a man's work; [2] to scientifically select then train, teach and develop each workman; [3] to heartily cooperate with the workman to insure that the work is done in accordance with the principles of the science which has been developed; and, [4] to do all work for which management is better fitted than the workman.²⁹ The first three duties comprised those which management was to do in successive order; the fourth duty defined entirely new roles for management: to analyze, to plan and to control the entire manufacturing process in detail. When management assumed its new roles, judgment of the individual worker was replaced by the laws, rules or principles of the science of the job which management had developed. While the system prescribed that

²⁹Frederick W. Taylor, The Principles of Scientific Management (New York: Harper, 1911), 17-37.

work and responsibility were almost equally divided between management and workmen, for the worker, the equal division of work and responsibility meant that he did that which he was told to do by management and his share of responsibility was the responsibility to do that which he was told to do.³⁰ In effect, scientific management assured efficiency through the centralization of authority and the close supervision of tasks.

The influence of Taylorism which McAndrew brought to Chicago was evidenced in his vicious pursuit of educational cost accounting. Since McAndrew regarded students as "per capita expenditures," he despised traditional professionals who were reluctant to accept business criteria in education.

"We are accustomed," McAndrew wrote:

to regard ourselves as above business and incapable of measurement by dollars and cents, yet the past ten years have made it more clear that one of the best things that can be happen to us is the realization that education is public business and that a dollar-and-cents measurement is inevitable.³¹

Though interest in scientific management eventually diminished and its influence on business and industry waned in the post World War I years, modern business practices and efficiency had become icons of progress and reform. It was, therefore, quite natural to expect that boards of education

³⁰Callahan, 27-28.

³¹William McAndrew, "Success in School." The School Review 19 (1911), 593.

and superintendents, under pressure to make education more practical, would apply business methods to restructure the schools.³² When the gospel of efficiency was applied to education, it increased the authority of the superintendent and limited the freedom of the teacher because administrators were forced to demonstrate that they were operating their schools efficiently.³³

FULL UTILIZATION OF THE SCHOOL PLANT

As educators sought to evidence their commitment to increased efficiency and economy, they seized upon full utilization of the school plant, a concept advanced by Charles Eliot, president of Harvard University, in an address before the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association (NEA) in 1903. Employing a school-factory analogy to urge more extensive use of educational facilities "as the only true economy," he stated that the practice of using schools six hours a day for one-half the days in the year would never be thought possible in industry since "no productive industry could be successfully carried on with so incomplete a use of an expensive plant." Eliot advised that schools remain open summers and evenings and that they be

³²Ibid., 1-6.

³³Samuel Haber, Efficiency and Uplift: Scientific Management in the Progressive Era 1890-1920 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 64.

considered educational centers for the community.³⁴ His plan was not implemented because the school-factory analogy was flawed: operating factories at capacity raised production and produced greater profits: operating schools at capacity raised costs which could not be defended as true economy, and the increased "production" could not be seen or measured.³⁵

The factory analogy was utilized again to defend operating schools for twelve months but this plan engendered little enthusiasm because it would have increased expenses which, it was feared, would have increased the tax rate. A twelve month school calendar to achieve full utilization of the school plant was adopted in some school districts, but the effort was less than successful despite arguments by school administrators that the practice was cost effective.

When McAndrew became superintendent, Chicago's schools were overcrowded with more students legally required to attend than there were seats. Since he felt that large classes were not a problem for efficient teachers and that an elementary class of forty-five was not excessive,³⁶ one solution which he proposed for the lack of actual seating space was "all-year schools. Applying the school-factory analogy, McAndrew stated

³⁴Charles Eliot, "The Full Utilization of a School Plant," N.E.A. Proceedings (1903), 241. Quoted in Raymond E. Callahan, Education and the Cult of Efficiency (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), 126-127.

³⁵Callahan, 127-128.

³⁶Annual Report, 1926, 55-56.

that, since "no industrial concern would voluntarily keep its plant idle for two months each year. . . . We must make a strenuous effort to impress upon the entire system that there is a business side of education which cannot be disregarded." To permit the system's \$120 million school plant to sit idle during summer vacation would ensure that "we can never expect to escape the requirements of constant criticism because of wasted time, effort and money. The whole public school system is an organization to get the largest returns from a definite and restricted amount of money."³⁷

This statement contrasted starkly to his stance in 1910, at which time, as principal of the Washington Irving High School in New York, he wrote: ". . . we have desired to be called business organizers. Nonsense. Education is the opposite of business; it is founded on the emotions."³⁸

Notwithstanding McAndrew's support for the twelve month school plan as a cost effective measure, it failed adoption, the victim of civic protests and the reluctance of the board of education to approve an economy program which increased operating expenses. McAndrew then proposed two organizational changes, introduction of junior high schools and implementation of the platoon school plan, to make more

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Willaim McAndrew, "What is the Trouble with the School Teacher," World's Work 19 (February 1910), 12552-54.

effective use of existing resources and to enable the school's to offer differentiated school programs.

THE PLATOON SCHOOL

The platoon plan was originated by William A. Wirt and introduced into the Gary, Indiana public school system when he became superintendent in 1908. Wirt, a graduate of the University of Chicago, had been a student of John Dewey who impressed upon him the value of enriching the regular academic program with nature study, art, music and industrial education classes in which children learned by doing. Wirt believed that education could promote capitalism and individualism within the framework of the corporate-technological society.³⁹ The conceptualize his belief, he sought to make the Gary schools a microcosm of the larger society "to give the children not a playground, not a shop, not a study room, but a life."⁴⁰ His innovation was the introduction of an organizational scheme which permitted full, cost effective utilization of a school building during the regular school year and which offered children the benefit of special studies. John Dewey and his daughter Evelyn praised Wirt's plan as the ideal

³⁹Ronald D. Cohen and Raymond A. Mohl, The Paradox of Progressive Education: The Gary Plan and Urban Schooling (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1979), 22.

⁴⁰William A. Wirt, "Gary Schools," Educational Report, Lake County Schools (n.p., n.d. 1913,), 20. Quoted in Raymond A. Mohl and Neil Betten Steel City: Urban and Ethnic Patterns in Gary, Indiana, 1906-1950 (New York: Holmes and Meier Publishers, Inc., 1986), 133.

merging of academic and practical learning which produced benefits for children, for teachers and for the community.⁴¹ In platoon schools, elementary school children were no longer taught in self-contained classrooms; instead, during a six hour day, they would rotate from room to room and be taught by subject specialists in a departmental system. Typically, students had two ninety minute periods in basic subjects and six thirty minute periods in work and play activities.⁴²

Though Wirt called his system a "work-study-play school," it was more commonly referred to as the "Gary plan." The term "platoon" was coined by Leonard Ayres, an efficiency expert in education, but its usage was popularized by S.C. Hartwell in Overcrowded Schools and the Platoon Plan, published in 1916.⁴³ Wirt's plan was widely discussed and recommended in administrative journals and, by 1925, when a national platoon school association was formed, the plan was operational in 632 schools in 126 cities.⁴⁴ In 1927, the association began publication of the Platoon School and, by 1929, 730,000

⁴¹John Dewey and Evelyn Dewey, Schools of Tomorrow (New York: E.P. Dutton Company, 1962), 22.

⁴²Roscoe D. Case, The Platoon School in America (Stanford: University of California Press, 1931), 21.

⁴³Ibid., 9.

⁴⁴Ibid., 268-271.

students were enrolled in 1,068 platoon schools in 202 cities.⁴⁵

Praise for the platoon plan came from many quarters as educators searched for promising concepts and programs. When a committee of the Milwaukee school board queried platoon school teachers in Pittsburgh, Akron and Detroit, 167 responded that they preferred to teach in the new system.⁴⁶ Winnetka, Illinois, Superintendent Carleton Washburn praised the platoon plan for its emphasis "on out-of-door work and shopwork and social gatherings. . . . It alternates mental and manual work, classroom work and shopwork. The monotony is broken. School becomes less of a prison and more of a playground."⁴⁷

McAndrew's proposal that the board of education adopt the platoon plan was little concerned with differentiated programs or monotony. Ever the cost conscious administrator who saw students as per capita expenditures, the platoon offered a solution to relieve an overcrowded system in which 545,929 students were packed into 408 schools.⁴⁸ When an associate superintendent in New York City, McAndrew endorsed the Gary

⁴⁵Ibid., 10.

⁴⁶Ibid., 26-35.

⁴⁷Lawrence A. Cremin, Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961), 295-298.

⁴⁸Annual Report 1924, 3, 12.

plan which the Manhattan school board president said provided a "flexible and elastic" school program whose economical features made possible "richer educational advantages" for all children.⁴⁹ Whether McAndrew was aware that Ella Flagg Young had used the plan as a temporary measure until desperately needed schools could be built is moot. That he that the platoon schools were a failure in New York City and were abolished in 1917 did not dissuade him from praising the June 1924 report of the Education Commission, appointed by the board of education 12 December 1923, which recommended, that "as soon as practicable a limited number of platoon schools be established, believing that a fair trial will win them enthusiastic approval from principals, parents, teachers, parents, and children alike."⁵⁰

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

McAndrew's proposed restructuring of the Chicago school system also included plans for a junior high school system to replace the traditional eight year elementary school plan. Despite city council protests that adoption of a junior high school plan was precipitous, their implementation had been considered for many years; Superintendent Mortenson had proposed their adoption; the plan was recommended by the special commission appointed by the board to investigate

⁴⁹Cohen and Mohl, 44.

⁵⁰Annual Report, 1924, 23.

junior high schools in other cities;⁵¹ and, of the three junior high schools which had been established in Chicago, one was still in operation.⁵²

Though junior high schools had been organized in the United States since 1900, it was not until 1918 that the board of education became interested in their implementation. At its 6 March 1918 meeting, the board of education voted to organize three junior high schools in the William Hibbard, Francis Parker and O. A. Sexton elementary schools. Response to the first junior high schools was unfavorable; principals objected that junior high schools "decapitated" elementary schools of their the seventh and eighth grades; assistant principals objected to their loss of prestige; and, other school officials charged that elementary school buildings were inadequate to meet the requirements of junior high schools. Consequently, on 28 August 1918, the Committee on Schools Administration recommended that no additional junior high schools be organized.⁵³ On 11 June 1919, the board adopted Superintendent Mortenson's request to close the Sexton Junior High School and to transfer the students to the Englewood Senior High School. Hibbard Junior High School closed on 1 February 1920 and its ninth grade was transferred to Hibbard

⁵¹Proceedings, June 1924, 1380-81.

⁵²Annual Report, 1918, 9.

⁵³Proceedings, 28 August 1918, 378-384.

Senior High School, later renamed Theodore Roosevelt Senior High School.⁵⁴

Notwithstanding objections, the Education Commission appointed by the board to study various types of school organizations, submitted its report, entitled "Proposal to Establish Junior High Schools in the City of Chicago" which recommended:

that as rapidly as practicable Chicago establish junior high schools to accommodate pupils of the seventh, eighth and ninth grades. This recommendation is based primarily upon the belief that the junior high school affords the greatest opportunity to provide effectively and economically the educational advantages which children of the early adolescent period most need to promote their immediate and future well-being and happiness and their usefulness and value as citizens. . . . The commission believes that the undisputed educational advantages of the junior high schools justify the necessary additional expenditure involved in establishing them.⁵⁵

When the thirty-nine elementary school councils met to discuss the committee's recommendation, thirty-five concurred in the resolution which urged that:

the fullest possible publicity be given to all the essential features of the proposed Junior High School for Chicago, for public discussion of the same, to the end that parents and teachers may know what is proposed, and as far as possible, what results may be expected from the working out of this system.⁵⁶

⁵⁴Ibid., 11 June 1920, 431.

⁵⁵Proposal to Establish Junior High Schools in the City of Chicago (Chicago: Report by the Education Commission, 1924), 2, 22.

⁵⁶Herrick, 146.

The resolutions were referred to the Committee on School Administration on 14 May 1924, the date on which the board adopted the commission's recommendation that junior high schools be organized. On 24 May 1924, the board moved to install junior high schools throughout the school system as soon as feasible and to establish five experimental junior high schools, the names and locations of which were not designated. On 25 June 1924, Superintendent McAndrew named the William Rainey Harper, Charles Herzl, Wendell Phillips, Charles Sabin and Francis Parker schools as the new junior high schools; ordered that the building be remodeled for September 1924 occupancy; appointed a district superintendent to administer them; and, received authorization to provide for the transfer of the students.⁵⁷ Despite expenditures totaling \$211,535, when the junior high schools opened in September 1924, with 4,875 students in attendance,⁵⁸ the buildings were not ready for occupancy:

As the schools start, they are housed in buildings excellent in themselves but not especially well adapted for the purposes in hand . . . the number of pupils in the classes averages more than forty; shops are not ready; and, library facilities are inadequate. In short, much of the finished machinery of true intermediate schools are lacking.⁵⁹

⁵⁷Proceedings, 25 June 1924, 788.

⁵⁸Ibid., 15 October 1924, 343.

⁵⁹McCoy, 89-96.

McAndrew's insistence on making changes quickly and his refusal to respond questions raised by teachers, labor, and parents aroused resentment and his unwillingness to discuss the issue intensified suspicions of his real intentions. Rumors that he had been brought to Chicago to subdue the teachers and to support the domination of the schools by business interests spread.⁶⁰ Though McAndrew calmly ignored the protests and made no comments, the unyielding opposition of Margaret Haley and the Chicago Teachers' Federation would become major factors in McAndrew's career as superintendent of the Chicago public schools. Irrespective of McAndrew's intent to inaugurate the junior high school plan and the commission's favorable recommendation, they would be resisted by organized labor which considered them an attempt to stratify the schools by class.

TEACHERS' COUNCILS

The concept of teachers' councils as an administrative device to secure teacher participation in school management originated with John Dewey and Colonel Francis Weyland Parker who believed that a democratic educational system should be democratically controlled.⁶¹ Ella Flagg Young, a student of Dewey's, was the foremost exponent of teachers' councils which

⁶⁰Counts, 198-199.

⁶¹John Albert Vieg, The Government of Education in Metropolitan Chicago (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), 213-214.

she first inaugurated in 1898 in the district in which she was superintendent. The idea for teachers' councils had also been suggested to the Educational Commission of the City of Chicago by the Howland and the Ella Flagg Young clubs, to which men and women principals, respectively, belonged.⁶² Subsequently, in the Report of the Educational Commission of the City of Chicago, Article XVI, captioned "School Faculties and Councils, proposed:"

That provision be made by the Board of Education for the establishment of school faculties and district councils and a general council, with proper representation, to be chosen wholly or in part by the teachers themselves, and that such faculties and councils be given the right of direct recommendation to the board on all matters connected with the educational system of the city.⁶³

In 1899, Superintendent of schools E. Benjamin Andrews also proposed that teachers have an opportunity to participate through teachers' councils but his scheme, analogous to that contained in the commissions's report, restricted the councils to an advisory role, with no venue in policy decisions, under a powerful executive in the superintendent:

The possibilities of this organization for favorably influencing school work are very great. Acceptance of any decision, judgment, or advice emanating from the organization is purely voluntary. The influence of any action by any of the councils depends upon the degree in which its intrinsic and obvious value commends itself to the judgment of those concerned. The organization makes practicable and easy the consideration and discussion of important questions the theory and practice of teaching,

⁶²Herrick, 94.

⁶³Report of the Educational Commission of the City of Chicago, by William R. Harper, Chairman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1899), 167.

and on other matters in which teachers are interested. Every teacher is thus made a student of these problems.⁶⁴

The structure which Andrews devised for the councils maintained the hierarchical authority in the system through the creation of a three-tier council system: one in each school, comprised of teachers and the principal; one in each district, comprised of one teacher from each school and the district superintendent; one council for the high schools comprised of two teachers and the principal of each; and one central council, comprised of all superintendents and supervisors and one delegate from the high school and district councils.⁶⁵ Mrs. Young did not share Andrews' estimation that the role of the councils was to "influence school work" or to consider and to discuss "important questions on the theory and practice of teaching." In June 1899, after thirty-seven years of service to the Chicago Public Schools, Mrs. Young resigned in preference to Andrews' autocratic governance which reduced the status of district superintendents to "ignoble subordinates" who lacked the ability to carry out their goals. She charged that Andrews' exercise of one man power reduced her to a "figure head" and that it was "not consistent with her self-respect to draw a salary for responsibility she did not have."⁶⁶ William Rainey Harper

⁶⁴Forty-Fourth Annual Report, 1899, 156.

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Chicago Tribune, 4 June 1899.

invited her to work with John Dewey, chair of the Department of Philosophy and Education, at the University of Chicago. Subsequently, she earned a Ph.D. and was appointed to a professorship which she resigned in 1905 in support of Dewey who departed the university because of his displeasure with the administration.⁶⁷ Following a year of travel, she was named principal of the Chicago Normal School.⁶⁸

Mrs. Young developed her theory of democratic schools in her doctoral dissertation, Isolation in School Systems⁶⁹, in which she assailed the system of "close supervision" which estranged teachers and administrators. She argued that the feeling of isolation which teachers experienced came from the discrepancy between the "theory of the school" which was imposed from above and the "theory of life" which teachers gained from experience in the classroom.⁷⁰ "While the teachers are still segregated into two classes, as are citizens in an aristocracy," they could not train students for democracy:

No more un-American or dangerous solution of the difficulties involved in maintaining a high degree of efficiency in the teaching corps of a large school system

⁶⁷John T. McManis, Ella Flagg Young and a Half-Century of the Chicago Public Schools Chicago: A. C. McClure, 1916), 119.

⁶⁸Proceedings, 23 May 1906, 771.

⁶⁹Mrs. Young's dissertation was published as the first volume in the Contributions to Education series, under the revised title, Isolation in the Schools.

⁷⁰Ella Flagg Young, Isolation in the Schools (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1901), 28.

can be attempted than that which is affected by close supervision.⁷¹

Mrs. Young deplored close supervision because it inspired "oversupervision of the teaching force" by those who did not teach, and that it offered "greater rewards . . . to those outside of the classroom." She argued that close supervision would make teachers "mere automatons of an autocratic hierarchical system"⁷² which would deprive teachers of initiative and responsibility by focusing on details which enhanced the importance of the superintendent and ignored the needs of the child:

Frequent visitations to the schools in the district, or ward, bring the minutiae of each school room into the foreground, and develop a feeling of responsibility for matters of petty detail which are of a purely personal nature; and hence it follows that a ranking officer may be so near to the daily work as to have an exaggerated, or mistaken, conception of the obligations of the superintendent in determining the method in regard to even the non-essentials in the conduct of the schools.⁷³

John Dewey, influenced by Mrs. Young's work,⁷⁴ also wrote of the stultifying effects of close supervision in his series of lectures entitled Democracy in Education:

. . . But until the public school system is organized in such a way that every teacher has some regular and representative way in which he or she can register judgment upon matters of educational importance, with the assurance that this judgment will somehow affect the school system, the assertion that the present system is

⁷¹Chicago Teachers Federation Bulletin, 3 July 1903.

⁷²Young, 28.

⁷³Chicago Teachers Federation Bulletin, May-June 1908.

⁷⁴McManis, 119-122.

not, from the internal standpoint, democratic seems to be justified. . . . What does democracy mean save that the individual is to have a share in determining the conditions and the aims of his own work; and that, upon the whole, through the free and mutual harmonizing of different individuals, the work of the world is better done than when planned, arranged, and directed by a few, no matter how wise or of how good intent that few? How can we justify our belief in the democratic principle elsewhere, and then go back entirely upon it when we come to education?⁷⁵

Mrs. Young believed that the control of public education and the formulation of educational policy were duties of the entire professional staff. To ensure that decisions of the schools would be decided in a democratic fashion, she proposed a system of school councils in which teachers would discuss educational policy in an open forum and that "the necessity for such an organization that shall insure a free play of thought and its expression, rather than courage in opposing and declaiming . . . cannot be made too emphatic." Under her proposal, school councils would be small enough "to make discussions deliberative, not sensational," and that teachers meet separately "to secure freedom of thought for teaches" who would otherwise not speak for fear of reprisal. Convinced that principals would inhibit free discussion, Mrs. Young insisted that they meet separately because "the voice of authority of position not only must not dominate, but must not be heard in the councils." Mrs. Young also proposed the creation of a delegate council, comprised of representatives

⁷⁵Reid, 89.

elected from each school council, which would advise the superintendent who would "act in accordance with his own judgment and be held responsible for the outcome."⁷⁶

When Edwin G. Cooley succeeded Andrews as superintendent in 1900, he disregarded Young's advice and placed principals in charge of the councils. Cooley's indifference to the requirement of deference to the hierarchy evoked strenuous protest from teachers and, as a consequence, the councils failed. In 1905, board member Dr. Cornelia De Bey proposed that teachers have "advisory authority and responsibility on educational subjects and the relation of the teaching body to the school system," and that the superintendent would be responsible for "administrative authority and advisory direction." She decried the "despotic manipulation" of teachers and the effects of close supervision:

The factory, the syndicate, the trust, have served as the pattern for school systems and with the natural result of turning the teacher into the cog of a machine. That's the best way to make the school system run smoothly, but the object of the taxpayers is not a system that runs smoothly or even a system at all. What the taxpayers want is education for their children to become free men and women. They cannot get this result from cogs in the machine.⁷⁷

De Bey's plan, which also recommended that teachers be organized at the local, district and central levels, was never implemented because it was considered too radical and Mrs.

⁷⁶Young, 106-109.

⁷⁷The School Journal 19 January 1906.

Young did not incorporate De Bey's proposal in her plan for the councils.⁷⁸

The defeat of Mayor Carter Harrison II in 1905 altered the composition of the board of education. Judge Edward Dunne who succeeded to the mayoralty was a liberal reformer who championed immediate municipal ownership of public utilities and a less authoritarian school system.⁷⁹ Dunne appointed new board members in both 1905 and 1906, nearly all of whom were well-known social reformers including Jane Addams, Louis F. Post, Raymond Robbins and Dr. De Bey. In 1907, the newly constituted Dunne board, which eliminated Edwin Cooley's plan for secret ratings of teachers, also established a system of teachers' councils with official standing as advisors to the board of education on curriculum and related teaching matters.⁸⁰

The board's Committee on School Management, which studied the revival of teachers' councils, determined that "the educational system was so organized as to make intelligent cooperation between the teaching force and the Board of Education impossible." To close the breach, the committee recommended that the board:

organize the whole teaching force into a simple, democratic, and elastic parliamentary body for advisory purposes. To this end it has referred to the teachers

⁷⁸Chicago Tribune, 15 December 1905.

⁷⁹Herrick, 109-110.

⁸⁰Ibid.

and principals themselves the work of formulating details of organization. As a result, the entire teaching force is now profoundly interested in the maintenance at a high level of efficiency a school system in which, until the advent of 'the Dunne Board' their proffers of cooperation had been superciliously discouraged as impertinent.⁸¹

The new plan authorized the formation of school councils and a central council. School councils, to be comprised of teachers, would meet monthly for one hour during the regular school session. The central council, comprised of all the principals and one teacher elected from each school, would formulate and initiate educational plans and proposals and make recommendations to the committee on school management for referral to the board for consideration. Two caveats permitted deviation from this plan: firstly, individual school could submit ideas and opinions directly to the board; and, the board reserved the right to refer educational matters directly to the teachers' councils for discussion and recommendations.⁸²

On 16 January 1907, the Committee on School Management submitted its report to the board of education in which it invited the educational councils in the Chicago public schools "to submit to the board of education a revised constitution for the purpose of placing the teaching body of the Chicago public school system into direct advisory relations with the

⁸¹Chicago Board of Education, Special Bulletin of the Board of Education, 1907, 4.

⁸²Ibid.

board. . . ."83 The report also advised that responsibility of legislative authority and final control should be reposed in the board; that the responsibility of administrative authority and advisory direction should be reposed in the superintendent; and, that the advisory authority and responsibility on educational subjects and the relation of the teaching body to the school system, should be vested in the teaching body.⁸⁴

The report was adopted at the 13 February 1907 board meeting but the defeat of Democrat Mayor Edward Dunne in the 1907 mayoral election thwarted efforts to revive the teachers' councils. Though Dunne's Republican opponent Fred A. Busse said little on the schools during the campaign, control to make them more representative of new constituencies was a simmering issue. Republicans favored a dynamic superintendent who would direct the schools on sound business principles and were inimically opposed to the Dunne school board of social reformers "with excessively progressive notions."⁸⁵ Democrats favored the community and the teachers, both of whom would have gained a greater measure of control had an elected board,

⁸³Proceedings, 16 January 1907, 762.

⁸⁴Rules and By-Laws of the Teachers' Councils of Chicago, 17, 1907. Quoted in George S. Counts, School and Society in Chicago (New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, Inc., 1928), 113.

⁸⁵Chicago Tribune, 22 March 1907.

supported by a nonbinding public policy referendum in 1904, replaced the current appointed board.⁸⁶

Dunne defended his appointees, ridiculed as "freaks, cranks, monomaniacs and boodlers," insisting that "labor and middle class people are better able to determine what is good for their children than the merchants club."⁸⁷ The mayoral election was held 2 April 1907, and despite strong support from the Chicago Teachers' Federation and the Chicago Federation of Labor, Dunne was defeated, his fall inextricably entwined, not with the fate of the public school system but with the municipal ownership of the public transit system.⁸⁸

On 17 May 1907, Busse illegally appointed twelve members to the twenty-one member board of education to replace seven whose resignations he had demanded and five who had resigned in protest.⁸⁹ Busse's action, which ousted most of Dunne's reformers, including Dr. Cornelia De Bey, Louis A. Post and Raymond Robbins, gave him majority control of the board. Alderman William Dever condemned the act as "the most cowardly and unconscionable in the history of this council,"⁹⁰ and the

⁸⁶Herrick, 109.

⁸⁷Chicago Tribune, 10 October 1906.

⁸⁸Ralph Russell Tingley, "From Carter Harrison II to Fred Busse," (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1950), 32-33.

⁸⁹Counts, 249.

⁹⁰Proceedings, 27 May 1907, 346.

Chicago Federation of Labor vilified Busse for his intent to make the public schools "a cog in the capitalistic machine, so that the children may reach manhood's estate content in a condition of abject servitude."⁹¹ Though the Illinois Supreme Court reinstated the ousted members in 1907,⁹² in the interim, Busse's appointments gave "control of the city school system into the hands of a board dominated by a practical and capable business element."⁹³ Businessman Otto Schneider, elected president by the Busse controlled board, declared that the operation of the schools was so haphazard, the "idea of creating advisory councils seemed very problematical and chimerical."⁹⁴

The future of the councils remained tenuous until 1913 at which time the board adopted Ella Flagg Young's plan to organize the schools into group councils, rather than school councils as proposed in 1899. The number of group councils would total of seventy-four, of which thirty were for elementary school teachers; eight for elementary principals; eight for high school teachers; two for high school principals; three for assistant and district superintendents; and, twenty-three for special teachers and those for whom the

⁹¹Chicago Tribune, 5 August 1907.

⁹²Proceedings, 12 August 1907, 398-400.

⁹³Chicago Tribune, 18 May 1907.

⁹⁴Proceedings, 15 January 1908, 398-400.

classifications did not apply.⁹⁵ The purpose of the councils was:

to give full and free expression or voice to the different attitudes and judgments of the teaching force on questions pertaining to courses of study, textbooks, departmental work duties and advancement of teaches and the general study of educational questions by the entire public school teaching corps, and to enable the superintendent to become conversant at first hand with these attitudes and judgments.⁹⁶

Though the councils prospered during the superintendency of Mrs. Young, they languished for three years under John D. Shoop who succeeded Mrs. Young in December 1915. When Peter Mortenson was elected superintendent in 1919, to succeed John Shoop who died in office in August 1918, the board adopted his recommendation to integrate teachers' councils into the administrative plan of the schools. Accordingly, the rules of the board of education were amended in 1919 to recognize high school councils:

High school teachers shall be organized into a council pursuant to authority granted by the Board of Education March 12, 1919. Teachers shall meet one each semester under the direction of the superintendent of schools and in local groups as authorized by the superintendent for discussion of educational matters and for the purpose of giving counsel and advice to the superintendent of schools, in accordance with the rules and by-laws already adopted by the superintendent of schools and amendments hereafter made and so approved.⁹⁷

⁹⁵Proceedings, 20 March 1913, 931.

⁹⁶Annual Report, 1913, 26.

⁹⁷Proceedings, 12 March 1919, 237-281.

In 1921, the Rules of the Board of Education were amended to make provision for elementary school councils and to establish the frequency of council meeting:

Elementary teacher councils shall be maintained pursuant to Board authority granted August 21, 1921, and in accordance with rules and by-laws already adopted and approved by the superintendent of schools or amendments hereafter made and so approved.⁹⁸

The board, which stipulated that council meetings were to be convened by the superintendent "two afternoons each semester in accordance with these regulations"⁹⁹ were held on school time and were often attended by board members or committees. During Morentson's tenure, the councils met regularly and, though principals and other supervisors were barred from attendance, the councils had become firmly established institutions. When William McAndrew became superintendent in February, 1924, teachers were resistant to any efforts to weaken or abolish them.

Though McAndrew desired that the Chicago schools "provide a thorough and efficient system of free schools whereby all children may receive a good common school education,"¹⁰⁰ the changes which he wrought aroused impassioned opposition and:

generated an enormous amount of hostility and precipitated a fight of the most violent and partisan character; and in both cases the alignment of forces was much the same. Ranged on the side of the opposition were a large fraction of the teaching staff, many ordinary

⁹⁸Proceedings, 31 August 1921, 62.

⁹⁹Proceedings, 1 September 1922, 498.

¹⁰⁰Annual Report, 1924, 6.

citizens, and the solid cohorts of organized labor. Ranged on the other side were the members of the supervisory and administrative staffs, the business interests, the professional people, and the educated classes generally.¹⁰¹

McAndrew engaged the conflict with the teachers and organized labor by his attempt to attain board adoption of his proposals to reorganize the school system with introduction of junior high schools and of platoon schools. When teachers questioned McAndrew's reorganization plan in the councils, his decision to abolish them introduced elements of controversy which became still more inimical. The junior high school issue generalized into a conflict over the class purposes of the school system and the teachers' council conflict became an issue of basic questions of authority and teachers' rights. By the spring of 1927, the seeds of revolt had been sown, and those who had welcomed him as the educational leader who would restore confidence in the public schools were again wearied by years of conflict and strife. The conflict was engaged.

¹⁰¹Counts, 81.

CHAPTER V
THE SEEDS OF REVOLT

William McAndrew entered upon his new responsibility as superintendent with brisk efficiency. Brandishing all the prerogatives of one-man rule vested in the office by the 1917 Otis Law, he embarked on an ambitious program to transform the Chicago public schools. During his tenure, the creation of junior high schools, the organization of elementary schools on the platoon system and the abolition of teachers' councils engendered the most rancorous partisan conflicts in the school system's history. The two issues which engaged the conflicts, teachers' rights and the class bias of the school system, merged into one as labor leaders opposed a superintendent, whom they perceived, desired to constrain both the teaching force and the education of working class children.

The Chicago Federation of Labor (CFL), quickened by the protracted three year struggle against differentiated schools which culminated in defeat of the Cooley Vocational Bill in 1915, denounced McAndrew's plans for junior high schools and platoon schools on the basis that they were intended to provide an inferior and less complete education for children from poor and working families. Although some teachers'

organizations endorsed junior high schools, McAndrew's plans for platoon schools incensed both the Chicago Teachers' Federation (CTF) and the CFL, both of which deprecated almost every attribute of the platoon school plan.

The primary issue underlying the controversy over the introduction of platoon schools and junior high schools was whether all children would receive a common education or whether they should be tracked into differentiated educational programs. The struggle which ensued ignited protest over a second fundamental issue: was the superintendent the sole authority to make educational decisions in the determination of school policies or, did the teachers have a right to a voice? Each question was deeply rooted in the history of Chicago schools and each had explosive potentialities. When McAndrew summarily abolished the teachers' councils, "perhaps the most significant of his official acts,"¹ each issue erupted into a firestorm, the effects of which swept him from office.

STRIFE OVER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

The conflict over junior high schools did not commence until 12 December 1923, just prior to the start of McAndrew's term as superintendent on 1 February 1924. At that time, by board resolution, an education commission was appointed to

¹George S. Counts, School and Society in Chicago (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., 1928), 107.

study the dimensions of the school housing problem in Chicago and the development of the junior high school in the United States during the previous ten years. Advised that the board of education and the superintendent of schools were anxious to proceed with the implementation of a junior high school program, the commission investigated the operation of platoon and junior high schools in Gary, Detroit, Rochester, New York, Pittsburgh, Cleveland and Kansas City.²

The introduction of junior high schools had been considered by Ella Flagg Young in 1913, not as an austerity measure, but as a means to meet the special needs of adolescent children and discussion of their implementation was raised in the teachers' councils. Though a comprehensive junior high school program was not implemented, four junior high schools were established in 1918 to relieve specific problems of overcrowding.³ Unlike his predecessor however, Superintendent McAndrew saw the junior high school not only as a method to relieve crowded schools, but also as a means to introduce vocational education to students at an earlier age and as the means to oblige elementary teachers to have the

²Board of Education, Official Report of the Proceedings of the Board of Education of the City of Chicago April 30, 1924 (Chicago: Board of Education Printing Plant, 1924,) 1265.

³Chicago Board of Education, Sixty-Fourth Annual Report of the Superintendent of Schools for the Year Ending June 30, 1918, 9.

same credential required of high school teachers, a college degree.

On 22 March 1924, McAndrew met with teacher delegates of the Elementary General Council, who as an expression of their concern about the function of the planned junior high schools, requested the superintendent to respond to five specific questions:

1. What were the essential features of a junior high school system?;
2. Will the junior high make a cleavage along class lines, becoming a substitute for senior high?;
3. Can a junior high be incorporated in an elementary school?;
4. Does it hold children in school and does it increase senior high failures?; and,
5. What teachers will be eligible for appointment to junior highs?.⁴

The superintendent deflected direct responses to the questions with the explanations that definitive answers were not ready; that he did not yet know enough about the junior high school system to answer their questions; and, that the forthcoming report of the education commission would contain some answers.⁵ He assured the council that junior high schools were not intended to cause class cleavage and that they were intended, not only as a preparation for senior high school, but also for students who had to leave school after the ninth grade. Since elementary schools did not have enough

⁴Elementary Teachers' General Counsel Report 11 (24 March 1924), 159.

⁵Ibid., 160.

students at the seventh and eighth grade levels to offer differentiated programs, they would be better off in a school which did. McAndrew then distributed a list of references on junior high schools for the council to study and, his response to the question on high school failures, he was characteristically caustic. Stating that there were no data on the effect of junior high schools on senior high failures, he added, "High school teachers will knock the work of elementary teachers from any grade. Some of them now in Chicago say that the elementary teachers do not know their business."⁶ As for teacher appointment to junior high schools, McAndrew informed the council that eligibility criteria had not yet been decided.⁷

On 30 April 1924, the Education Commission tendered its report, entitled "Proposal to Establish Junior High Schools in the City of Chicago," to the board of education, in which it was recommended that:

as rapidly as practicable Chicago establish junior high schools to accommodate pupils of the seventh, eighth and ninth grades. . . . upon the belief that the junior high school affords the greatest opportunity to provide effectively and economically the educational advantages which children of the early adolescent period most need to promote their immediate and future well-being and happiness and their usefulness and value as citizens.⁸

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Proceedings, 30 April 1924, 1265.

The Commission, which concluded that the educational opportunities to which seventh and eight grade students were entitled during "the early adolescent period when individual characteristics, abilities and aptitudes begin to manifest themselves," recommended the junior high school plan to meet the unique needs of this age cohort. The report stated that the aim of the junior high school was "to do for boys and girls during this critical period of their lives, those things which promise most to fit them for a happy and useful after-life." Accordingly, the advantages which the high school plan offered to achieve this goal were that it: permitted students to advance according to ability; provided more successfully for over-age pupils; permitted homogeneous grouping; induced pupils to remain in school; offered more effective vocational guidance; and, permitted more suitable discipline. However, the commission conceded that, initially, appropriations to build new junior high school buildings would equal the level of funding required to build additional eight year elementary and four year high schools to relieve overcrowded schools.⁹

Notwithstanding the increased costs, the Commission concluded that economies in capital expenditures would be realized since the new junior high schools would obviate construction of costly additions in old and overcrowded

⁹Ibid.

elementary schools.¹⁰ As a final statement, the report stated that "the commission believes that the undisputed educational advantages of junior high schools justify the necessary expenditure involved in establishing them."¹¹ Board member and Education Commission member Helen Hefferan moved that the proposal be referred to Superintendent McAndrew for his recommendation and report at the next regular board meeting two weeks hence, and to the Committee on School Administration for consideration.¹²

At the 14 May 1924 board of education meeting, action on documents 8830 and 8855, to establish junior high schools and to authorize the Superintendent of Schools to organize junior high schools, was deferred temporarily on a motion by James Mullenbach. Document D-8935, the School Administration Committee's recommendation that the board concur in the report of the Education Commission to establish junior high schools, was also deferred temporarily upon a motion by Mullenbach. However, Mullenbach's third attempt to defer consideration of the three junior high school reports failed. After board secretary Charles Gilbert read Deferred Reports 8854, 8855, and D-8935, Mullenbach motioned for deferral until the next board meeting. Seconded by J. Lewis Coath, the motion was

¹⁰Ibid., 1266-1271.

¹¹Ibid., 1266-1270.

¹²Ibid., 1271.

declared lost on a vote of 8 nays to 2 yeas. Mullenbach favored deferral because he believed that:

we are a trifle hasty in revamping our entire educational system without consulting the teachers and principals who will play such an important part in carrying out the proposed policy. Generally speaking, I am in favor of the junior high, but we should proceed with caution before experimenting with our children.¹³

Julius Smietanka, chairman of the finance committee, immediately motioned for adoption. Without regard for public hearings, consultation with interested organizations or the resolution sent to the board by the Elementary Teachers' Group Councils which requested that the "fullest publicity be given to all the essential features of the proposed Junior High School," the board moved unanimously to adopt reports 8845, 8855 and 8935-D, each of which appertained to junior high schools. Though report 8855 recommended and authorized McAndrew to organize the Blaine, Forestville, Lawson, Libby, and Sabin schools as junior high schools, the names of the elementary schools to be substituted for those identified and the number of elementary schools to be converted into junior high schools were withheld.¹⁴

The supercilious conduct of the board of education and the superintendent alarmed labor leaders who suspected that the precipitous introduction of junior high schools heralded another caste system of vocational training, different in

¹³Chicago Tribune, 14 May 1924.

¹⁴Proceedings, 14 May 1924, 1275-1332.

aspect but similar in intent, to the Cooley plan.¹⁵ On 27 May, aldermen Oscar Nelson and Harry Klinke and Margaret Haley, business manager of the Chicago Teachers' Federation, met at the Blaine school with the parents of Blaine students and Joseph Gonnely, who represented Superintendent McAndrew. Though Gonnely supported the junior high school plan, the consensus was that the "plan should not be instituted until such time as . . . a hearing had been accorded all who desired to express themselves." At the conclusion of the meeting, a resolution, which was unanimously adopted, resolved that:

this meeting of citizens request the Board of Education to take no steps to put into effect the Junior High School system until the public of Chicago has the opportunity to consider the matter and be heard before the Board of Education.¹⁶

Submitted to board secretary Gilbert, member Grace Temple moved that the correspondence and the resolution be entered into the 28 May 1924 Proceedings and that an invitation be extended to concerned citizens to appear at the 3 June meeting of the Committee on School Administration when the junior high school plan would be discussed. Accordingly, representatives of the CFL, the Illinois State Federation of Labor (ISFL) the High School Teachers' Council and the Elementary Teachers' General Council, met with the School Administration Committee of the board. Forty-sixth ward Alderman Nelson, vice-

¹⁵The New Majority, 31 May 1924, 19.

¹⁶Proceedings, 28 May 1924, 1342.

president of the CFL, denounced the means by which the board had adopted the junior high school plan, "without the slightest conference with any element of our citizenry, parents, or teachers, being given an opportunity to discuss it with you."¹⁷

Victor A. Olander, secretary-treasurer of the ISFL and chief spokesman for labor, argued that the junior high school plan be considered an experiment. Olander, who had conducted an extensive study of the junior high school in other cities, adduced that junior high schools produced a definite class division based on "card catalogue intelligence tests" which clearly discriminated against lower income working people: "The really sinister element in this arrangement is that children are led to believe that only persons of inferior intelligence perform industrial work."¹⁸ Olander also charged that the junior high school organization would reduce the common education of children, which, he asserted was central to the development of proper citizenship:

The first attack of the so-called junior high schools is against that democracy (of the elementary school), by cutting two years, and announcing that hereafter common education of children, in which all are

¹⁷The stenographic report of the meeting of the Committee on School Administration of the Board of Education, 3 June 1924, 4. Quoted in George S. Counts, School and Society in Chicago (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc. 1928), 171-172.

¹⁸Chicago Tribune, 5 June 1924.

educated approximately alike, shall continue only until the child reaches the age of twelve.¹⁹

The junior high school plan, he continued, was "nothing more than the German idea of compelling, through the public pressure of public authorities upon the parents, a class division being made clear and distinct when the child reaches the age of twelve years." Olander insisted that junior high schools "ran so counter to all that is best and truest in American life that they cannot survive," and, invoking the political heritage of Jefferson, rejected the idea of meritocratic testing and selection and charged that the junior high school violated the "meaning of the Declaration of Independence . . . what it means with reference to the equality of men," and to "the meaning of the Constitution."²⁰

The committee listened respectfully, and then presented a prepared statement of the policy of the board, which, in its collective wisdom, had authorized the junior high school plan. The decision had been made and the board was not disposed to change it. Labor's representatives felt that the meeting had been "a deliberate slap in the face,"²¹ made more egregious by the board's refusal to consider a proposal that the junior high school be implemented as an experiment to determine the nature of the curriculum and to consider whether it tracked

¹⁹Stenographic Report, 3 June 1924, 4.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid., 194.

students away from high school. On 16 June, at a meeting in the Chicago City Club to discuss the junior high school plan, Olander stated that, as an "experimental policy," the plan would represent no danger if labor were given the opportunity "to watch, to suggest improvements, and to consult with the Superintendent of Schools and the Board of Education."²²

His animus toward the junior high school was based on his belief that the "average man among our people, no matter what class he moves in, is opposed to anything endangering the American political birthright, the equality of all citizens."²³

The basic principle upon which our nation is founded recognizes this truth in candid language, written so plainly that none can misunderstand its meaning and purpose. For this reason . . . America has become the great nation of the earth, until within recent years the public school system has responded more and more to the great truth and as a result the education of all citizens has been growing apace. Now comes the effort to stem the tide of human progress in this country by overthrowing the great principle of American life within the public school system and thus, through the children of the nation, to degrade it by destroying the one vital principle which marks our nation as different from all others: the great principle of human equality as proclaimed in the American Declaration of Independence.²⁴

Olander contended that, given the board's imperious and undemocratic conduct, it was intent upon introducing another form of class education. The bases for this rejection of the junior high school traced to labor's conviction that it

²²The City Club Bulletin, 16 June 1924, 99-100.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Illinois State Federation of Labor Weekly News Letter, 26 July 1924, 1.

represented another Cooley plan and to their inability to reconcile the purported benefits of an organizational plan supported by the city's business interests, especially the Association of Commerce. Among its strategies to exert pressure on the board of education to reject the junior high school plan, labor carried it opposition to the city council, to local unions and into neighborhoods designated for a junior high school:

Groups of irate parents held indignation meetings, petitioned the board for hearings, and appeared at the board rooms for conference. . . . The bitterness of the struggle increased. In one junior high school the parents are reported to have destroyed \$5,000 worth of equipment in protest against the change. At least one school strike was organized.²⁵

On 26 July 1924, the ISFL published a comprehensive report concerning the junior high schools, intelligence tests and the platoon schools prepared by Olander. The principal thesis of the report's discussion on junior high schools asserted that they were:

proposed by the Chicago Board of Education . . . to break the direct connection which now exists between the elementary schools and the high schools and to provide a means whereby the pupils may be given courses which will not qualify them for entry into regular high schools.²⁶

The report also averred that junior high schools would end "the common education of children, [which] instead of being continued to the age of approximately fourteen years or

²⁵Counts, 194-195.

²⁶Weekly News Letter, 26 July 1924, 3-4.

the end of the eighth grade, is to cease when the average child reaches the age of twelve years or at the end of the sixth grade."²⁷ Finally, it was asserted that junior high schools would achieve:

exactly the division proposed in the Cooley Bill under which the commercial interests in Illinois attempted to put through the Illinois legislature, the purpose of which was to classify children at the age of twelve into two separate groups, one of which was to be destined for higher education and the other for industrial life. The plan was defeated by the trade-unionists of the state then, but in a different form it is now being imposed upon the people of Chicago by the Chicago Board of Education.²⁸

In the evening of 15 June 1924, John Fitzpatrick, president of the Chicago Federation of Labor, informed his membership that the junior high school plan:

would work a hardship on the parents, cause anxiety to them because of the endangering their children's lives in crossing street car lines and streets crowded with fast-moving trucks and motor cars, and discommode those who had bought or rented the places in which they reside in close proximity to the schools in which their children were to receive their education.²⁹

The following morning, the executive committee of the ISFL issued a statement which concluded that the junior high schools plan:

. . . is cunningly devised and furnishes a means whereby pupils at age twelve years can be led into sidetracking courses which frequently do not qualify them for entry into regular high school although in its inception the system may be so administered as to disarm suspicion by

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹The New Majority, 21 June 1924, 11.

providing a curriculum which actually does connect with the high school in cases of all pupils.³⁰

Responsive to labor interests, the city council adopted a resolution germane to junior high schools on Wednesday, 11 June 1924 and directed that City Clerk, Al F. Gorman, forward a copy to each member of the board of education. Referred to the board at the 18 June meeting, the resolution stated:

Whereas, The members of the Board of Education, with one exception, and the Superintendent of Schools decline to accept the invitation of the Council Committee on Schools, Fire and Civil Service, to appear before them to give information relative to the radical change they have ordered in the public school system of Chicago, by the adoption of the Junior High School plan, and have refused the Council's request to withhold all arrangements putting this new plan in effect . . .

Whereas, The Board of Education . . . are withholding information from the public as to which elementary schools will be substituted for the five schools specifically named by the Board of Education on May 14th . . .

Whereas, This condition of uncertainty is unjust and unfair to the school children, their parents and teachers of the entire city; and

Whereas, Some members of the Board of Education, as well as the public press of Chicago, make the statement that the Board of Education has not adopted the Junior High School plan, but merely ordered that an experiment be made, while the official record . . . shows that the plan has been adopted and that while five schools were designated in the official order as Junior High Schools, that in the same order, discreptionary (sic) power and unlimited authority was given to the Superintendent of Schools to change such selections and establish an unlimited number of Junior High Schools;

Therefore, Be It Resolved, That . . . this City Council, acting as representative citizens, reflecting the sentiment of our constituency, that the Board of Education should take some definite official action at its next meeting that will settle beyond the possibility of a doubt, the question as to whether the Junior High School plan is to be instituted as an experiment or as a permanent policy in our educational system, as well as

³⁰Weekly News Letter, 28 June 1924, 2.

to give the public definite information immediately, as to how many Junior High Schools will be opened in September and what elementary schools will be converted into Junior High Schools . . .³¹

Victor Olander again protested the junior high school plan in correspondence to board president Moderwell, in which he alleged:

That there is a deliberate and conscious effort to establish class distinction within the public school system by means of the so-called "junior high" school method is apparent in developments which have taken place in other cities, the purpose being to economize in the expenditure of public funds by discouraging high school attendance and ambitions. The curtailment of education is dangerously false economy. This may not be the conscious purpose of the members of the Board of Education but we believe that it will be the inevitable result of a permanent establishment of the educational switching arrangement which is camouflaged under the name of "junior high" school.³²

The CFL, certain it knew the author of the latest plan, declared:

the new changes proposed in the public schools are degrading and the schemes proposed to be in force were conceived by representatives of the Chamber of Commerce and large industrial concerns as a hindrance to the children's obtaining a good education and to restrain their mental faculties to the extent that they might be able to induce them to work in their cheap industrial plants at low wages and under inhuman conditions.³³

Labor's distrust of vested business interests dated to 1899 and the unsuccessful struggle to secure an elected school board and to secure compensation for board members to enable

³¹Proceedings, 18 June 1924, 1381.

³²Ibid.

³³Ibid.

working class citizens to hold board positions.³⁴ Labor also surmised that Chicago's schools were controlled, not by the board of education, but rather by the Association of Commerce, which Olander damned as "the most class-conscious body" he had ever opposed.³⁵

At its annual convention in September 1924, the ISFL declared that "while the junior high school is not in itself a plan to be condemned, it offers the opportunity for very serious abuses" and as proposed, junior high schools were "revivals of the 'dual system' which labor helped to defeat some years ago." In October 1924, the CFL sponsored a meeting of the Chicago Teachers' Federation, the Chicago Federation of Women High School Teachers and the Chicago Federation of Men Teachers. At the meeting, which attracted 4,000:

The junior high school was condemned along with the platoon system and intelligence testing as a sordid attempt to deprive the working man's child of a thorough education with the hope that he could be more easily controlled in industry if he had little schooling.³⁶

Olander stated that it was not the board of education but the Chicago Association of Commerce that was running the schools. Olander believed that the Association's interest in junior high schools was the result of the transformation of the production process, the effect of which was the demand for

³⁴Counts, 197.

³⁵Federation News Letter, 18 October 1924, 3.

³⁶The New Majority, 8 October 1924, 3.

a new type of labor which, he stated, was the critical factor behind the whole movement for the junior high school:

No kind of labor out of which there does not come pleasure to him who does it is safe to work or safe labor. And right there we are going to have the struggle, right upon that point, because through the establishment of new and efficient methods, so called, of one kind or another, they have succeeded in dividing and subdividing until there is nothing left but a few mechanical motions, and they now want to bring in a new class of workers, who are to be turned out by the public schools for the purpose of doing this monotonous, mechanical, degrading, mean labor.³⁷

"This is where the fight is," Olander remarked. . . .

"That is where the fight was in reference to the Cooley Bill about ten or twelve years ago."³⁸

As American citizens, allied with each other in our trade unions, with the definite purpose of making life better and happier for all the people, we must oppose with all the strength at our command the effort now being made to mutilate our public school system.³⁹

Olander insisted that the junior high school plan was a "switching arrangement which may or may not be used to send pupils off the main line of education, according to the desires of those who manipulate the system." Though he believed that, through the efforts of a "lot of good men and women administering the school forces,"⁴⁰ the junior high

³⁷Federation News Letter, 18 October 1924, 2.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Federation News Letter, 26 July 1924, 4.

⁴⁰Victor A. Olander to Frank Morrison, Secretary of the American Federation of Labor, 18 September 1927, in the Victor Olander Collection, Box 9, Chicago Historical Society, Chicago.

school might be a defensible innovation in principle, his immutable distrust of those whom he asserted controlled public education convinced him that the junior high school was an indefensible attempt to graft onto American life a "Prussian system" of education.⁴¹ Fundamentally, labor was wary that the junior high schools represented a sophisticated method of creating "a caste system of vocational training like that sought to be forced onto the school children in the 'dual' vocational schools some years ago under the leadership of E. G. Cooley."⁴²

Opposition to the junior high school plan by the Chicago Teachers' Federation was unyielding. The Federation of Women High School Teachers supported the plan but acknowledged that it presented opportunities for "misuse." The Federation of Men Teachers shared Olander's opinion that the plan be considered an experiment and should not be immediately adopted for the entire school system.⁴³ Though the CTF argued that its unqualified opposition to junior high schools stemmed from McAndrew's refusal to discuss the plan or to respond to the questions submitted by the Elementary General Council, his announcement on 4 June of an examination for teachers of junior high schools amplified the CTF's distrust. The union

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²The New Majority, 31 May 1924, 1.

⁴³Herrick, 147.

viewed McAndrew's action as a threat to teacher tenure. If, by administrative fiat, a superintendent could invalidate certificates to teach seventh and eighth grades, then he could invalidate all certificates. The CTF also regarded McAndrew's action a threat to the Federation's existence. Many seventh and eighth grade teachers, who had been the mainstay of the Federation, were older and had less formal training than recent Normal School graduates who were more inclined to take the junior high school examination and join one of the high school unions. Thus, it was inevitable that the Federation would feel that a large corps of junior high teachers, with salaries and problems different from those of elementary teachers, would threaten the Federation's dominance in the school system.⁴⁴

The CTF, galvanized by McAndrew's unilateral action, met on Saturday, 14 June, and by unanimous vote, authorized Mary Abbe, Federation president, to communicate a formal protest to the board of education. The CTF requested that:

the Board of Education withhold its approval of the unjust and unfair requirements sought to be imposed upon the elementary teachers of Chicago as outlined in the Superintendent's bulletin of June 4th and that this matter be referred to the Committee on School Administration and opportunity given to the teaching force to be heard through its representatives before action by the Board of Education.⁴⁵

⁴⁴Ibid., 148.

⁴⁵Proceedings, 18 June 1924, 1380.

That McAndrew did not have board approval in advance of announcing the examination constituted material grounds for protest but the Federation's most compelling challenge was to protect 8,000 teachers whose elementary certificates, for grades one to eight, would be invalidated.⁴⁶ Board president Charles Moderwell recommended that "the communication from the Chicago Teachers' Federation . . . be referred to the Superintendent for such action in the premises as he may deem proper." The board so moved on a motion by Mrs. Hefferan.⁴⁷ In response to the CTF's protest of unauthorized examinations, the board stated that:

announcement of examination, subject to Board approval, gave notice to teachers several days in advance of the meeting of the Board of Education, the notice reduced for teachers such inconvenience as would result from a more hurried preparation for the examination. . . . setting new conditions for teaching in junior high schools does not invalidate seventh and eighth grade certificates for teaching in elementary schools. . . . The Board cannot always refrain from establishing new classes and new certificates on the ground that holders of old certificates will be inconvenienced. . . . The Board of Education expects its teachers to adapt themselves to such changes as the benefit of the Chicago Educational System requires.⁴⁸

The CTF's request came too late; on recommendation of the superintendent, the board adopted report E-9092 and the first examinations for teachers of Junior High Schools would be

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Ibid., 1381.

⁴⁸Proceedings, 9 July 1924, 58.

conducted 26 July 1924.⁴⁹ One week later, despite requests that the board delay adoption of the junior high school plan and without responding to the teachers' queries as to whether junior high schools might increase class cleavage in the system, board report A-9207, which amended the selection of schools, was adopted. On a roll call vote of 6-0, the Harper, Herzel, Parker, Phillips and Sabin elementary schools were ordered opened as junior high schools in accordance with the general policy of the board of education.⁵⁰ The ultimate irony of organized labor's rejection of the junior high school came in 1933 at which time a business-controlled economy committee abolished the junior high schools. The CFL protested.⁵¹

ADVENT OF THE PLATOON SCHOOLS

Concurrently with the introduction of the junior high school, the board of education also introduced the platoon school plan. On 25 June 1924, the eleven members of the Education Commission submitted majority and minority reports pursuant to their investigation of the platoon school plan. Prior to the Commission's visits to school systems in Akron, Detroit, Gary, Pittsburgh and Rochester in which platoon schools were in operation, the Commission conducted meetings in Chicago to which principals and teachers were invited to

⁴⁹Ibid., 1401.

⁵⁰Proceedings, 25 June 1924, 1463-1464.

⁵¹The New Majority, 26 April 1933, 1.

participate. To maintain objectivity, the Commission also interviewed prominent educators opposed to the platoon system, including William H. Kilpatrick, Teachers' College, Columbia University, an advocate of the project method of teaching, who admitted, "I do not know enough about the platoon system to be intelligently critical of it, and I am not. . . . I am rather sure that it (departmentalization in the elementary school) can be carried to a degree where it is a bad thing."⁵²

The majority report, in which ten members concurred,⁵³ recommended adoption and in the preamble, the Commission stated the rationale for its recommendation:

The platoon school is a type of school organization, designed primarily to afford children of the public school certain educational advantages, which for various reasons it is impracticable to provide in elementary schools of the traditional type. In addition, the platoon plan usually increases the housing capacity of a building. It therefore cuts down the amount of building space required and in a large school system

⁵²Educational Commission of the Chicago Board of Education, "Report on Work-Study-Play or Platoon Plan of Elementary School Organization," Official Report of the Proceedings of the Board of Education of the City of Chicago June 25, 1924 (Chicago: Board of Education Printing Plant, 1924), 1453.

⁵³Though C. N. Hoffman, a member of the Commission, concurred in the recommendation that the Platoon plan be adopted, he had reservations: "I believe that the report overstates the advantages of the Platoon organization over Chicago's present organization and that it is due to a lack of information and contact with what is being done here as well as to an enthusiasm for the plan in general which I do not possess." Proceedings of the Board of Education, 25 June 1924, 1453.

results in important savings in expenditures of both buildings and equipment.⁵⁴

The Commission estimated that implementation of the platoon plan would increase building capacity by thirty or thirty-five percent and that the effect of increased utilization would yield annual savings of one million dollars.⁵⁵

The educational advantages of the platoon plan which the report delineated included:

the manner in which it employs specially trained teachers in various subjects, without unduly increasing the cost of instruction; the special equipment and facilities which it provides for teaching certain subjects and which ordinarily it is impracticable to provide in schools of the traditional type; and the way in which classes are assigned to the auditorium, gymnasium, library and shops simultaneously with the assignment of other classes to the usual classrooms the result being that a building under the platoon plan will accommodate many more pupils than it will under the traditional plan of organization which still prevails in most Chicago schools.⁵⁶

Rose Pesta, principal of the West Pullman school, the sole member of the Commission who dissented, submitted a minority report in which she delineated three deficiencies of the platoon system: rigid departmentalization; deceptive assertions for an enriched curriculum; and, unverified claims as a solution to overcrowding. Influenced by John Dewey and Kilpatrick, Pesta stated that rigid departmentalization would lead:

⁵⁴Proceedings, "Report on Work-Study-Play or Platoon Plan of Elementary School Organization," 1453.

⁵⁵Ibid., 1457.

⁵⁶Ibid., 1453-1454.

to some very peculiar and dangerous separations of subject matter. . . . The platoon system tends to make impossible the pursuit of project studies because of the number of teachers through whose hands a given project must go. . . . The idea is that the child learns by doing and so any activity that legitimately comes in the study of a subject should be indulged in right at the time that subject is under discussion.⁵⁷

The claim that the platoon plan offered an enriched curriculum aroused her special ire. "The enriched curriculum is no more dependent on the platoon system than is the exceedingly poor teaching one can find in room after room of academic work in the schools of Detroit. The main subject introduced to enrich the curriculum is auditorium work."⁵⁸

Pesta also refuted claims that the platoon system was a solution to congested schools. To the claim that platoon schools hold thirty-three and one-third percent more pupils, she retorted: "Schools hold just the amount more that are placed in the auditorium, the gymnasium and the playground," which she considered to be "dumping" grounds for the students not engaged elsewhere, which practice was one of the factors which led to the defeat of the platoon system in New York.⁵⁹

Her apprehension with the platoon was its emphasis on the mechanics of organization without consideration of the purpose for which elementary children are educated. She concluded that the platoon was in reality a factory system, "with no

⁵⁷Ibid., 1459.

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹Ibid.

thought or care as to whether the child gets anything out of the [educational] process or not."⁶⁰ Rose Pesta was not the only dissident voice and her theme struck a responsive chord with the CFL which believed that it was McAndrew and the board's intention to make the schools resemble factories to satisfy employers who wanted public schools to resemble the environment students would find in their work situations. The CFL declared that "no more vital issue of immediate concern," was before the workers of Chicago than the attempt:

to remake the school system into a replica of the Ford automobile plant, pouring little children into the hopper at one end and grinding them out at the other end as perfect parts of an industrial machine . . . calculated to work automatically, smoothly and continuously for a short period and then go on the scrap heap, to be replaced by other cheap, simple parts, exactly like them. . . . Ford's highly systematized factory is at Detroit. There is an efficiency-shark, machine-organized school system at Detroit. Is it an accident? Could anything more dramatically illustrate how this mechanized platoon system, with its precision, standardization, 'efficiency' as its gods, has its birthplace in the . . . inhuman undemocratic industrial machine?⁶¹

E. N. Nockels, secretary of the Chicago Federation of Labor communicated the organization's request that the board delay action until public hearings were held and the CFL had an opportunity to be heard. John Fitzpatrick and Victor A. Olander, president and secretary-treasurer, respectively, of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, called for public hearings and requested that the Commission's platoon report

⁶⁰Ibid., 1458.

⁶¹The New Majority, 29 December 1924, 4.

be referred to the appropriate board committee prior to any further action. The Elementary Teachers' General Council, the representative body for the thirty-nine Group Councils of the Elementary Teachers, opposed adoption of the platoon system at its March 1924 meeting, and the executive committee of the General Council officially notified the board on 23 June that it categorically opposed the plan.⁶²

After Superintendent McAndrew proposed the platoon plan in his 1924 annual report, the Chicago Teachers' Federation appointed a committee of nine classroom teachers to study platoon schools in Detroit and to draft a report of its findings. The "Report on the Detroit Platoon School" was presented to the Federation on 14 December 1923, at which time the membership voted unanimously against introduction of "the factory system applied to education" in Chicago and on 23 June 1924, the Federation notified the board of its opposition to the platoon plan.⁶³ Confronted by resistance to the platoon system, the board directed McAndrew to respond to findings in the Education Commission's majority and minority report and allegations on the work-study-play plan authored by the Detroit Federation of Labor. Undaunted, McAndrew parried each claim in detail, then wryly rebuked his detractors:

If the opponents of this plan are of the same kind as those who have recently contravened other propositions of yours, a calm scrutiny of the situation will disclose

⁶²Proceedings, 25 June 1924, 1450-1452.

⁶³Ibid.

that the large purpose of public service is the same in their and in your minds. There are more points of agreement than of difference. Recital of reasons against the platoon plan seem to me of high value in safeguarding it from doing the damage, friends of education fear from it.⁶⁴

Notwithstanding the denunciation of the platoon by labor and political leaders, the plan was adopted by the board on 9 July 1924, with the declaration that "a limited number of platoon schools should be given a fair and unprejudiced tryout."⁶⁵ When the superintendent delivered his second Annual Report in June 1925, sixty schools were operating on the platoon plan.⁶⁶ "Only after his enforced departure did the noble experiment fade into oblivion."⁶⁷

DEMISE OF THE TEACHERS' COUNCILS

The opposition of teachers' organizations to McAndrew's programs was exacerbated by his abolition of the teachers' councils which, for a quarter century, symbolized the worth of teachers in the system and in the profession. Though only superintendents Ella Flagg Young and Peter Mortenson had ever used them, and though they had never been convened during the three year term of Superintendent John Shoop, the value of the

⁶⁴Proceedings, 9 July 1924, 20.

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Annual Report, 1925, 70.

⁶⁷Robert L. Reid, ed., Battleground: The Autobiography of Margaret Haley (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982), 211.

councils had been respected in principle, if not in practice. That McAndrew had no use for the Teachers' Federation or teachers' councils was evident when he stated that he had been brought to Chicago for the purpose of "loosening the hold of this 'invisible empire' within the schools, a weird system, a selfish system, doing everything to indicate a selfish purpose and demanding the right to govern the schools."⁶⁸ Councils, he argued, violated the principles of "the standard works on school management in which there is a direct line of control from Board through superintendent and principal down to teacher."⁶⁹ By striking at the councils, McAndrew made clear that he would not countenance expropriation of the superintendent's autonomy in the conduct of the schools. Though the councils had a long history, and though they had never been effective policy making bodies, their existence had served to legitimate the idea that teachers had, as a basic prerogative, a right to influence school policy. While the conflict over the Loeb Rule had been directed at the Chicago Teachers' Federation as an organization, McAndrew's refusal to call the councils and then his directive that they would no longer meet during the school day, was aimed at the

⁶⁸"Superintendent Lets the Cat Out of the Bag: From the News Columns," Margaret A. Haley's Bulletin (25 May 1927), 245, 255. Reprinted from the Chicago Daily Journal 18 April 1927.

⁶⁹Annual Report, 1924, 10; idem, 1926, 31-36.

teachers as educators. McAndrew's contemptuous dismissal of the teachers' councils was consistent with his belief that teachers had no rights derived from tradition and that the existence of the councils was inimical to the line-and-staff administrative organization which he had created:

A record so barren of educational results, as is presented by the councils as a result of their previous meetings, does not justify returning to the old plan. The usage of those councils of excluding principals from the meetings, I can not approve. In education, as in business, the simpler the system the better. The usual arrangement: the school as a unit, the principal as official leader, no official by-pass from the teacher to the principal cutting out the principal can be approved by any one who has regard for experience, discipline and efficiency.⁷⁰

Consequently, the battle which ensued evinced fundamental differences in attitudes toward authority, expert direction and democracy. The forces he unleashed not only climaxed in his ouster but also marked the last great fight of the Chicago Teachers' Federation.

THE BATTLE IS ENGAGED

On 22 March 1924, as Superintendent McAndrew left the meeting with the Elementary Teachers' General Council, he "wished the delegates a pleasant vacation in case he did not see them again."⁷¹ Since a council meeting was scheduled for May in accordance with board rules and prior to vacation, his

⁷⁰"The Teachers" Councils in Chicago," School and Society 21 (25 April 1925), 495.

⁷¹Elementary Teachers' General Council, Report 11 (March 1924), 163.

enigmatic remark indicated that either the council would not meet or that he would not be present if it did.⁷² When the issue of convening the elementary school councils on 25 April arose, McAndrew informed the secretary of the Elementary Teachers' General Council on 9 April 1924 that he questioned the need to curtail classroom instruction to permit teachers' councils to meet during the school day and "the segregation of teachers from the principals in the discussion of and recommendation of propositions for the advantage of the school." Stating that "the advantages of council meetings would be just as great if this disturbance of regular school work were avoided," he related his intent to notify principals to that they were to "keep the full session" and requested, that, "if there are objections, will you advise me what advantage the council is to the schools, and to the children, and to the city, which could not be secured if the meeting were held on other than school recitation time?"⁷³

McAndrew's stance impeached the integrity of the councils but his judgment that the authority of the superintendent would intimidate the teachers into submission was in error, and on 14 April, the battle over the councils was engaged:

In reply to your question, "Do you see any objection to my notifying the principals to keep the full session on the days indicated?, April 25, 1924 and May 8, 1924, I respectfully refer you to Chapter IV, Article 15, Section

⁷²Herrick, 151.

⁷³Elementary Teachers' General Council Report 13 (May 1924), 157.

2 of the Rules of the Board of Education . . . adopted September 1, 1922. I respectfully call you attention to Article 8, Sections 1 and 2 of the Rules and By-Laws of the Elementary Teachers' Councils referred to in Chapter IV, Article 15, Section 2, of the Rules of the Board of Education,⁷⁴ to wit:

Elementary Teachers' Councils shall be maintained pursuant to Board authority granted August 31, 1921, and in accordance with rules and by-laws already adopted and approved by the superintendent of schools or amendments hereafter made and so approved. The superintendent shall arrange for council meetings two afternoons each semester in accordance with these regulations.⁷⁵

To evade the mandate that the superintendent convene the councils, McAndrew argued that the time of the meeting was not fixed in the rules. Just prior to the meeting date of 25 April, he published a notice in the superintendent's bulletin advising principals that "the rules of the board of education do not fix the time at which the councils shall meet. This does not appear to be a good time to call the councils. No call therefore is made by the superintendent at this time."⁷⁶

McAndrew had two major objections to the councils and he stated his case against them in his Report on Teachers' Councils Presented to the Committee on Rules and the Committee on Schools Administration of The Board of Education of Chicago. Firstly, McAndrew objected to the exclusion of principals from the councils. According to him:

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵Proceedings 1 September 1922, 491-508, 509.

⁷⁶Elementary Teachers' General Council Report 13 (May 1924), 185.

the exclusion of these officers from the meetings professedly concerned with the main duties of the principals is an anomaly in education procedure not upheld by any professional treatises known to me. All of the arguments I have heard favoring exclusion are contrary to the better aim of cooperative discussion and democratic administration.⁷⁷

Secondly, McAndrew objected to the practice of conducting council meetings during school time because the dismissal of classes resulted in the loss of teaching time which he estimated cost taxpayers \$150,000. He asserted that "numerous complaints of serious wastage in their present organization came from various sources. . . . I have sixty-one spontaneous letters from citizens protesting against the use of school time for these meetings. All were unsolicited."⁷⁸

The ordinary and regular administration of schools recognized by standard usage calls for meetings of teachers with their principals in order that the work of the school may be kept progressing. Policies, changes, inquiries, suggestions, and reports go from the superintendent s and come from the principals and teachers. I know of no educational writer on school supervision who concedes good administration possible without this. There is a chance to discuss, to correct, and to propose afforded any teacher who wishes to speak in the regular school meetings. There ought to be ten such school conferences a year in every school.1 The children's time should not be taken for them. This is a standard aid to good schooling. It has gone lame in Chicago. Principals report that with these meetings after school and with the council meetings in school time the regular meetings fail. I am unable to see why our schools should surrender the usual meeting in favor of the other. Before abandoning the standard usage I should like a strong array of facts showing the good results

⁷⁷William McAndrew, "Report on Teachers' Councils Presented to the Committee on Rules and the Committee on School Administration of the Board of Education of Chicago" Elementary School Journal 25 (October 1924), 98.

⁷⁸Ibid., 100.

secured by excluding the principals from school conferences and by dismissing the children to make way for the meetings.⁷⁹

During the interim, board member James Mullenbach introduced a resolution to amend Chapter IV, Article 15 of the rules governing the councils. The resolution specified that council meetings would be conducted on school time and defined the term "teacher" to mean "one actively engaged in classroom work . . . not including the principal." The report was referred to the Committee on School Administration and the superintendent.⁸⁰ On 30 April, when the recessed 23 April meeting was reconvened, Mrs. Helen Hefferan reintroduced the resolution but action was deferred until the next meeting.⁸¹

On 6 May, three days in advance of the General Council meeting which was to convene at 1:30 p.m. in accordance with board rules, McAndrew issued another bulletin which ordered that:

No dismissals of classes for teachers' councils, meetings, or for other purposes, are authorized until further notice. The protests of principals, teachers, parents, and citizens against suspension of the regular program of instruction indicate the desirability of concentrating on the main business and of preventing supplementary service from interfering with it.⁸²

⁷⁹Ibid.

⁸⁰Proceedings 23 April 1924, 1262-1263.

⁸¹Proceedings 30 April 1924, 1273-1274.

⁸²Ibid., 217.

Since the meeting time of the General Council was fixed, McAndrew's previous position was indefensible. Thus, he audaciously maintained that the phrase in the rules, "adopted and approved by the superintendent or amendments hereafter made and so approved," conferred on him the power to amend the rules:

I therefore make and approve the following amendments, viz., that no dismissals of pupils from their classes during regular school hours shall be made for the purpose of the meetings of the councils, either high school or elementary, and in accordance with Section 2, Article 2, Chapter IV, of the board of education, adopted September 1, 1922.⁸³

The CTF, which argued that board rules obliged the superintendent call council meetings, immediately engaged its forces and organized a series of protest meetings addressed by organized labor leaders, including Victor Olander, and the teachers' circulated reams of material on the value of the councils. Margaret Haley, who accused McAndrew of trying "to choke off discussion by the advisory organization of class room teachers," demanded McAndrew's dismissal, contending that "it was not within the power of the superintendent to invalidate the rules."⁸⁴ Though Mayor Dever suggested to board president Moderwell "that perhaps it might be in the interests of harmony to call the disputed councils," McAndrew remained adamant: "The notices have gone out and there will be no

⁸³Elementary Teachers' General Council 13 (May 1924), 218.

⁸⁴Chicago Tribune, 7 May 1924.

meetings."⁸⁵ However, when advised by board attorney Frank Righeimer that "any rules or by-laws adopted by the Teachers' Councils, approved by the superintendent and in force prior to 1 September 1922, were made, and now are, rules of the Board of Education."⁸⁶ McAndrew acquiesced and on 8 May, he notified principals that:

The President of the Board of Education informs me that the Attorney has found some hitherto unfiled and unrecorded document which, on examination, may have a bearing on dismissals of children on account of teacher' council meeting and that, pending final decision, it would be well to follow this week last year's practice regarding council meetings. Please do so.⁸⁷

That night, at a rally in the Studebaker Theater, Margaret Haley spoke to an audience of 1,600:

You teachers have won an important victory today. For twenty-six years the councils have been the guidance of teachers. Had tomorrow's council been denied you the orderly, peaceful and lawful processes of progress would have ended. Instead of control of teachers by law there would have been government of you by a person or group of persons. You would have been subject to the whim or caprice of one or a group of men. Therefore, because of what has been accomplished, you may go to your councils tomorrow.⁸⁸

McAndrew, who confessed he was puzzled by the teachers insistence that councils meet during school time, declared that the "war is not over . . . nor is there an armistice"

⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶Proceedings, 14 May 1924, 1275-1276.

⁸⁷Elementary Teachers' General Council 13 (May 1924), 220.

⁸⁸Chicago Tribune, 9 May 1924.

because the issue is not councils but rather "who is running the school board?:"

Is the school system of Chicago to be run by the board of education and by the superintendent it appoints, or is it be run by the teachers' councils, or by any other group that feels so inclined?

As far as I am concerned, the school administration will remain in the hands of those elected and appointed for that task.

If the present rules of the board of education, or if an interpretation of these rules are contradictory to this principle, I shall do all in my power to change these rules or cause them to be changed.⁸⁹

Consideration of the resolution to amend the rules pertaining to the teachers' councils was deferred at the three subsequent board meeting. On 18 June, one week before the summer recess, McAndrew attempted to wrest control over the councils with a recommendation that "Teachers councils may be organized by the Superintendent of Schools subject to the approval of the Board of Education." The proposal was referred to the committees on School Administration and Rules.⁹⁰ In September, when the issue of the councils was raised, J. Lewis Coath introduced a motion at the 10 September meeting which ordered:

By the Board of Education that the Superintendent of Schools and the principals of the high schools be, and they hereby are, ordered and directed to provide for the dismissal of classes for the local meetings of the high school teachers during school hours as provided in said rules and by-laws of the High School Teachers' Councils

⁸⁹Chicago Tribune 10 May 1924.

⁹⁰Proceedings, 18 June 1924, 1399.

which have been made and now are rules of the Board of Education . . .⁹¹

The board, reluctant to intervene, tabled the measure on a motion by Edgar Greenbaum and then, on a motion by J. Lewis Coath, referred the resolution to the Committee on Rules on a viva voce vote.⁹² Two weeks later, at the 24 September board meeting, McAndrew submitted two recommendations for board consideration:

that you formally endorse as the authorized practice for Chicago Public Schools, the duty of teachers to attend, without dismissal of any regular classes, meetings called . . . by the principal . . . for the discussion of school matters under his direction. . . . that you authorize the superintendent to offer to teachers the free use of schools buildings . . . for meetings of teachers in local groups as authorized by the Superintendent, for the discussion of educational matters, appertaining to the improvement of school service.⁹³

The report, referred to the School Administration committee, submitted a minority report which concurred in McAndrew's 18 June proposal. By a viva voce vote, all of Article 15, entitled "Teachers' Councils," of Chapter IV, was deleted and the rule was amended to read, "Teachers councils may be organized by the Superintendent of Schools subject to the approval of the Board of Education."⁹⁴ The teachers' councils were ended. In February 1925, McAndrew proposed a

⁹¹Proceedings 10 September 1924, 221.

⁹²Ibid., 222.

⁹³Proceedings, 24 September 1924, 238.

⁹⁴Ibid., 260-261.

new council to be organized "for furnishing the Superintendent with advice intended to maintain public school service to a high degree . . ." Renamed the Chicago Public School Teachers' Council, membership was to be comprised of 12 elected representatives, one each from the Chicago Teachers' Federation, Chicago Teachers' League, Chicago High School Teachers' Club, Federation of High School Women Teachers, High School Federation of Men Teachers and teacher associations. In addition to these members, there was to be one elementary principal, one high school principal, one district and one assistant superintendent, each of whom was to be elected by his peers. Initially, the terms of office would be one, two or three years, to be decided by lot. Upon expiration, election would be for three years. Though McAndrew's plan recommended regular meetings of principals and teachers to improve the service of the schools, the central council served as liaison to the superintendent and its meetings were subject to his call.⁹⁵

The teachers and the CTF lost the battle to retain the original councils and they loosed a fusillade of protest when given the opportunity to express their view before the board. The board was reminded that the councils were authorized during the administration of Superintendent Mortenson, who had endorsed their formation:

⁹⁵Proceedings, 11 February 1924, 769-770.

The experiment has worked well. The superintendent of schools has gained a more authoritative view of the opinions of the rank and file on questions submitted to them, and has been able to disabuse the minds of teachers of certain rather harmful misunderstandings regarding the policies adopted by the Board of Education. It has also had the effect of promoting professional ethics both in statement and conduct. It is hoped as time goes on this agency will be found of increasing value in making the collective experience of the teaching force of service in shaping educational policies.⁹⁶

To underscore the hallowed nature of the councils in Chicago, the High School Teachers' Council quoted Jane Addams who chaired the School Management Committee and the 1907 report which the committee prepared advocating the importance of teachers' councils. Jane Addams insisted that teachers had a right to a voice in school decisions. "Even if it were true that all goodness and wisdom in affairs educational dwell with school authorities, the fact remains that in the end their decrees must be executed by teachers."⁹⁷ The committee's report, which favored teachers' councils, concluded:

. . . it is the teachers, after all, and not boards, committees, or superintendents that must be depended upon to give vitality to public school education. . . . In the opinion of your Committee the teaching force must be sympathetically considered and trusted. If they are to do their best for the children, the teachers must be consulted about educational policies, not now and then and here and there as real or apparent favorites of superiors in authority, but as a body of educators organically recognized by the Board and its employees.⁹⁸

⁹⁶Proceedings, 9 August 1922, 113-114.

⁹⁷Proceedings, 16 January 1907, 762.

⁹⁸Proceedings, 25 March 1924, 943; idem 16 January 1907, 760-762.

The High School Teachers' Council demanded that the board reestablish democratic, universal councils in accord with Ella Flagg Young's advocacy of the councils and her insistence that teachers meet without the bridling presence of principals. McAndrew responded to the argument that teachers would be afraid to speak candidly with the rejoinder that, "If any one should be so foolish as to charge teachers in general with any particular fault, timidity would not be one characteristic of Chicago teachers."⁹⁹ The Federation of Women High School Teachers criticized a plan under which "teachers who are expected to train others to function in a self-governing society are not themselves given in their occupation the opportunity to exercise self-government."¹⁰⁰ Board member James Mullenbach, a labor arbitrator in the men's clothing industry, stated that McAndrew's new council would be nothing but a "hand picked" body for the superintendent:

I am certain in years to come, when the historians of educational development look back upon it that it will be of immense interest to the folks to read of the tremendous reaction that took place in the school system of Chicago in 1924 and 1925, when the school councils were suddenly and ruthlessly withdrawn and, in my judgment, destroyed. The teachers in Chicago have less to say about the conditions and the policies of our educational system than the humblest sewing girl in the manufacture of our men's clothing has to say about the condition under which she works.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹"The Teachers' Councils in Chicago", School and Society 21 (25 April 1925) 495.

¹⁰⁰Proceedings, 25 March 1924, 943.

¹⁰¹Ibid., 287-288.

The consensus of all the viewpoints expressed was that none of the groups represented desired to participate in the council organization proposed by McAndrew. Since it was evident that McAndrew's proposal was unacceptable, it was not adopted. The teachers were invited to submit a revised teachers' council constitution pending a final decision by the board but when the constitution was submitted, McAndrew would not accept it. In September 1925, board member John English presented a resolution to reorganize the teachers' councils as provided in the rules prior to 24 September 1924. The resolution was never adopted and the councils were never reconvened during the remainder of McAndrew's administration. Though victorious in his intractable refusal to permit the councils to function, the passions which McAndrew enkindled created a breach into which those who opposed him in 1927 stepped.

CHAPTER VI

THE FALL FROM GRACE

William McAndrew believed that the school system could produce the maximum output at the least cost if politicians and subordinates did not interfere in the management of the school system and, for the first two and one-half years of his term, McAndrew performed his duties without interference. Though his authoritarian administrative style brought him into conflict with organized labor and teachers' organizations, McAndrew's ultimate removal from office was the culmination of a bizarre clash with William Hale Thompson who, seeking a return to office in 1927, promised "to throw that stool pigeon of King George out of his job."¹

THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN OF 1927

The 1927 election campaign was one of the most unrestrained in American political history. Conspicuous for its use of ethnic slurs and ridicule, Thompson successfully publicized his "America First" jingoism in searing attacks on Superintendent McAndrew for allowing pro-British propaganda into the schools. His campaign rhetoric, which described pernicious British influence in the schools to capitalize on

¹Chicago Tribune, 27 August 1927.

anglophobic sentiment to capture Chicago's ethnic vote, became so outlandish that he was alleged to have remarked that he would "punch King George in the snoot."²

Mayor William Dever, Thompson's opponent, had estranged the teachers and the leaders of the organized labor with his efficiency rhetoric and by his refusal to uphold the teachers in their quarrel with the superintendent. Dever consistently maintained that he would not involve himself in school matters as had Thompson in his two earlier terms as mayor, because to do so would constitute undue political interference. In 1924, thirteen months after he assumed office, Dever was censured by the CFL for his refusal "to commit himself further to or to aid the teachers in their fight,"³ against McAndrew's unilateral abolition of the teachers' councils. In the fall of 1924, at the height of the conflict between McAndrew and the teachers, Dever still remained aloof:

I will not interfere in the schools. People will claim that I am using the public school system for politics if I undertake to do anything. So I am not going to touch it. I have appointed what I believe to be a good school board, and I am going to leave matters with them.⁴

The opening salvo in the primary campaign came when Thompson charged McAndrew with seeking to destroy American

²William H. Stuart, The Twenty Incredible Years (Chicago: M. A. Donohue and Co., 1935), 296.

³Chicago Federation of Labor, The New Majority 17 May 1924, 1.

⁴Illinois State Federation of Labor, Federation News 18 October 1924, 6-7.

patriotism by denigrating the contributions of non-British ethnic groups through biased representations of American history:

I'll lead in any fight to protect the Chicago public schools against propaganda of the King of England, and will help kick out of the public school system any one who has anything to do with such propaganda. Mayor Dever permitted Charles E. Merriam of the University of Chicago to dictate the selection of William McAndrew of New York City, who is now carrying out the bidding of those responsible for his appointment, and is permitting the teaching of propaganda to the end that the people of the United States should repudiate the Declaration of Independence and the doctrines of George Washington.⁵

Exhorting the people to "put back the Spirit of '76 upon our school room walls," Thompson told Chicagoans that if elected, he would "do what Dever has not done, make the schools citadels of sturdy Americanism, a nursery of good citizenship."⁶ Thompson boasted that, to preserve American values and revitalize Chicago's schools to be an example of patriotic devotion to American ideals, not a pest-hole of anti-Americanism, he would ensure that school children were taught to love their country; that American histories replaced pro-British histories; and, that a patriotic school board would be appointed to rid the city of Superintendent McAndrew, Dever's eastern importation, and his pro-British 'yes' men and women.⁷

⁵Chicago Tribune, 16 June 1926.

⁶Counts, 268-269.

⁷Chicago Tribune, 30 March 1927.

McAndrew's response to Thompson's attacks was to sally into partisan politics. Notwithstanding his uncompromising conviction that schools and politics remain separate and his refusal to abide political interference, McAndrew wrote a letter of endorsement of Dever which was distributed by the Woman's City Club to every school principal.⁸ McAndrew's earnest appraisal of Thompson was that of a formidable foe who, if reelected, would attempt to remove him from office with the utmost publicly and dispatch. Not one to shirk a fight, McAndrew stated that since it was first predicted that he would survive only five weeks as superintendent, the removal effort was overdue.⁹

THE 1927 MAYORAL PRIMARY

The mayoral primary was held 22 February, Washington's birthday, as Thompson's "America First" supporters happily noted. Though Dever was renominated, with 149,453 votes, Thompson overwhelmed his opponent, Edward Litsinger, with a vote total of 342,337 to 161,947. Not only was Thompson's vote the largest ever recorded in a Chicago primary, his victory margin exceeded Dever's entire vote.¹⁰ In a display

⁸Mary J. Herrick, The Chicago Schools: A Social and Political History ((Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, Inc., 1971, 168.

⁹Chicago Daily Journal, 18 April 1927, reprinted in "Superintendent Lets the Cat out of the Bag," Margaret Haley's Bulletin 15 May 1927, 255.

¹⁰Chicago Daily News, 23 February 1927.

of confidence, Dever stated that he was not distressed with the primary results; that Thompson's popularity would decline; and, that he would receive more than 600,000 votes in the 5 April election.¹¹

Though Dever had stated that he intended to serve only one term, he accepted the nomination at the insistence of Democratic leaders who convinced him that only he could defeat Thompson.¹² Notwithstanding his reluctance, Dever vowed that his campaign would be a "decent, friendly discussion, without malice or sensationalism, of the needs and dangers of our city."¹³ Consequently, he refused to sanction any campaign strategies which would compromise the dignity of the office or descend to the level of "that clown" Thompson. Dever was resolute that his campaign would focus on real issues. "The job of being mayor of Chicago has to do with managing the business affairs of a big city [and] nothing to do with regulating international affairs [or] freedom for the downtrodden people of Mars."¹⁴ In response to Thompson's America First rhetoric, Dever maintained that his opponent was making an issue of nothing. ". . . nobody needs blarney about

¹¹Chicago Daily News, 23 February 1927.

¹²John Bright, Hizzoner Big Bill Thompson: An Idyll of Chicago (New York: Jonathan Cape & Harrison Smith, 1930), 250.

¹³Chicago Daily News, 23 February 1927.

¹⁴Ibid.

100 percent Americans. We're all Americans First here, and nobody has a monopoly on that."¹⁵

When Thompson retorted that, since Dever had been a do-nothing mayor, he would run on the slogan "Dever Didn't, the Democrats seized the initiative and proclaimed that Dever didn't appoint school board members sent to jail; Dever didn't appoint a school board attorney guilty of fraud; and, Dever didn't have a whisper of scandal in his term as mayor, a record in Chicago."¹⁶ The Chicago Tribune, which in addition to the Post, Daily News and Daily Journal supported Dever, was confident that an enlightened electorate would return Dever to office:

No one is obligated to guess as to Thompson or as to Dever. . . . The issue is between common sense and plain bunk. It is between decency and disreputability, between sensible people and political defectives, between honesty in administration and the percentage system.¹⁷

The Tribune's sanguine appraisal of Chicago's electorate was ashened by the Democrats who exploited the specter of black power to capture the ethnic vote to blunt the effects of Thompson's huge primary vote majority in black precincts. Though Dever did not condone the racism which sullied his campaign, neither did he publicly renounce those supporters who actively gamboled on white fears. As calliopes played

¹⁵Chicago Tribune, 17 March 1927.

¹⁶Chicago Tribune, 11, 12, 14 March 1927.

¹⁷Chicago Tribune, 23 February 1927.

"Bye, Bye, Blackbird" at Democratic events, Dever supporters charged that Thompson "offers to open the city as a haven to all the lower type of colored man, the crap-shooters and the crooked Negroes from all parts of America. . . . Mayor Dever will be reelected . . . this is a white man's town."¹⁸

As if to prove the point, squads of police swept into black precincts in the Second and Third wards, padlocked business and arrested hundred of black citizens who, Dever's chief of police explained, were operating illegal nightclubs and gambling houses. Charging the Democrats with "voter intimidation" and "cossack raids"¹⁹, Thompson warned:

We stand for America First. We stand for Old Glory, and we stand for kicking out of office the Cossack mayor who doesn't keep his oath to God. . . . When the time comes we'll show this Cossack mayor that he's up against a buzz saw, and a buzz saw isn't any joke.²⁰

While Thompson blustered passionately about the battle for human liberty and the incursions of the English king into the Chicago schools, Dever spoke prosaically about honest, efficient government, schools free of political influence and more classrooms for the school children:

Mayor Dever has taken the schools out of the chaos of corruption in which he found them, following an administration marked by scandal after scandal in the Board of Education. Mayor Dever is the man who found 90,000 children without seats in the schools and who has already provided seats for 72,000 of those children who

¹⁸Chicago Daily News, 4 March 1927.

¹⁹Chicago Daily News, 8 March 1927; Chicago Tribune, 10 March 1927.

²⁰Chicago Tribune, 14 March 1927.

were being cheated of their birthright by the greed of spoilsmen. Thirty-two more schools are being built.²¹

Thompson's appeal was a seductive anodyne:

Where there was strong discontent, he fed the fires of hate with an ample supply of fuel; where there was moderate discontent, he fanned the smoldering embers into a steady flame; and where there was no discontent he did what he could to kindle it. He found the public school system ready to his hand, and he proceeded to make the most of the good fortune which fate turned his way.²²

On 30 March 1927, two days before the mayoral election, Thompson launched his final assault on Dever. In a full page advertisement graced with a picture of George Washington, the caption emblazoned across the top asked: "Why America First? Because the American who says 'America Second' speaks the tongue of Benedict Arnold and Aaron Burr." The implications were unmistakable: the insidious enemies of the United States were Dever and McAndrew:

Never had the slogan "America First" a finer significance than right today in Chicago. In the schools of this great city, with one-fortieth of the population of the United States - the children, the future men and women who must carry on - are being taught that the American Revolution was an act of villainy against a benign king, - that Washington was an ungrateful rebel - that Von Steuben, Kosciusko, Pulaski and other heroes who came to America to fight with Washington the battle of human liberty - were a lot of undesirables and merit the scorn rather than the gratitude of the nation.

The ideals you were taught to revere - the great Americans you were taught to cherish as examples of self-sacrificing devotion to human liberty - are subtly sneered at and placed in a false light so that your children may blush with shame when studying the history of their country. Read . . . the textbooks that have

²¹Chicago Daily News, 27 March 1927.

²²George S. Counts, School and Society in Chicago (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1928), 252.

been revised and rewritten for the Dever-Merriam-McAndrew School Board, falsified and distorted to glorify England and vilify America - and then you'll understand why America First should stir to action every red-blooded man and woman in Chicago until the city is rid of pro-British rats who are poisoning the wells of historical truth.²³

Thompson vowed that he would replace pro-British history texts with those properly American; teach school children to love their country; appoint a "patriotic school board who will rid the city of Superintendent McAndrew;" ensure "that Chicago will be an example of patriotic devotion to American ideals;" and, make schools "the nursery of good citizenship."²⁴

Tuesday, 5 April, dawned cloudily and cool and by 6:00 p.m. when the polls closed, more than one million voters had cast their ballots in the 1927 mayoral election. Dever polled 432,678 votes; Thompson polled 515,716 with a plurality of only 83,038 votes. Dever, who carried only twenty-two of the city's fifty wards, was further humiliated when his running mate for city treasurer received more votes.²⁵ Whether Thompson's pledge to remove the superintendent affected the outcome of the election is conjectural. That Thompson had to control of the board to keep his pledge that McAndrew would not serve one day in the next school year was certainty.²⁶ As events unfolded, the terms of four board members expired

²³Chicago Tribune, 30 March 1927.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Chicago Tribune, 6 April 1927.

²⁶Bright, 266.

and within six weeks of the 11, April inauguration, a Thompson majority on the board set the stage for a new school drama in which the superintendent was to be the central character again.

DENOUEMENT

One board member who was singularly antagonistic to William McAndrew was J. Lewis Coath, the bald, tough, 1922 Thompson board appointee who gloried in his nickname, "Iron-Handed Jack."²⁷ Erratic in his loyalty to Thompson when he was a mere member of the board of education, the supercilious businessman became maniacal in his devotion to Thompson who placed²⁸ "that unspeakable insect in the president's chair"²⁹ and to whom was assigned the duty of purging the school system of its intractable superintendent. Coath derided McAndrew as an outsider despite his years of service to Chicago and was his harshest critic. When McAndrew, in an article in the Chicago Schools Journal objected to displays of war pictures and other "symbols of carnage," in public schools, Coath called him a "goddamned pacifist."³⁰ At one session of the

²⁷Herrick, 168.

²⁸Chicago Board of Education, Official Report of the Proceedings of the Board of Education of the City of Chicago May 25, 1927 (Chicago: Board of Education Printing Plant, 1927), 1591.

²⁹Chicago Tribune, 26 July 1927.

³⁰Wendt and Kogan, 285.

board, Coath charged that McAndrew, as a slave to the "selfish interests" of the city, had taken away children's penny lunches and had transferred gymnasias and classroom equipment to schools in wealthy districts. "I want to say to you," yelled Coath, "that you, Mr. McAndrew, are incompetent. The condition in the schools is due to your mismanagement." The stubborn Scot declared, "That is what you say every week, Mr. Coath." Though Julius Smietanka, acting board president, denied the allegations, Coath raged, "I think the school board should erect a monkey house to put the superintendent in. He not only looks like a monkey, but he has been acting like one."³¹

In an attempt to end the trouble, Mayor Dever invited McAndrew, Charles Merriam, an unofficial adviser and professor of political science at the University of Chicago, Charles Moderwell, board president and Francis X. Busch, corporation council to a luncheon at which he hoped to restore harmony to the fractious school board. Merriam tried to explain that tact, diplomacy and a more conciliatory attitude were needed when dealing with teachers and board members. Though advised that "you don't have to give in to them, but can let them off more easily," McAndrew snorted that he was the superintendent and it was his duty to carry out his ideas as he saw fit, whether or not the public or the teachers or the board liked

³¹Ibid., 287.

it. He would persist in his ideas, he informed Merriam, to the very finish.³²

McAndrew did not have long to wait. Shortly after the mayor's inauguration, Thirty-Seventh Ward Alderman Wiley Mills drafted a city council resolution which requested McAndrew to testify before the Committee on Schools, Fire and Civil Service to state whether the quote attributed to him was correct: "I was brought here specifically to loose the hold that certain outside agencies and the city hall had around the school system. I have loosed that hold and I believe it will stay loosed."³³ Mills stated that if the quote were accurate, McAndrew was to produce before the committee papers, letters, contracts, correspondence, telegrams and memoranda showing "in what respect he was to loose the hold of the city hall . . . the outside agencies whose hold he was to loose and how the proposed loosings were to be brought about."³⁴ On 14 May 1927, in correspondence to Alderman Wiley whom he addressed as "Excellency," McAndrew declined the invitation, provided written answers to the questions and informed the alderman that "you do not have to invoke a committee . . . to get a question to me. Ask me anything any time. There is nothing

³²Bright, 245.

³³Proceedings, 25 May 1927, 1511.

³⁴Ibid., 1512.

mysterious about this business.³⁵ A second request from Mills that McAndrew appear before the committee was rejected.

McAndrew stated:

The tenor of your resolution . . . has so much the flavor of duces tecum as to suggest that you are proposing to try me before you committee. I don't see what other than personal satisfaction to yourself could come of it. Much as I love you I'll have to deny myself that favor to you. I am not favoring personal prominence nor publicity. I understand it is you who gave my letter to the press. I don't know what is gained by it. But I do not criticize it.³⁶

In the meantime, Coath, who ordered board attorney James Todd to find a technical charge to be brought against the "gentleman from New York," also asked former Congressman John J. Gorman, whom Thompson had appointed special assistant corporation counsel, to examine McAndrew's links with the British empire. By the end of summer, the Thompson board was ready for the general assault and on 29 August, board president Coath recommended the immediate suspension of William McAndrew on "charges of insubordination and conduct incompatible and inconsistent with, and in direct violation of, his duties as superintendent of schools."³⁷ The strategy which Thompson employed to dispose of McAndrew without his having worked one day during Thompson's incumbency was diabolically simple: suspend him prior to 6 September to

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Ibid., 1513; idem Chicago Tribune, 20 May 1927.

³⁷Proceedings, 29 August 1927, 214-216.

prevent him from assuming his post in the new school year; and, prolong the suspension until his contract expired 9 January 1928.

To that end, Thompson appointee Walter Brandenburg moved for suspension and the motion carried on a roll call vote of six to five; McAndrew was peremptorily suspended, pending trial to commence 29 September 1927.³⁸ The technical charge against McAndrew was premised on interpretation of the Otis Law which board attorney James Todd alleged was "the most astounding insubordination, and brands the superintendent unfit to hold his important office."³⁹ According to the indictment, the basis for the charge of insubordination, was McAndrew's defiance of board report 18074 and a Supreme Court ruling which ordered compliance with Civil Service law. The law in question stated that persons holding certificates as teachers, but whose primary duties were of a clerical nature concerned almost entirely with the business administration of the schools and who were assigned under the title of Extra Teacher, Teacher-clerks or school clerks were to be filled under and pursuant to the civil service. The practice in Chicago had been to assign new Normal School graduates to the schools to serve as teacher clerks. When the civil service commission protested the practice and petitioned the board

³⁸Ibid., 223.

³⁹Wendt and Kogan, 285.

to replace the teacher clerks with civil service employees the board agreed.⁴⁰ McAndrew, however, refused to comply on the justification that the positions were educational and outside the purview of the board. As a consequence of his assistance to Julia A. Smith, one of the teacher-clerks who contested the board's action in court, McAndrew was charged with entering into "an unlawful confederacy and conspiracy with certain employees of the Board of Education . . . and with divers other persons . . . to hinder, obstruct and prevent the enforcement of thereof."⁴¹ McAndrew, who took the charge seriously, retained Roy Shannon, architect of the Otis Law, as legal counsel and presented a documented and rational statement before the board in support of his action.⁴²

The report was ignored by the board and on 29 September, when the hearings commenced, James Hemingway moved that "additional specifications and a bill of particulars to the charges made and filed by me with the Board of Education against William McAndrew, Superintendent of Schools, on the 29th day of August, 1927, be filed"⁴³ The voluminous indictment, based on a report by Gorman who stated that he had examined textbooks, pamphlets of the English-Speaking Union,

⁴⁰Proceedings, 3 August 1927.

⁴¹Ibid., 29 August 1927, 214-215.

⁴²Ibid., 216-223.

⁴³Proceedings, 29 September 1927, 337.

speeches of University of Chicago professors and British statesman, records of the Carnegie Foundation, and the files of the anti-British Citizens' Committee on School Histories, alleged that McAndrew had recommended textbooks which contained pro-British propaganda and omitted the names and exploits of many foreign and native born heroes of the Revolutionary War, "all for the purpose of promoting propaganda for the English-Speaking Union." He had removed from the school walls the famous painting, The Spirit of '76, "to carry out his purpose of perverting and distorting the ideals and patriotic instincts of our schoolchildren." He had entered a conspiracy with Charles E. Merriam and Charles Judd, professor of education at the University of Chicago, to "destroy the love of America in the hearts of children by encouraging teachers to attend special classes at Chicago University at which a textbook was used which pictured George Washington as a rebel and a great disloyalist."⁴⁴

Since these charges "placed the issue of the trial on the vague and comprehensive charge of incompatibility,"⁴⁵ the trial assumed an increasingly irrelevant aspect. McAndrew retained legal counsel and although the hearing was before the board of education, it resembled a trial in every detail and attracted national attention. The pro-British attacks were

⁴⁴Ibid., 29 September 1927, 337-339.

⁴⁵Counts, 277.

brought up again and witnesses were unendingly paraded through the board chambers to testify to McAndrew's unpatriotic handling of the Chicago public schools. Though McAndrew petitioned for a writ of certiorari to compel the board to hold the trial without delay McAndrew,⁴⁶ the proceedings continued for weeks, subject to postponements and delays called by board president Coath. McAndrew attended the first six weeks of the hearing but on 23 November announced his intention to absent himself from further hearings until the board was ready to abandon its present tactics and try him on the primary charge of insubordination:⁴⁷

It is now seven months since the new mayor in his official inaugural address declared his intention, though he has no proper jurisdiction over the schools, to proceed to oust the superintendent . . .

It is now nearly five months since your president and five members voted to charge me with insubordination and improper conduct in having entered into an unlawful confederacy with certain employees of the board, designated as extra teachers. . . .

Instead of trying me on the alleged misdemeanor for which I was suspended, you have permitted to be added a host of irrelevant allegations. . . .

The repeated published assertion of your president that he will put the superintendent out, the degradation of your school system in the eyes of the entire country by editorial condemnation of the trial as a farce and vaudeville; the cloud of aspersion you permit to remain upon you best teachers that they recommended to the superintendent the adoption of poisoned books; the effect on your school children of the continued characterization of your proceedings as a travesty on justice; the repeated and uncontradicted editorial designation of his trial as before a packed jury and an admittedly prejudicial judge, all lead me to desire to escape being

⁴⁶Chicago Tribune, 30 August 1927.

⁴⁷Ibid., 24 November 1927.

a party to the continuance of what is almost the is almost universally regarded as a burlesque.⁴⁸

McAndrew's withdrawal did not halt the hearings. Charles Merriam, whose advice to McAndrew was unheeded, remarked:

The whole affair is a prime piece of political humor. Tell me, does one have to pay for his seat, or is admission to the big show free? . . . The McAndrew trial violates every principle of the square deal. The school board is acting as judge, jury and prosecution. I regard its sessions as ridiculous, as I do the hope that a body, the members of which have already formed their opinions, should give a fair decision.⁴⁹

Notwithstanding McAndrew's absence, the trial continued. The European and American press, which observed the events with disbelief, concluded that if the superintendent of schools were on trial, then Chicago would suffer the verdict. Though McAndrew's tenure as superintendent had terminated on 8 January 1928, the hearings continued with Frank Righeimer, a Thompson protegee who had replaced James Todd, as the board prosecutor in the trial. On Wednesday, 14 March 1928, at the Recessed Regular Meeting, Righeimer entered into evidence a twenty-four page document which delineated undisputed proof of McAndrew's rank insubordination, insolence, contempt and defiance toward the board and which conclusively established that he was guilty of all the charges preferred against him.⁵⁰ One week later, on 21 March 1928, Righeimer delivered a

⁴⁸Counts, 279.

⁴⁹Bright, 270-271.

⁵⁰Proceedings, 14 March 1928, 955-978.

peroration which summarized McAndrew's heinous crimes, among which were indifference to the effects on school children of un-American history books and other British propaganda; despotic treatment of the teaching force; and, imposition of unsound and obsolete teaching methods through intimidation. Finally, after Righeimer's crescendo of fulsome praise for William Hale Thompson, who, "with characteristic courage and energy espoused the cause of citizens, crying 'They shall not teach that George Washington was a rebel'" died from the room, the board voted to dismiss McAndrew, two months after his contract had expired. Only James Mullenbach and Helen Hefferan, who had not initially supported McAndrew's selection as superintendent, dissented. McAndrew withdrew the suit which he had filed against the board for \$6,000 in back salary and \$250,000 against Mayor Thompson for libel when the Circuit Court ruled that his dismissal had been unjust; and, that the charges of insubordination and lack of patriotism were groundless.⁵¹ McAndrew, who left Chicago to become editor of the Educational Review and School and Society⁵² responded to his ouster with customary acerbity:

I knew before I went to Chicago that it was 50-50 that I'd get the Chadsey-Young-Cooley-Andrews-Lane coup de grace. I can't work up any whine over it. No more'n a

⁵¹Wendt and Kogan, 302.

⁵²New York Times, 29 June 1937.

man who operates close to the hind legs of a mule has any kick when he gets his.⁵³

EPILOGUE

McAndrew's failure to recognize the relationship between the role of the superintendent and the political and social factors by which it was shaped led to his fall from grace. However, the effects of the scandals, corruption and political incursions which witnessed the defeat of the superintendent by city hall signaled an awareness that the superintendent's role, which had become ambiguous, needed redefinition. With the election of William J. Bogan to succeed McAndrew, the status quo was maintained and no serious disputes over the administrative authority of the schools erupted. During the 1930s and 1940s, the debilitating effects of the Great Depression and America's entry into World War II precluded sustained public interest in the schools though political control of the school board continued.

Attention focused on the schools in 1946, at which time Superintendent William H. Johnson was expelled from membership in the North Central Association (NCA) for unprofessional conduct. In response to demands by the press, organized labor, and civic organizations for reform of the school system and

⁵³William McAndrew to Charles H. Judd, 29 January 1930, C. H. Judd Papers, Special Collections, University of Chicago Library. Quoted in David John Hogan, Class and Reform: School and Society in Chicago 1880-1930 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 215.

redefinition of the role of the superintendent, Mayor Edward Kelly was compelled to appoint a school advisory committee which recommended the immediate resignation of Johnson and the entire board of education to avoid interdiction by the NCA. Johnson resigned and within six months, a substantially reconstituted board was appointed.⁵⁴ In 1947, ten years after McAndrew's death, the Illinois General Assembly amended the Otis Law and vested in the office of the superintendent that which McAndrew had sought to exercise: total administrative authority for the public schools. In the ensuing years, the administrative organization of the Chicago public schools has been reorganized three times. The most recent reorganization occurred in 1989, in the aftermath of a nineteen day teachers' strike, at which time the Illinois General Assembly bowed to the demands of an enraged public and amended 23 Illinois Administrative Code. Public Act 85-1814, stripped principals of their tenure, constituted local school councils as the legal governing bodies of local schools and, turning back the hands of time, once again relegated the superintendent to the role of a manager under the direction of the board of education.

⁵⁴Herrick, 271-278.

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APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Arthur Norman Tarvardian has been read and approved by the following committee:

Dr. Gerald Lee Gutek, Director
Professor of Educational Leadership
and Policy Studies
Loyola University Chicago

Dr. Joan K. Smith
Professor of Educational Leadership
and Policy Studies
Loyola University Chicago

Dr. Max A. Bailey
Associate Professor of Educational
Leadership and Policy Studies
Loyola University Chicago

The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

April 15, 1992
Date

Gerald L. Gutek
Director's Signature