

SPECIAL ADVISERS: THEIR PLACE IN BRITISH GOVERNMENT

A Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

by

Stephen Robert Hanney

Department of Government, Brunel University

February 1993.

Brunel University, Uxbridge; Government Department;
Stephen Robert Hanney;
Special Advisers: Their Place in British Government;
1993; Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the recruitment, role, and effectiveness of special advisers to departmental ministers between 1970 and 1987 and attempts to establish whether their place in the British system of government has become institutionalized. Interviews with 160 advisers, ministers and former officials, a questionnaire completed by advisers, and relevant contemporary literature, provided the principal data.

The literature, with its diverse theories on ministers' roles and relationships with the permanent bureaucracy, supplied a framework within which modelling was conducted on both the potential place for advisers in the system and the needs of ministers for extra assistance. An exploration of reasons given by ministers for appointing advisers shows how far ministers felt these needs.

Evidence from the questionnaires and interviews reveals the wide range of activities in which advisers engage and that their role and place are products of the interplay of various factors. Variations in the effectiveness of advisers are analysed along with case studies illustrating their occasional impact on policy making. Limitations on advisers, and the characteristics of effective ones, are identified.

Most features of the advisers' potential place within the system are shown to exist, along with an increased formalization of the role. Although they are only a partial solution to ministers' problems, the issue seems to have become not whether they have a place, but how it might be extended.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page No.
1: INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY	1
A: Setting the Scene	1
B: Methodology	3
C: Plan of the Thesis	11
2: HISTORY, DEFINITIONS, AND CATEGORIES	13
A: Pre-1970	13
B: Developments since 1970	16
C: Definitions, Outline of Functions, and Terms of Employment	21
D: Categories of Special Advisers	36
3: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES; MODELS; AND INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS	41
A: Roles of Ministers	41
B: Assistance to Ministers	49
C: Relations Between Ministers and the Bureaucracy	53
D: Model Showing the Place of Special Advisers	75

4:	REASONS FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF SPECIAL ADVISERS	85
A:	Ministers' Perceptions of Needs	86
B:	Ministers' Reasons as Seen by Others	112
C:	Appointment of Special Advisers for Reasons other than Needs Perceived by Ministers	128
5:	SELECTION OF SPECIAL ADVISERS, AND SUPPLY AND DEMAND	143
A:	Selection	143
B:	Supply and Demand	148
6:	FUNCTIONS OF SPECIAL ADVISERS	156
A:	How they Spend Their Time	156
B:	Role of the Prime Minister's Policy Unit	190
7:	INFLUENCES ON THE ROLE OF SPECIAL ADVISERS AND HOW FAR A PLACE HAS EVOLVED FOR THEM IN THE SYSTEM	198
A:	The Minister's Developing Needs and Wishes	199
B:	Capabilities of Special Advisers	202
C:	Capabilities, Expectations and Attitudes of People Already in Post How Far is There a Place for Advisers?	204
D:	Advisers' Exercise of Discretion	234
E:	Evolution and Formalization	239

8:	ASPECTS OF EFFECTIVENESS AND LIMITATIONS	247
A:	Activities in Which Advisers Were Effective Overall	248
B:	Effectiveness of the Advisers' Network	260
C:	Limitations as Experienced by Advisers	264
D:	The Ambivalent Attitude Adopted Towards Advisers by Politicians and Consequent Difficulties	274
E:	Response of the Civil Service	279
F:	Ambiguities in the Role	293
9:	EXAMPLES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVENESS	299
A:	Impact on Policies	299
B:	Examples of Effective Advisers	315
C:	Characteristics of Effective Advisers	319
10:	ASSESSMENTS AND PROPOSALS	336
A:	Overall Effectiveness of Individual Special Advisers and Criticisms of Their Work	336
B:	Growing Acceptance and Cyclical Phases	341
C:	Appropriateness of the Model of the Place and Role of Advisers	349
D:	Effectiveness of Advisers' Contributions to the System of Government	353
E:	Proposals for Reform	364
	APPENDIX 1 - THE QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO SPECIAL ADVISERS	375
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	381

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES IN THE TEXT

	Following Page No.
Figure	
1: Bilateral Relationships Maintained by the Minister	44
2: People who Assist the Minister	49
3: Bureaucrats and Politicians: Evolving Roles	71
4: The Place of Special Advisers	75
5: Meltsner's Typology of Policy Analysts	83
6: Special Advisers as Research Brokers	193
Table	
1: Questionnaire Findings on Reasons for Appointment - Percentage Response	112
2: Questionnaire Findings on the Reasons for Appointment - Percentage Response Broken Down by Party in Government	119
3: Questionnaire Findings on Frequency of Contact with Various People - Percentage Response	157
4: Questionnaire Findings on How Time was Spent - Percentage Response	157
5: Questionnaire Findings on Effectiveness - Percentage Response	248
6: Questionnaire Findings on Limitations on Effectiveness - Percentage Response	264
7: Summary of Various Proposals for Reform of Special Advisers' System	364
8: Summary of Functions of each of the Units in Various Proposals for Reform	364

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The research project on which this thesis is based was originated by Dr William Plowden, former Director-General of the Royal Institute of Public Administration (RIPA). I acknowledge with gratitude his knowledgeable advice and unfailing encouragement. He secured funding from the Leverhulme Trust, to whom considerable thanks are due, and gathered an expert steering group to supervise the project. Chaired by Professor Maurice Kogan it consisted of: David Lipsey, Sue Richards, Sir Adam Ridley, Bill (now Lord) Rodgers, and Norman Warner. Their assistance and advice, given both collectively and individually, were invaluable. In particular, I am grateful to Maurice Kogan who was also my Ph.D supervisor at Brunel and was a frequent source of guidance and support.

I am indebted to the 160 former advisers, ministers, and civil servants whose participation in the project in 1987 and 1988 made the study possible. Even though not all are mentioned they each supplied me with valuable information.

The RIPA provided a hospitable base from which to conduct the research. Ivor Shelley was a particularly valuable source of advice as were various visitors to the Institute. Finally I would like to thank Judy Wallace for secretarial assistance, and Janine Thomas for expertly transcribing the interviews and typing successive drafts of the thesis.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY.

SECTION A: SETTING THE SCENE.

The introduction of special advisers into the permanent, 'neutral', civil service still based on the nineteenth century Northcote-Trevelyan reforms intended to abolish patronage and jobbery caused strong and varied reactions. Diverse views were expressed on both the influence and desirability of special advisers:

It's the most important development in modern government in Britain (Bernard - now Lord - Donoughue - in Young and Sloman, 1982, p.88).

At best they're a minor cosmetic on the great granite face of the body politic (Young and Sloman, p.91).

The invasion of Whitehall (Sunday Times, 21 April 1974).

They've not really made any great contribution to British public life ... A high percentage of special advisers have been killed off by not getting the data. (A former civil servant).

It absolutely transformed my life in the department ... greatly strengthened the position of the minister in controlling the department (Tony Benn - interview).

All that seems special to me about these new advisers is that their position combines the functions of lesser politicians with the salaries of higher Civil Servants (Lord Rothschild, 1977, p.170).

This study will suggest that these views are exaggerations in one direction or the other.

The system of special advisers has existed for a number of years and despite the variety of reactions to them there has been no major study of the role they have played. In Australia, by contrast, the Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration (1976) established by the Whitlam Government in 1974 commissioned a report on how the new system of 'ministerial advisers', introduced at the end of 1972, had been operating (Appendix, Vol.1). As the system has become more established in the UK there has been increasing discussion about whether it should be extended. In particular, it has been suggested

that ministers should be assisted not just by one or two advisers but by larger and more systematically structured cabinets on the continental model.

This study should help to inform the discussion and shed light on the debate about how far the special adviser system should be a step towards a cabinet-type system rather than a finished product in its own right. Whichever of these two positions is adopted it is of value to know how well the system has worked. An analysis of situations in which some special advisers have worked most satisfactorily might indicate ways in which others could operate more effectively.

Some of the themes and key questions running through this study reflect the comparatively recent development of special advisers and the fact that their place in the system of government was still a matter of conjecture. The main themes and questions include: What functions do special advisers perform? What factors determine the role of special advisers? Is there room for them at the point where the political and administrative systems meet? How effective have special advisers been? Is the role becoming more formalized? Is there a need, and room, for the system of special advisers to develop or has it reached an optimum. Overall these themes and questions relate to the central hypothesis being explored, namely, that special advisers have become sufficiently institutionalized for there to be a recognized place for them in the British system of government, and that they can play an effective role. The hypothesis was refined and developed as a result of discussions on the emerging research findings with the steering group.

It is argued that a multi-theoretical approach should be adopted in research into public administration (see, for example, Rhodes, 1991). In developing a model of the place of special advisers many theoretical perspectives have been drawn upon including some of the language and concepts of systems theory. An emphasis on flows of information stresses the importance of the role of people who can cross boundaries both between the political system and the environment, and within the political system itself. The model developed in Chapter 3, and later analysed, makes a contribution to a variety of theories about the functioning of a system of government in which there are many channels

of information to and from the political decision makers who are largely dependent upon a permanent, neutral, civil service to assist them perform their many roles. Overall, however, this study is a micro analysis of an historical development rather than being a large scale theoretical work. The part played by various theories referred to in the study has therefore been primarily as a source to draw upon when modelling the potential place of advisers. The individual nature of the role of advisers has limited the ability to generalize in ways that could make major contributions to theories of government. Furthermore, although systems theory provides a useful framework in which to analyse the structural forces, especially overload, at work on actors in the political system, it is also desirable to attempt to gain an understanding of how these forces were perceived by individuals. As Pollitt (1984) argues 'action' and 'structure' approaches are not incompatible: 'A growing number of published analyses at least lay them alongside each other, and with greater or lesser success attempt to integrate motivational/intentional with structural elements in a single explanatory framework' (p.177).

SECTION B: METHODOLOGY.

The literature search revealed that although only a handful of articles has been written specifically on special advisers, there are some references to advisers in: official reports; Parliamentary Papers; politicians' memoirs; and articles and books on topics such as the role of ministers, their relations with officials, and policy making. Furthermore, the role of special advisers has to be set in the context of widely discussed concerns such as civil service reform and how far the wishes of ministers are carried out. Some of these issues have been popularized by the Yes Minister series (Lynn and Jay, 1984, 1986, and 1987), to which many participants in this study referred. References to advisers occur much more frequently in the diaries of some ministers, such as Tony Benn and Barbara (now Baroness) Castle, than they do in the memoirs of others. Although this is probably partly a reflection of the greater length of the diaries and the considerable use made of special advisers by those particular diarists, it might also illustrate the ever present but background nature of the role played by

some advisers. Lord Callaghan noted in his autobiography that the role of the parliamentary private secretary (PPS) was to be with ministers frequently and 'to be observant but usually to be silent - except when they are alone together. For this reason ...[they] ... hardly feature in this account in their capacity as Parliamentary Private Secretaries; but this does not lessen my immense debt to them for all their personal and political advice' (1987, p.14). A somewhat similar role was played by many special advisers which reinforced the need to conduct interviews to reveal the nature of their contribution.

The interviews themselves resulted in some further unpublished reflections being supplied by former advisers. These, along with the many books, articles and official documents consulted, were particularly valuable in the historical and theoretical chapters (2 and 3).

The written material alone, however, was not sufficient. In studies such as this which include elite political actors, interviews - as open ended as is feasible - are seen as especially appropriate sources of information (Dexter, 1970; Kogan, 1975; Young and Mills, 1980; Aberbach *et. al.*, 1981; Pollitt, 1984; Pridham, 1987).

About 160 interviews were conducted with former special advisers, former and serving ministers and former officials - mostly permanent secretaries and principal private secretaries but also some deputy secretaries and chief information officers. The numbers interviewed in each category were: 84 former special advisers (five of whom served as advisers solely at Number Ten); 51 former officials; and 43 serving and former ministers. When added together they total well over 160 because some people served in more than one capacity. Serving officials and special advisers were forbidden from taking part in the study. Virtually all former special advisers who had served at any time between 1970 and 1987 and who were living in the UK agreed to take part. For one reason or another about 26 of the departmental advisers who had served during this period did not participate. Probably a slightly higher proportion of the 26, than of those who did participate, played a specialist role. Nevertheless, evidence gathered in the study about their functions suggests that overall their roles were sufficiently varied to mean that their lack of participation did not markedly distort the findings.

The vast majority of the interviews were tape recorded. Although some researchers argue against (see, for example, Headey, 1974; Philip Williams, 1980) on balance the advantages seem to lie in favour of using recorders (Young and Mills) with Dexter moving away from his original opposition. The basis upon which the information could be used varied. Some interviews were attributable, a few were entirely off-the-record and many - especially with former officials - were conducted on a non-attributable basis but with the understanding that permission could be sought to use information in an attributable or identifiable way. When this permission was sought it was given in the overwhelming majority of cases. Partly to maintain confidentiality, material from the interviews has been used without references, apart from the name of the interviewee in cases where material could be used on an attributable basis. The vast majority of participants were male; therefore, to help preserve anonymity, the male form has been used throughout apart from references to specific females. To reduce the inevitable congestion of names arising in studies such as this, current titles (or last - for all but deceased former prime ministers) have, with a few exceptions, been given only at first reference. Furthermore, peers' full titles have been applied only where they are necessary to avoid confusion. Similarly, where authors are cited and just one of their publications included, the date has normally been used only for the first reference to that publication.

There was a positive response to the initial letter from William Plowden, then Director-General of the RIPA, in which he invited participation. The fact that not only were the interviews to be conducted under the auspices of the RIPA, but also most interviewees knew at least one member of the steering group, helped provide the element of neutrality which is sometimes seen as important in this type of research. All the former permanent officials approached agreed to be interviewed, as did most of the former ministers. A semi-structured approach was adopted and overlapping standard guideline sets of questions prepared for each of the three categories - ministers, officials and advisers - on the basis of: William Plowden's original grant application; initial reading; and discussions, individually and collectively, with members of the steering group and other key sources.

The problems of using material from interviews are well aired by those who advocate the approach. The difficulties revolve especially around two issues. First, there are doubts about the reliability of such evidence. Pollitt said of his research involving a similar (and in some cases identical) list of ministers and officials: 'with all the interviews there was to greater or lesser extent the danger that the interviewee's memory was faulty or misleadingly over-selective, or that he or she was "improving history"' (1984, p.7).

One of the standard techniques for alleviating this difficulty - the use of triangulation (see, for example, Denzin, 1978) - was particularly apposite for this study because, the role of each adviser was different and, therefore, had to be specifically examined using an historical approach which involved attempts to find corroborative evidence - from both other interviewees and other sources - for the examples given. Consequently, the structure of each interview - especially the later ones with ministers and officials - was to varying degrees directed towards the testing of specific points about particular advisers either appearing in written sources or raised by previous interviewees. As far as possible advisers were interviewed first so that their perceptions could be fed into later interviews. Where earlier interviews had been conducted on the basis that permission had to be sought before remarks were attributed, care was taken to generalize comments that had, in fact, been made by the specific adviser or his minister.

This triangulation, in turn, however, exacerbated the second problem - the complexity of analysing material from interviews other than those with a uniform set of questions requiring only short, relatively easily coded, answers (see, for example, Aberbach *et al.*, 1981). A further factor creating a lack of standardization in the interviews was that the experience of ministers and officials ranged from working with anything from one up to a dozen advisers. The approach in the latter case had to be different from that used in the former because each adviser played a unique role.

Parts of the interviews lent themselves more readily than others to systematic analysis. These included ministers' statements of the reasons for appointing advisers, and ideas for the development of the system. On some such issues it was possible to record the opinions of all relevant interviewees which could then be presented in a reasonably precise manner.

For some highly controversial subjects (for example, the advisers' role in briefing ministers for Cabinet) it was desirable to collate as many opinions as possible. On other topics (for example, the advisers' role in speech writing), once a framework for chapters, sections, and sub-sections had been provisionally devised on the basis of an initial analysis, it was necessary to collate the comments only of certain people. These were selected on the following bases: typical and strong examples of the particular point; interesting examples showing a wide range of opinions; examples where the issue was a major activity of the interviewee under consideration; examples illustrating how the All-rounder and Highflier categories of effective advisers were developed; and instances where use of memory had suggested there were matching comments from several witnesses in the same situation (for example, Home Office ministers, officials and advisers all stressing the importance of the advisers' contributions to speech writing). Similar criteria were adopted when deciding which examples, out of the frequently numerous ones collated, to include in the study to illustrate particular arguments. With the role of advisers varying so much, and often depending on the specific requirements of the minister, the widespread use of attributable quotations and opinions was appropriate and gives authenticity to the study.

A further criteria used to determine the selection of examples was that frequent use was made of material from members of the steering group thus enabling account to be taken of their expert comments on the analysis of their experience.

One justification for the inevitably selective approach in the collation of material is that systematic evidence on a range of items came from the use of a questionnaire.

Some of the advantages of using a questionnaire in addition to more open-ended interview techniques are described by Aberbach et al:

a short answer questionnaire was used to supplement, and in some respects validate, responses from the open-ended questions ... Had we known then what we have subsequently learned, we very likely would have standardized more short-answer questions across a wider array of samples. For our purposes, however, neither technique alone could have yielded the combination of nuance gleaned from open-ended materials and the highly standardized data developed from the short-answer questions. (1981, p.34-5).

In this study the questionnaire (which is reproduced as Appendix 1) was sent to departmental advisers, and usually completed, prior to the interview. The questionnaire was designed using the same procedures adopted for the development of the interview schedules. Of the 79 departmental advisers, 75 answered the questionnaire (one completed it but then pulled out of the interview because of illness and died shortly afterwards). The most important aspects of it were tick boxes rather than short-answer questions. The questionnaire ensured that basic information about advisers was obtained. This not only often saved interview time, but also meant material could be systematically collated and presented on: the frequency of contact between advisers and various people; reasons for appointment; functions; assessments of effectiveness; and limitations. This was especially worthwhile given that a large proportion of the total possible population was included and the difficulties involved in getting a representative sample did not really arise. The questionnaires, particularly those returned prior to the interview, often provided the basis for follow-up questions which might not necessarily have arisen naturally during the course of the interview. Furthermore, sending out questionnaires encouraged advisers to think about the items to be discussed, which in many cases were events taking place some years earlier.

The final point, however, is perhaps the most contentious of the suggested advantages of using questionnaires because such an approach would be criticized by those who believe that it inhibits the respondents' ability to give a spontaneous recall of the situation (Dexter, for example, refused even to provide examples of the questions he was proposing to ask). Some of the further objections to

questionnaires are not so great in this study as they are for others. Headey (1974) suggests that in his research on ministers a questionnaire - type approach would have been inappropriate. Ministers might have thought they were constitutionally expected to fulfil certain role and, therefore, if asked to rank a list of functions might, for example, have placed playing a particular role high even when this was not the case because they felt it would be expected of them. The lack of standardization in the role of advisers means that such a danger was absent from this study. Furthermore, Headey's objection that in interviewing political leaders, 'the researcher typically does not have a strictly representative, let alone a random sample' (p.57) does not apply, as was described above.

There were, inevitably, further difficulties with the construction of the questionnaire and analysis of its results. An attempt was made to pilot the questionnaire by arranging a meeting of the project's steering group to discuss progress after 15 questionnaires (and rather more interviews) had been conducted. However, because those advisers included at the pilot stage constituted about a fifth of the total population to whom the questionnaire was to be directed, it did not seem appropriate to change any of the questions. This meant, in particular, that question 16j) remained unaltered even though its ambiguity soon became obvious. Instead of changing questions, a few more points were added to the ends of questions 14,15, and 18. Another reason for the total number of responses to the questions varying was that, in a few cases, advisers who had experience of more than one department and/or minister ticked more than one box for certain questions but not for others. Furthermore, where some questions on a page were not answered but others were, those not answered were assumed to be in the negligible/never/insignificantly box and counted accordingly. This seems appropriate even though on a few occasions the question had probably been overlooked rather than being deliberately not answered because of its insignificance. A few of the 75 questionnaires returned contained no answer at all to any of the tick-box questions on certain pages - particularly to question 17), on effectiveness. In such cases nothing was recorded for those questions.

One adviser had completed the questionnaire prior to the interview but then could not find it and so completed another one. He subsequently found the first and sent it to enable a comparison to be made between the two sets of answers. The match was reasonable, although far from perfect. This, combined with comments made during the interviews, suggests that there was some ambiguity about the meaning of certain questions and a degree of unreliability in the responses given. This factor, in addition to the failure of some advisers to answer certain questions at all, indicates that it was correct to assume that given the much greater salience of these questions to advisers than to ministers and officials, the questionnaire should be limited to advisers.

There was often a good correlation between the results from the questionnaire and the picture portrayed in the interviews. Where, however, the early impression gained from the interviews suggested (as with the proportion of time spent discussing issues with the minister) there was a conflict, particular attention was given both to collate material on this and search for possible explanations. Similar care was taken - both during the later interviews and in the analysis of all of them - to gather opinions on matters where questionnaire evidence was at variance with other sources. Attention was paid, for example, to why comparatively few advisers thought lack of proper position within the administrative chain of command was a serious problem at a time when several reports were calling for advisers to be given a more formal position within departments.

The limitations, but also advantages, of using a questionnaire highlight the appropriateness of the conclusion, as reached by Aberbach *et al.*, that a combination of interviews and questionnaires is a most productive method to adopt.

SECTION C: PLAN OF THE THESIS.

Although the period examined in this study starts in 1970, people have always been used in various personal advisory capacities by ministers, especially prime ministers. A brief examination of these earlier roles, and the various phases in the development of the system of special advisers since 1970, helps establish a definition for them, and assists in identifying the main categories. In contrast to the dearth of material solely relating to the role of special advisers, there is a considerable literature and a variety of theoretical perspectives on the role of ministers and their relationship with the permanent bureaucracy, and many international comparisons can be made. A review of this material provides a framework within which the various themes and questions can be addressed and some modelling attempted on the potential place for advisers in the system of government.

Theoretical perspectives and international comparisons provide various pointers to the potential needs of ministers for additional assistance. An exploration of reasons given by ministers for appointing special advisers shows how far, in practice, ministers perceived these needs. The appointment of advisers by some ministers also reflects the encouragement they received from other people, including party officials and members of the Prime Minister's Policy Unit. Evidence from the questionnaires and interviews reveals the range of activities in which special advisers engage. The role or place of special advisers is a product of the interplay of various factors which are examined including: reasons for appointment; ministers' continuing needs; advisers' capabilities; and how far other people already in post carry out the functions performed by special advisers.

Various aspects of the effectiveness of advisers and limitations on them are examined. Some case studies illustrate the impact advisers can sometimes have on policy making, and an analysis of the contributions made by some successful special advisers allows the characteristics of effective advisers to be identified. Most features of the advisers' potential place in the system are shown to exist, along with an increased institutionalization of the role. An examination of proposals for reform is informed by an analysis of how the current system is

working and the extent to which it supplies solutions to ministers' problems.

CHAPTER TWO: HISTORY, DEFINITIONS, AND CATEGORIES.

SECTION A: PRE-1970.

Analysis of the history and definitions of special advisers reveals that their place in the system of government is not always easy to define. There have always been some 'outsiders' appointed as temporary civil servants. This was particularly the case during, and following, the Second World War as shown by Hennessy and Hague (1985) in: How Adolf Hitler Reformed Whitehall. They suggest that the people brought in were used, 'in almost every capacity except that of a Minister' (p.31). Clearly many of them were used in roles different from those filled by today's special advisers.

However, at various times three categories of people played a role which might be thought somewhat analogous to that of those who are now called special advisers:

- (i) people brought into work for prime ministers;
- (ii) people brought into the private offices of departmental ministers;
- (iii) specialists (often politically committed) introduced into departments.

(i) People Brought in to work for Prime Ministers.

Until the 1920s there were always some personal and political appointees serving in the Prime Minister's private office (Jones, 1978). Most later prime ministers also brought at least one person into Number Ten in a staff capacity, for example, in 1964 Harold Wilson (now Lord Wilson of Rievaulx) appointed Marcia Williams (now Baroness Falkender) as his Personal and Political Secretary (Marcia Williams, 1975, p.24); and John Wyndham (later Lord Egremont) joined Harold Macmillan's private secretaries at Number Ten in 1957. The informal and ill-defined nature of the role is well illustrated by Wyndham's description of a meeting after he had agreed to join Number Ten:

I met my future colleagues to fix up the job. They asked what conditions I had in mind to make. They were a bit surprised when I quoted them the story of the Duc d'Aumale and Sarah Bernhardt. The Duc sent her a message from his box in the theatre where she was acting: 'Ou, quand, combien?.' In the interval Sarah sent back a note: 'Chez moi, ce soir, pour rien.' (Egremont, 1968, p.162).

The Prime Minister's Policy Unit also had precedents including: Lloyd George's 'garden secretariat' under Professor Adams; the statistical section of Professor Lindemann (later Lord Cherwell) which served Churchill during the Second World War; Douglas (later Lord) Jay who advised Clement Attlee on economic matters in the first year of the 1945 Labour Government; and a team of academics under the guidance of Thomas (later Lord) Balogh who worked for Harold Wilson from 1964 (Jones, 1978). According to Turner (1980) Lloyd George's 'Garden Suburb was the earliest of a number of attempts to strengthen the Prime Minister's hold over central government.' (p.1). The developments since 1964 were also seen as marking an important change: 'In this period [1964-1976] attempts were made by prime ministers to counterbalance the long-established predominance of civil servants at Number Ten through the introduction of a more explicit personal and political set of advisers. Indeed, it might be said that they sought to return to the older tradition of having their personal adherents with them.' (Jones, 1987, p.46).

(ii) Outsiders Brought into Ministers' Private Offices.

There is a long tradition of some departmental ministers introducing advisers into their private office or appointing them in a personal staff capacity. Lloyd George for example brought outsiders into his private office at the Board of Trade and Hennessy (1988) described John Rowland as 'his special adviser in today's terminology' (p.58). Of all departments the Foreign Office has had the most consistent tradition of ministers appointing 'outsiders'. Philip (later Lord) Noel-Baker was appointed as private secretary by Lord Robert Cecil and later Lord Parmoor when they had ministerial responsibilities for the League of Nations (Parmoor, 1936). In 1925 the Labour Party's International Advisory Committee, suspicious of the Foreign Office's role in the Zinoviev Letter incident, proposed that any Labour Foreign Secretary

should have a 'political' private secretary who should be a Labour Party member and in 1929 Arthur Henderson also appointed Philip Noel-Baker to be his PPS but he was described as 'a prototype special adviser' by Theakston (1988, p.13). Others brought into the Foreign Office as personal appointments - but not always in the private office - include: Stuart Hampshire for Philip Noel-Baker (Healey, 1989, p.107); John Wyndham for Harold Macmillan; Bill Grieg, who continued as personal press adviser for George Brown (later Lord George-Brown) when he moved to the Foreign Office from the Department of Economic Affairs; and John Harris (now Lord Harris of Greenwich) for Patrick Gordon Walker (later Lord Gordon Walker) and Michael Stewart (later Lord Stewart of Fulham). John Harris later worked as special assistant to Roy Jenkins (now Lord Jenkins of Hillhead) in the Home Office and the Treasury. During the war the temporary civil servant, Hugh Gaitskell, was appointed as 'Principal Private Secretary and, in effect, Chef de Cabinet' by Hugh (later Lord) Dalton (Pimlott, 1985, p.283).

(iii) Specialists (often Politically Committed) introduced into Departments.

Prior to 1964 some specialists were brought in to departments by ministers, for example, Sir Percy (later Lord) Mills was appointed to advise on, and lead, the house building programme by Harold Macmillan, Minister for Housing (Macmillan, 1969, pp.385-402); and Professor Lindemann was first appointed by Winston Churchill when he was First Lord of the Admiralty in 1939 (MacDougall, 1987, p.20). However, this third category of pre-1970 appointments illustrates the case that could be made for suggesting 1964 rather than 1970 saw the start of special advisers. Young and Sloman, for example, claim that, 'as long ago as 1964 a new Whitehall species was born: the political or special adviser, half-politician and half-official' (1982, p.88). The mid 1960s, especially 1964, is also the starting date referred to by several other commentators including Fry (1986); Hennessy (1986); and Drewry and Butcher (1988). A similar view is taken by some former permanent secretaries including Ian (now Lord) Bancroft who was private secretary to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1964 and claims that, 'the special advisers came along first of all in force in 1964'.

Most of the sizable number in this category were appointed by Labour ministers in the 1960s and many were politically committed to the Labour Government (see, for example, Brittan, 1969, and 1971; Kogan, 1971; Crossman, 1975, and 1977; Chester, 1982; Castle, 1984). They include: Brian Abel-Smith, Peter Lederer, David Piachaud appointed by Richard Crossman; Bill (now Lord) McCarthy by Barbara Castle; A. H. Halsey by Anthony Crosland and many economists by these and other ministers. The economists include: Wilfred Beckerman, Ian Byatt, Christopher (now Sir Christopher) Foster, David Henderson, Nicholas (later Lord) Kaldor, Robert Neild, Michael Posner, Derek Robinson, Dudley Seers, Paul Streeten, Gordon Wasserman. A team of Industrial Advisers under Frederick (now Sir Frederick) Catherwood, and later Campbell (now Sir Campbell) Adamson, were recruited for George Brown's new Department of Economic Affairs and their role is described in Adamson, 1968.

Some ministers also had a circle of friends, including academics and specialists, with whom they would discuss issues. Both Crosland and Crossman (for whom Arnold (later Lord) Goodman was particularly influential) are examples. One of the roles played by some later special advisers, including John (now Sir John) Cope for Peter (now Lord) Walker at the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and Robbie Gilbert for Jim (now Lord) Prior at the Department of Employment, was to maintain links with equivalent groups of people or organize meetings between them and the minister.

SECTION B: DEVELOPMENTS SINCE 1970.

This study concentrates on the period since 1970, whilst recognizing the importance of the previous developments, especially between 1964 and 1970. In 1970, 1974, and 1979 there were noticeable changes in the number and the nature of 'outsider' appointments following the change of government. In 1974 Rose, in The Problems of Party Government, claimed that, 'In constituting the 1970 Conservative government, Edward Heath imported irregulars to government in a more systematic and larger number' (p.399). Although the degree of systematization might have been exaggerated by Rose, this statement indicates why 1970 was thought to be an appropriate starting point for this project. He argued that in 1970

the Conservatives differed from Labour in two significant ways. First, 'the Conservatives had worked out more legislative policies in detail. Secondly, the Conservatives brought into Whitehall a group of special advisers and political secretaries who had been working under the aegis of the Conservative Research Department' (p.420). Writing in 1977 in Australia, R. Smith, noted that in the UK, 'In opposition the Conservatives have been critical of Labour's use of advisers even though Labour merely expanded a Conservative experiment' (p.139).

Lord Hunt of Tanworth (1987) suggests that an important element in the realization of the need for more advisory capacity for ministers occurred towards the end of the Wilson Government in the 1960s. There was, 'considerable dissatisfaction among ministers with the advice they had been given; they had the feeling that they were being blown off course needlessly' (p.67). Such thinking was reflected on by the Tories in Opposition and partly as a result several varieties of irregulars were appointed in 1970. Of the small group of political secretaries two, Douglas Hurd and later William Waldegrave, worked for the Prime Minister. Even after a slight increase in 1972-3 this group only numbered seven. Some of them were located in their minister's private office, most had been at the Conservative Research Department (CRD) and most continued to be paid by the Conservative Party. Rose referred to John Harris as the 'precursor' of this group but claimed that, 'Harris's appointment was not part of a general strategy of the first Wilson administration' (1974, p.451). In interview several permanent secretaries agreed with this analysis. Another group of irregulars were 'the Businessmen's Team' who had been recruited in Opposition and who, along with the Central Policy Review Staff (CPRS), were more explicitly a product of thinking developed in Opposition than were the political secretaries. The team of businessmen, who included Derek (now Lord) Rayner and Richard (now Sir Richard) Meyjes, had no specific departmental responsibilities *per se* but were all located in the Civil Service Department (CSD) and were concerned with a number of projects (see Pollitt, 1984, pp.85-103).

Illustrating the very ill-defined nature of these two categories of irregulars, Arthur (now Lord) Cockfield, a former Commissioner of the Board of Inland Revenue and senior businessman, was appointed to be

'Adviser on Taxation Policy to the Chancellor of the Exchequer'. He was called that, 'for want of any other title', and seems to have played a role more akin to that of some later senior special advisers than did any of the Businessmen's Team of which he was not technically a member anyway.

There was a large increase in the number of special advisers following the election of the Labour Government in 1974. Illustrating how this could be interpreted as a continuation of the Conservatives' introduction of political secretaries rather than a return to the Labour approach of 1964, Rose (1974, p.444) claimed, 'the advent of the second Wilson government demonstrated that the Conservative innovation of 1970 has bi-partisan support, for many departmental ministers promptly announced the appointment of a political secretary or adviser within their private office.' Harold Wilson claimed that in 1974 the system had been, 'regularized' (Wilson, 1976, p.98). One of the major themes of this study is to consider whether the appointment and use of special advisers has been formalized sufficiently for the phrase, 'the system of special advisers' to be appropriate. To the extent that this has taken place, then the system is probably most accurately described as dating from 1974.

It is sometimes claimed that as far as Labour ministers were concerned there were two distinct phases in the development, with the 1960s seeing the more specialist or technical adviser and the 1970s the addition of the political adviser. In 1973 Barbara Castle reflected on her ministerial experience in the 1960s in a talk given, at Sunningdale, to senior civil servants. It was written up in The Sunday Times on 10 June under the heading Mandarin Power. In it she both described how the special advisers of the 1960s were not fully integrated into the team surrounding the minister, and advocated the introduction into the private offices of future Labour ministers of a new type of political adviser in addition to the specialists.

In 1974 numbers went up to almost 40, a quarter of whom were in the Prime Minister's Policy Unit headed by Bernard Donoughue. They were virtually all appointed to be temporary civil servants and the term 'special adviser' was commonly used for the first time. The figure

dropped to 24 by the middle of 1976 and remained at about that level until 1979. The numbers are illustrated in the following exchange on 21 June 1976 when the Minister for the Civil Service replied to a Parliamentary Question from Ian Gow, the most persistent Tory critic of advisers, about the number of special advisers and their cost:

Mr Charles R. Morris: Twenty four special advisers are currently employed by the Government, at a total annual cost of £160,000.

Mr Gow: Will the Minister accept the congratulations of the House that the number of special advisers has been reduced from the figure of 29 in January, and their salaries from the figure of £196,000 in January? (Official Report, Vol. 913, cols 1090-1).

A limit of two special advisers to a department was soon imposed - although the Department of Health and Social Security (DHSS) already had, and retained, more than that. Roger Darlington wrote in The Times on 18 July 1978 that, 'since July 1975 there has been a rule (in a minute from Harold Wilson) that Cabinet ministers should not employ more than two special advisers.' Donoughue and Tom McNally agree that the limit of two was introduced to stop Tony Benn, in McNally's words, 'staffing up a private army.' Despite some contrary opinions the July 1975 date for the introduction of the limit of two is supported by Tony Banks. He lost his special adviser's position in July 1975 when Judith (later Baroness) Hart was dropped as Minister for Overseas Development. Benn offered to appoint him as his third special adviser at the Department of Energy but the Prime Minister prevented this on grounds of numbers.

In some departments a clear distinction could be made between specialist advisers and political advisers. The former are people chosen primarily for their subject expertise and the latter (generally younger than the specialists) are chosen for the contribution they can make based on their partisan loyalty to their minister rather than on any substantial policy expertise. Following the election of Margaret (now Baroness) Thatcher in 1979 there was a significant drop in numbers to about a dozen, of whom only two were in the Policy Unit. The total figure was probably less, Sir John Hoskyns suggested, 'than the number of people employed in storing and changing the pictures in ministers'

offices' (1982, p.15).

Since 1979 there has been a gradual increase in numbers so that prior to the 1987 election there were about 25, with the Policy Unit back to its 1970s strength although several of its members were not special advisers but permanent officials seconded from departments. The increase tended to be in the number of political, as opposed to specialist, departmental advisers. With a few exceptions there has been an informal limit imposed by the Prime Minister of one special adviser to a department. The Seventh Report from the Treasury and Civil Service Committee, Session 1985-86, was entitled Civil Servants and Ministers: Duties and Responsibilities (1986). Considerable evidence was gathered for the Select Committee by a sub-committee. In its response the Government stated that the appropriate number of special advisers depends upon the size and range of the department and the minister's wishes but, 'the Government believes that the number of such advisers should generally not exceed one per department, and that, as a general rule, only Cabinet Ministers (and in exceptional cases other Ministers in charge of departments) should need a Special Adviser.' (Cmnd. 9841, 1986, para. 34). The Treasury however has consistently maintained three special advisers throughout this period. The assumption by Treasury ministers that they would maintain the team of three advisers is illustrated by Douglas French. He says that when Peter Cropper went from being a Treasury adviser to being Director of the CRD, the Chancellor asked him (French) to take over the special adviser position: 'I suppose he rang me because when he was in Opposition I had worked with him [up until 1976]. ... So he knew me and he knew the post he wanted to fill and I suppose he felt the two went together.'

Although the period covered by the present study finished with the 1987 General Election it is relevant to note several developments since then. The number of departmental special advisers has continued to increase and special advisers have been given their own pay spine - something which had been sought for a long time.

SECTION C: DEFINITIONS, OUTLINE OF FUNCTIONS, AND TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT.

In the 1960s the term 'irregulars' was used but an authoritative definition of such people was elusive. According to Sam Brittan,

The 'irregular' official or adviser, who has been a feature of the Whitehall scene under Labour is not the same thing as the traditional 'temporary'. Many years before 1964 there were temporary civil servants in the professional grades, recruited for specific purposes. The Economic Section of the Treasury, for example, was for long recruited on this basis ... The basic difference between the temporaries and the 'irregulars' is that ministers are much more involved in the appointment of irregulars than of temporaries. The 'irregular' does not owe his appointment to the civil service machine, and his place in the hierarchy is less closely defined... In practice the distinction is blurred at the edges. There are many people of whom it is quite impossible to say whether they are temporaries or irregulars (1969, p.331).

A sharp distinction must be drawn, Klein and Lewis (1977) however argue, between special advisers and 'the much larger and more heterogeneous category of "irregulars" ... This category covers a variety of advisers and experts brought into government departments (as distinct from being personally attached to Ministers) by both the 1964 Labour and the 1970 Conservative Administrations. Special advisers, in effect, are a particular sub-group of the species "irregulars" ' (pp.3 and 24-5). Klein and Lewis argue that the special advisers' role is different from that of the economists imported into the Department of Economic Affairs by the Labour Government in 1964 or from the businessmen recruited by the Heath Administration.

Various categories of 'outsiders' are not usually considered to be special advisers. They include: the CPRS; most of those recruited into the civil service during the war, some of whom continued serving governments of different parties after it for example Oliver (later Lord) Franks and Edwin (now Lord) Plowden; most of the economists recruited to the civil service by the 1964 Labour Government. In his autobiography, Sir Donald MacDougall, who was recruited to the Department of Economic Affairs in 1964, attempted to distinguish between various economists most of whom were appointed at the same time. He reported that he chaired a group of Economic Advisers consisting of six

people: Alec Cairncross, John Jukes and himself were non-political but, 'three might be termed "political" advisers.' They were Neild, Kaldor and Balogh (MacDougall, 1987 p.151). Most, if not all, of the economists recruited to departments such as the Ministry of Overseas Development (ODM) soon became accepted by ministers and other officials as a permanent part of the department so that in none of her three periods as political head of the ministry did Judith Hart regard the economists as being her personal advisers: 'they were totally integrated into the department.' The report on the 'irregulars' appointed after 1964 which was prepared by the Fabians for the Fulton Committee argued that many irregulars were economists and 'helped to build up the Government's staff of economics and statistical experts' (Fulton Report, 1968, Vol 5 (2), p.559). Evidence that the development of such specialist staff involved far more than just the provision of personal support staff for ministers came where the Fabian Society advocated that only 'in some more senior cases' (p.565) should the 'irregulars' enjoy access to the minister. 'Irregulars' not enjoying regular access to the minister would not usually be classified as special advisers.

For some groups included in the historical analysis in Sections A and B it is less clear whether they would now be regarded as special advisers. In some ways it is rather contrived to attempt to impose later categorization on people who were performing or developing roles considered important by the minister for whom they were working. The difficulty, and to some extent artificiality, in drawing a sharp distinction in practice between special advisers and other 'irregulars', especially for the 1964-70 period, again indicates why 1970 is a more appropriate starting date for this study. Nevertheless, it is important to define the people who have been regarded as central figures in this analysis, and an examination of various groups helps when compiling a list of features to include in the definition of special advisers.

Of the pre-1970 categories, many of the individuals named in Section A would later have been regarded as special advisers. Indeed a few of them, i.e. Abel-Smith, Kaldor, and Lynes were officially designated as special advisers to ministers in the 1974 Labour Government, and Piachaud became a special adviser in the Policy Unit. Similarly two of the economists appointed to work for Balogh in the

1960s (Stuart Holland and Michael Stewart), and Francis Cripps who worked for Kaldor, became special advisers in 1974. In subsequent writing a number of these 1964 advisers are referred to as special advisers. Hennessy (1988, p.172) says, for example, that Neild, 'entered the Treasury with Labour as a special adviser in October 1964,' and Neild writes that Kaldor, 'was special adviser to the Chancellor of the Exchequer during the Labour governments of the 1960s and 1970s' (Guardian, 2 October 1986). In reality in 1964, as one of the Treasury officials of the time argued, there was a great influx of economists and special advisers and they were often the same people.

However, several of the 1960s economists were given more specific posts within the civil service than those occupied by later special advisers. For example: Neild, whom Brittan (1969, p.336) called, 'the most effective of the original irregulars', became Economic Adviser to the Treasury in 1964; Foster became Director-General of Economic Planning at the Ministry of Transport in 1966; and Seers became Director-General of Economic Planning at the ODM in 1964. Similarly the 'Industrial Advisers' probably occupied more of a role as advisers to the department, rather than the secretary of state, than did later special advisers. Such an interpretation is supported by the words of Sir Douglas Allen (now Lord Croham). In 1967 he described the role of 'the Department's small but highly expert team of Industrial Advisers' (p.353 - emphasis added) despite the fact that R. G. S. Brown (1965, p.330) referred to Catherwood as being a 'personal adviser' to the minister.

Blackstone (1979) includes the 1970 Conservative Government's businessmen with the special advisers category and in the House of Commons on 10 May 1976, Tim Sainsbury, a former member of the Businessmen's Team who had subsequently been elected to Parliament, implied that he regarded himself as having been a special adviser:

Mr Sainsbury asked the Minister for the Civil Service what advice is now given to special advisers with regard to their political activities.

Mr Charles R. Morris: In December 1974 the previous Prime Minister issued a memorandum of guidance to Ministers in charge of Departments about the terms and conditions of employment of special advisers. This guidance still stands.

Mr Sainsbury: Is the Minister aware that when I was a special adviser I was expected to, and did, resign from my ward committee to conform to the strict rules that were then in force and that should still be in force? Is he satisfied that those same strict rules are enforced now?

Mr Morris: Yes ... (Official Report, Vol. 911, col. 23).

By contrast Charles Morris had only a few months earlier on 23 February replied to another of the numerous Tory attacks on the cost of special advisers by pointing out that under the Heath Government, 'in addition to special advisers the civil service administration had to live with businessmen's teams.' (Official Report, Vol. 906, col. 21). As in Klein and Lewis's study therefore, the businessmen will not be counted as special advisers.

Definition of Special Advisers and Outline of Their Current Role.

Various features distinguish special advisers although not every point applies to all:

(i) They are appointed by the minister for whom they work: 'a Political Adviser is the personal appointment of his Minister.' (Wilson, 1976, p.203))

(ii) They are appointed to serve in a full time or part time capacity in their minister's department. Even if they are not paid they have an official status that distinguishes them from friends of the minister whom he might consult on particular issues, for example William (now Lord) Wedderburn who advised Michael Foot in an unofficial capacity on Trade Union legislation. The vast majority of special advisers become temporary civil servants; most are paid directly but in a few cases their employer receives compensation from public funds. Even though Lord Glenamara (formerly Ted Short) suggested that calling special advisers civil servants was only a device for paying them, they are generally expected to adhere to civil service regulations. In 1986 the Treasury and Civil Service Committee made the accepted position clear by stating that the Head of the Civil Service, Sir Robert (now Lord) Armstrong had told them that special advisers 'are civil servants and they are bound by all the conventions of civil servants' (Vol. 1, para. 5.21).

(iii) They serve for only as long as the individual who appointed them

remains the minister in the department and wishes them to continue in post; although if the party remains in power they can be reappointed by a new minister in the same department or be appointed to serve in a different department. Edward Bickham, for example, was appointed by Jim Prior, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, in 1983. He was reappointed to be special adviser in the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) by Douglas Hurd when he became Northern Ireland Secretary in 1984 on the resignation of Prior. Hurd subsequently took Bickham with him as special adviser when he became Home Secretary in 1985. Following the reappointment of Hurd as Home Secretary in the new Government formed by Mrs Thatcher after the June 1987 General Election, Bickham was reappointed as special adviser. The potentially precarious nature of the position is illustrated by several examples. David Coleman was given up to two years leave of absence from Oxford University to take up a post as special adviser to the Home Secretary, Leon (now Sir Leon) Brittan, who wished him to start almost immediately. Initially, therefore, in April 1985, he began part time, and had not cleared his university office for his replacement before Brittan was moved from the Home Office in the July reshuffle, resulting in Coleman having to clear his room in the Home Office as the new Home Secretary brought Bickham with him. Coleman became adviser to the newly appointed ministers of state in the Department of the Environment (DoE). Michael Stewart took up his appointment as special adviser to the Foreign Secretary only a few days before Tony Crosland's death. However, the new Foreign Secretary, Dr David (now Lord) Owen, 'wanted him to stay and thought it was quite a generous decision on his part to stay.'

(iv) They work directly to the minister. G. S. A. Wheatcroft is an example of a borderline case who would not really count as a special adviser partly because he did not work directly to the minister. Although he had helped the Conservative Opposition develop its Value Added Tax (VAT) proposals in the late 1960s and was appointed by the Chancellor, his appointment was as honorary adviser to Customs and Excise Department on technical VAT problems. Johnstone (1975) said of his work:

The situation created when an 'outside' adviser comes to occupy a room in a government department and look over the shoulders of a group of civil servants going about their professional avocations is always potentially delicate, but its handling by Ash Wheatcroft ... was an object-lesson in wisdom, tact and charm - assisted possibly by the fact that he was officially attached to the department itself and not to its Minister (p.15).

- (v) They are cleared to see official papers and they have to be positively vetted although at least one refused.
- (vi) They cover a broad field of work.
- (vii) They do not have executive functions or authority over civil servants.

In various Labour Party/Fabian publications (for example, Labour's evidence to the Fulton Committee (Vol. 5 (2) pp. 652-673); The Administrators (Fabian Society, 1964); Labour's First Hundred Days (Pimlott, 1987)) at least two types of political appointment have been advocated. First, political advisers who would work very closely with ministers and would clearly be counted as special advisers. Second, policy experts who would work more in an executive capacity within the civil service machine. To the extent that Labour ministers followed this second approach, some appointments, especially in the 1964-70 period, are on the borderline of fitting the above definition of special advisers, for example, Christopher Foster, Dudley Seers and Robert Neild. Chester suggests (1982) that although Kaldor, Balogh, and Neild were all political appointees, only the first two were clearly seen as being sufficiently special and distinctive not to raise problems about the relationship with the Economic Section.

Terms Used.

A bewildering variety of sometimes overlapping terms have been used to describe the people appointed by ministers to work closely with them in departments. Of the two above categories used by Labour the first are political advisers but the use of that term is not restricted to politically committed, often young, people working very closely to the minister. The term is also sometimes used to cover the whole category that others refer to as special advisers. Joan Mitchell (1978), former

special adviser to Shirley Williams, thought that political adviser was the parliamentary term and special adviser was the civil service term. From 1970-4 the term political secretary was favoured, and is still used by the Prime Minister for the Number Ten adviser responsible for matters such as party liaison.

In his 1975 statement to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Conference, Harold Wilson referred to, 'The "Political Advisers" Experiment.' (see Appendix 5 to The Governance of Britain, 1976, pp.202-5). By then, however, as noted above, the official guidelines from Number Ten were already using the term special advisers. In a Written Answer to a Parliamentary Question on 10 April 1984, Mrs Thatcher made a distinction between: special advisers, who 'are civil servants', and political advisers who, 'are not civil servants and are not paid from public funds.' (Official Report, Vol. 58, cols 155-6). This distinction, however, is somewhat inappropriate because the only departmental political adviser included in the list given in the Parliamentary Answer, which covered the period 1979-84, was Robbie Gilbert. He was adviser to Prior, Secretary of State for Employment, and he fits the above description of a political adviser because he was still being paid solely by his employer, Shell, for whom he continued to work part time and there was a small expenses budget paid for by the party. Nevertheless, at that time the political aspects of the adviser's role were performed by Prior's other special adviser, Rob Shepherd. By contrast Gilbert brought, according to Prior, the practical experience of a manager in Shell and he commented on the likely reactions of industry to proposals under consideration.

Other terms used include: policy adviser; special assistant (the American term deliberately adopted by John Harris and later also used by Adrian Ham, special adviser to Denis (now Lord) Healey in the Treasury and by John Cope, special adviser to Peter Walker at the DTI); economic adviser; political assistant (the term used by Maggie Sidgreaves, special adviser to Judith Hart); consultant adviser in industrial relations to the Secretary of State (the title adopted by Roger Dyson, special adviser to Patrick (now Lord) Jenkin at the DHSS); research assistant (the phrase used by several ministers including Merlyn Rees - now Lord Merlyn-Rees - and Nicholas Edwards - now Lord Crickhowell).

Some of the advisers express unease at the use of the term 'political adviser' in relation to their role for senior, experienced politicians. Evidence from the questionnaires reveals an even greater consistency in use of the term special adviser since 1979. In this report, special adviser will be the term predominantly used.

In 1986 the Treasury and Civil Service Committee Report listed all the people thought to have been special advisers since 1974 on the basis of information supplied by the Management and Personnel Office. (Vol. 2, pp. xliii - liii). This shows that a variety of people in a wide range of roles have been officially designated as special advisers. It includes three people who worked for the Government Chief Whip in an almost secretarial capacity: Felicity (now Dame Felicity) Younge (1979-83); Alison Ward (1984-5); and Robina Finlay (from 1985). Sir Robert (Robin) Cooke is also listed. He was special adviser for a succession of Secretaries of State for the Environment from 1979 onwards and took a special interest in the buildings of the Palace of Westminster. According to Michael Heseltine, who appointed him in late 1979, Cooke was already 'actually doing the job in an unofficial capacity and we really legalised it and gave it form.' He was reappointed by Tom King who thought the appointment was 'horses for courses' and by Patrick Jenkin who used the phrase, 'an absolute round peg in a round hole.'

Some of the borderline cases illustrate the breadth, and the limitations, of the term as used in the official list. According to this list Ken Griffin became a special adviser to Tony Benn in 1974 in the Department of Industry despite already being an adviser to the department and despite the fact that Benn did not really regard him as a special adviser. Griffin, a trade unionist, had been an Industrial Adviser to the department since 1970. Recruitment of Industrial Advisers was conducted by the existing Coordinator of the advisers and the department but had to be approved by the minister because they were directly responsible to him. Griffin had been proposed prior to the 1970 election whilst Benn, as Minister of Technology, was running the department. John Davies, the Conservative Secretary of State for Trade and Industry approved the appointment and Griffin, by this time Coordinator of the Industrial Advisers, was still in post when Benn returned to the department. Griffin continued in his role as Industrial

Adviser and maintained that title but also became a special adviser to Benn. He felt he was much more closely involved with the Secretary of State after he became special adviser than he had been under the Tory ministers. Although Benn thought that Griffin was making a valuable contribution he distinguished Griffin's role from that of his two special advisers, Francis Cripps and Frances Morrell: 'I never put him in exactly the same category ... he was an adviser to the department.' The permanent secretary, the late Sir Antony Part, however, thought that Griffin became a special adviser to Benn whilst remaining an Industrial Adviser to the department.

Further examples of fuzzy boundaries around the place occupied by special advisers and uncertainties in the definition of their role are provided by Michael Heseltine's use of advisers. In his book Where There's a Will he states:

I introduced three exceptional men into the world of Whitehall to help us in specific policy areas for limited periods. Tom Baron, Peter Levene and Ed Berman had each experienced the effect of Government policies on their daily work in different areas. They knew the limitations of the official mind, the timidity of politicians at national and local level, the weaknesses in the Whitehall systems (1987, p.44).

All three appointments were unlike most appointments of departmental special advisers in that they were for fixed periods, and, at less than a year, they were even shorter than the few other special advisers on fixed period secondment. Ed Berman, having agreed a set of specific tasks with the Secretary of State, then had, for a special adviser, comparatively little contact with him. His role, therefore, was more akin to that of a consultant or specialist appointed by a department in a short-term contract than it was to that of most special advisers. Nevertheless, Baron and Berman are the two listed as special advisers whereas Peter (now Sir Peter) Levene does not appear in the Treasury and Civil Service Committee list. Levene describes himself, during this six month period before he was appointed as Chief of Defence Procurement, as being 'Personal Adviser to the Secretary of State' (Who's Who, 1986). Elsewhere he is described as Heseltine's 'former special adviser', (RIPA, 1987, para. 4.23; Hennessy 1988, p.371). Heseltine's answer to

the question as to whether Levene was clearly a special adviser during those six months was, 'Absolutely. Exactly the same as Tom Baron.'

Angela Byre was, in effect, recruited by Anthony Lester in 1974 as 'special adviser to the Home Office' to give advice on the preparation of the White Paper, Equality for Women (Cmnd. 5724), and subsequent legislation on sex discrimination. Her name does not appear in the 1986 Treasury and Civil Service Committee list and she did not regard herself as a political appointee: 'I was not a political adviser ... I was there for a specific task.' Nevertheless, she shared an office with Lester, one of the Home Secretary's two special advisers, and she was made to feel very much part of that team.

The importance of the above analysis is that the difficulties in defining precise boundaries and in stating exactly who may be considered to be a special adviser underline the comparatively recent development of the role and its informality. There is probably no other category in Whitehall about which there is such uncertainty. Furthermore, a degree of imprecision will be argued to be one of the important beneficial features of the special advisers' system in that it provides flexibility. The label 'special adviser' has occasionally been used to give an official title and thus a salary and/or access to official information to people fulfilling useful functions for ministers, for example Robin Cooke, Peter Levene, and Felicity Younge. On the other hand, the fact that the vast majority of special advisers since 1974 are clearly identified in the lists indicates that there has been a degree of systemization and formalization in the concept when compared with the 1960s. A wide range of functions are generally accepted as being legitimate activities for special advisers. These will be fully discussed in Chapter 6 but may be briefly listed here in their approximate order of importance according to the findings of the questionnaires completed by special advisers. There is inevitably some overlap between various activities:

- (i) examining papers going to the minister and commenting on some of them;
- (ii) advising the minister on, and involvement with, presentation;
- (iii) discussing issues with the minister;
- (iv) attending departmental meetings and visits with the minister;
- (v) speech writing;
- (vi) preparing reports on departmental policy;
- (vii) attending meetings of all the politicians in the department;
- (viii) corresponding with party MPs and officials/attending party meetings/receiving party deputations, on behalf of the minister;
- (ix) preparing briefs on non-departmental agenda items for Cabinet and Cabinet Committees;
- (x) attending departmental meetings/talking to groups/and receiving deputations, on behalf of the minister or at least when he is not present;
- (xi) chasing up progress on implementing the minister's wishes.

Terms of Employment.

Whereas most of the Tories' political secretaries in the early 1970s were paid by the Conservative Party, the overwhelming majority of advisers since 1974 have been paid from public funds and become temporary civil servants. In 1974 the terms of employment to be issued by departments were set out in the memorandum of guidance issued by Number Ten following discussions with the CSD. These were changed when necessary.

Negotiations over starting salary and increments, and in some cases pensions, were initially held ad hoc between the individual adviser and the relevant department. Then approval for each agreement had to be sought from the CSD. Ian Bancroft, former permanent secretary of the CSD, admits this approval was not 'totally automatic' and the CSD was probably 'a bit meaner in terms of pay.' Over the years the CSD tried to secure consistency.

Nevertheless, considerable variations remained. Some of the senior, experienced advisers, including some of the university professors, were given a salary and/or status equivalent to that of a deputy secretary. At the other end of the scale at least one special adviser was given the salary equivalent to an executive officer. Although some of the differences reflected variations in age and seniority of special advisers, sometimes advisers of similar backgrounds were treated very differently. The salary and consequent status of a special adviser are thought to be important for reasons beyond monetary considerations - the grade of an individual often determines the units to which he is entitled for office accommodation and furniture. In a hierarchical organization such as the civil service the way in which an individual is treated by others might depend partially upon his official status. According to Brian Abel-Smith, 'grading is important, it normally determines what access you have.' Similarly Barbara Castle's other main special adviser, Jack Straw, was pleased that she telephoned Number Ten and insisted that, although only 27, Straw be put on the assistant secretary scale. He felt it was 'a signal to the department that I was to be taken seriously.'

Terms and conditions, and later the progress of the salary negotiations held with the CSD, were a major topic of discussion at a number of the infrequently held meetings of Labour special advisers. A note produced by these special advisers about nine months after the initial appointments suggested that variations in terms and conditions did not appear to be related in any systematic way to differences in the nature of particular appointments and responsibilities involved. There was little consistency in the payment of London Weighting allowances, thresholds and regular increments. Under Labour, negotiations over salary increases were protracted and at times complicated by the need to adhere to changes in the government's own pay policy. During the negotiations the Head of the Policy Unit, Bernard Donoughue, to some extent acted as shop steward for the special advisers. Even by the nine months stage however, most special advisers had been given salaries equivalent to those of either principals or assistant secretaries and many of the worst anomalies in salaries had been rectified.

Nevertheless, the full variations in treatment had not been resolved by 1979 and some of the Conservative special advisers were similarly dissatisfied with the vagaries in treatment over salaries and pension arrangements. At one time a five per cent rule was applied to Tory special advisers which meant that they could not be paid more than five per cent above their previous pay and this was a source of contention because many of the special advisers were recruited from the CRD where salaries were low compared with what most of the staff could have expected elsewhere.

Several factors help account for advisers' dissatisfaction at their salary levels, especially during the Labour Government. First, their salary negotiations often took place against a backdrop of attempts to restrain civil service pay. Bancroft was, 'not surprised there should have been this rumbling discontent amongst the advisers, mirrored by the rumbling discontent amongst the civil servants.' Second, there was a general feeling in some quarters of the civil service, and especially amongst backbenchers and sections of the press, that far from being underpaid some advisers received too much and the total amount spent on them was exorbitant. This feeling is reflected in the earlier quotations and played a major part in the campaign against advisers unofficially led by Ian Gow. Individual salaries were not generally disclosed. However, after Gow had been told in Parliament on 5 November 1975 that Kaldor's salary was £14,000, he campaigned for other salaries to be disclosed and on 23 March 1976 intensified his attack on Kaldor and on the total amount spent on advisers:

I sometimes think that the quality of advice that the Government have been receiving from their selected special advisers is an indictment of the judgment of the Ministers who make these appointments. I sometimes think that it would be better if Ministers were to accept rather more advice from my right hon. and hon. Friends, which they would get free, gratis and for nothing, rather than that they should pay out £196,000 a year to get advice that is leading the country to economic disaster (Official Report, Vol. 908, col. 365).

The rules governing the political activities of civil servants were generally applied to special advisers. Several special advisers, therefore, had to resign following their selection as prospective

parliamentary candidates. Although an initial attempt was made to prevent special advisers from continuing to serve on local councils, Roy Jenkins and Barbara Castle successfully insisted in 1974 that Matthew Oakeshott and Jack Straw should be allowed to remain on Oxford City and Islington Borough Councils respectively. Nevertheless, certain ground rules were established to cover their activities and when, in 1984, the Leader of the Conservative Group on Lambeth Council, Peter Davis, was chosen to be special adviser to the Minister for Local Government he had immediately to resign his council seat.

Restrictions on party political activities were probably most strongly applied in the Heath Government, to the advisers who became temporary civil servants - Mark Schreiber (now Lord Marlesford) and Brendon Sewill. They were not able, for example, to go to party conferences and, despite being former Director of the CRD, Sewill was not permitted to go to the party offices. Schreiber did, however, have the civil servant's right, denied to later special advisers, to see the files of previous administrations. In practice, under Labour in the 1970s, as Darlington told The Times on 1 July 1978, 'a few special advisers ignore some of these restrictions.' About 20 advisers subscribed to evidence submitted by Jack Straw to the Committee on Political Activities of Civil Servants chaired by Sir Arthur Armitage. The committee agreed with the advisers that 'the rules applicable to career civil servants are not applicable to Special Advisers' and concluded, 'that the guidelines and rules for the political activities of Special Advisers should be laid down by the Prime Minister; and that these should be separate and distinct from the rules applicable to career civil servants' (1978, para. 136).

Some move towards this position might be indicated in Thatcher's Written Answer of 10 April 1984: 'their terms of appointment are similar to those of other civil servants and they are subject to the same rules of conduct ... apart from certain exceptions which reflect the special nature of their role.' This slight recognition of the special nature of their position was reflected in the letter of appointment of some advisers serving ministers in the Thatcher Government. The letter stated, as had been the case under Labour, that advisers would be expected to abide by the provisions of the Civil Service Pay and

Conditions of Service Code with the exception of acceptance of outside business appointments after resignations or retirement. However, it went one step further and also allowed certain exceptions to the rules on political activities. These included giving permission, subject to the approval of their minister, for advisers: to attend party functions, although only as observers in the case of party conferences; to maintain contact with party members; and to take part in party policy reviews with the purpose of ensuring that those undertaking the review were fully aware of the Government's view and their minister's thinking.

Despite such developments the traditional view still prevailed in Robert Armstrong's comment, noted earlier, to the Treasury and Civil Service Committee. Furthermore, the continuing restriction on advisers remaining in post if selected as parliamentary candidates caused the resignation not only of several advisers once they were selected, but also of some who were hoping to be selected and did not want to pass up good alternative job opportunities when they arose.

It was feared in 1978 that several special advisers might have to resign in Spring 1979 because of the regulations relating to temporary civil servants not serving for more than five years without recourse to the Civil Service Commission (The Times, 31 May 1978). As a result of the issues raised by the consequent investigation, the Civil Service Order in Council 1978 was made. Article 1(2)(d) of the Order excluded appointments limited to the duration of an Administration (such as special advisers) from the requirement of needing to receive a certificate of qualification from the Civil Service Commissioners (Civil Service Commission, 1979). Conservative special advisers who served for more than five years, for example Adam (now Sir Adam) Ridley, faced no difficulties in continuing in service.

Some advisers made certain conditions before accepting their appointment. Lester set three: 'One was that I would have ready access to the Home Secretary; the second was that I would have ready access to all relevant documents; the third was that I would have adequate administrative back up. Those requirements were met pretty well.'

SECTION D: CATEGORIES OF SPECIAL ADVISERS.

The two categories used in Labour Party and Fabian writings provide an important starting point. In its evidence to the Fulton Committee the Labour Party advocated that:

Two particular kinds of temporary appointment should be explicitly recognised. First experts who are called in to help implement the particular policies of the government of the day. Here we envisage the recognition of a limited number of 'posts of confidence'. These appointments must be at a fairly high level or special provision must be made for access to the Minister The second proposal we would make is that a Minister on assuming office, should have the power to appoint a limited number of personal assistants (perhaps up to four) with direct access to him and to all the information in his department. These would form his personal 'Cabinet'. They would take no administrative decisions themselves. (Fulton Report, 1968, Vol. 5 (2), pp.664-5).

This categorization has not, in practice, been followed precisely by Labour or Conservative Governments although it still finds favour in recommendations from the Fabians, for example, Labour's First Hundred Days (Pimlott, 1987), and radicals on the right including John Hoskyns, for whom the personal assistants would be policy advisers (1982). Two informal categories are often applied to the special advisers who have been appointed: 'political' advisers and 'specialist' advisers. Such a categorization - which has nothing to do with the previously described official attempt to distinguish between political and special advisers - was particularly clear in the case of some of the teams of advisers serving Labour ministers between 1974-9.

This distinction is considered to be valid by many observers including several former advisers who have analysed the role - Roger Darlington, Joan Mitchell and Alastair Ross Goobey. Brian Abel-Smith and Jack Straw are often cited as the archetypal 'specialist' and 'political' adviser respectively. Straw adds weight to the distinction by recalling that when asked to distinguish between them Barbara Castle said, 'I've hired Brian Abel-Smith for his brains and Jack for guile and low cunning.' These two illustrate, however, some of the difficulties with a simple specialist/political dichotomy. Abel-Smith was seen as a committed socialist and his political role included serving on the

Social Policy Sub-committee of Labour's National Executive Committee (NEC), and Straw became involved in policy discussions in the department.

Several commentators, including some who support the distinction between political and specialist advisers, believe that in practice there is a large variety of roles that can be played and some advisers could be classified as both specialist and political. Tim Boswell, for example, had both worked at CRD and been a farmer prior to becoming, in 1984, adviser to Michael Jopling, Minister of Agriculture, a role which he performed part time whilst continuing to farm. He is now Conservative MP for Daventry.

The advisers who served in the Department of Prices and Consumer Protection (DPCP) between 1974-9 illustrate the possible categories and the complexity of the issue. Joan Mitchell (an economist and former member of the Prices and Incomes Board) and John Lyttle worked for Shirley Williams, and provide perhaps the clearest example from any department of the specialist and political adviser categories that Mitchell herself described in 1978 in Public Administration:

In practice there are two kinds of advisers, personified in the two which most (though never all) Cabinet ministers were allowed: those who act as an extra political arm, and those having technical or departmental expertise, usually economists. The special political advisers mainly function as party and pressure group contact men, as devillers chasing ministers' needs and wishes and possibly as speech writers. The special economic (or similar) advisers act mostly as the sieves, for papers originating in other departments as well as the minister's own, and as policy thinkers (p.89).

Even such a clear-cut example, however, has atypical features. John Lyttle had not only worked in Labour Party offices but had also been Chief Officer of the Race Relations Board at assistant secretary level. He was, at 41, more senior and experienced than most people appointed to the political adviser slot. Moreover, initially there was a third special adviser working for Shirley Williams. Timothy Josling was an economist who worked part time as did Mitchell. But whereas Mitchell explained that the adviser had to insert, 'the specifically political and social slant' on issues (p.92), Josling's role was to brief as an expert on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). After a

while Josling became 'part-time consultant to the department' although he continued functioning much as before.

Possibly of all special advisers Josling came nearest to being an economic adviser to the department - as highlighted by his later change of title. Under Labour several specialists who were economists had the title Economic Adviser to the Secretary of State. It is important to note that they were specifically advising their minister and therefore count as special advisers in a way which economic advisers to the department do not.

Roy Hattersley, who succeeded Shirley Williams at the DPCP, thought that, 'the perfect balance is a man of some considerable seniority with committed expertise - and I think that is exactly the phrase - and a man slightly more junior who has got an essentially political role.' Although in Maurice Peston and David Hill respectively, Hattersley thought he had this balance, he did not think the terms 'specialist' adviser and 'political' adviser were entirely appropriate because Peston, 'was a combination of both.' Furthermore, Hill was more interventionist in the DPCP than Lyttle had been. Peston emphasized the political role of even the specialist adviser by drawing a distinction between,

the professional role and the political role. Economists who take leave from university to work temporarily in the civil service do so as professionals ... Their value lies in their technical skills and their knowledge insofar as they have any. Thus, in the early 1960s when I was in the Treasury the Chancellor was Reginald Maudling, but this was a complete irrelevance as far as my work was concerned ... All this is to be contrasted with the special adviser who is a political appointee and has a political role to play ... [special advisers are] people who give advice, but who are politically committed. As an example of the contrast, when I was at DPCP, the department used another professor of economics to advise as a technical expert on the CAP (Times Higher Educational Supplement (THES), 11 July 1980).

Inevitably discussion about categories of advisers overlaps with that about the definition of advisers and Peston's clear distinctions would have been harder to make in the 1964-70 period. In practice, the political/specialist categories partly overlap with those advocated by the Labour Party/Fabians at the start of this section. But whereas in

Labour's evidence to Fulton it was the personal assistant who would 'take no administrative decision', that limitation has applied in practice to both the 'political' advisers and the 'specialist' advisers. Campbell (1987) uses similar phraseology in referring to the distinction between, 'policy professionals with partisan ties and political operatives.' (p.266-7). He styles the former category 'amphibians'. Attempts were made, for example by Wilson (1976 p.204) and Hecló and Wildavsky (1981 p.xlvii), to develop a three fold categorization of advisers. Often these were developed on the basis of the advisers' backgrounds rather than their roles. Whilst these are of some value, the heterogeneity of advisers and their roles have defeated attempts to develop an authoritative categorization into which all advisers could be slotted.

Special advisers in the Number Ten Policy Unit really form a separate category and when the term 'policy adviser' is used it usually refers to them. The main focus of Klein and Lewis's study was on advisers attached to individual ministers rather than the 'special unit at Number 10 Downing Street' because, they claimed, that unit is 'very much the exception and no doubt reflects the special, because wide ranging, needs of the Prime Ministerial office in recent years' (p.2). Advisers at Number Ten are not included in the main analysis in this study not only because their role is in many ways different from that of departmental special advisers but also because, as they have usually been the single largest group, their numbers would distort the picture. Nevertheless, they are included in the official lists of special advisers and have played an important role - which is specifically examined in Chapter 6, Section B. Their contribution is also analysed to the extent that, for example, they were part (possibly the centre) of a network of special advisers and comparisons can be made between their role and that of special advisers in departments. According to Pollitt:

If the group under Dr. Donoghue at No.10 was generally well received, the same could not be said of all the other two dozen or so political advisers ... In sum, a distinction needs to be drawn between the No.10 unit and the other political advisers. The former quickly staked a firm claim to a place in the machinery of government The role of individual advisers to other ministers has been less well defined and less widely accepted (1984, pp.110-11).

This chapter has worked towards a definition of the role of advisers to other ministers. The following chapters will suggest their role is now increasingly accepted.

CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES, MODELS AND INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS.

In analysing the place of special advisers within the British system of government it will be of value to set it against various theoretical perspectives on, and descriptions and models of, the roles of ministers and the adequacy of traditional sources of support for them in performing those roles. The analysis moves from a discussion of the general issues to an examination of the place of advisers. Section A examines the many roles of ministers and their consequent requirements for assistance. Section B considers the traditional sources of support for ministers and international comparisons are made. Section C reviews the relationship between ministers and the most important providers of assistance - the permanent civil service. Of the extensive material available the items selected are generally those most relevant to the eventual development of a possible model of the place occupied by special advisers. Section D combines the various elements and develops the model.

SECTION A: ROLES OF MINISTERS.

Special advisers are appointed by their minister and have direct access to him. It is, therefore, appropriate to start by analysing ministers' roles. Ministers have a wide range of roles to fill and this leads to considerable strain on them (Kogan, 1971, p.15 and p.156; Headey, 1974, p.47 and p.278; Blackstone 1979; Hoskyns, 1983; Hennessy, 1986, p.184). British ministers are active members of the legislature, unlike their counterparts in America or France. In some continental traditions members of a minister's cabinet are permitted to carry out some of his functions of reporting to the legislature (Neville-Jones, 1983, p.235). The British Parliament also sits for more hours each year than those of other democratic countries (Blackstone, 1979). The majority of British Ministers have seats in the House of Commons. The UK electoral system is not based on a list system and so there are strong demands on a minister from his constituency.

British ministers who head a department are responsible for providing policy leadership. In 1974 Headey (p.59) reported that some regarded themselves as having a management role, and probably since the early 1980s even greater attention has been paid to it. Ministers have a vast amount of paper to read, many decisions to make and a large number of meetings and visits which, especially since the UK joined the European Economic Community (EEC), may include overseas trips. Furthermore, in the British unitary system, central government is responsible for more decisions than in federal countries. Their role in a department is extremely important to ministers because as Rose (1987, p.4) argues, ministries provide them with a means of satisfying their political ambitions. A minister also has to defend and promote his department, himself and the whole government. He does so to various audiences - Parliament, the interest groups, the media and the country. There seems to be an ever increasing demand from the media, partly fuelled by a reduction in secrecy, for explanations from ministers.

Some ministers, especially in Labour Governments, spend time on party committees (see, for example, Benn, 1989, and 1990; Castle, 1980, and 1984), again in strong contrast with members of American Cabinets. British ministers also attend meetings of Cabinet or its committees and, not only have to promote their departmental interests, but also have to share a stronger collective responsibility for the decisions taken by the Government than that in most countries (see, for example, Birch, 1964).

Alan Healey, the Chairman of the First Division Association (FDA), suggested in May 1986 at the Re-skilling Government Seminar that ministers, 'have at least five full-time jobs to perform, and almost by definition therefore cannot perform any of them properly.' (Institute of Directors (IOD), 1986, p.30). In 1970 the newly elected Conservative Government produced a White Paper, The Reorganisation of Central Government, in which it claimed, 'This Administration believes that government has been attempting to do too much. This ... has also overloaded the government machine itself ... the weakness has shown itself in the apparatus of policy formulation' (Cmnd. 4506, para. 2).

Although it is widely accepted that British heads of departments

are extraordinarily busy, even compared with ministers in other countries, one compensating factor is that there are far more junior ministers in Britain than elsewhere. In 1976 Britain accounted for a quarter of the total number of junior ministers in the world (Theakston, 1987, p.167). How far junior ministers are themselves overworked, and their capacity to relieve the burden on Cabinet ministers, are explored later.

Given that ministers have so many functions to carry out, Headey argues, 'sheer pressure of work is seen as the basic reason why Ministers are forced, consciously or unconsciously, to give higher priority to some roles than others.' (1974, p.30). Ministers who attempted fully to play all the roles open to them would exhaust themselves and not tackle them properly. He identifies five main types of ministers: minimalists; policy selectors; policy initiators; executive ministers; and ambassador ministers. Ministerial minimalists give priority to their parliamentary tasks and to fighting their departmental corner in Cabinet and Cabinet Committees. Policy selectors provide policy leadership but do so by probing for weakness in advice and choosing from among the alternative lines of policy submitted to them. The policy initiator thinks of himself as providing policy leadership by defining and setting his own objectives. Executive ministers emphasize management roles and ambassador ministers emphasize public relations roles. Some ministers thought that nothing could be neglected and they refused to define their priorities at all (p.65).

Headey's work contributes to the conclusion that, to varying degrees, ministers are overloaded and do not have the time to carry out certain of their functions. Hennessy (1986) gathered considerable evidence to suggest that the collective Cabinet role was one that ministers, partly through lack of time, carried out least well (p.185). Headey's evidence, however, raises doubts about how far greater involvement in wider Cabinet discussion was a role that ministers wished to adopt (pp.58-60) - this may, of course, have been an implicit acceptance of the lack of time.

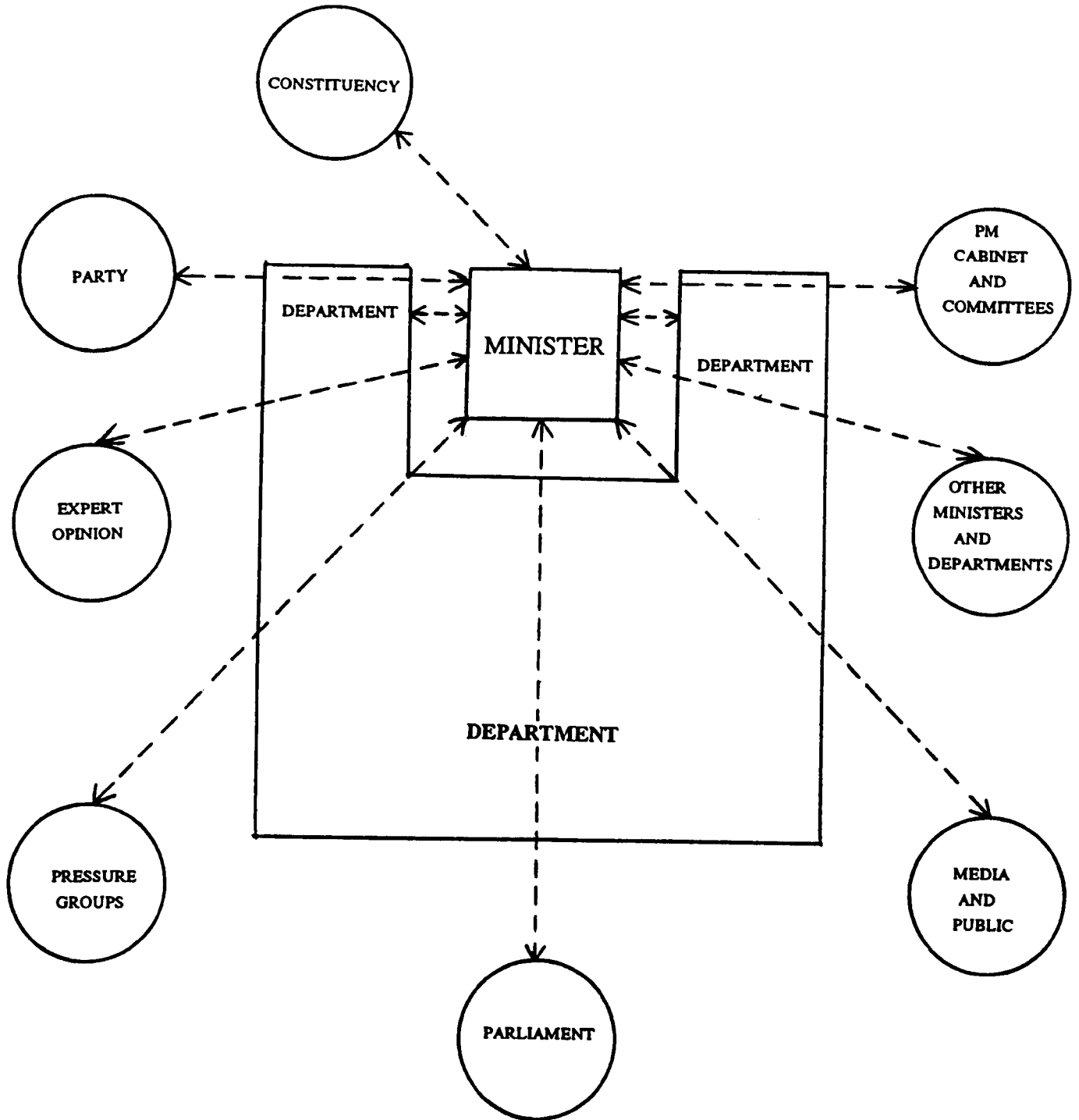
Nodal Point.

The large number of roles a minister is expected to perform highlights the fact that he ought to maintain a relationship (entailing the flow of information and/or influence) with many institutions and people. These could include: his department; other departments; the Prime Minister; other ministers - either singly or collectively; Parliament; his party (including the parliamentary party, the party in country, and the party headquarters); pressure groups; the media; academics and other specialists; the public; his constituency. These key relationships are illustrated in Figure 1 but various intermediaries and people with closest contact with the minister will be added to the diagram later. Furthermore, some of the relationships are more complicated than straightforward bilateral relations, for example, a minister may meet representatives of an interest group but such a group is also likely to have a strong relationship with the department. The relationship with the department is the most important for a minister and officials help him with many of the other contacts.

Simon (1976) suggested that theories of administration should take decision making as a central focus. He stressed that how decisions were made was influenced by the information available. The concept of the flow of information is central to systems theory. According to Easton, 'we may visualize a political system as a gigantic communications network into which information in the form of demands is flowing and out of which a different kind of information we call a decision emerges' (1965, p.72). Within systems theory the actual decision making occurs inside the black box. Much of this study focuses on the black box and the perspective of the political decision makers (i.e. ministers) at the heart of the whole process.

With so many relationships to maintain it is perhaps useful to view British ministers as being at the nodal point of a vast array of information (formal and sometimes informal) flowing in from a wide range of sources. The buck then stops with the ministers who either individually, or collectively, have to make the decisions and have 'unlimited liability' (Rose, 1987, p.18) for any political mistakes

FIGURE 1: Bilateral Relationships Maintained by the Minister.



KEY: i) <-----> Flows of information and/or influence.

ii) ○ Institutions and people with whom the minister maintains a relationship.

made.

Ministers also send information out to a wide variety of institutions and people. It is important for partisans to promote the policies once decisions have been made - especially if the decisions are unpopular. Hood (1983) shows how nodality is one of the key tools that ministers and government possess in carrying out the vital functions of 'detection' i.e. taking in information and 'effecting' i.e. trying to make an impact on the outside world.

A person in such a nodal position, who is overloaded with functions to carry out, will have various interlocking requirements:

(i) Specific tasks will have to be carried out (for example: detailed policy options prepared, meetings arranged and serviced, speeches and press statements written) to assist him in carrying out the functions.

(ii) He will not be able to maintain all the contacts himself and so intermediaries will have to conduct communications for him. In the terminology of systems theory the demands flow along communications channels and at various stages gatekeepers winnow out certain demands. The demands or statements of interest are further reduced through collection and combination into a more manageable form and issue formulation occurs. (Easton, 1965). Much of this process is far removed from the minister but the argument being developed here is that as the objective of all this activity is to transmit demands to the political decision makers it is profitable to examine the process from his perspective. It is possible, therefore, to see much of the activity as being on his behalf and considerable liaison occurs within the political system. Part of this is sometimes seen as brokerage. The concept of brokerage is variously interpreted. For some, the element of 'authority' within it is important (Kogan and Henkel, 1983, p.32) and in this sense a retiring permanent secretary, Sir Brian Cubbon, accepted the description of himself as being the 'broker' between the minister and the department (The Times, 4 April 1988). On the other hand, there may be situations (especially when dealing with a rigid hierarchy such as a government department, or a delicate party matter) where a minister feels it desirable to use an informal confidant to carry out brokerage. Whilst lacking constitutional authority such a person may be able to carry out brokerage because he is known to be both relaying the

minister's wishes and available to take information directly back to the minister.

(iii) The third requirement that a minister with such heavy demands on him is likely to have is for personal support of the type that can be provided by an aide or confidant. Young and Sloman (1982) refer to ministers' need for 'ego-boosting'(p.88). As part of this personal support a few ministers may find the need for somebody to play a 'medieval fool' role and be able to speak more bluntly to them than officials think appropriate for civil servants to do.

The complex and potentially contradictory requirements of heads of government are examined by Dror (1987). He claims that many of the points are also relevant for other ministers. The absence, he argues, 'of tension-reducing and support-providing historical court positions, such as court jesters and court priests, from the entourage of modern rulers makes supply of emotional support all the more important a function for advisers to rulers.' This creates, however, the first in Dror's list of eight 'inherent' dilemmas because advisers are supposed to provide, 'objective estimates and professional analysis, the content of which is not adjusted to the emotional needs of the recipient or to his possible emotional reactions.' (p.193-4).

Escalating Requirements.

In the last two decades the demands on ministers have become greater, and their requirements more difficult to meet, for various inter-related reasons revolving around issues such as the increase in adversarial politics; the development of overload on ministers and the breaking down of barriers between existing institutions or roles.

It was claimed in the 1970s that a reduction in consensus was occurring and that Britain was moving towards adversarial politics following the earlier consensus of the Butskellite era (Finer, 1975). Where there is adversarial politics a gulf develops between the policies of the parties with each undoing the policies of the former administration when they form a new government. Such a view is challenged by some authors, for example Jordan and Richardson (1987,

p.80), who claim that the consensus of the Butskellite era is exaggerated as is the later conflict. They go on to suggest that people who claim that Butskellism has been replaced by conflict do not agree, 'as to which period is what style: usually, indeed, 'today' appears to have adversarial politics and yesterday consensual - whenever 'today' happens to be' (p.80). A minister who believes that there has been a reduction in consensus and that he has a mandate to introduce changes is likely to put different, and perhaps greater, demands on the system and possibly feel that the existing system is unable to meet his requirements. Writing in 1979 Brown and Steel argued that since 1971 civil servants', 'ability to serve both political parties impartially has been brought into question by the appearance of differences in the parties' views on a number of major issues, which are probably greater than at any time since 1945' (p.148).

Whatever doubts there might be about the development of adversarial politics there is, as Hennessy (1986) shows, wide acceptance of the view put forward in the 1970s by, for example, King (1975), that the overload on government is increasing. This is seen as a world-wide phenomenon; the third Annual Meeting of the International Political Science Association in 1986 was entitled: 'Government Overload and Recent Developments in the Organisation of State Power.' (Peele, 1986). Greater overload on government inevitably results in overload on individual ministers and, as we have seen, the range of functions that British ministers have exacerbates the problems.

It is possible to distinguish between qualitative and quantitative overload (Dror, 1987). Qualitative overload is associated with the growing complexity of the issues on which ministers have to make decisions: 'the issues have become so, so much more difficult.' (Sir Frank Cooper, quoted in Hennessy, 1986, p.177). A British minister is less likely than many of his overseas counterparts to be a specialist in the subject dealt with by his department (Blondel, 1985). This problem is exaggerated by the ephemeral nature of many ministerial appointments. Crosland reckoned that, 'it takes you six months to get your head properly above water, a year to get the general drift of most of the field, and two years really to master the whole of a Department ... I had four separate jobs in five and a half years, which was far too

many.' (Kogan, 1971, pp.155 and 159).

Time spent as a junior minister is not regarded as preparation for eventually becoming the Cabinet Minister in the same department (Theakston, 1987). Whilst, with the exception of length of time in post, these points are not new, the development of overload makes their impact more severe.

Quantitative overload is associated with the growth in ministers' activities and in the number of decisions they have to take. A range of sometimes interlocking developments are linked to overload. They include: the increasing range of activities for which British Governments held themselves responsible (King, 1975); increasing willingness of backbenchers to rebel and to spend time on select committees investigating the activities of government (Norton, 1981; Drewry, 1985); increasing demands from the media for explanations from ministers of government actions and proposals; increasing leaks of, and demands for, official information; the growing number of pressure groups (Hurd, 1986); and the increasing demands by party members, at least in the 1970s and early 1980s, for a role in making the policy of the party (Kogan and Kogan, 1982). In some cases, such as increasing scrutiny of the executive by Parliament, there is some erosion of traditional boundaries.

The overload is exacerbated by the difficulty that ministers have in defining their objectives and by an attempt to maintain the myth that ministers are instigators of all new policies (Blackstone, 1979). Furthermore, there is a tendency to force upwards to ministers decisions that used to be taken lower down (see, for example, Hennessy, p.193). This partly reflects the politicization of more issues - another way in which traditional boundaries are eroded.

The dangers of overload are much discussed in systems theory. According to Easton:

The capacity to handle demands once they have entered a system is a function of the volume of demands and existing channel capacity. The members of a system can cope with overload either by reducing volume in some way or by increasing the capacity of the system to handle the existing volume ... [in the latter case] the problem becomes one, not of too many

demands and too few channels but of enough channels operating so effectively that they may let too many demands through. In this case it would not be the transmission channels that would be overloaded but the decision-making centers themselves (1965, pp.119-20 and 128).

Klein and Lewis (1977) suggest that ministers may feel 'swamped' (p.7) and point out that: 'the emergence of the special adviser has coincided with the growing awareness of 'overload' in British government' (p.2).

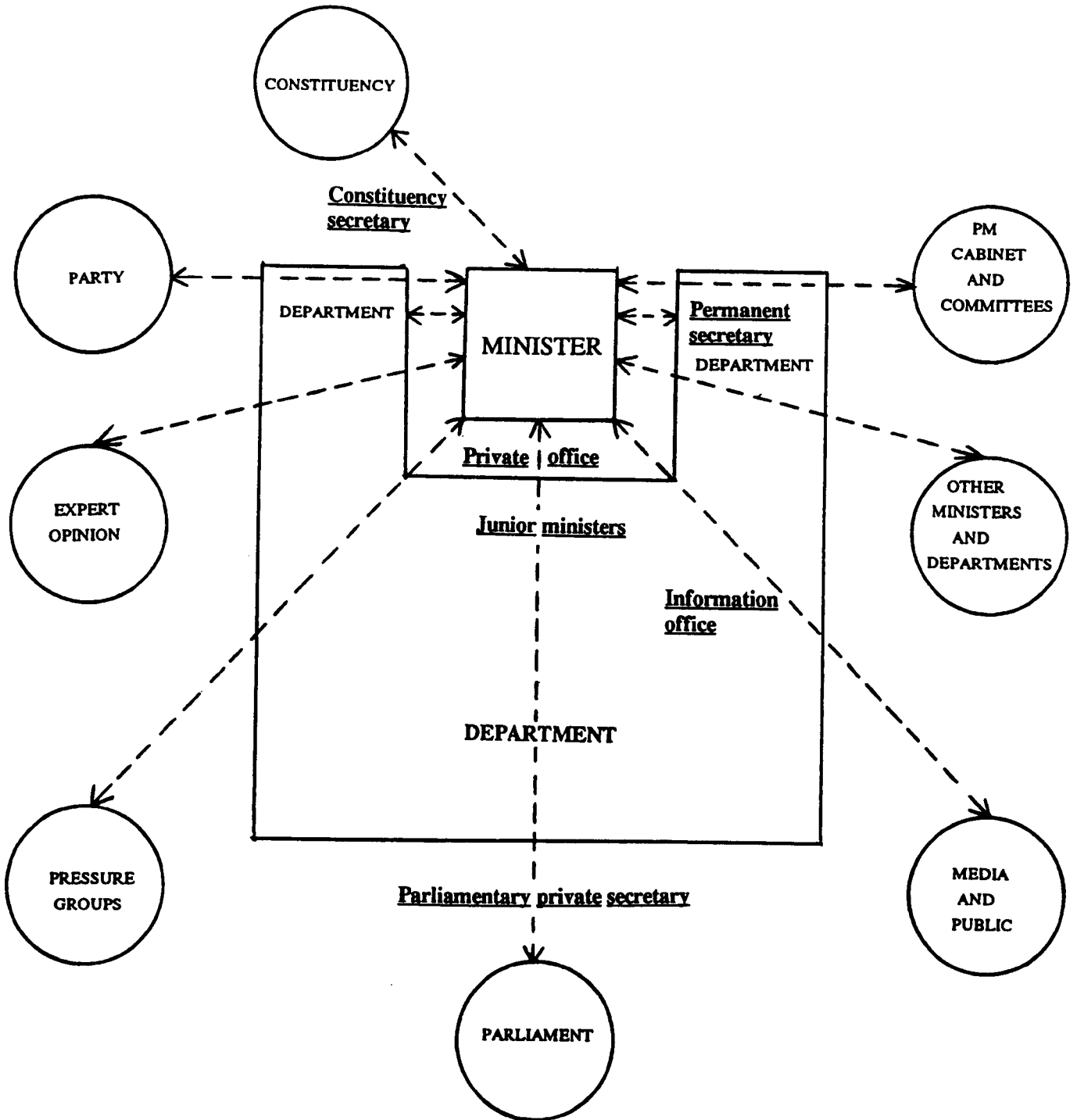
It is possible to examine the bilateral relationships in Figure 1 to see whether, in the light of escalating requirements, there are functions for a special adviser to carry out. Before this is done, however, it is important to examine the categories of people who are already providing assistance for ministers, and ministers' relationships with them. This is because places and roles for special advisers will only be revealed by combining analysis of ministers' many and growing needs with assessment of the appropriateness of traditional sources of assistance.

SECTION B: ASSISTANCE TO MINISTERS.

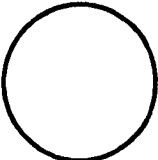
A minister needs a team of people to assist him. Even before special advisers were appointed a British minister had many people working closely with him, some in capacities not always found in other countries. Figure 2 illustrates, in a very simplified way, the place of some of the key people who help their minister to maintain the flows of information and/or influence identified in Figure 1 and carry out the tasks that have to be completed if the minister is to fulfil so many roles. These people are: the junior ministers, the PPS, the private secretaries, the permanent secretary, the information officers. Clearly, some of these people, especially junior ministers and the permanent secretary, have major responsibilities within the department and their role is more substantial than the aspect being concentrated on here - assistance given to the Cabinet minister.

The relationship between a minister and his department is most important and the extent to which the officials' knowledge and value

FIGURE 2: People Who Assist the Minister.



KEY: i) $\langle \text{---} \rangle$ Flows of information and/or influence.

ii)  Institutions and people with whom the minister maintains a relationship.

iii) **Private Office** People who assist the minister.

systems limit their minister's ability to exert his political will on the department is analysed in the next section. Despite the strength of the relationship that can develop between the minister and both his private office and his permanent secretary (see, for example, Playfair, 1965; and Pooley in Young and Sloman, 1982, p.101), he does not rely solely on them for liaison with his department. Often he develops powerful links directly with high ranking officials. Kogan (1971) discussed with Crosland and Boyle how they might use an under secretary as a sounding board. Much of the policy charge in a department might be carried by under secretaries and assistant secretaries. Unlike the various other bodies shown in the Figure with which a minister has to maintain a relationship, the department is working for him. The administrative divisions of the department gather and filter information; develop policy options; and help him in his dealings with the other groups. Therefore, some of the information and/or influence flows will be more complex than it is possible to show in a simple diagram - for example the findings of academics may be taken up by pressure groups who feed them into the department which in turn relays them to the minister.

Commenting in 1965 on the absence in Britain of an equivalent to the cabinets which are found in many European countries Dutheillet De Lamothe wrote: 'One may wonder whether this difference is not a result of the absence of, or at least the very negligible part played on the Continent by Junior Ministers (Parliamentary Secretaries) or Parliamentary Private Secretaries and Permanent Secretaries, these people assuming in the British system tasks attributed in France, Italy and Belgium to the ministerial cabinets' (p.366).

Although British ministers have considerable assistance, the very nature of this assistance might generate further difficulties and not entirely meet all the ministers' requirements. With a minister being surrounded for much of his time by generalist civil servants, it is widely thought that the minister is insulated (Headey, p.78) and 'isolated' (for example Klein and Lewis; Lawson and Bruce-Gardyne, 1976; Drewry and Butcher, 1988). Rose (1986, p.19) refers to a minister as being 'an island in a sea of civil servants.' Two well known references to this phenomenon are Barbara Castle's reference to, 'the loneliness of

the short distance runner' (1973), and Richard Crossman's description in the first day of his Diaries of a Cabinet Minister to his minister's room as being, 'like a padded cell', in which he sat, 'insulated from the real world' (1975, pp.21-3).

Perhaps the major difference between the British system and that of many other countries is that, especially initially, a British minister is not surrounded in the most significant posts with people whom he has chosen. In the US over 3,000 senior positions within government departments are filled by political appointees with a variety of backgrounds who are usually changed following the election of a new president (Hecklo, 1977). In West Germany the top two grades within the civil service are filled by 'political civil servants'. These are civil servants who are usually, but not always, recruited from amongst career officials in Federal, Lander or Local Government. They are expected to be in full accord with the governments' partisan goals and may be temporarily retired at any point. When there were changes of government in 1969 and 1982 almost half of these posts were available to be filled as a result of vacancies resulting from a variety of causes: natural, premature and temporary retirement; resignation; and reshufflement (Derlien, 1988, p.60). In the Westminster type systems of Canada (David Brown, 1986) and Australia (R. Smith, 1977; James Walter, 1986), with their tradition of a permanent, neutral, civil service, there has been an institutionalization of positions equivalent to those of special advisers which give ministers an opportunity to appoint a few of 'their own people' as well.

In Australia, furthermore, there have been moves towards a 'Washminster' system (Uhr, 1987) in which a few senior civil service posts have been filled by political appointees (Wilenski, 1986). In France, and some other European countries, ministers choose their own cabinets. French cabinets consist of between ten and 30 members, the majority of whom are appointed from amongst career officials of any department. Only a small percentage of members belong to a minister's party before joining his cabinet, and usually loyalty to the minister and administrative competence are more important than political views (Searls, 1987).

Cabinets originated as teams of people appointed to help a minister gain control over the powerful specialist civil service which had been inherited from the former absolute monarchs. In such systems, unlike Britain, 'there was no cult of enlightened gentlemen, nor deference towards a liberal arts-based education, and hence no predisposition to reserve a special place for the generalist administrator.' (Drewry and Butcher, 1988, p.47).

We saw earlier that British ministers may have some categories of people assisting them which do not exist at all, or to the same extent, elsewhere. However, when it comes to appointing 'their own people' British ministers are not given the same scope as their counterparts. A group from the Fulton Committee visited France, Spain and the United States and 'in all three countries' one of the main points that struck them was 'the extent to which Ministers choose their own immediate staff' (Vol.1, p.132). Many others have made similar comments and Ridley (1983, p.29) claimed that, 'senior officials are the close - almost only - collaborators of a minister in Britain since he cannot, as in most countries, appoint his own confidants to policy-making posts.' According to Walter Williams (1988, p.61) the British system places permanent civil servants closer to the top within departments than almost any country and makes it difficult to remove a permanent secretary.

Nevertheless, a minister in the 1960s who, somewhat exceptionally, analysed how to appoint a group of people from within his department to help him control it was Denis Healey, Secretary of State for Defence. In his recent autobiography he reports,

As my work-load increased I decided to establish a body which would serve me as a minister in France is served by his 'cabinet'. I called it the Programme Evaluation Group, and made it formally responsible to the Chiefs of Staff, though this device did not deceive them for a moment. Essentially its job was to make sure that I asked the right questions of the ministry and got relevant answers in time ... It consisted of officers from each of the three services, with a scientist, a civil servant and an economist (1989, p.268-9).

Generally, however, apart from appointing their PPS, and sometimes choosing, or influencing the choice of, their own junior ministers and chief information officers, most British ministers initially have little say over who fills the important positions around them. Henderson (1984) shows how private secretaries are usually retained by an incoming minister and Barbara Castle (1984) and Jock Bruce-Gardyne (1986) have suggested how difficult it is to attempt to remove a permanent secretary or prematurely replace a recently established private secretary. When the time is appropriate to make a replacement, British ministers do choose their own private secretary and may influence the choice of a new permanent secretary. In both cases, however, the choice is usually made from amongst a relatively small pool of generalist civil servants who are considered - by their own official bosses - to be at an appropriate stage in their career.

In Chapter 2, Section C, the numerous possible functions of special advisers were listed. To help explain the origin of these functions it is important to examine in more detail the literature on the relationship between ministers and civil servants to see what limitations ministers might have thought existed in the services they were receiving.

SECTION C: RELATIONS BETWEEN MINISTERS AND THE BUREAUCRACY.

The relationship between ministers and civil servants is so important in any consideration of the place of special advisers that it must not be assumed to be unproblematic even though Harold Wilson did exclude it from the Fulton Committee's terms of reference. Many of the - sometimes contradictory - models developed to explain this relationship explicitly or implicitly show where there might be a place for special advisers (for example, Aberbach, Putnam and Rockman, 1981; Rose, 1974 and 1986; Brown and Steel, 1979; Lipsey, 1982; Walter Williams, 1988). What determines the appointment of special advisers is the perception held by the minister and here, again, these vary.

Important work has been conducted in Australia. One of the main themes in James Walter's book, The Ministers' Minders: personal advisers in national government (1986), is the concept of political executives being frustrated by permanent bureaucrats and therefore turning to partisan irregulars. Examining the relationship between bureaucrats and politicians is difficult because of the many interpretations. Attempting then to fit special advisers into the picture adds further complications. Based on his work for the Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration, R. Smith had earlier argued that the position of advisers was anomalous:

In both normative and practical terms, relations between ministers and their public service advisers do not provide for the easy inter-positioning of policy orientated ministerial staff ... in British and similar political systems ... their presence disrupts accepted patterns of bureaucratic influence ... no matter how skilled and tactful ministerial advisers were, their position could not be accommodated readily in either theory or practice. They were a response to anomalies generated by problems of contemporary government and their position was itself anomalous. (1977, pp.149-50 and 153).

An early view of the relationship between politicians and civil servants was that politicians made policies and bureaucrats administered them. This political/administrative dichotomy was most clearly articulated in America by Woodrow Wilson: 'Administration lies outside the proper sphere of politics. Administrative questions are not political questions'; and by Luther Gulick who claimed, 'we are faced by two heterogeneous functions, "politics" and "administration", the combination of which cannot be undertaken within the structure of the administration without producing inefficiency.' (Both quoted in Aberbach, Putnam and Rockman, p.4). This 'arms-length' model (Rose, 1986. p.4) was also the conventional model in Britain and Continental Europe.

Weber (1978) thought that the ideal relationship between elected politician and appointed bureaucrat was as described above but he recognized that in reality it was unlikely that the relationship would take that form. Today, the model is widely criticized as being an

inadequate account of the complex relationship. Brown and Steel (p.201), for example, claim that it is a model which, 'hardly anybody now believes to be useful'. Suggestions as to why the model is inadequate and what constitutes a more accurate one are, however, varied and overlapping although even when the neutrality of the British civil service is questioned its non-involvement in overtly party political activities is widely accepted.

Such is the variety of opinions on this topic that Gray and Jenkins (1985, p.15) claim:

discussions of British administration are also collectively confused about, for example, administrators' values, the extent of administrative influence in the policy process, and the different links administrators have with each other, the centre and outside interest groups ... Yet the relative absence of evaluative criteria makes it difficult to judge whether we are now offered clear alternative models of bureaucracy ... or the outpourings of a tower of Babel.

Rose (1986) suggests that there are two ideal type models of the relationship. The 'arms-length' one described above and a model of symbiosis in which 'ministers and civil servants combine political and administrative skills to deal with value conflicts, problems of public presentation and persuasion, and technical, organizational and legal difficulties' (p.5). Such a view incorporates the idea of political administration in which politicians and bureaucrats are interdependent within the Whitehall village (Hecllo and Wildavsky, 1981) and builds on Rose's earlier work in 1974. In this he suggested that the relationship could be described in terms of an equation (p.429) showing that the more that is expected from those performing the roles of minister and of civil servant, the more skills they must have and that loss of effectiveness by ministers is not a gain by civil servants:

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Politicians' skills} \times \text{Civil servants' skills} = \text{Executive leadership} \\ \text{Ministerial roles} \quad \text{Administrative roles} \quad \text{in government} \\ \text{[expectations]} \quad \quad \text{[expectations]} \end{array}$$

He argues that the interdependencies and complementarities of politicians and civil servants are multiple and complex. The most

meaningful way to think about this relationship is in terms of exchange theory, that is, 'the services that civil servants provide ministers, and that ministers provide civil servants' (1986 p.28). Many others who do not necessarily go this far with Rose would agree that ministers and officials complement each other (Brown and Steel, p.201). Young and Sloman (1982) collected reactions to their radio series about Whitehall called No. Minister. Greatest reaction came from civil servants and the most common reservation concerned the depiction the programmes offered of ministers and civil servants as adversaries. They reported that Sir Patrick Nairne suggested, 'while of course there would be tensions, fundamentally what you find is a partnership. The real question is not, "Are the civil servants outwitting the politicians, or the politicians outwitting the civil servants?" ... but rather, "is this partnership adequately fruitful?"' (p.100). Even some civil servants who tend to see things more in terms of a dichotomy nevertheless can argue, 'their duties are complementary not competitive and the functions they perform and the qualities they need are essentially different' (Allen, 1977, p.136).

In this quote we see a possible merging of Rose's two models. A more fundamental criticism of the political/administrative dichotomy comes from radicals who think that far from ministers deciding policies and bureaucrats implementing them, it is, in fact, civil servants in departments who have their own consensus views and frustrate attempts by politicians to change them (see, for example, Tony Benn, 1980). Political figures who do not share such a view are aware that it is a view often held by party supporters. (Boyle, 1965; Hudson, 1976). Simmonds (1988) in a pamphlet written for the Adam Smith Institute (ASI) before he became a special adviser advocated proposals designed, 'to regain political control of departments for the politicians' (p.29). Taking the argument one step further Benn and others suggest that certain ministers are 'captured' by their departments and become active spokesmen for departmental policies. A further complication is the claim that some officials in all departments owe loyalty to the Treasury (Hecló and Wildavsky).

Brian Smith (1988) shows that concern about the power of bureaucrats is widespread but argues that in questioning whether bureaucrats are apolitical, and showing that they do influence political choices, he is not necessarily trying to prove that the bureaucrats are politically dominant everywhere. (p.49). Flora MacDonald claims that on becoming Canadian Foreign Secretary, she, as a new minister in a government of a party which had not been in power for 16 years, needed protective mechanisms. Without them, 'the Minister is indeed at the mercy of bureaucratic domination, not because of some devious manipulative plot, but simply because that is the way the system has been allowed to develop.' (1980, p.29) She goes on to quote approvingly not only from Tony Benn and Richard Crossman but also from Henry Kissinger who stressed the power of permanent officials within the American bureaucracy. This was also a theme of President Reagan when he took office (see, for example, Walter Williams). The Coombes Royal Commission into the Australian Civil Service was established by Gough Whitlam's Labour Government in large part because of dissatisfaction with the public service and the need to consider issues such as ministerial control, accountability of officials to ministers, and the democratic agenda (Wilenski, 1986, p.184). James Walter argues that in Australia, as in the United States, Canada and Britain, growth in the quantity and complexity of demands on national leadership, accompanied by the elaboration of bureaucracy, lead to, 'the cry for sympathetic aides to push the executive's interests in the face of what is experienced as organizational inertia'(p.7).

Despite these examples, some authors claim that Whitehall, 'frustrates the partisan will of the political executives more frequently and more completely than perhaps any other bureaucracy within advanced democratic systems.' (Campbell and Peters, 1988, p.86). Another North American commentator, Walter Williams, makes similar points when suggesting that Britain, at least in its pre-Thatcher days, 'often came close to civil service rule in part because of a misguided belief in a politics/administration dichotomy and in part because ministers either fled managerial responsibility or else had no notion of how to exert it.' (p.171).

Power of the Bureaucracy.

Various ways are suggested in which the bureaucracy might be able to gain power at the expense of politicians. Clearly only a very limited amount of the information available to a department can be put before its minister and he has time to consider only a limited range of options on each of the small percentage of issues dealt with by the department that are important enough to warrant his attention. As information is transmitted it is structured, simplified and made more precise as ambiguities are removed. This is the vital process known as 'uncertainty absorption' (March and Simon, 1958) which Brown and Steel (p.185-6) suggested could be applied to British Government. This is such a valuable concept that it will be used here to cover most of the activities civil servants engage in when preparing simplified policy options to put to ministers. Although ministers accept that this must inevitably happen if they are to cope with all their business, some fear that important information is being withheld and the list of decisions and of options unnecessarily curtailed with options 'unacceptable' to the department, or even to other departments, filtered out. Richard Crossman was one of many ministers who have expressed a desire for an extra pair of eyes and ears in the department: 'the Minister needs those eyes and ears, those outside helpers, in order to get his way ... Most Ministers sacrifice those, "eyes and ears" and soon scarcely notice that they are going blind!' (1972, p.69).

The danger of important elements of information being lost in the flow of information both up to a minister and from him down to his department, are exacerbated by the rigid hierarchy within departments. An effective organization requires both formal and informal information flows (Beer, 1966). Despite the presence of informal links within the civil service (Drewry and Butcher, p.90) a strong hierarchy is likely to restrict the flow of informal information. Although the principal private secretary, as somebody who knows the department and is known by it, is likely to be a good source of informal information by talking, in Crosland's words, with, 'intelligent indiscretion' (Kogan, 1971, p.158), he is unlikely to put his future career within the department at jeopardy by being disloyal to it.

A stronger version of the argument is that by constantly advocating certain options civil servants create considerable pressure on busy ministers to follow the considered advice of officials. People who question the ability of ministers to impose their will on the bureaucracy often suggest that the bureaucracy is not necessarily politically biased in favour of the opposite party, but rather, it has, 'a political position of its own to defend.' (Benn, 1980 p.62). One of Tony Benn's political allies, Brian Sedgemore, himself a former civil servant, believes that, 'the minister soon becomes aware that there is a departmental policy on most issues and that some Permanent Secretaries see their main role as sustaining the integrity of those departmental policies' (1980, p.89). Reservations about the power of civil servants are not limited to radical left wing socialists who suggest senior officials have a class identity which makes them hostile to socialism. As a member of the House of Commons Expenditure Committee, Sedgemore proposed an alternative draft to the first chapter of the Eleventh Report (The Civil Service) in Session 1976-77. He was supported by a majority of Labour Members of the Committee who voted, and only failed by 11 votes to 15 to receive support for a strong attack on the civil service:

There is, as should be, no role in our society for people with little to offer in a practical way but civil servants have got round this stumbling block by inventing a role for themselves. The role that they have invented for themselves is that of governing the country They can and do relegate Ministers to the second division (appropriately enough they call their own union the First Division) through a variety of devices. These include delay; ... foreclosing options through official committees which parallel both cabinet sub-committees and a host of other ministerial committees; interpreting minutes and policy decisions in ways not wholly intended; slanting statistics ... In doing all these things they act in what they conceive to be the public good. Some would say they perceive that good in the interests of their own class: others that they see it in terms of the tenets and taboos of their caste. In doing all these things there is an esprit de corps By their very nature bureaucracies become conservative however radical their intake. Conservative governments who come unstuck in the same manner as Labour governments are those who want to change society in a radical direction (1977, Vol.2, pp. lxxix - lxxxi).

Sedgemore is correct to assert that radical Tories are also apprehensive about the power of the bureaucracy. Various commentators including Drewry and Butcher (1988) and Wickham-Jones (1990) note that criticism comes from both left and right. In his ASI pamphlet Simmonds cites Tony Benn's evidence to the 1985-86 Treasury and Civil Service Committee enquiry into the civil service, in support of his conclusion that, 'there is convincing evidence to suggest that departments do take a "house" view on important issues which affect them' (p.20).

Public choice theories, especially Niskanen's view of bureaucrats as self interested budget maximizers (1971), are one influence on the radical right. Borins (1988) spoke to Tony Jay, co-author of Yes Minister and recalls that, 'The first thing Jay said when I interviewed him was, "Yes, indeed, you're right - public choice has been a major influence on my thinking"' (p.18).

People, therefore, holding a range of views have come to the conclusion that officials tend to have too much power. This is important because if ministers, for whatever reason, perceive civil servants to be obstructive then they might want to appoint some partisan advisers.

In 1976 an analysis of the influences on policy making was published by two politicians who were later to become ministers - Jock (later Lord) Bruce-Gardyne and Nigel (now Lord) Lawson. They too believed that, 'it is the civil servants who (in general) acquire power by sinking their individuality in a corporate ethos: in this way they both build up a departmental esprit-de-corps and limit the range of policy options from which ministers are invited to choose ... In general ... departments tend to develop a symbiotic relationship with their clients' (p.167).

The final point leads to another explanation of how officials might gain influence. Civil servants are involved in a great deal of discussion with relevant interest groups or clients. So much so that they are sometimes thought collectively to form, in each major sphere, 'the policy community' (Richardson and Jordon, 1979) and interest groups become part of the decision-making and implementation system. Policies

are made and administered, 'between a myriad of interconnecting, interpenetrating organizations. It is the relationships involved in committees, the policy community of departments and groups ... that perhaps better account for policy outcomes than do examinations of party stances, of manifestos or of parliamentary influence' (Richardson and Jordan, 1979, p.74). The policies that departments are alleged to develop and defend as a result of their close relationship with relevant groups are often 'consensus' views which they wish to change only at the margin, if at all. Martin Smith (1989, and 1990), for example, examines the difficulties of securing policy changes in agriculture, a field where it is often claimed a strong or 'closed' policy community exists.

Such thinking would help explain why radical governments and politicians - of left and right - tend to be the ones which have greatest conflict with civil servants. A reduction in consensus between the political parties might create conditions in which ministers will wish to seek assistance from special advisers (Klein and Lewis) and, as we have seen, it was claimed in the 1970s that just such a reduction in consensus was occurring.

A party in Opposition might particularly expect difficulties with the civil service next time it forms the government. Such expectations may be based on a variety of factors. First, a civil service that is being loyal to the 'Government of the Day', may appear to the Opposition as if it is politically committed to that Government's policies. Second, Opposition leaders and supporters may think that any failures of the party last time it was in power were partly caused by lack of civil service zeal in implementing radical policies and/or by the bias in the civil service. Ernest Marples expressed this view after 1964 (Schreiber interview) and Marcia Williams (1975) suggested that:

After 1970 nobody in the Labour Government deluded himself that all the hopes of 1964 were fulfilled. We did not succeed in doing what we set out to achieve ... I believe that what failures we had can be attributed largely to our defeats on two separate fronts. One battle was against the Civil Service. This was a struggle which we never fought with much heart or conviction ... [and] was lost from the start (p.274).

Views similar to these were being expressed by Labour ministers even before they lost office - see, for example, Crossman's Godkin lectures which although not published until 1972 were delivered in 1970 prior to the election. As we have noted the Conservative Opposition was aware of such thinking.

Furthermore, there are various reasons for suggesting that conflict between politicians and civil servants might be most likely when a newly elected government takes over after the previous party had been in power for a long time. First, the previous government would probably have played some part in shaping whatever consensus views had by then developed within each 'policy community'. Second, Downs's, 'law of compulsive innovation', states that, 'Newly-installed administrations have a strong desire to reject what their predecessors have started and to emphasize programs they create themselves.' (Quoted in Jordon and Richardson, 1987, p.78). Third, there is a view that inexperienced ministers might be most vulnerable to civil service pressure: 'If there had not been the thirteen-year gap I imagine that some people who succumbed to Civil Service domination might not have done this quite so easily.' (Marcia Williams, 1975, p.31). The Canadian and Australian examples cited earlier occurred in circumstances containing several of these factors. At the change of government in Australia there were, 'prevalent feelings' that the public service, both in structure and in outlook, had been deeply conditioned by the previous 23 years of Liberal-Country party rule (R. Smith, p.136). In Canada the incoming government with fears about the bureaucracy was Conservative.

It is sometimes thought that a critical mass of partisans may be necessary to have a real party government (Rose, 1974) and to push the machine in the direction the politicians wish (Hoskyns, 1982). Such thinking is linked to the view that ministers tend to be isolated.

It must be stressed, however, that most British ministers have a high regard for the civil service and, according to Young and Sloman, 'tend to marvel at the civil servants' industry, integrity and sheer availability' (1982, p.94). Furthermore, many civil servants and politicians disagree with the above thesis and claim that far from wishing to impose their will on ministers, officials are only too

pleased if a new minister has a clear view for them to follow (for example, Boyle, 1965; Jenkins, 1971). From his interviews with Boyle and Crosland, Kogan (1971) concludes 'no feeling emerges that civil servants are obstructive' (p.44). According to Hennessy, 'there is at first sight a degree of unanimity between keepers and kept, permanent official and transient politician. The cliché is shared - both stress the joy and pleasure of having/being a strong minister.' (1988,p.490). Many people agree, however, that if a minister, in the words of Jenkins, 'flutters aimlessly, the most dominant civil servant will give him a policy' (1971). This is because they 'abhor a vacuum.' (Lipsey, 1980). Some commentators, including Heclo and Wildavsky, conclude that the problem is not that civil servants are too strong and creative in devising public policies but that politicians are too weak. They suggest that not only is there little danger of civil service conspiracy but that, 'officials will initially go along with an astonishing range of nonsense' from newly elected ministers. (p.379). Boyle (1965) and Pliatzky (1981, and 1989) also allege that if anything, civil servants are too unwilling to criticize ministers' policies and to give unwelcome advice.

Boyle told Kogan that, 'there's nothing like returning as a Minister to a Department for realizing how fallacious it is to assume that presuppositions, on the whole, remain the same ... if only because new officials are coming into positions of authority and their value - judgements ... are a factor in the situation.' (1971, p.84). Furthermore, a new government may have greater political will than an exhausted government and thus be able to impose its policies. It is argued that if used properly the private office and permanent secretary provide an essential gear-box for getting a department working in the direction the minister wishes (see, for example, Nairne to the Treasury and Civil Service Committee, 1986, Vol.2, p.48). It is sometimes claimed that a cabinet works like this (Dutheillet de Lamothe) but Neville-Jones (p.236) suggests that at times a cabinet can become a screen shielding the minister from officials' advice he ought to receive.

In A Government of Strangers (1977) Hecló questions whether the appointment of a large number of 'political executives' in the United States is a satisfactory way of controlling a permanent bureaucracy; and, to the extent that such a system creates tensions between the political executive and the bureaucracy, it may have a demoralizing effect in the bureaucracy. (Schmidt, Tanner and Turek-Brezina, 1987; Lane, 1987). Recently some Americans have been even more critical of their system. Huddleston (1988, p.415-6) argues that the challenges facing the federal government are too great to tolerate a system of executive leadership, 'that is driven by groundless fears of bureaucratic hegemony, a delusionary reverence for private sector management gimmicks and a misplaced faith in the will and capacity of political appointees to channel popular aspirations into public action.' Similarly Walter Williams believes that the number of political executives should be reduced and that senior career officials are too isolated from the top decision making. He shows, however, that criticisms of the American system should not necessarily be used to justify maintenance of the status quo in the UK: 'The American case is instructive because bringing in outsiders has gone too far while Britain now errs clearly in the opposite direction' (p.170).

Nevertheless, Margaret Thatcher's government, in particular, it is claimed, managed to implement many of its radical policies and thus illustrate that the politicians can get their way: 'The Yes, Minister version of how Governments are deflected by the civil service does not apply to the Thatcher Government, as a whole, although there are a number of exceptions.' (Holmes, 1987, p.6). This raises another debate to be examined later, about how far, if at all, Thatcher politicized the civil service.

A somewhat different defence of the civil service role is made by people who argue that it is good that there are permanent officials to test thoroughly the ideas of politicians (see, for example, Lipsey, 1982). Others take this point so far that, in the eyes of a radical, it would justify their own criticisms: 'It is bound to be an impediment to any Government that wishes to make great changes in our affairs that they are served by a permanent civil service that is by its nature a force for consensus. While it may be an impediment to such a

Government, it may equally be a great comfort to the citizen.' (Dell, 1979).

Organizational Culture.

Cultural explanations of organizational success and failure (for example, Handy, 1979) are now favoured by business schools and it may be useful in several ways to apply these to the relationship between civil servants and ministers. It would hardly be surprising if a strong organizational culture developed within a permanent bureaucracy and if it differed in various ways from that of politicians. Whilst such thinking can lead to the view that the civil service deliberately obstructs the politicians, it is also useful in helping to explain why there can be difficulties and misunderstandings in the relationship even where there is no deliberate intention of obstruction. Handy, in Gods of Management, also shows that if different people and parts of an organization have different management styles then exceptional people may be required to play the role of liaison officers or 'integrators'. The successful liaison man, 'is knowledgeable about each of the areas he has to bridge and is respected by both ... [but] It is hard to sustain this dual nationality. Most liaison men become identified in time with one side or the other, thus reducing their efficiency as a bridge and turning liaison into negotiation' (p.114-15).

Within a government department the private secretary could be seen as such a liaison officer. However, as a generalist administrator he clearly faces several problems. He is not necessarily very knowledgeable about the party political world in which the minister operates, and anyway faces constitutional obstacles to full involvement in this area. There is also a danger that the minister will regard him as being too identified with the department and part of the insulating group referred to earlier. The private secretary might, therefore, welcome assistance in carrying out some of the tasks and the minister might wish to reduce any isolation he may feel.

The second benefit of looking at organizational cultures is that such cultures filter information and, 'establish values, standards and levels of aspiration which motivate action and define more or less explicit criteria for evaluation' (Metcalf and Richards, 1984, p.444-5). Having internalized the norms of the department it may become difficult for officials to accept that they are acting in anything other than, 'an entirely value-free objective way.' Therefore, Metcalf and Richards continue, 'some of the debate about political neutrality and the existence or non-existence of "departmental views" stems from just such blindness to cultural assumptions' (p.445). This may partly explain the attitude adopted by officials towards the overtly political stance of partisans - especially non elected ones brought in by ministers. This, in turn, helps explain why some ministers may feel isolated.

Having established that civil servants have values that will to some extent be determined by the organizational culture of their department, there is still room for debate about what impact such values will have on the relationship between ministers and their officials. This partially covers ground explored earlier but, according to James Walter, the writings of Weber and Michels imply that the unresponsiveness of the bureaucracy, 'is as much to do with the sociology of the organization as with the ideological leanings of the bureaucrats' (p.14).

It is possible to argue that civil servants have their own knowledge and values which they use in arranging for policy to be changed, but that, 'their views on what should be done complement, rather than compete with those of politicians' (Brown and Steel, p.201). Similarly, Kogan (1974) points out that there are differences and commonalities in the values of officials and ministers and that, 'it seems inevitable and beneficial that two sets of values should run through organization' (p.110). Such thinking fits with the opinion that not only do officials accept the values of political neutrality and loyalty to ministers, but also, departmental policies exist and will come into play, even to the extent of completely filling any vacuum that might appear if a minister fails to impose his values alongside those of his department.

However, at this stage it is useful to develop Walter's argument because this is a central feature in his model of the place of personal advisers to ministers. It is based on three main themes. First, all modern societies require institutionalized civil services to meet leaders' needs. But:

at a certain point in the evolution of modern societies it seems, inevitably, that political leaders begin to doubt the tractability of their bureaucracies: this is the second theme. This arises because none of the participants in the policy process can be 'value neutral', since policy deliberations are full of imponderables which can only be given definition when facts are interpreted in the light of assumptions, and these assumptions will incorporate values (p.111).

This will not be a problem, he suggests, if politicians believe bureaucrats share, or take on board, their values. In such circumstances the myth of the bureaucracy being value neutral will be preserved. Using the work of Jaques on the dynamics of the development of bureaucratic units, he argues that this will only occur when organizations are relatively small, and decisions relatively simple. When the bureaucratic element becomes complex and demands abstract relationships and sophisticated organizational structures:

the sociology of organization has taught us that it is likely to develop its own politics and its own values which may not be in concert with those of the political leaders. At this stage the political leadership will perceive a tendency on the part of the bureaucracy to impede its policies, if not by design then by inertia. There will be a call on the one hand for the reform of the bureaucracy to make it more responsive to the political will of elected representatives ... On the other hand there will be much greater resort to 'irregulars', and eventually the institutionalization of systems of partisan advice around political leaders: this has been the third theme (pp. 111-12).

Walter claims these themes are relevant for all western democracies. He notes that the appointment of personal advisers is partly a return to the court politics existing at the start of the first theme prior to the institutionalization of bureaucracies: 'This assertion by political executives of the need for subordinates who are directly responsible, politically responsive, and loyal appointees, also suggests the persistence of small-group enterprise at the heart of political leadership, with features perhaps analogous to court politics, even in

the modern state.' (p.15). Walter's work is valuable in several ways and further elements from it will be incorporated later, but, at least for the UK, other factors need to be analysed before a model is fully developed showing possible places for advisers to occupy.

The concept of political neutrality is particularly strong in the British civil service but, according to Hoskyns (1982, p.14), it puts senior civil servants in an impossible situation where they have to cultivate 'passionless detachment' rather than the commitment and energy necessary to produce substantial changes. He raises the question, 'how can you have a radical government, without radically-minded officials?' He suggests, 'the commitment, the urgency and energy must be provided by just ninety odd ministers and a handful of special advisers' (pp.14-15).

Despite the existence of a general civil service culture it is also argued that different departments develop their own sub-cultures (Rose, 1987) and even that units within a department develop sub-cultures.

Spectrums and Images.

There are various ways of viewing much of the discussion in this section. Probably the most helpful perspectives are those that see the relationships between ministers and officials either as a spectrum, or as a series of Images. Brown and Steel suggest that:

Professional experts, civil servants, Ministers, MPs, all contribute to the consideration of a policy. So may academic thinkers and research workers, members of pressure groups, and press and television journalists. Their contributions can be arranged along a spectrum, with experts and pressure groups near the specific-technical-fact end and politicians and journalists nearer the general-political-value end (p.203).

Elaborating Brown and Steel's concept it might be useful to see that there are a range of places that different ministers, and indeed civil servants, could occupy on the spectrum. Therefore the roles they carry out and the relationship between them vary and are variously interpreted. The positions may be different in different departments and vary over time. The concept of a spectrum, with generalist administrators being closest to ministers, helps to provide an understanding of the need that ministers, situated somewhere nearer the

middle of the spectrum than other politicians, might sometimes feel for direct access to either one or more of the following points on the spectrum:

- (i) the technical/expert end;
- (ii) policy analysis/strategic planning;
- (iii) the party political end.

(i) A common theme in discussions about the British civil service is that, especially compared with other countries, it has too few experts, particularly at the higher levels (for example, the Fulton Report; Klein and Lewis; Hennessy, 1988). The complex overlaps between the development of special advisers and the increasing demand for, and use of, specialists within the British civil service was referred to in Chapter 2. Brown and Steel observe that reformers who wish to see the position of specialist staff change, 'argue that the practice of appointing special advisers, many of whom are experts in their fields, is an indication that Ministers no longer feel able to rely upon advice given by general administrators' (p.107). Brown and Steel's spectrum is a useful way of looking at the relationship between specialists and generalists in the civil service. There are good reasons why generalists, who have to be politically sensitive and aware of a range of interests, should be the ones closest to ministers. They claim that, 'as long as importance is attached to the maintenance of a collegiate system of government and to political accountability, so there will be a need for general administrators in senior posts' (p.120). In this respect Brown and Steel question some of the analysis in the Fulton Report. They suggest that specialists are less capable than generalists at assisting ministers to carry out the vital function of arbitration (i.e. decision taking) by making lower level decisions, narrowing the field and sharpening the issues, all of which demand the ability to compare and reconcile conflicting priorities. Neville-Jones shows that in some continental systems with a more specialist civil service and cabinets, the specialist officials tend to take the view that it is not their job to exercise judgment (p.238). Notwithstanding Brown and Steel's arguments in favour of generalist administrators usually being the ones nearest to ministers, the fact remains that some ministers might wish more direct access to the technical/expert end of the

spectrum.

(ii) It has also been claimed that the generalist administrator pays so much attention to his minister's short-term needs in terms of how to defend himself against political attack that insufficient attention is given to long-term strategic planning (see, for example, Hoskyns, 1982, and 1983). This is not a new argument. In what Hennessy (1988, p.191) calls, 'the most impressive submission of all', William (now Sir William) Ryrie told the Fulton Committee:

Far too many issues are referred to the top not because they are intrinsically important but because they could be brought up in a political encounter in Parliament. A large proportion of the time of Ministers is taken up in delving into small issues for this reason, or guarding against this danger. Consequently far too little time and energy is given to the important work of framing basic and long-term policies and objectives (Vol.5 (2), p.1088).

Ryrie also predicted the problem could get worse with the ever increasing overload of business on government. Concluding his study of Whitehall, Hennessy similarly claims that the blemishes of the civil service include being both, 'still too preoccupied with advising ministers on policy and enhancing their performance in Parliament,' and nothing like as good as it should be, 'at confronting hard long-term problems by thinking forward systematically and strategically' (p.687).

As Hennessy and others note, however, it is ministers who are, in Walter Williams's words, 'intolerant of policy analysis,' (p.76) and civil servants take their cue from them. Therefore, the officials', 'main emphasis is not on policy formulation, strategic planning, performance assessment - the domain of policy analysis' (p.63). The pressure for greater attention to be given to strategic thinking is, mainly, coming from commentators, including some former advisers. Williams admits this is a difficulty. Not only is there a problem in creating mechanisms to conduct long-term thinking, but there is the further question of how to ensure notice is taken of a planning unit when a decision maker is under political pressure to find short-term solutions.

(iii) Ironically, many ministers seem more acutely aware of the need for greater access to, and help in dealing with, the political end of the spectrum. The civil service does not provide help for ministers to defend the policies and actions of the department in party meetings, Bruce Headey claims. He quotes a former Chancellor of the Exchequer: 'they expect you to manage party meetings by the light from heaven' (p.137).

Commenting from what may be regarded as the political end of the spectrum, Hudson, a former political secretary, suggested, with regard to a minister, 'it seems strange that in the past it was accepted that he needed the whole resources of the Civil Service to help him perform the non-party political side of his functions, but should have no help at all where the party politics are concerned' (1976, p.305).

Earlier it was argued that in consideration of policies, values come not only from the politicians but from the civil servants too. Perhaps, a useful way of combining the concept of a spectrum with the acceptance of this point is to use Kogan's concept (1971, p.42) of civil servants contributing low frequency policy waves and ministers contributing high frequency activity.

An ambitious attempt to pull together many of the concepts and opinions outlined in this chapter is provided by Aberbach, Putnam and Rockman (1981). Their four ideal-types or Images of the relationship between politicians (only some of whom are ministers) and civil servants not only indicate that there might be a place for special advisers but also one of their Images specifically includes special advisers. The central point of their argument is illustrated in Figure 3. The Image I relationship is the one outlined as the political/administrative dichotomy. Image II is called 'Facts/Interests' and assumes that both politicians and civil servants participate in policy making but that they make distinctive contributions. Civil servants bring facts and knowledge; politicians interests and values. Image III is entitled 'Energy/Equilibrium'. According to this, both bureaucrats and politicians engage in policy making, and both are concerned with politics. The real distinction between them is that whereas politicians articulate broad, diffuse interests of unorganized individuals,

FIGURE 3: Bureaucrats and Politicians: Evolving Roles.

	Image I →	Image II →	Image III - ? →	Image IV
Implementing policy	B	B	B	B
Formulating policy	P	S	S	S
Brokering interests	P	P	S	S
Articulating ideals	P	P	P	S

B=Bureaucrats' responsibility; P=Politicians' responsibility; S=Shared responsibility.

Source: Aberbach, Putnam and Rockman, 1981, p.239

bureaucrats mediate narrow, focused interests of organized clienteles. Politicians seek publicity, raise innovative issues, and are energizing to the political system whereas bureaucrats manage incremental adjustments and provide policy equilibrium.

Image IV is called 'The Pure Hybrid'. This image carries to its logical conclusion the process seen in the other three Images of a gradual reduction of the distinction between politicians and officials. This 'suggests speculatively that the last quarter of this century is witnessing the virtual disappearance of the Weberian distinction between the roles of politician and bureaucrat' (Aberbach, Putnam and Rockman, p.16). In Britain, they suggest, 'harbingers of the hybrid figure may be found in the introduction of politically sympathetic, "outsiders" or "irregulars" into positions once reserved for career civil servants' (p.17).

Even though Aberbach *et al.* suggest that those politicians who are ministers have always been in a rather special, dualistic, position somewhat resembling Image IV (p.17) these Images are useful when analysing the relationship between ministers and permanent civil servants as well as in suggesting a place for special advisers. In 1988 Aberbach and Rockman reviewed the Images in the light of developments in various countries. Mrs Thatcher had tried to dent the administrative elite culture by simultaneously elevating officials of ambitious temperament, 'while generally downgrading the role traditionally given to the civil service to fulfil' (p.18). This could be interpreted as a move towards both Image II and Image IV and Bulmer claims, 'the drive towards managerialism suggests, paradoxically, both elements of Image II and Image of IV' (1988, p.45). To the extent that civil servants are playing Image IV type roles, there might be less need for special advisers in these roles. However, Campbell and Peters suggest (1988) that permanent officials playing a proactive Image IV type role, 'may want to define the perimeters of their roles more clearly and prevent the mixing of policy making with explicit identification with partisan objectives' (p.96). In the face of the erosion of barriers between the ministers and officials this comment might suggest that other barriers are being sought almost as protection.

Aberbach et al. recognize that at any time, in any country there will be a variety of relationships between ministers and the bureaucracy. This emphasizes how difficult it is to make generalizations about who has most influence on any particular policy. Hall et al. (1975) were unable to derive a systematic pattern of generalizations from case studies of how central government policy is made as a result of the various forces at work. Although they found there was rarely a single source for policy ideas, it was often useful to think in terms of, 'the sponsorship of issues' (p.501). Not only can the range of interest groups, individuals and political groups proposing a reform be examined, but also the values and ideological preferences behind it can be explored. Thus, for example, in a study of the Assisted Places Scheme, Edwards et al. (1984, p.136) claim that the scheme, 'had been a limited attempt to translate the ideological preferences of the new Thatcher government into policy terms but had the advantage that groups holding rather different ideological preferences could support it for different reasons.' Of very many theoretical perspectives on decision making, Simon's concept of 'satisficing' seems particularly useful. He claims that, 'Whereas economic man maximizes-selects the best alternative from among all those available to him, his cousin, administrative man, satisfices-looks for a course of action that is satisfactory or "good enough"' (1976, p.xxix).

Implications of the Various Relationships between Ministers and Officials.

Before relating the various perspectives, including those on policy making, to a model of the place of special advisers, it is important to examine the range of possible interpretations about what the various views of the relationship between ministers and officials might mean in terms of a need for extra assistance for the minister. Different actors might think that some, or all, of the following limitations exist in the services that civil servants can provide for their ministers:

1. insufficient willingness to devise and implement policies in line with the, possibly radical, commitments of the minister and his party which sometimes entail breaking with consensus views held by the relevant policy community;

2. insufficient technical or expert advice, especially coming directly to the minister;
3. insufficient opportunities for long-term strategic thinking to take place, especially for officials close to the minister;
4. inadequate attention and sensitivity to the views and demands of the party, Parliament, the public, and certain pressure groups, from the generalist civil servants who surround the minister;
5. an unwillingness and/or inability to carry out more overtly party political functions which the minister does not always have time to carry out himself.

The final point takes the discussion back to the account in Section A of the wide range of ministerial roles, and it might be useful to review the argument developed so far in this chapter. In Section A it was demonstrated that ministers are overloaded with a large, and escalating, list of functions to perform and are at the nodal point of a complex network of flows of information and influence. In consequence they need considerable and varied assistance. Section B examined the range of support available to British ministers and international comparisons revealed the relative dearth of opportunities for them to appoint their own people to the positions closest to them. Section C concentrated on a review of the many analyses of the relationship between ministers and their major traditional source of support - the permanent civil service. Not only might some ministers perceive limitations in this assistance, but its very nature might generate further requirements.

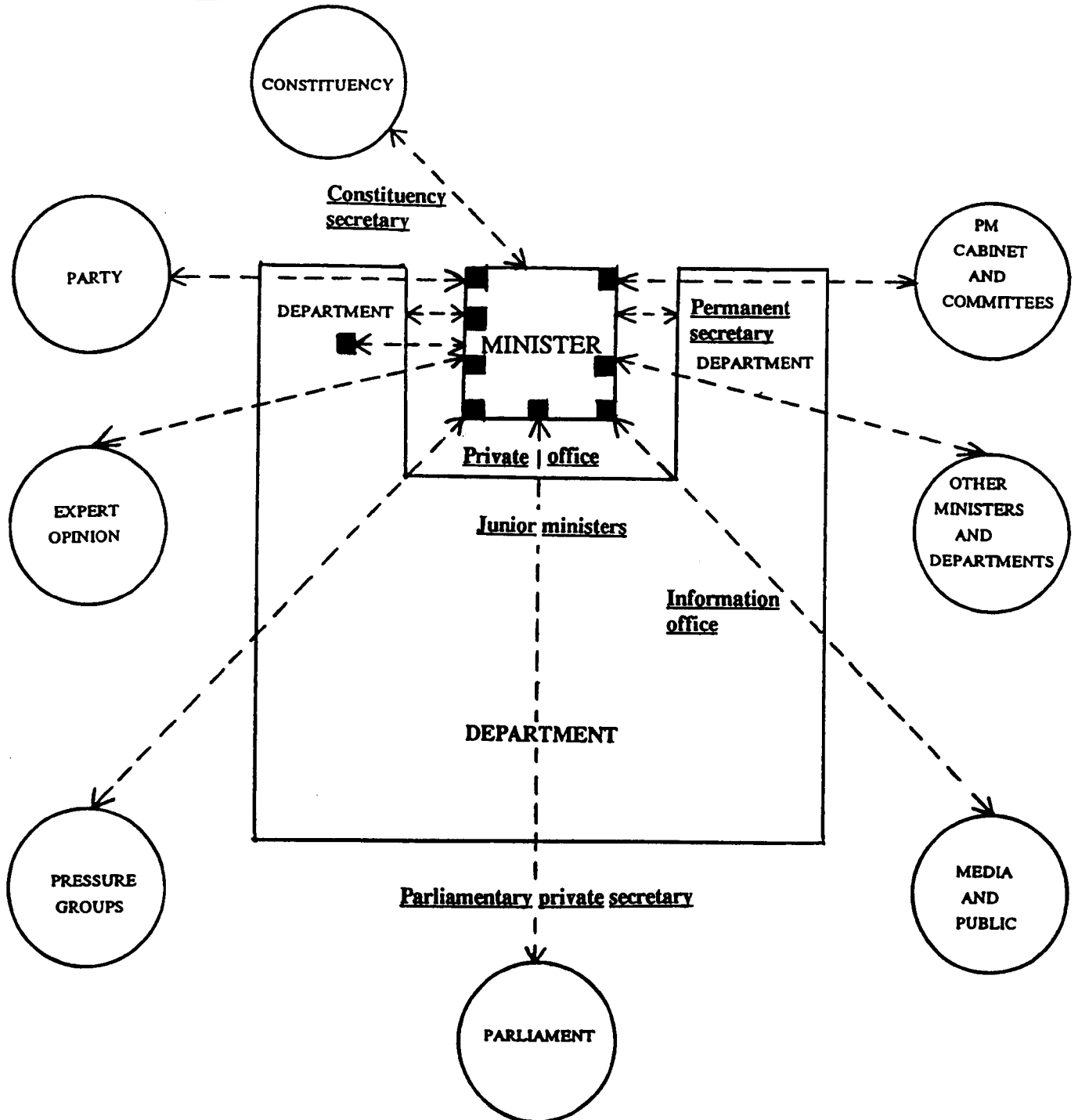
Some commentators, including Bruce-Gardyne (1986), argue that ministers are overloaded, isolated and find it difficult to dissent from departmental views, but they do not think special advisers are much of a solution. For others, however, the overlapping arguments developed in Sections A, B, and C illustrate why there might be a place for special advisers. A possible model of such a place is outlined in the next section.

SECTION D: MODEL SHOWING THE PLACE OF SPECIAL ADVISERS.

It might be possible to identify a place for a special adviser as somebody who is appointed by his minister and whose personal loyalty and closeness to him will be important. In practice, such a person will have greater freedom, both constitutionally, and because of the informality of his role, to carry out a range of functions to help sustain his busy minister who is at a nodal point in the system of government. The minister may require the special adviser to do one or more of the following activities identified in Section A: carry out some specific tasks; maintain liaison or brokerage with a variety of groups; provide personal support. The minister may require the special adviser to carry out one or more of the roles that might be necessary as a result of the potentially insulating nature of the assistance already offered to him and/or the perceived limitations in the services of the bureaucracy identified at the end of Section C. Furthermore, how far the minister perceives advisers as contributing services that his junior ministers and PPS are not willing, able, or suitable to provide will be further explored in Chapter 7.

Figure 4 builds on Figures 1 and 2 and adds possible places that could be occupied by special advisers. As with the first two figures it is best understood in terms of a minister having a series of bi-lateral relationships to maintain if he is satisfactorily to fulfil all his roles. Figure 1 showed these relationships with the minister occupying a nodal position. Figure 2 added the places occupied by various people who assist the minister in maintaining these relationships. Figure 4 indicates a large potential range of places within which any particular special adviser could be situated. Although the adviser has been placed at the minister's end of flows of information and/or influence, the model implies he is sometimes able to move freely along the channels of communication. Furthermore, some advisers spent a considerable time working, in effect, inside the department but still possessing the vital special link with the minister which is the hallmark of a special adviser. It is desirable to expand the model somewhat and examine more fully the determinants of the place of a special adviser, some of the features of the place of special advisers, and some of the potential impacts of special advisers.

FIGURE 4: The Place of Special Advisers.



KEY: i) <-----> Flows of information and/or influence.

ii) ○ Institutions and people with whom the minister maintains a relationship.

iii) Private Office ■ People who assist the minister.

iv) ■ Places potentially occupied by special advisers i.e. at the minister's end of information flows and sometimes in the department.

Determinants of the Place of Special Advisers.

A range of factors influence the place of each individual adviser including: the wishes of his minister, the resources already available to help the minister, and the ability and wishes of the adviser. Klein and Lewis correctly state that, 'although personal loyalty to their minister is a common thread holding the special advisers together, they are otherwise extremely diverse' (p.3). The role of advisers will vary so much because not only will the determining factors differ in each case, but so too will the interaction between them. Some of the many theories about the relationships between ministers and officials have already been explored and it was noted that in several of them there might be a place for special advisers. This is because the minister's opinions about his need for special advisers will be influenced by his perception of what support he finds, or expects to find, already in his department.

A radical minister believing in the conflict model of civil service obstruction might well perceive a need to appoint advisers who share his political commitments and will help him maintain the thrust of his policies. Even for ministers who do not necessarily suspect their officials of sabotage, and have every reason to believe they are doing everything to help, 'the nagging doubt remains that a more sympathetic adviser would have done better by them. It is less a question of officials refusing to follow the dictates of a given policy and more of excluding from debate the kinds of ideas and follow-through that the minister might have favoured if only he had known about it' (Heclo and Wildavsky, p.376-7). Ministers who perceive officials and departments as having strongly held values that will be used to fill any vacuum might want advisers to help dictate clearly policies for the department to follow.

It is possible to extend Rose's model of interdependence between ministers and bureaucrats. In this model both required a range of skills if they were to fulfil their roles. Developing this idea special advisers could be seen as providing skills which either a) ministers do not possess, or do not have time to use; or b) which civil servants do not hold or feel constitutionally able to use. Rose (1986, p.20)

himself suggests that advisers help ministers and complement the work of civil servants. He distinguishes between partisan advisers who assist a department, 'by arguing its minister's case in party quarters where civil servants cannot go', and policy advisers. The latter can assist, 'by advising the minister to avoid paths that civil servants believe dangerous, and by giving practical content to vaguely expressed ideals or aspirations of the minister.'

The interaction between the minister's perception of his role and his analysis of what existing sources of support are doing, or capable of doing, will to some extent prescribe the role of the adviser.

The importance of examining this is demonstrated by the much greater level of support provided in Britain than in Australia by civil servant private secretaries and junior ministers. Some of the arguments deployed for example by Walter are less relevant in Britain where high flying principal private secretaries have often supplied a satisfactory level of personal support for ministers.

Furthermore, once advisers are appointed their role will be influenced by the various reactions to them from those already in the system. Some might welcome the complementary skills advisers might bring, whereas people who perceive access to, and influence on, the minister in zero-sum terms might be hostile. Klein and Lewis (p.10) suggest that in some areas there is a 'vacuum' in which special advisers operate - the extent to which this is perceived to be the case varies widely. The reaction to advisers, and the consequent impact on their role, might change over time because, as Hecllo and Wildavsky argue, 'in time, senior civil servants may realise the protection afforded to them by an improved articulation of ministerial leadership' (p.378).

Depending upon the reasons for appointment, the minister's needs, resources in the department, the department's culture, and their own abilities, special advisers will find they have varying degrees of discretion to carve out a role by choosing from amongst the menu of roles listed in Chapter 2, Section C.

Meltsner (1986) shows that the role of a policy analyst in American government departments is not only influenced by the client, the organizational situation and the policy arena, but also by the analyst himself. Analysts differ from each other in their expectations and 'in part, the policy analyst sets his own expectations' (p.4). In Britain, some special advisers, through their abilities and opportunities, might be able to get into such a strong position to exploit their freedom, closeness to the minister, and informality that they almost become nodal points within the system. Rather than merely acting as conduits of information, such people might receive so much information that they become gatekeepers and decide what information to pass on to their minister.

It could be claimed that there are so many theories being used to illustrate various determinants of the many possible places occupied by special advisers, that none of them have much explanatory power. The answer to this is two-fold. First, one of the key elements special advisers bring to the system of government is a degree of flexibility. Therefore, it seems appropriate that they could be used in a variety of roles to satisfy disparate perceptions held by ministers of their needs. Second, such flexibility forms a central part of an interlocking range of features of the place of special advisers.

Features of the Place of Special Advisers.

The notions of closeness and loyalty to a busy minister who might have varying needs, and the informality of the role, are vital features of the place of special advisers. Others are that advisers are 'in the know', i.e. within the Official Secrets Act, and 'on the spot'. As Klein and Lewis state, 'a crucial element in the relationship, most special advisers stress, is sheer availability' (p.4).

Combining a variety of ideas from this chapter it might be possible to see special advisers hopping freely along the technical-values spectrum and up and down the departmental hierarchy. In doing so a special adviser might bring expertise, or political opinions, or the thinking within the department, or a combination of all these, directly to his minister. He might also assist in the process of communicating

the minister's views to the department and/or to relevant people outside. Sometimes it might be necessary to take a view directly to the minister to counteract the considerable influence of the 'uncertainty absorbers' within the hierarchy. One feature is the inevitable potential for conflict. Much of the delicacy surrounding the role of special advisers involves the extent to which they, as the minister's extra pair of eyes and ears, can counteract the 'uncertainty absorption', but do so in an open way so that civil servants are aware of what is being sent to the minister and all the benefits of 'uncertainty absorption' are not lost.

Relating these points to the wider discussion of systems theory, advisers can have a variety of roles. First, they provide extra channel capacity and perform a range of gatekeeping and reduction functions in relation to, for example, demands from the party. Second, advisers might sometimes be seen as helping ministers to cope with the volume of demands reaching them for a decision. Third, given the inevitable gatekeeping and reduction functions of the permanent bureaucracy, and sometimes of the whole political community, advisers can sometimes provide ministers with a reassurance that alternatives they would have favoured have not been winnowed out. Fourth, advisers provide a means of strengthening the communications channels for outputs.

Dror (1987) describes several dilemmas in the position of advisers, especially that between providing objective advice and giving personal support. Furthermore, we noted the difficulty of ensuring that ministers took notice of strategic analysis at times of pressure for short-term action. Brown and Steel highlight comments from Sam Brittan (1964) on how to tackle the problem. Brittan called for the introduction of more politically committed experts. It is possible that the flexibility and closeness to the minister inherent in a special adviser's role will provide the best opportunity for this dilemma to be overcome, because in some circumstances the person a minister is most likely to take uncomfortable, objective, advice from, is a certain type of adviser: somebody philosophically and politically committed to the minister's policies, personally loyal to him, and with the intellectual capacity and specialist knowledge to conduct policy analysis. Clearly, advisers who have the ability to contribute from both ends of the

spectrum are rare.

Walter describes the type of person who will want to become an adviser and, using Gramsci's theory about the role of intellectuals in society, shows how they fit into his model of the development of personal advisers to ministers in western democracies. He suggests there is a psychological and role differentiation, but also an affinity, between politicians and, as he calls them, their minders. He attempts a, 'more psychologically and sociologically informed analysis of their place in the political arena' (p.125). Linking back to his earlier discussion of the timeless element of court politics in political life he refers to, 'the ubiquitous pattern of patronage and cronyism' built upon, 'a needs relationship based on a typological distinction between the leaders and their personal advisers' (p.177). Mainstream politicians specialize in adversary relations. They may be drawn into politics by a desire to combine idealism with knowledge, or to stand at the hub of events, but, once there, they have not time to think in terms of principle or philosophy but only of conflict. Minders are also motivated by a desire to be at the centre of events but want to avoid public displays of aggression:

These can never stand first in their own right, but on the other hand they are free to stand aside from the daily conflict, to think in abstract terms, to consider the long term, to reinject ideals. ... Arguably, therefore, the choice of a backroom role indicates some difficulty in coping with aggression, and a hesitance to live with the consequences of actions. Both predilections could be rooted in the predicament of the 'adult civilized' child who remains aloof from peers but inevitably finds some barriers in relation to the adults towards whom he is orientated (p.178).

Moving the discussion on and taking Gramsci's argument as an analogy, he suggests that politicians, bureaucrats, and advisers all constitute part of the intelligentsia but, 'the intellectual function of the power elite falls to the advisers' (p.181). The bureaucrat forgoes the task of analysis and articulation, 'to become a supposedly neutral expert in "apolitical" information and administration'. Furthermore, the politician can pay them little attention because he is too busy surviving in political combat:

At first, the institutional disjunction thus caused creates tension and strain at the institutional interface ... But at the next stage the political stratum, in order to maintain its dominance, must demand help, and thus demands the services of personal advisers, incidentally creating avenues for precisely that sector of the intelligentsia obsessed with the importance of politics but disillusioned about the available avenues of electoral representation or public service (p.181).

Whatever merit Walter's ambitious analysis might have in the Australian context, its application to the UK is limited by several factors. These include the small number of advisers in the UK and the desire many of them have, especially under the Tories, not to shy away from a front line role but to become parliamentary candidates. Some believe their experience of being an adviser will enhance their chances of being selected for a winnable seat. The smallness of numbers in the UK and yet the diversity of roles played, means that any attempt to apply psychological analysis to the features of the advisers' place might be of limited value.

Another feature of the place of special advisers is not only the variety of positions they could occupy but also the insecurity of the position - only two departments, DHSS and Education, had special advisers continuously between 1974 and 1987. If ministers are, in Simon's terms, 'satisficers', they might be pleased to take the extra information that the right adviser could supply, but not feel the system would collapse, or even stall, without them.

The Potential Impact of Special Advisers.

One area of advisers' potential impact relates to the uncertainty surrounding the precise boundaries between minister's responsibilities and the legitimate concerns of others (including Parliament, the party, the media, pressure groups, and the civil service). The most capable special advisers could potentially be useful in a number of almost contradictory ways. First, in carrying out overtly political functions. This allows neutral civil servants, who are increasingly accused of being politicized because of their adoption of a 'can-do' attitude (see, for example, RIPA, 1986, p.44), to emphasize the boundary between themselves and party politics. Second, in having the freedom to cross uncertain boundaries and act as messengers, or sometimes even brokers,

for their minister in a way he could not do himself. In many ways Figure 4 showing the possible positions of special advisers, together with the idea of advisers hopping along the spectrum and the development of Image IV officials, encapsulates the notion of boundaries being crossed. Several commentators illustrate how advisers are seen as having a liaison role across eroding traditional boundaries:

The increasing politicization of what were once thought of as administrative issues, as well as the growing burden on Ministers, suggest that the role of the political adviser, both in policy and private office functions, will become increasingly important (Brown and Steel, p.335).

There has also been a marked tendency for the Government to have a closer relationship with its own Parliamentary party, of which the liaison functions of a proportion of the special advisers who have been appointed in larger numbers since 1974 (though the total is not yet large) is only one manifestation (Allen, 1978, p.7).

Similarly Walter (p.167) suggests minders can have a positive role as mediators in the groups where major political and bureaucratic institutions intersect.

There is evidence that there is no set pattern as to how central government policy is produced as a result of the various forces at work. This would not be incompatible with the view that on certain issues there is room for special advisers to make a considerable impact on policies, possibly as 'sponsors'. To the extent that policy communities exist and major changes in policy reflect changes in the composition of the policy community, special advisers might sometimes be used in a brokerage role to liaise with an interest group which the minister, possibly at the adviser's suggestion, wishes to bring more fully into policy discussion. Jordan (1990, p.474) recently admitted that 'The existing policy community approach can be seen as a strong description of policy-making but as incomplete (by definition) in that it has little to say about excluded groups.' It is feasible that occasionally advisers could have a role in helping to facilitate greater participation by previously excluded groups. It is also possible to see a role for special advisers acting as brokers in situations where ministers wish to take less notice of established pressure groups but more notice of policy research centres.

It might be that special advisers who combine technical expertise with an ability to make a contribution from the political or 'values' end of the spectrum will have the greatest potential to influence policy. This would fit in well with the typology of policy analysts devised by Meltsner which is shown as Figure 5. Although no analyst exactly fitted these categories, Meltsner found that the typology became a convenient way of discussing some central characteristics. The role and impact of British special advisers will probably vary even more than that of American policy analysts who, although they all work in a staff capacity, are orientated specifically towards policy analysis and information gathering. This point is well illustrated by Campbell's development (1987) of Aberbach *et al.*'s Image IV. Campbell suggests there are three categories of officials who can have an Image IV type relationship with ministers. The most partisan of these, Image IV 2b officials, he calls 'amphibians' and they are politically appointed policy professionals. However, he makes a strong distinction between these and political appointees who do not contribute substantially to policy issues and whom he calls 'political operatives' and who seem to have no place in Image IV. Despite the lack of space for 'political operatives' within Image IV, it is clear that where they possess valued political and personal skills there could be an important place for them within a British minister's entourage.

Campbell's second category of Image IV officials are traditional line civil servants who show enthusiasm for the policies they are implementing. Their position raises questions about whether some of the types of advisory roles are really needed. Having examined changes in the UK under Margaret Thatcher, Aberbach and Rockman (p.23) suggest, 'it is plausible to argue that the penetration of the mainstream administrative system in pursuit of political responsiveness from the traditional bureaucracy renders a more generous return than would be gained by building new units of support for the political centre of the executive.' It could be argued that encouraging civil servants to adopt a more 'can-do' attitude reduces the need for 'amphibians' but increases the requirement for 'political operatives' who will help preserve the party political impartiality of the enthusiastic officials.

FIGURE 5: Meltsner's Typology of Policy Analysts.

		Political Skills	
		High	Low
Analytical Skills	High	Entrepreneur	Technician
	Low	Politician	Pretender

Source: Meltsner, 1986, p.16.

The wide range of possible impacts that special advisers could make partly derives, as we have seen, from the variety of potential reasons for their appointment. It is possible to identify some types of ministers who might want to appoint special advisers. They could include: radical ministers; ministers ambitious to carry out many functions; ministers who need assistance; ministers who make a realistic assessment of their needs. The many specific reasons given for the appointment of special advisers is examined in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR: REASONS FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF SPECIAL ADVISERS.

Talking once with a miner I asked him when the housing shortage first became acute in his district; he answered, 'when we were told about it' (George Orwell, The Road to Wigan Pier, p.57).

It is easy for a Minister to be swallowed up in the engrossing work of his own department. He can lose touch with colleagues, with his Party, with the political strategy of the Government ... Seeing this happen, I tried in 1972 and 1973 with Mr Heath's approval to interest several of his senior colleagues in choosing political or special advisers of their own. (Douglas Hurd, An End to Promises, 1979, p.37)

The extent to which needs are recognized and become the basis of reasons for action varies. Having examined the factors that might, in theory, have led ministers to think that they needed to appoint special advisers, we should consider the actual reasons given by ministers, to see how far the two match. Despite the difficulties this is important because if the reasons for appointment are established they provide some yardstick by which to judge whether special advisers are effective in doing what it was hoped they would do.

The reasons for appointment need to be included in this study because the decision whether to have a special adviser is one that ministers still have to make, whereas they have no effective choice about having private secretaries, a permanent secretary, information officers and junior ministers. That said, it is apparent that some ministers appoint special advisers because it has become the thing to do. Roy Hattersley is a good example of a minister who had a clear idea of what he wanted his special advisers to do and who used them well. Nevertheless, when asked to explain why he thought of appointing special advisers he said that by the time he joined the Cabinet in 1976, 'I suppose I thought of it because we all thought of it. There was no specific thing that made me want to do it. I just took it for granted that I would ... Standard operating procedures.'

Attempting to assess the reasons for appointment is, therefore, complex with a range of cross cutting factors to take into account. These include:

- (i) variations in the extent to which there were clear reasons;
- (ii) sometimes differing perceptions held by various actors as to why ministers appointed special advisers;
- (iii) variations in the degree to which ministers remember and/or acknowledge their real reasons;
- (iv) fluctuations in the supply of potential special advisers and the influence that this had on the demand for them in general, and in specific cases.

Bill (now Lord) Rodgers initially did not appoint a special adviser and his later decision to choose one flowed from his recognition that he needed one. Yet, even where there was such a clear acknowledgement of needs, Rodgers admits that it is, 'difficult to distinguish between what were intended to be, and what became, the functions.' One official suggested special advisers had been introduced as a solution to the problem of getting the right people into the right jobs to meet the minister's needs. He felt it was the wrong solution to the problem, but that a whole host of more or less useful jobs, 'have accrued to special advisers,' because they were there.

Having accepted these difficulties, and to help cut through them, this chapter will analyse in Section A reasons related to ministers' perceptions of their needs. Section B focuses on the comments of others about what ministers perceived their needs to be. In Section C the views and actions of others who thought ministers ought to have special advisers will be examined to see how far special advisers were appointed as a result of such pressure. This would be either directly or as a result of the creation of a climate of opinion. Some of the themes from Chapter 3 are relevant for this discussion.

SECTION A: MINISTERS' PERCEPTIONS OF NEEDS.

There are a number of aspects to this question: the reasons stated by ministers before appointments were made; the reasons stated by ministers during the research interviews; and how far ministers have clear reasons related to need.

Reasons Stated Before Appointments Made.

At some stage prior to their appointing special advisers, certain ministers expressed the need for some improvements to be made in the services provided to them. Some specifically advocated the appointment of special advisers as a way of helping to achieve this. The following extracts give a flavour of such thinking. In all cases the comments are based on experience of government gained either directly (Tony Benn) or indirectly (Peter Shore as PPS to the Prime Minister and David Howell who was influenced by Ernest Marples).

In 1966 Peter Shore, having been Head of Research at the Labour Party and PPS to Harold Wilson, wrote in Entitled to Know,

But the most important reform of all is make the power of Ministers more effective in their own departments. Deluged by work, largely cut off from ministerial colleagues, separated from supporting MPs by the Official Secrets Act, accessible on a day-to-day basis only to top officials, none of whom they have appointed, Ministers have a relationship with their Civil Servants which is dangerously unbalanced and dependent .. The need here is to strengthen the power of the 'temporary politicians', the Ministers, against the 'permanent politicians', the civil servants. The first step is to end the isolation of Ministers by ensuring that top advisers, knowing the Minister's policies and able to watch over the main fields for which he is responsible, are brought into the departments' (p.155-6).

In the 1960s the Conservative Opposition undertook major reviews of policies. David Howell, an MP who had formerly been Director of the CRD, was an important contributor and in 1968 he wrote a pamphlet, entitled, Whose Government Works? In it he proposed major reforms which are of particular interest given their similarity to Government thinking in the 1980s and 1990s; he started by referring to the:

growing scepticism about the ability of elected politicians to control the administration and to get their undertakings carried out ...Under a more modern structure of government with proper management accounting, senior officials will have to be given responsibility as well as authority and will have to carry that responsibility in public. At the same time, more senior administrative posts (that is, directorships of major governments projects, boards or commissions and other agencies) will be headed by publicly-named and fully-qualified men and women who, again, will have to be able to justify

their views publicly.

This kind of development will at once have the valuable effect of relieving the Minister - that is, the man at the top - of the great burden of administrative detail of his department and giving him time to run the organisation properly with the aid of a proper personal staff or cabinet. (pp.5 and 16).

On 11 July 1973 Tony Benn wrote in The Times:

Ministers themselves are at present severely handicapped by the traditions of secrecy that operate within Whitehall which prevent them from maintaining the close connexions they need, both with their colleagues and the public, if they are to do their job properly.

The workings of the Civil Service and the growing pressure in the Labour Party for political advisers for ministers is closely connected with this issue. The Civil Service half consciously uses the Official Secrets Acts to maintain itself as a two-way filter between ministers and the outside world ...

Ministers have no staff specifically charged with the development and maintenance of the political links they need to have with those who work outside Whitehall; or even their own ministerial colleagues...

There is no ministerial or political network comparable to the Civil Service network - through which ministers can brief each other, politically, in advance of the committees at which papers are to be discussed.

These are some of the defects in our machinery of government which must be remedied if ministers are to be able to maintain real contact with each other, real contact with backbench MPs and are to have adequate consultation with the world outside - including those advisers who may have helped in Opposition to develop the various policies, upon which the party was elected. The problem is essentially one of isolation rather than of sabotage or obstruction by the Civil Service ...

What is required is the open acceptance - with proper safeguards - of a new category of political advisers who would be appointed to serve an incoming government, and each of the departmental ministers, and would go out of office with them. Such advisers would have no executive power within the department and no civil servant would be expected to take orders from them ...

Each minister within his own department - especially in the economic or industrial fields - would need both a political adviser, and a trade union adviser, as well as an economic adviser, all properly serviced. Parliamentary Private Secretaries could play a much more active role within such an advisory group.

These changes, minor as they may appear to anyone not familiar with Whitehall, would strengthen the political impulse within Government without disturbing the sound and practical administration of the Civil Service.

These extracts have been quoted at length because they reveal the mixture of motives in the thinking of politicians, all of whom subsequently appointed special advisers. In similar vein Barbara Castle, in her Mandarin Power article, argued the case for the minister to have the support of a political cabinet within the department to reduce 'the loneliness of the short-distance runner' (1973). She thought it important that the specialist and political advisers should be integrated into the structure of the department because it was the ministers who needed moral, philosophical, and physical support from people who went into the department sharing their approach. Ministers required, 'political reminders all the time', and 'a political conscience at the heart of the departmental battle.'

Several major themes emerge - especially from the Labour ministers. Support is needed to: strengthen the position of ministers in the department - especially by enhancing the political impulse; help ministers cope with overload; and reduce their isolation - especially by conducting political liaison.

Wider but less specific evidence about ministers' thoughts on the limitations of services provided for them, and their needs in terms of extra assistance, comes from Headey's study of the role of Cabinet ministers (1974, pp. 112-13). Of the 50 ministers he interviewed who had served up to the early 1970s, 18 thought the range of options presented to ministers by civil servants was inadequate. Furthermore, 18 also thought outside experts should be brought into the civil service on either a temporary or permanent basis, although not all who took this view suggested that there was a lack of expertise amongst the civil servants. Nine thought that there were, 'problems in communicating the ministers' objectives; Private Office needs strengthening; more political aides needed.' As has been noted earlier only five ministers thought that they should be spending more time preparing for Cabinet. Headey concludes:

The case for ministerial cabinets is hard to evaluate. It is only fair to say that few Ministers want them; for every respondent who was critical of the Private Office there were several who stated that they were well satisfied and doubted if comparably good arrangements existed in business and other organisations. On the other hand, the general point that

departments are not at present so constituted as to facilitate or at any rate maximise ministerial and party impact on policy also seems a strong one (p.131).

This evidence from Headey is important in showing that those ministers who were advocating the appointment of special advisers were by no means reflecting an unanimous view.

The Research Findings.

As we have seen, it is often difficult to distinguish between reasons that existed at the time of appointment and the reasons as they are now remembered, because inevitably a minister's thinking is influenced by the functions his special advisers performed. Interviews with current junior ministers and shadow ministers do, however, usefully illustrate the needs as perceived by potential secretaries of state.

From the interviews it is possible to identify a number of specific needs felt by some ministers and examine the extent to which these were generally thought by ministers to be a reason for appointing a special adviser.

These needs are listed below, and then analysed, in a more specific way than appeared at the end of Chapter 3:

- (i) the relief of overload;
- (ii) political support in terms of an extra person, independent of the department, to look at departmental submissions;
- (iii) an extra pair of eyes and ears;
- (iv) help with maintaining the thrust of party policies;
- (v) the provision of additional expertise;
- (vi) the provision of alternative and/or new policy thinking;
- (vii) somebody to play an aide/confidant role to reduce the isolation;
- (viii) help with party liaison;
- (ix) help with liaison with groups outside the department and the party;
- (x) help with presentation;
- (xi) help with preparation for Cabinet.

Obviously several of these merge into one another, especially from (ii) to (vi) which are to do with development of policy in the department. Nevertheless, certain of these categories could be further sub-divided because respondents diversley interpreted them and associated a variety of activities with each one. In most cases a minister had a number of reasons for appointing a special adviser.

(i) A major theme of Chapter 3 was the concept of overload on ministers. Many ministers agreed that they were overloaded but comparatively few saw the appointment of a special adviser as a way of relieving overload. Very few spontaneously mentioned it as a reason and most denied that it was when the question was specifically put to them. Nevertheless, some clearly did see special advisers as a way of relieving overload. Bill Rodgers (1980, p.24) referred to the need for 'another pair of hands.' Another minister suggested that, 'all the time you are groping for things which enable you to go to bed at midnight instead of 1 o'clock.' Barbara Castle suggests that special advisers do relieve overload and that was one of the reasons for appointing them. In her Diary entry for 4 November 1974 she observes: 'I thanked God for the allies I have got in the ministerial team and for the special advisers. Without them a Minister is almost certainly swamped by the sheer pressure of the top officials surrounding him - or her' (1980).

Reservations about the idea of special advisers helping to relieve overload take several forms. First, if special advisers read through submissions and comment to the secretary of state it is claimed that this might help to make the secretary of state more effective by drawing his attention to important political points, but it adds to his workload. This is because he will have extra words to read; he still has to read everything put in his boxes by the private secretary. Furthermore, of course, special advisers cannot make decisions on behalf of their ministers. Second, it is felt that by performing tasks such as writing political speeches and liaising with the party, a special adviser might help his minister to do things he would not otherwise have been able to do at all, or as satisfactorily. It is not thought to be relieving overload, however, if the minister is helped to engage in more activities.

(ii) Ministers have a number of sometimes overlapping needs in relation to their departmental role, especially policy making. Recognition of these needs encouraged them to appoint special advisers. About half the ministers interviewed expressed a desire for somebody who was independent of the civil service to be making an input into the process of policy consideration within the department. Jim Prior referred to the need for somebody independent to give 'candid advice' and John Smith claimed that the adviser assisted his work by giving him, 'a source of advice independent from that of the department.' The need to appoint a special adviser to provide such independent advice is felt by both Labour and Tory ministers; and in both these cases, and others, it was important that the advice came from somebody politically committed to, and/or knowledgeable about, party policies. Leon Brittan thought it important that, 'everything was looked at from the political angle.' If, as a number of ministers believe, politics is thought of as a minefield then, according to Peter Shore, especially when he was Secretary of State for the Environment, 'one of the things you would hope to get from an astute political adviser would be a mine detector: "don't put your foot there because it will blow up."' Advisers can carry out this role by taking part in policy discussions within the department and by commenting on submissions going to the secretary of state.

(iii) Several ministers suggested that there was a need to appoint special advisers to act, as Harold Wilson said in his 1975 statement, as an additional pair of 'eyes and ears' for the minister within the department (1976, p.204). The 'eyes role' can be played by reading submissions and commenting on them in the manner discussed above. The 'ears role' goes further and some ministers wanted advisers to gather information. Norman Lamont thought that, 'special advisers can often develop close working relations with civil servants and can discover what is really going on in the department and what officials really think.'

Similarly, Denis Healey wanted his younger advisers, Adrian Ham and Derek Scott, to play an intelligence role and find out what was being discussed at a lower level in the Treasury and give him advance warning about what would be pushed up. Occasionally, a minister's need for an extra pair of eyes and ears related not only to policy making but

also to his management role within the department.

(iv) Whereas quite a large number of ministers wanted independent advice within the department, somewhat fewer took it a step further and saw a need for advisers to help maintain the thrust of their policies. This can take several forms. At one end of the spectrum it is merely a belief that special advisers could help civil servants by providing a steer on details of the minister's thinking or the philosophy behind them. Other ministers, however, believed special advisers were necessary to provide, 'the policy enthusiasm to help ensure that progress is made in implementing the minister's policies and the position of the minister in the department is strengthened.' When asked whether advisers helped maintain the thrust of policies within the department and helped to ensure they were introduced Lamont agreed and stressed that faced with time constraints and officials correctly pointing out the difficulties it was often 'very useful' to appoint special advisers as people with extra time and, in many cases, expertise to consider the issues.

Whatever position is taken along this spectrum some ministers feel a need to take into Government with them a researcher or expert who helped develop policies in Opposition.

Considerable work had been undertaken by the Conservatives in Opposition in the late 1960s. Stephen Abbott from the CRD had been secretary to a succession of study groups on industrial relations. The shadow spokesman on Employment, Robert (now Lord) Carr was 'instinctively opposed' to special advisers. He stated:

in so far as an incoming minister might have difficulty in getting his way with the civil servants, I used to take the view that it would not be helped by introducing irritants into the system. I had a feeling as a minister it was my job to know what I wanted to do, get it done and to have sufficient confidence in my civil servants to detect if they weren't doing what they should do. On the whole I believed I was more likely to get the help I needed to pursue my, and the Government's, policies if I was seen to trust them.

He knew, however, and as Parliamentary Secretary from 1955-8 had shared, the long tradition of Ministry of Labour opposition to the use of the law in industrial relations. He assumed that the departmental view would still be the same and he might have a battle on his hands. Therefore, given that he wanted to act quickly and it was a complicated subject, he felt to have someone he had been working with, 'would be a great comfort and help.' He had already suggested to Edward (now Sir Edward) Heath that whoever became Secretary of State for Employment in the next Conservative Government should take Abbott with him because his detailed knowledge would be very useful when legislation was being planned.

Also in 1970 David Howell advocated that Mark Schreiber should be appointed to help maintain the thrust (a phrase, he suggests, they were keen on in those days) of implementing various ideas on reforms to the machinery-of-government they had been working on in the Public Sector Research Unit. Arthur Cockfield had been centrally involved in the policy group considering taxation. Patrick Jenkin, who was Financial Secretary to the Treasury in 1970, recalled that Cockfield, therefore, 'as an acknowledged expert in the field for whom the Inland Revenue had a very great respect' was invited to join the Treasury as Adviser on Taxation Policy to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

There was similar reasoning in 1974. Barbara Castle appointed Brian Abel-Smith who had worked in Labour Party research groups on the evolution of policy. In the early 1970s Stuart Holland was an influential member of the Public Sector Group of the Industrial Policy Committee of Labour's NEC (Hatfield, 1978). The group was formed by Judith Hart, and Holland was soon invited to join her on the full Industrial Committee. When she became Minister for Overseas Development she appointed Holland to be her specialist special adviser, but he initially spent about half his time working for Tony Benn in the Department of Industry on the departmental working party drafting the White Paper, The Regeneration of British Industry (Cmnd. 5710, 1974), on which the Industry Bill was to be based. This Bill was intended to implement proposals from the Industrial Policy Committee which had been adopted in Labour's Programme for Britain, 1973.

Developments in 1979 show most clearly how the idea of wanting to appoint advisers who have a detailed knowledge of party policy can cover a variety of situations. David Howell was appointed to be Secretary of State for Energy even though he had not been the shadow spokesman. He thought it would be useful to appoint as a special adviser Michael Portillo who had been the relevant desk officer at CRD. Taking over the education portfolio for the Opposition shortly before the election, and with little previous knowledge of the field, Mark (now Lord) Carlisle found that Stuart Sexton, who had been research assistant to his predecessor, gave him much advice. Sexton had been involved in developing Conservative education policies and Carlisle saw his appointment as a way of carrying into Government the work he had been involved in in Opposition, particularly on the Assisted Places Scheme, which, 'was going to require a good deal of push to get it through.'

By contrast, when the Treasury team of ministers were appointed in 1979 they had already had a considerable spell in Opposition developing their policies. In this case the situation was similar to the examples cited earlier from 1970 when some ministers took with them people who had been working for them for a number of years. However, the newly appointed Chief Secretary to the Treasury, John Biffen, neither appointed, nor made much use of, any of the Treasury special advisers: 'I never behaved as though I had a special adviser.' Nevertheless, although he thought the Treasury, 'acted with great propriety and loyalty to the policy of the their new Government,' he could see that given the radical programme that had been developed in Opposition and 'given that you were determined to stick to it, and not to have a repetition of the 1970-74 situation, then there was merit in having alongside you some of those who had toiled in the preparation of those policies.' Three special advisers were appointed from the CRD to the Treasury in 1979: Adam Ridley, Peter Cropper and George Cardona.

As part of helping ministers maintain the thrust of their policies, special advisers are sometimes seen as 'Keepers of the Ark of the manifesto'. This is interpreted in several ways. Sometimes it is seen as appointing advisers to help make sure that the minister keeps to the policies of the manifesto. Many ministers react negatively to such a concept although several thought there was something in it and reference

was made earlier to Castle's comment in the Mandarin Power speech about the need for, 'a political conscience at the heart of the departmental battle.' Taking over as Secretary of State for Social Services after the sacking of Barbara Castle, David (now Lord) Ennals reappointed Brian Abel-Smith and Tony Lynes and thought the phrase was a 'very fair one' and that the advisers were a constant reminder of manifesto commitments as well as being people who could develop arguments to be used in Cabinet, Parliament and the country. Carlisle opined that there was a role for Sexton to play in reminding him of manifesto commitments, and he sometimes introduced Sexton to people as his, 'right wing conscience.' The other interpretation of the phrase was to suggest that special advisers were appointed to help their minister ensure that policies were pushed through the department. Few ministers saw things in precisely these terms.

(v) The provision of expertise is another of the overlapping reasons related to the development of policy within a department for appointing special advisers. Often it is felt there is a need for expertise that is either missing in the department and/or is committed to party policies. There is an obvious overlap with the previous points because one aspect of expertise might be a knowledge of the policies of the party. However the concept of committed expertise takes things one stage further. Not only was Abel-Smith somebody independent of the department who could evaluate policy developments and bring knowledge of policies developed in Opposition, he could also do these things from Barbara Castle's particular approach. In appointing Anthony Lester to be one of his special advisers in 1974, Roy Jenkins selected a person not only committed to fighting race and sex discrimination, but who also had skills in aspects of civil law probably lacking in the Home Office at that time. Lord Gowrie, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Arts, was also government spokesman in the Lords on economic affairs. As such he could perhaps have relied solely on Treasury backing but wanted the considerable experience that could be provided by appointing his long standing friend Adam Ridley who had just completed over five years in a role - special adviser to the Chancellor of the Exchequer - involving, Ridley felt, a substantial degree of committed expertise. Roy Hattersley's belief that Maurice Peston could provide, 'committed expertise' was referred to earlier.

Despite the small numbers involved, there is, in keeping with the heterogeneity of advisers, a surprisingly large range of permutations between on the one hand, the provision of expertise and/or commitment; and on the other hand, filling gaps in civil servants' knowledge or adding to their existing expertise. By 1974 the ODM was well staffed with economists but Judith Hart felt sometimes there were aspects of their, 'assessment of issues that raised economic theology that wasn't altogether to my liking.' It was beneficial, therefore, to have an economist, Stuart Holland, who shared her beliefs, 'to use the appropriate economic jargon' to tackle the issue as she wished it to be approached. Initially Denis Healey appointed Nicky Kaldor because he, 'wanted somebody who was known to be sympathetic with the thrust of Labour policy and who was also capable of arguing on his own level with civil servants. I would have liked him as my economic adviser but Ken Berrill already had that post.' This again raises interesting questions about how far an appropriate person in the post of Chief Economic Adviser might obviate the need for Chancellors to appoint a leading economist as a special adviser.

A mixture of expertise and commitment can be supplied by the businessmen recruited. Sir Keith (now Lord) Joseph illustrated the importance of commitment: 'By 1979 I was far more alive to the dangers of devitalisation than I had been at the end of '70-'74 ... so when I came back in '79, I wanted allies who would see things as I saw them. David Young and I worked harmoniously together.' David (now Lord) Young and his successor Jeffrey (now Lord) Sterling also brought expertise not present in the department. Norman Lamont was Minister of State at the Industry Department for four years and thought the 'different perspective' provided by businessmen such as Young and Sterling was 'very valuable'. He illustrated the argument well: 'no matter how good civil servants are at developing knowledge about the City, this is something that they have essentially learnt. They have never done it themselves, and the perspective of somebody who has actually floated a company is obviously different to that of somebody who has read about it.'

Michael Heseltine makes similar comments on his use of experts, which was described earlier:

It was what I profoundly believe in which is the fusion of the talents of the public sector and private sector, the breaking down of barriers ... [They were introduced] to advise on specific areas ... I am a great admirer of the civil service but you cannot expect someone trained in the disciplines of the public sector to be an entrepreneurial capitalist and if you are trying to deal with the problems of achieving results and making things happen, you are well advised to use the skills that are experienced in that sort of activity.

Some of these points can be related to themes discussed in Chapter 3. In line with some British ministers, Walter suggests that a, 'generalized need for most ministers is for expert knowledge, and for that expertise to be informed by philosophies and assumptions congenial to the minister's politics' (p.154). However, whereas Heseltine and some other British ministers stress the value of advisers in breaking down barriers and fusing complementary skills, Walter emphasizes the conflict in values between ministers and bureaucrats. He continues by stressing the theme, 'that knowledge and the deployment of technical capacity are not value-neutral, and that the political executive will frequently experience the values of their department as inimical to their own' (p.154).

Several British ministers, including Ted Short, made a clear distinction between expertise and commitment. As minister with responsibility for devolution legislation Short appointed Norman Hunt (later Lord Crowther-Hunt) to be his special adviser on devolution issues, not because of his undoubted commitment to it but rather because he was, 'an acknowledged expert'. With encouragement from the Prime Minister, Short felt Hunt, 'would be extremely useful' because they were starting from scratch on the issue and initially there was a lack of detailed knowledge about it amongst the civil servants. Harold (now Lord) Lever, as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, had few departmental responsibilities or civil servants but he produced many initiatives. He appointed Ray Richardson, an economist from the London School of Economics (LSE). Lever, an expert in international finance, produced papers on economics and wanted Richardson to be, 'a checker and challenger of propositions ... [because] it's very important for a non-

economist to have an economist say, "you can only hold x view if you make the following assumptions" - that clarifies your thinking.' He was clear, however, about the limitations on what he wanted Richardson to do and, 'didn't appoint him to provide alternative ideas ... I took enough initiatives anyway and didn't need anybody to suggest any.'

(vi) There are some ministers however, who also appoint advisers to provide alternative and new policy thinking. This implies they feel a need for somebody, independent of the department, to play a proactive role in developing policies. In this sense it is distinct from both the person independent of the department who plays a reactive role in examining departmental submissions, and the role of advisers who come in with knowledge of policies developed in Opposition. However, the needs may be linked in the minds of some ministers who might appoint the same person to fulfil all these roles. Furthermore, an adviser with expertise lacking in the department and/or with committed expertise is in an ideal position to develop alternative and new thinking, although it is possible for other people to do so. The importance of having an adviser to provide long-term thinking is stressed by certain ministers, including Richard (now Sir Richard) Luce and John Patten. On becoming Minister of State for Housing in 1985 Patten was one of the two ministers to appoint David Coleman and thought that the provision of alternative/new thinking was a major reason for their decision: 'We were going into a policy formulation period, we wanted a cerebral kind of person ... someone who was thoughtful, mature and far thinking.' He believed it important not only to have, 'someone there to give you the party political component but to understand that you might be making major sea-changes in policy of a very long lasting nature.'

Some of the advisers appointed to provide committed expertise and/or alternative and new thinking, including Abel-Smith, Peston and Ridley, were expected by the minister to cover a wide waterfront. The appointment of other such advisers signalled the minister's intention to give greater attention to specific policy areas. This was especially true of Heseltine's appointments. Patrick Jenkin appointed Roger Dyson to provide, 'an entirely new dimension of expertise', which was related to industrial relations and management issues within the NHS. When he became Secretary of State for Trade in 1974 Shore appointed Roland

Brown, who had been engaged on trade and aid missions on behalf of the Tanzanian Government, because, 'he had insights particularly into the trading and aid and other problems of the developing countries, which I thought was an admirable addition to the kind of thinking which I would get in the Department of Trade.'

(vii) About a third of ministers interviewed suggested that their appointment of a special adviser was partly associated with their need for an aide/confidant. Again there is a range of interpretations. A few ministers thought it desirable to appoint somebody with whom issues could be discussed when making policy decisions in the department. Respondents also claimed that aide/confidants are required to combat the isolation ministers feel from their political colleagues. Benn, Castle and Shore all stood by the comments, referred to earlier in this chapter, that were written before they appointed special advisers in 1974. In other cases, however, the special adviser became an aide/confidant but, as one minister stated, the role was, 'not in my mind originally.'

When a new government is formed and ministers are appointed after a spell in Opposition, they may want to take with them any research assistant or party research officer they had in Opposition and with whom this relationship had already developed. Ted Short, for example, soon came to think in the early 1970s that if he went back into Government his Rowntree Trust research assistant, Vicky Kidd, was somebody he would quite like to take with him and he thought the aide/confidant role was, 'extremely useful'.

In their choice of adviser, ministers sometimes indicated the importance they were going to attach to the aide/confidant role. Judith Hart thought reducing the isolation was, 'terribly important' in a role played for her by Margaret Jackson (now Beckett), Tony Banks, and Maggie Sidgreaves. She not only looked for people whom she, 'thought were capable and intellectually high grade but also one wanted people one knew one could get on with.' Interesting examples of how the aide/confidant relationship can develop whilst a minister is in post and then become a reason for appointment occurred with both Judith Hart and Leon Brittan. Sidgreaves served Hart as private office diary secretary

in the 1960s and, in common with several other such people, moved departments with her minister. Sidgreaves remained in the private office at the ODM in 1970 when the Labour Government fell and was still there when Hart returned as Minister in 1974. On Hart's departure from the Government in 1975 Sidgreaves left the civil service to continue to work for her and came back as a special adviser on Hart's reappointment to the Ministry.

When Brittan became Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Robin Harris was already a special adviser in the Treasury and he gradually gravitated towards Brittan. On becoming Home Secretary in 1983 Brittan took Harris with him and thought the aide/confidant role was important. A further example occurred with a minister moving in the opposite direction. On becoming Home Secretary in 1965 Roy Jenkins appointed John Harris whose work he knew of but whom he did not know personally very well. However the relationship rapidly developed and when Jenkins became Chancellor of the Exchequer it was, as he explains in his autobiography, six weeks before he was able to move David Dowler, his long standing principal private secretary and confidant, into the Treasury as one of his joint principal private secretaries. During the interval, he writes, 'I was dependent for an intimate "no secrets barred" confidant, of which I have always had great need, upon John Harris, who had come immediately from the Home Office to the Treasury with me and whose political judgment was admirable, but who would not at that stage have claimed to have much economic expertise' (1991, p.221).

(viii) For several ministers there was a link between the need to appoint a special adviser to help overcome the political isolation and the need to carry out liaison with party colleagues. They viewed advisers as being 'political antennae'. When Richard Luce was appointed Minister for the Arts he thought, especially as the political head of a department but not a member of the Cabinet, there was a danger of becoming, 'rather politically isolated'. Interviewed whilst in post he stated that therefore, 'you should have a political adviser here who keeps his or her tabs on what is happening elsewhere and keeps close to other political advisers.'

Over a third of ministers interviewed appointed advisers to maintain liaison with the party - especially the party organization. Many Tories, including Leon Brittan, regarded liaison with Conservative Central Office as an important element in keeping contact with the party and their choice of a former member of the CRD facilitated this. For a number of Labour ministers who were active in internal party matters including Benn, Castle, Hart, Short and Jenkins it was important to have advisers who could liaise with the party. Most of these ministers were playing a major role within the party's NEC structure. Matthew Oakeshott had been a very useful political assistant in Opposition and Jenkins wanted him to continue working on general political matters. This was particularly important for Jenkins who, though not on the NEC, was seen as leader of the pro-European group of MPs within the Labour Party. Ministers who saw this as a major reason for appointment include Roy Hattersley who said that David Hill, 'had the very special job of maintaining my link with the party.'

This party liaison role provides a good illustration of the central theme developed in Chapter 3 that advisers act as a channel of information. One of the reasons behind Bill Rodgers's decision to appoint a special adviser after all, was the feeling that because of the overload he needed somebody, 'to provide communications rather than advice,' in relation to the political world. Some Labour ministers also wanted advisers who could liaise with the trade unions - a role fulfilled by Ken Griffin for Tony Benn, and by Tony Banks for Judith Hart. For some ministers, including Peter Shore at Environment, the need to have somebody to liaise with party contacts links in with the requirement for a person with expert knowledge of local government and local councillors.

(ix) Rather fewer ministers appointed an adviser to liaise with groups outside the party. Again, however, for some ministers this was something valuable that their advisers, once in post, carried out and in that way it became one of the functions that ministers saw advisers in general appointed to do. David Ennals was clear from the start that an adviser was required to perform such liaison. He appointed a social worker, David Townsend, because he, 'needed someone who had day-to-day, continuing and professional background knowledge of the social

services'. He desired 'eyes and ears' in the social work world - a phrase also used by other ministers in relation to their department's client groups. Luce wanted his advisers to be, 'out and about a lot in the arts world: trying to understand the political dimension of it and the sensitivities of feelings; giving me a feedback on what people are saying and doing; making sure my view has got across at seminars and conferences, two way flows, eyes and ears.' Jim Prior wanted Robbie Gilbert, who had line management experience in Shell, where he continued to work part time, to act as secretary to a group of industrialists whom Prior met regularly and privately. William Waldegrave described several facets of this reason for appointing advisers. He claimed, 'Ministers need someone to act as a conduit for ideas.' He too used his special advisers, including David Coleman, as secretaries to informal advisory groups of senior figures and also felt that advisers could, 'go out into the pressure groups and reach the parts that a minister can't usually reach and talk to people and make contacts and feed things back'. These examples demonstrate the relevance of the model developed in Chapter 3 - the adviser emerges as a channel of information across sometimes uncertain boundaries.

For some ministers the adviser can begin to play a brokerage role and there is a link with the attempt to relieve overload. Hurd (1986) stressed the extent to which increased numbers and activities of pressure groups exacerbated the burden on ministers. Asked, when Home Secretary, whether he stood by his 1979 comment, quoted at the start of this chapter, about the need for advisers because of the danger that ministers might lose touch with colleagues, the party and the Government's political strategy, Hurd replied:

Yes, I see it a bit more widely now ... the party is one thing and that is still true. But I think that in any big department there is a great advantage in keeping informally in touch with a whole range of people, interest groups, and lobbies in a way which the civil service doesn't always find easy ... The idea has broadened out a bit. You have got a skirmisher who will operate quite widely and personally so his reports, his information, his ideas come direct to the minister instead of coming up through the machine... although usually he would copy to, and work closely with, officials.

Some advisers appointed for this reason, as with some appointed for their expertise, indicate that the minister felt he required help in giving greater attention to certain aspects of his department's work. These were topics that the minister thought were particularly important, or merited greater attention.

(x) Over half the ministers identified help with presentation as a reason for having advisers. In many cases it was the major reason. Hurd referred to the work of his adviser as being, 'overwhelmingly presentational'; others linked this to the minister feeling dissatisfied with the services of his press or information office. Thus Lord Young (1990, p.143) claims that when he was Minister Without Portfolio with special responsibility for wealth creation and enterprise, his 'Press Officer had not worked out.' Young was upset because he had a number of White Papers to launch but then, he writes, 'I had a minor brainwave. I could appoint a Special Adviser. After all, I had once been a Special Adviser and as a Cabinet colleague I was entitled to one myself. I did not need one to help me with political advice but with dealings with the press.' Patrick Jenkin told the Treasury and Civil Service Committee that, although he had a high regard for civil service loyalty, 'far too much of the work of press and information officers is reactive' (1986, Vol.2, p.124), and he felt their role should be re-thought. Furthermore, in interview Jenkin said that whilst he was Secretary of State for Industry in 1982, 'more and more of my colleagues were getting political advisers and I felt I really had to have a political adviser. I needed somebody to help me with my speeches.' Speech writing was identified as the most important area where help was needed by many ministers, including Hurd's predecessor at the Home Office - Leon Brittan. This applied in particular to political speeches, with the party conference speech being specifically mentioned by several Tories.

Assistance could also be provided in a range of other tasks connected with presentation. These included: preparation of journal articles; production of White and Green papers; preparation for Parliamentary Question Time. Some ministers wanted an adviser with whom they could discuss the best strategy for presenting the departments' work and their own views. Quite a few advisers were given a brief to

talk to journalists on behalf of their minister. When promoted to Home Secretary Roy Jenkins originally took on John Harris very much as a press adviser, although he subsequently played a wider role. Several ministers were disappointed that their special advisers turned out not to be as good as they had hoped at speech writing.

(xi) Finally about a third of ministers identified assistance with preparation for Cabinet, and Cabinet Committees, as being a reason for the appointing a special adviser. A few ministers, Jim Prior for example, acknowledged that although it had not been an original reason for appointment, help with briefing for non-departmental issues coming up in Cabinet, especially economic ones, was an important service that the adviser could provide. Rob Shepherd performed this function for Prior. Several ministers, for example, Michael Heseltine and Sir Keith Joseph, did not use their advisers in this role.

Some ministers, especially Labour ones, thought that this was one of, if not the, most important reasons for appointing a special adviser. As Lord President of the Council, Ted Short played a major role in Cabinet and Cabinet Committees and he wanted Vicky Kidd to comment on Cabinet papers from a party political view. Several features of the place of special advisers are illustrated in his view that it is valuable to have this performed by somebody who, in addition to having a political slant, is located in the office (and therefore, 'on tap') and has been positively vetted (and thus 'in the know'). Bill Rodgers wanted to go to Cabinet meetings well briefed and found that the Department of Transport were unable to provide a fully adequate service in this field. This was a major factor in his decision that he would, after all, appoint a special adviser. A particularly important aspect of briefing for Cabinet meetings was the briefing that economists could provide. Advisers who were appointed primarily with this in mind include: David Metcalf by Stan Orme; and Michael Stewart, initially by Peter Shore and later Tony Crosland and David Owen. Perhaps reflecting the importance of the post within the Cabinet, two Tory Home Secretaries, Leon Brittan and Douglas Hurd, were amongst the comparatively few Conservative ministers who referred to the Cabinet briefing role as a reason for appointing a special adviser.

How far do Ministers have Clear Reasons Related to Needs?

In addition to discussing ministers' comments about individual appointments it is possible to identify general circumstances in which ministers are likely to feel the need to appoint an adviser to perform specific functions. One is when a special adviser leaves his post and the minister looks for another special adviser to continue performing the same functions (sometimes the retiring special adviser is given the responsibility of finding a replacement in his own image). A good example occurred when David Young was appointed to be Chairman of the Manpower Services Commission and so could no longer continue as special adviser in the Department of Industry. Patrick Jenkin recalled that he said to Sir Peter Carey, the permanent secretary, that they needed to 'find another David Young' because the department was about to embark on a major privatization programme and required an understanding of the world of finance and the City, 'therefore I have got to have a special adviser who can be our conduit in to this area.' Similarly, Young claims Jenkin was quite upset when he announced his departure: "Find me your successor", he said, "otherwise you just can't leave." (1990, p.67).

Jeffrey Sterling was the man found by Young and Jenkin. Sterling provides a good example of the other main circumstances in which the need to have a special adviser to carry out specific functions can sometimes be identified as the reason for appointment. This occurs when a new minister is appointed to a department and concludes that the work that the 'existing' special adviser had been doing was very important and decides to reappoint him. Sterling served seven successive Secretaries of State at the DTI - his sixth being Lord Young, the man he was recruited to succeed. Sterling agreed to continue working for Young despite the idiosyncratic nature of the invitation the new minister issued to one of his oldest friends: "Jeffrey," I said, "I have never listened to you in over thirty years. I cannot think of a better person to be my Special Adviser." Despite that comment he accepted on the spot. This cheered me up' (p.236). Other specialist special advisers who have been asked to serve a number of secretaries of state include Robin Cooke, Tony Lynes, and Brian Abel-Smith (to whom Barbara Castle said, 'do for me what you did for Dick', i.e. Richard Crossman).

There have, however, been occasions where it has been difficult for the incoming minister not to reappoint the special adviser. In some of these instances the incoming minister was an advocate of the use of special advisers and/or welcomed the individual 'in post'. When Joseph was replaced by Jenkin at the Department of Industry, Young was summoned to Number Ten and told by David Wolfson (now Lord Wolfson of Sunningdale) that the Prime Minister requested him to continue his work in the department. The circumstances of his reappointment were very different from earlier: 'I had worked for Keith for years and presumably he only selected me once he was satisfied that he could work with me. Patrick, who had been at Social Security, had me thrust upon him by the Prime Minister at the very moment he was offered the job. No one refuses in those circumstances!' (p.58-9). When Robert Carr became Lord President of the Council he looked upon Michael Wolff, whom he knew well, 'as part of the machinery that I had inherited in the Lord President's Office, rather than appointing my own special adviser.' He was, 'delighted' to find Wolff there because, as the member of the Cabinet responsible for the coordination of Government policy but having no civil service specialist staff to assist the Lord President in that capacity, he relied on his adviser to liaise with departmental chief information officers.

Shortly after Keith Joseph took over the Education and Science Portfolio from Mark Carlisle he 'temporarily dismissed' Sexton (Knight, 1989, p.164) and Young worked in a part time capacity for Joseph whilst concentrating on Industry. Sexton continued to work, now unpaid, in the Department of Education and Science (DES) but largely for Rhodes Boyson, one of the junior ministers. According to Knight it was Boyson who persuaded Joseph to reappoint Sexton a few months later.

Margaret Thatcher, especially in the early years of her premiership, was restrictive in allowing ministers to have special advisers. It is thought that at least one minister who wished to have one was not permitted to do so. To the extent that ministers had to argue their case for having a special adviser, they were forced to produce reasons, or at least justifications. Another circumstance which allowed ministers to assess whether they needed a special adviser was that an increasing number of newly appointed Cabinet ministers had been

junior ministers in departments in which there were special advisers. As a result, they either came to the conclusion that special advisers were desirable, or had this opinion confirmed. Similarly, when John Patten became Minister of State at the DoE his decision to appoint an adviser was 'very much' influenced by the 'extremely good' work he had seen Rob Shepherd and Nick True perform for their respective Secretaries of State in departments where he had been a Parliamentary Secretary.

Some people, however, challenge the extent to which it is meaningful to produce lists of reasons for appointing special advisers that are related to ministers' needs. Several ministers took the initiative in appointing special advisers, or at least, were willing to accept them, without having a clear perception of functional needs. Some such ministers felt a need to take in their 'own person' without specifically linking it to the argument others use about the need for an aide/confidant to overcome the minister's isolation. Once special advisers began to be appointed then inevitably for some ministers, as one admitted, an important reason for making an appointment was the attitude, 'I certainly wasn't going to miss out on them. If they were going I was going to have them.'

In America, Meltsner noted that clients differed on why they wanted policy analysis but, 'a few want it because it is fashionable.' (1986, p.5). Similarly in 1986 a British adviser, Chris Butler, wrote: 'as their numbers rose after that [1983] election, it became almost a status symbol for secretaries of state to possess a special adviser' (p.14).

Norman (now Sir Norman) Fowler, a pre 1983 Tory exponent of special advisers, stated: 'When you first come into Government you quite wonder what the role of the special adviser is going to be and I think, as my career has shown, I have firmly come to the conclusion that the special adviser should be a political figure.' This quote provides evidence that the place of special advisers is becoming more clearly identified. Once ministers have had the experience of using advisers, they should have clearer reasons for making their subsequent appointments, and some activities that evolved as part of the first adviser's role, will become reasons for later appointments.

A few ministers just wanted to appoint somebody who was suitable, whereas others knew the specific individual they wanted to appoint even though the initial decision to appoint was not related to functional requirements. By 1974 there were a number of research assistants to shadow ministers. Some were the Political Fellows funded by the Rowntree Social Services Trust from 1972, and others were in a separate research unit set up in late 1973 and financed by Sigmund (now Sir Sigmund) Sternberg, a London metal merchant (Darlington, 1976). Some of the research assistants were appointed as special advisers in 1974 without great thought from ministers about their precise needs. One of the ministers, Denis Healey, commented that his research assistant was, 'largely appointed because he was already working with me - I hadn't really thought it through very carefully.'

Michael Heseltine, as we have seen, appointed specialist advisers on short term contracts. When he was asked how far he saw his special advisers, at the time of appointment, as people who would talk to, and attempt to influence, their colleagues in the private sector, he replied, 'I think you are inviting me to rationalize where there was no rationalization. I saw someone who knew a lot about this subject, with a lot of ideas, a lot of energy and a lot of experience; we need these sort of guys and that is where you start.' Having made his appointments, Heseltine, with his managerial background, used his advisers in more specific ways than did the majority of ministers.

Adam Ridley coined the phrase, 'residual legatee' to describe the role that special advisers have of filling gaps that might appear in any one of a number of areas where services are provided for ministers. This could help explain why some ministers appoint advisers without being sure which needs will arise. In a few instances ministers appointed advisers because people were either proposed to them by a third party or the adviser volunteered his services. In the examples referred to here there is no question of pressure being applied to ministers. The full complexity of the reasons/needs discussion is seen here because in some such cases particular ministers could see good reasons for appointing special advisers, and other ministers were happy to accept them, even though the initial reason for making an appointment was little more than an approach from outside. Examples of advisers

offering their services include John Harris to Roy Jenkins; Miles Hudson to Sir Alec Douglas Home (now Lord Home of the Hirsel); and David Young initially to Sir Keith Joseph. In 1983 the Secretary of State for Wales, Nicholas Edwards, was offered the services of Christopher Butler: 'I didn't set out feeling I must have a research assistant, let's look for one. It happened that a well-qualified individual was available and I was approached and enquired whether I would like to appoint him; so it worked that way round.' In all these examples the minister was attracted by the qualities of the individual offering his services. Thus Lord Home stressed the personal nature of Hudson's appointment. He knew Hudson had, 'a very distinguished mind and knew a lot about international affairs and policies' but 'if the whips had said would I have taken somebody out of the blue, I would have hesitated a long time.'

It was suggested at the end of Chapter 3 that a minister who appointed special advisers might possess certain characteristics. It is difficult to generalize. For example, some of the new Conservative ministers in 1979 appointed the relevant desk officer at CRD because they themselves had had little or no experience of the subject for which they were responsible. Yet other ministers with considerable Opposition experience of the subject also appointed special advisers. Nevertheless, some analysis of the suggestions in Chapter 3 is possible. Ministers who had radical proposals for policy changes seemed quite likely to appoint advisers - especially specialist ones. Writing prior to the 1974 development of the system of special advisers, Headey noted that, 'policy initiators, in altering departmental priorities, must expect some conflict and unpopularity with their civil servants. Conflict is especially likely if, to press through his initiative, the Minister reorganises his department or recruits "irregulars"' (p.215).

Ministers who were ambitious to carry out many functions and play a large role in Cabinet and/or the party were also more likely to appoint advisers. There is little evidence to support the view that it was ministers with the most limited capacities who felt the greatest need for assistance, and consequently appointed special advisers. Bernard Donoghue told the Treasury and Civil Service Committee:

What I noticed very much in the Labour Government was it was the best ministers, the ministers who by outside judgment would be the most able, who had the special advisers and used them well. Ministers thought to be fairly marginal did not have special advisers, it was the reverse of what you might think. It was those who most needed them who did not have them (1986, Vol. 2, p.197).

In interview Donoghue claimed that one or two ministers who really needed advisers declined to appoint them because it might look as if they could not do their job. In reality, especially in the pre-1974 days, the appointment of a special adviser was sometimes taken to be an indication of strength: 'but just as it is the weaker minister who most needs a cabinet, so he is the least likely to insist on getting one - and he may need to be very strong to insist successfully.' (Opie, 1968, pp.77-8). Similarly, Headey (p.212) suggests that the way Jenkins took Harris, and David Dowler his principal private secretary, from department to department was an indication of strength.

However, it would be incorrect to conclude that the only ministers who declined to appoint special advisers were weak ministers, with greatest need for assistance. William (now Viscount) Whitelaw and Peter Walker are but two examples of powerful Tory ministers in the post-79 governments who extracted the most out of their departments and who did not appoint special advisers. Several officials at the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries (MAFF) at the time of the change over from John Silkin to Peter Walker, including Terry Dawes, the press officer, felt that the valuable role Ann Carlton had played as special adviser to John Silkin disappeared as Walker was his own political adviser and rewrote draft press notices himself.

The quality of Whitelaw and Walker demonstrates that it would be misleading to develop generalized theories about the type of minister who did not appoint advisers. Furthermore, both illustrate the earlier point that when ministers 'inherit' an adviser they sometimes keep him. When Whitelaw became Secretary of State for Employment in 1973, and Walker Secretary of State at the DTI in 1972, they both retained the services of the existing adviser - Robert Jackson and John Cope respectively. Cope had only worked for John Davies for a few weeks before Davies was moved and Cope found himself, 'in the rather odd position of being political adviser to Peter Walker, which was at first

sight probably the least necessary job in Whitehall.' In fact, Cope commented, 'I found myself worked hard in a department which at that time had ten ministers.' Despite the fact that Jackson and Cope were well regarded in the departments, and have demonstrated their political skills by their subsequent rise to ministerial positions, it is possibly unlikely that Whitelaw or Walker would have initiated such appointments.

SECTION B: MINISTERS' REASONS AS SEEN BY OTHERS.

It is difficult for other people to know conclusively the reasoning behind a minister's appointment of special advisers. However, Table 1 shows the questionnaire answers given by special advisers to question 14) about why they thought their minister appointed them. Most advisers were prepared to attempt this even though frequently the minister had not precisely defined what the adviser's functions would be.

Although the findings of Table 1 are broadly in line with evidence from interviews with ministers, they need to be interpreted with care. The following analysis is based on evidence from the interviews with advisers and civil servants, in addition to the raw statistics. One adviser refused to answer on the grounds that ministers did not think along such systematic lines when appointing special advisers. This view, discussed in the previous section, was one with which other advisers had a degree of sympathy. Furthermore, it was rare in practice for advisers to make a clear distinction between reasons for appointment and functions performed. Inevitably, too, some advisers stressed the reasons why they thought ministers should appoint advisers. As far as possible this section concentrates on what were thought to be the ministers' reasons.

Relief of overload. Question 14a) on the relief of overload was interpreted in various ways. Many advisers believed they were performing tasks (especially in the party political field) which otherwise might have been left for the minister. Some advisers thought that this did not always result in the ministers being any less overloaded - they simply became involved in extra activities. Other advisers felt, however, they were appointed to relieve overload. Roger Liddle, for instance, thought that Bill Rodgers was sceptical about the

TABLE 1: Questionnaire Findings on Reasons for Appointment - Percentage Response.

14) Various reasons have been suggested for the appointment of special advisers. In the case of your appointment, what importance do you think was attached by the minister to each of the following:

	Substan tial	Consid erable	Moder ate	Slight	Neglig ible
a) Relieve the overload of business on ministers	7	18	26	21	28
b) Provide political support within the departments staffed by "neutral" civil servants, to ministers wishing to introduce changes.	24	41	12	11	12
c) Fill any gaps in the knowledge or experience of the civil service with experts committed to the policies of the party.	19	32	15	18	16
d) Help ministers carry out a more effective collective role in cabinet.	21	16	22	22	19
e) Prevent ministers drifting away from the party by liaising with the various sections of the party.	4	31	21	12	32
f) Help the ministers with the presentation of their views on departmental and general issues.	37	27	21	3	12
g) Provide new/alternative policy ideas.	19	32	31	9	9
h) Reduce the isolation of ministers by playing an aide/confidant role.	18	31	15	16	20

need for advice but rather wanted more capacity to get things done: 'Bill wanted me to help him with any task he asked me to do.' Liddle, in common with several other advisers including Edward Bickham used the phrase, 'an extra pair of hands' to describe a major reason for their appointment. Another adviser suggested that, even though his minister might not have been prepared to admit it, he feared being 'swamped' by the workload and the appointment of an adviser was an attempt to relieve the burden.

Political support. The answers given to questions 14b) c) and g) were handled differently in the previous section's analysis of interviews with ministers because it became clear that the data were not only overlapping but were also, especially 14b), subject to a range of interpretations. Many special advisers believed their minister had made the appointment to ensure that policy issues within the department were examined by somebody independent of the civil service and wholly committed to the minister, and usually to the party. Part of the required political support was often thought to be looking through policy submissions for 'time bombs' (Rob Shepherd), or 'landmines as far as the domestic House of Commons situation was concerned' (John Harris). Leon Brittan's stress on the importance of issues being examined from the political perspective was echoed by one of his advisers, John Whittingdale: 'Ministers do like to have a different source of advice, someone who is seeing the same issues as officials but looking at them from a different angle ... how we should structure things so that the backbenchers would approve of it and generally advising him on the political side of every issue coming up.' Peter Shore's comments, reported earlier, about the need for a mine detector, especially at Environment, are mirrored in his reasons for appointment as seen by one of his advisers, David Cowling:

Part of what I was about was watching out for politically sensitive areas and slapping in a paper with some ideas and comments on the civil service conclusions ... acting as a bit of a warning system about how the party might receive certain things coming from the department. Not just the party at head office but the party at local government level.

Some advisers felt their minister appointed them to play an eyes and ears role. David Stephen was selected by the new Foreign Secretary David Owen several months before he could fill the position and, 'had a number of chats with him over the summer about what he wanted and it was clear that it was basically agreed with the Office that I would have an extra pair of eyes and ears role.'

There was less agreement about how far this political support was necessary to help progress the policies of the minister and/or the party, in the department. Some thought this was a reason, but that it only extended as far as familiarizing civil servants with the policies and/or the philosophy and arguments behind them and/or the priorities amongst them.

Linked to this, but most contentious of all, was how far advisers were appointed to help maintain the thrust of the minister's policies possibly against civil service obstruction. Many did not see it in these terms. Mark Schreiber, however, interestingly suggested that the Tory politicians in Opposition in the 1960s were aware of the views of the Labour critics such as Crossman and Castle who believed that the civil service had its own long-term policies to which it successfully adhered. Thought was given to ways of overcoming obstruction of the radical changes the Conservatives wished to introduce and the recruitment of outsiders was seen by some shadow ministers as a way of achieving this. Having played a major part in devising the tax reform plan launched by the Conservatives in 1970, Arthur Cockfield claims, 'I was brought in to ensure that this programme was driven through - which it was.'

The approach adopted by the Tories at the Treasury in 1979 is subject to slightly differing interpretations. Adam Ridley felt there was, 'emphatically' a desire when they came in to sustain the thrust of implementing the policies on which they had been elected and that, 'special advisers sustain the thrust because they know why the policy was devised.' Furthermore, if ministers were considering moving away from a manifesto commitment or from a policy they had already established, then, compared with the civil servants, the adviser, as a political operative, 'has far more licence to say, "are you sure you

want to change that policy?"' Whilst pointing out that he did not become a Treasury adviser until 1982, Douglas French agreed that a reason for the appointment of advisers was to help maintain the thrust of a newly elected government and sustain it when a U turn was expected in the country. George Cardona suggested that the incoming Tory advisers in 1979 expected the Government to face civil service obstruction:

I arrived at the Treasury as a special adviser in May, 1979, clutching an armful of files which contained the policies we had worked on in the years of Conservative Opposition.

I had read, and heard, about the obstructions the Civil Service would place in the way of a new Government. Books and articles by Labour ministers and special advisers (particularly in the Bennite wing of the party) warned me of what to expect. I was ready to defend our policies against the most dirty tricks. (The Times, 11 November 1981).

Cardona believed that in reality they encountered little obstruction, and that although he had anticipated some he felt that the incoming ministers, apart from on a few specific issues, were not expecting resistance from the civil service. He argued that from the ministers' perspective the appointment of advisers, 'was to maintain continuity with the policy formation which I had been doing for so many years - to see that through.'

Several other Treasury advisers drew a distinction between 1979, when the ministers might have been feeling a need for help to maintain the thrust of their policies, and later years. However, according to some, including Howard Davies, even that presented, 'an exaggerated case.' Davies was a Treasury civil servant in 1979 who later left the service to join McKinsey but in 1985 was seconded for 15 months to become a special adviser in the Treasury. He suggested that other advisers would say,

the Treasury was trying very hard, was as political as it really could be but nonetheless the constitution prevented it from being as political as the ministers would really have liked and therefore in presentational terms, and just as an extra pair of hands ... there was a job to be done - but not a kind of crusade against the bureaucrats.

He went on to suggest that there might be a greater need to help maintain the thrust in departments such as the DHSS or DES where the departments have a close relationship with their clients.

In fact, several of the comparatively few advisers who accepted the term 'Keeper of the Ark' served in the DES. The comments of Mark Carlisle reported earlier are echoed in the words of his special adviser, Stuart Sexton:

I saw my role as continuing to develop education policy, to see that what we had planned and proposed in the '70s was actually put into effect ... I'd accept the phrase 'Keeper of the Ark of the Manifesto'; particularly as I would claim to have written a lot of it ... Mark Carlisle kindly said to me, 'now that you've written all this for the election manifesto, you'd better join me in Government and see that we put it into effect.'

When Oliver Letwin was appointed by Keith Joseph he understood his task to be to help introduce the voucher scheme - 'everything else was ancillary to that.' In performing this role he was not 'Keeper of the Ark' but helping to push new and alternative policy thinking within the department. The emphasis that Maurice Peston gave to the political nature of his role has already been shown. He had a generally, 'very high view of the civil service and didn't see the role of political advisers, or the possible future role of cabinets, as to do with lack of expertise.' He saw the provision of political support as vital:

Any organization works via conflict and I actually think the role of the civil service is at least 50 per cent to test out the politicians' ideas ... It was believed by the Labour Party, as in the Tory Party, that the civil service was too good at sidetracking people; therefore there was a need for more political commitment on the part of the adviser.

When asked whether the concept of 'Keeper of the Ark of Manifesto' was appropriate, Peston replied, 'Yes, very much so; I regard that as the central role of advisers - saying, "this is party policy. It cannot be changed without good cause, and civil servants not liking it, is not really good cause." I was a firm believer that that was what I was most there for.' Peston stressed however, that his ministers were keen that the civil servants should not feel that they were undermined by advisers. Perhaps the clearest example of an adviser stating his role

in these terms comes from Butler (1986): 'A prime function of special advisers, and to a great extent their justification for existence, is acting as "Keepers of the Ark of the Manifesto"' (pp.14-15).

We noted earlier Barbara Castle's belief in the need for 'political reminders' and 'a political conscience at the heart of the departmental battle.' Brian Abel-Smith was clearly attuned to this need: 'The object of a special adviser is to make sure the minister is giving sufficient time to the main policy commitments of the party and that they are properly considered.' Another of Castle's advisers, Jack Straw, felt there was more need to help ministers maintain the thrust of their policies at DHSS than Environment because, 'there was a high degree of scepticism at a departmental level about the policy of removing pay beds from the NHS'.

The concept of ministers in different departments having differing needs or reasons for appointing advisers, was clearly demonstrated by Stuart Holland. As explained earlier he was appointed by Judith Hart at ODM but spent some time working for Tony Benn at the Department of Industry on the Industry White Paper. The latter case he felt presented an 'encounter situation' between some of the civil servants and the ministers who, with their advisers, successfully battled to ensure that the committee drafting the White Paper reflected the policy contained in the manifesto. Holland claimed it was, 'a classic example of the case for special advisers.' The situation was different at ODM where, 'the department was basically behind Judith and very glad she was there, so it was dealing with some individual issues as they came up and pushing some individual issues to which the department was more resistant.' Similarly Tony Banks felt ministers in other departments would use advisers to help maintain the thrust of their policies but this was not really necessary for Judith Hart who was a respected world expert on her subject and was on top of the department. At Industry, Holland, an expert on the location costs of industry, showed how expertise and commitment can be combined. He also argued that even when a minister has specialist knowledge and his department with him, there is still a role for an adviser. Interviewed whilst a Labour frontbencher he declared: 'I would want them. At the moment, my Shadow responsibility is Treasury Affairs. I am a professional economist but however wide

one's experience as a professional economist, there are certain areas where you need specialist advice, or you should get second opinions.'

Provision of expertise. Holland illustrates points that became clear in the earlier discussion: the provision of committed expertise can be linked to filling gaps in the knowledge and experience of the civil service and/or to commitment to party policies. Many advisers, including Abel-Smith, Mitchell and Peston, thought the phrase, 'committed expertise' appropriate. Three further examples demonstrate facets of this concept. Tony Lynes, author of The Penguin Guide to Supplementary Benefits (1972), was appointed by Labour ministers in the 1960s and '70s. He stated: 'the reason I was appointed, basically, was that I had worked with the people concerned outside government ... one was known to both understand, which is quite important at DHSS, and sympathize with, the policies.' Anthony Lester claimed that Roy Jenkins needed somebody,

to be in creative tension with the department... The immediate issues involved sex discrimination and race relations legislation and the policy formation on that. And that was the area where I was an expert. So it was the fact that the Home Office lacked experience in that area of law, coupled with the fact that Mr Jenkins and I shared common values which made it a sensible thing to do ... it was the expertise of someone committed to producing the best possible sex and race discrimination legislation one could.

The experience of Arthur Cockfield provides a particularly interesting example. Cockfield, a former postgraduate student of Hayek, rose rapidly in the Inland Revenue to become a Commissioner of the Board. He then joined Boots eventually becoming Managing Director. His role in helping to devise Tory taxation policy in the 1960s has been described. The policies he helped to develop were based, he claimed, on certain principles including a move from direct to indirect taxation. When he became Tax Adviser, therefore, to his role of providing political support to help drive through the policies, he brought an unrivalled combination of philosophical commitment, detailed knowledge of the policies and an expert administrative specialism in the subject matter. More than anybody else his role may be thought of as being sui generis and beyond that of an ordinary special adviser.

A number of advisers, including Lynes and Peston, opined that whilst they were bringing in expertise this was not necessarily required because of gaps in the services provided by the department. Similarly some advisers, especially from the CRD, saw themselves as experts in the policies of the party even though they lacked the academic or business background of other experts. In Table 2 the answers to question 14 are analysed by party in government. For a few key questions the 1979-87 results were further divided into 1979-81 and 1982-87 but this is not shown on Table 2. Virtually all the advisers appointed in the 1979-81 period thought of themselves as being in some way chosen for their expertise - even if it was related to the work in Opposition on developing party policies. This finding fits nicely with the view of Patrick Jenkin that Mrs Thatcher made it known in Opposition that she was 'opposed to the idea of political advisers to departments. She was initially very prepared to consider expert advisers.'

Whilst Jenkin's adviser at the DHSS, Roger Dyson, was an academic (at Keele University) his specialism was in the practical issues of management/industrial relations within the health service. Through activities such as seminars he had developed a large network of contacts and claimed that, 'Patrick wanted my expertise ... and wanted a direct line that hadn't come through the official channels, to some of the senior managers in the service which would have given more of a direct feel for what was happening.' Dyson is, therefore, only a partial exception to the general argument developed by Tim Boswell that the Tory expert special advisers tend to be, like him, practitioners not academics. This constitutes one of the major distinctions between the parties in terms of advisers used.

New/alternative policies. One of the Tory practitioners was Tom Baron, Managing Director of Christian Salvesen (Properties) Ltd. Appointed by the new Secretary of State for the Environment, Baron felt that Heseltine thought he had original ideas: '"you're the burr under the saddle", he said.' Baron was put to work within the objectives set by Heseltine, including getting value for money, improving and easing the planning system, and improving the production of housing for the bottom end of the market. Baron's role is one of the clearest examples of how the provision of expertise can overlap with the introduction of new and

TABLE 2: Questionnaire Findings on Reasons for Appointment-Percentage
Response Broken Down by Party in Government. L = Labour 74-79 (N=40)
T = Tories 79-87 (N=29)

14) Various reasons have been suggested for the appointment of special advisers. In the case of your appointment, what importance do you think was attached by the minister to each of the following:

		Substan tial	Consid erable	Moder ate	Slight	Neglig ible
a) Relieve the overload of business on ministers.	L	6	17	20	28	29
	T	10	16	39	13	22
b) Provide political support, within the departments staffed by "neutral" civil servants, to ministers wishing to introduce changes.	L	28	36	8	17	11
	T	19	47	12	6	16
c) Fill any gaps in the knowledge or experience of the civil service with experts committed to the policies of the party.	L	17	30	17	22	14
	T	26	32	13	13	16
d) Help ministers carry out a more effective collective role in cabinet.	L	26	21	15	23	15
	T	16	10	32	19	23
e) Prevent ministers drifting away from the party by liaising with the various sections of the party.	L	5	29	18	11	37
	T	3	39	26	13	19
f) Help the ministers with the presentation of their views on departmental and general issues.	L	24	33	24	5	14
	T	56	19	16	0	9
g) Provide new/alternative policy ideas.	L	11	31	35	8	15
	T	26	33	30	7	4
h) Reduce the isolation of ministers by playing an aide/confidant role.	L	18	32	18	25	7
	T	19	31	8	8	34

alternative thinking. Provision of such thinking can equally be linked to the theme of supplying political support and doing so within the context of the features of the place of special advisers developed in Chapter 3. Thus Frances Morrell, one of Tony Benn's advisers, thought that, 'providing political support within the department was very important - we formed a political community round the minister ... the essential point is to give the Secretary of State the opportunity of alternative sources of advice within his working life and within the framework of the Official Secrets Act.'

Cabinet briefing. Item (g) of question 14, provision of new/alternative policy ideas, was analysed out of order here because of its overlap with the linked items (b) and (c) but it is now useful to return to the questions as listed in Tables 1 and 2. The answers to question 14d) on helping ministers prepare for Cabinet, include some by advisers whose role almost entirely involved working on papers from their own department to be discussed in Cabinet. For most advisers, however, the briefing was mainly to help prepare their minister for non-departmental issues. Some advisers, including the economist David Metcalf, felt this was the main reason for their original appointment. In his case he thought the minister, Stan Orme, was particularly interested in briefing for economic issues, with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) discussions being very important. Vicky Kidd, echoing comments from Ted Short, thought that one of her two principal duties entailed providing, 'input into consideration of other departments' papers for Cabinet and its committees.' The greater emphasis placed on this role by Labour rather than Tory ministers is reflected in the Table - it was noticeably less important for Tories after 1981. However, there were still some Tory advisers in this period who thought it was a most important reason, including Michael Dobbs - appointed by Norman (now Lord) Tebbit. For quite a number of advisers this was not a reason for their appointment.

Party liaison. Many advisers thought that the second part of 14e) - liaising with the party - was more appropriate than the first part which suggested that this was necessary to prevent ministers drifting away from the party. This probably helps to explain why so few advisers thought it was substantially a reason for their appointment. A few Labour special advisers thought it would be more appropriate to suggest

that a reason for appointment was to prevent the party from drifting away from the minister. Roger Liddle argued that, 'liaison with the party was very much part of my activities but the purpose of liaison was to do it from Bill's point of view ... rather than keeping him in line with the Labour Party.' Advisers who knew from the start that party liaison had been a reason for their appointment include David Hill and David Lipsey. Hill mirrored Roy Hattersley's comment quoted earlier by saying: 'Corresponding with the party was one of the things I knew I was going to have to do.' According to Lipsey, 'squaring Transport House was a major part of the job - brokering the endless party committees.' Labour advisers who thought party liaison was an important reason for their appointment include: Tony Banks, Margaret Beckett, John Lyttle, Tom McNally, Frances Morrell, and Jack Straw. Generally they worked for the ministers, referred to earlier, who played an important role within the party's NEC structure. However, about 40 per cent of advisers to Labour ministers did not think that this was at all a reason for their appointment.

Question 14e) was so phrased partly to reflect the opinion expressed by Douglas Hurd in the quotation at the start of this chapter, about encouraging ministers to have advisers because he could see them losing touch with colleagues, the party, and the political strategy of the Government. John Cope agreed that liaison with the party was part of the main reason for his original appointment which was to assist his minister, John Davies, with the political side of his role. The post-1979 Tory advisers who felt this was an important reason for their appointment were more likely to have a CRD background. John Houston, for example, was appointed by the new Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey (now Lord) Howe, who was generally anxious to retain his contacts with the domestic political scene and specifically wanted somebody to work with the party in the preparation of the manifesto for the European elections. Again, however, some of the Tories thought that the second part of question 14e) was more appropriate than the first. The notion of the adviser operating along lines of communication on behalf of his minister was captured in the evocative phrase of David Coleman who thought some ministers regarded the main function of advisers as being a, 'pot of political grease and lubricant, relieving them of tiresome and time consuming chores.'

Once again, Environment supplies a clear example of the need felt by certain ministers to appoint somebody capable of liaising with councillors and knowledgeable about local government. Peter Davis recalled that when he was appointed in 1984 the incoming Minister for Local Government, Kenneth Baker, said he wanted him, 'to liaise with Conservative local government groups in the trouble spots that he was taking on - the abolition areas, the rate-capping areas - because he knew that I knew a lot of the people.'

Presentation Helping ministers with presentation, question 14f), comes out strongly as a major reason for appointment. This compares well with the evidence from interviews. Once again the figures for Tory advisers appointed in 1979-81 are closer to those of the Labour advisers than they are to those of the Tories after 1981. Richard Ehrman was clear that speech writing was one of the main reasons for his appointment in 1984 because Tom King, Secretary of State for Employment, set him a selection test. Ehrman had to write a speech, and a job description outlining what he thought he could offer. Others have been clear that speech writing was a major reason for their appointment:

the basic concept of the political adviser at that stage was to help with speech writing (Robert Jackson appointed in 1973 by Maurice Macmillan).

It was a political battle which was being fought through press releases and speeches. It was a matter of winning the battle in the country for policies which were pretty unpopular at the time ... I was specifically brought in to do that. (Robin Harris, appointed in 1981 by Geoffrey Howe).

Basically he said, 'I need someone who can help me to write speeches.' That was what I was taken on for. (Christopher Mockler, appointed in 1983 by Patrick Jenkin).

Departments will concede most easily that an adviser has a role in helping with presentation and Parliamentary affairs. (Edward Bickham).

I was brought in initially mainly to write speeches for Lawson. (Rodney Lord, appointed 1983).

Speech writing is something which will always come top of the list of priorities when ministers are telling special advisers what they want done. (David Coleman, appointed by Leon Brittan, 1985).

Several of these comments correlate very well with the needs expressed by ministers including Hurd, Jenkin, and Brittan. For some of the advisers quoted above, and others, help with presentation as a reason for appointment meant more than speech writing. Michael Dobbs, who continued to work part time as a director of Saatchi and Saatchi, was appointed partly to assist Norman Tebbit plan how to present the case so as to change the way people perceived the Government's role in dealing with unemployment. That help with presentation is now seen as being perhaps the major reason for a minister wishing to appoint a special adviser, was highlighted by a spoof 'job description' for a special adviser appearing in the The Times Diary 26 August 1988: 'Do you have a keen interest in legal affairs? Are you creative? Are you tactful? Most important, do you want to relieve civil servants of the onerous job of writing speeches for an increasingly publicity-conscious Lord Chancellor, Lord Mackay of Clashfern? If you fit the frame, apply to become the latest of Whitehall's "special advisers."'

Aide/confidant. About a third of Tory advisers answering question 14h) thought that acting as an aide/confidant to reduce the isolation of ministers was not in the slightest a reason for their appointment. Furthermore, there are particular difficulties with the aide/confidant role in distinguishing how far it became a function of special advisers as opposed to being an original reason. Nevertheless, it was clearly in the mind of Anthony (now Lord) Barber who, Brendon Sewill recalled, telephoned him whilst he was on holiday in France and asked him to become his 'alter ego'. Barber had not been Shadow Chancellor. Therefore, being asked to take over the Treasury on the death of Iain Macleod only a few weeks after the return of the 1970 Conservative Government, he felt, according to Sewill, he wanted somebody at his right hand who knew how and why the policies were developed. Sewill was Director of the CRD and this appointment illustrates how the aide/confidant role can overlap with other reasons for appointment.

There are a range of other circumstances in which a relationship between the minister and adviser can already have developed and the aide/confidant role clearly be seen as a reason for appointment. Some advisers, including Vicky Kidd, David Lipsey, and Tom McNally, who worked for their ministers in Opposition, thought this important, with

Lipsey referring to, 'the age old need for somebody to be on the minister's side - the totally loyal aide role.' Kidd mirrored the comments noted earlier from Ted Short, and McNally described it as, 'just this rather intangible ... somebody to talk to outside the machine.'

Certain ministers appoint people known to them in ways other than through their work in the research department or on party policy committees. Sometimes such advisers, including Elizabeth Thomas who was assistant literary editor of the New Statesman before being appointed by Michael Foot in 1976, believe that the aide/confidant role was in the minister's mind initially. Echoing the views of Judith Hart, her minister, Maggie Sidgreaves thought she was appointed to continue playing a 'confidante' role that had developed over the years.

The views of three Labour ministers, Benn, Castle, and Shore, that ministerial isolation is a reason for appointing advisers have been followed through from writings prior to the appointments to agreement retrospectively that these opinions influenced their actions. Several of their advisers also thought this was a major reason - the most important one according to David Cowling. Michael Artis, an economist appointed for one day a week by Peter Shore at Trade, believed Shore wanted somebody with economics training who was a non-civil servant and politically sympathetic, 'to discuss, in the role of a confidant, the economic papers and his interpretation of what civil servants were doing.' This statement reflects a similar convergence of themes to that contained in Shore's 1966 quotation given earlier. Brian Abel-Smith argued that giving ministers the feeling that they have a friend to discuss things with was, 'an inevitable function and of course to give them support and to tell them, "you were right and you had to do it."' Both Abel-Smith and Straw worked for Castle and Shore. Straw's evidence is particularly interesting because it combines experience as an adviser with that of a shadow minister:

having somebody who is a confidant is important because politics at a senior level is a very isolated business and it is egocentric. It ought not to be, but it is there, anyway people are very competitive ... even in the Shadow Cabinet you can be isolated in terms of policy decisions, but in Government you are physically isolated from people.

One of Tony Benn's advisers, Ken Griffin, also remarked on the importance for ministers of talking with somebody who was not a permanent civil servant. Frances Morrell, however, observed that she was an adviser: 'that was specifically the role - I never saw myself as an aide.' Nevertheless, her stress on building a political community around the minister was noted earlier.

In some instances what a minister claimed were his reasons correlated very poorly with the perceptions of his advisers. Overall, however, the findings from the questionnaire reinforce the picture of ministers possessing a wide variety of reasons and generally varying from each other both in specific requirements and in levels of awareness of their needs.

Ministers' Reasons as seen by Civil Servants.

In general, and in many specific cases, civil servants' assessment of why ministers thought they needed advisers matched those of ministers and advisers. A small number of the many examples that could be given illustrate this. David Edmonds, as principal private secretary, was present at the meeting when Michael Heseltine decided to appoint Tom Baron. Edmonds argued that the new Conservative Government was determined to have a fresh look at issues such as the planning system, the way housing was administered and giving a bigger role to the private sector. Baron was appointed because the contributions he was making at the meeting with the Volume Builders Study Group, 'impressed Michael Heseltine ... For a Secretary of State faced with that set of objectives, the additional knowledge and background that someone from the private sector could bring we hoped would be invaluable, and that, in fact, proved to be the case.'

Douglas Hurd's view on the need for advisers to help maintain contact not only with the party but also informally with interest groups, illustrates the model developed in Chapter 3. Furthermore, Home Office ministers (including Jenkins, Brittan and Hurd) and their advisers (including Robin Harris, Coleman and Bickham) referred to assistance with presentation as being a reason for their appointment.

Sir Brian Cubbon, former permanent secretary at the Home Office 1979-88, linked these points and he agreed that John Harris could be seen as a precursor of the special advisers. He suggested that,

the whole accountability of ministers to the public was transformed in the sixties; the media interest became intense ... you had to have a line on everything and the old civil service approach rather crumbled when you said, 'nothing to do with us, it is a matter for the chief constable'. ... Ministers then, rightly, wanted a different range of, not necessarily views on policy but, views on how to deal with interest groups as well as the media. In my experience of it in the Home Office that was the trigger for the special adviser, and in parallel, almost at the same time, the growing importance of junior ministers.

Working as a Treasury civil servant in 1979 David Willetts (later a member of the Prime Minister's Policy Unit, Director of the Centre for Policy Studies, and Conservative MP) thought advisers were brought in because they had helped develop policy in Opposition. Ministers wanted top grade understanders rather than second grade believers in the permanent bureaucracy. The fear was not whether or not officials were believers but whether all the civil servants would understand, after working for Labour ministers, what it was the new Government wanted to achieve. Therefore, in 1979, there was a role for advisers to help transmit the message and further develop policies.

In general, several themes emerge quite strongly from the analysis of officials' perceptions of ministers' reasons. First, quite a few ministers were thought to want to appoint somebody who had a personal and/or political loyalty to them and had perhaps worked with them in Opposition. Thus Lord Brimelow, former permanent secretary at the Foreign Office, thought that the civil service attitude was that they must not be disloyal to minister A, but if they were actively loyal to A how could they be actively loyal to his successor B who might hold diametrically opposed views. However, 'A and B want loyalty to them, not abstention from disloyalty to them. That is the basis for wanting political advisers.' Second, some officials thought it went one stage further and that ministers, especially initially, were, to varying degrees, worried about the bureaucracy. Some officials believed it was outright suspicion, whilst for others, including the late Sir Hamilton Whyte of the Foreign Office, 'ministers tend naturally to be a bit wary

of their officials certainly when they first arrive in the department because they are so heavily dependent on them, and they don't want to be taken over by them totally.' Third, several officials admitted that ministers wanted somebody to bring an expertise that they felt was lacking in the department.

Fourth, many civil servants suggested that ministers appointed advisers to inject party political thinking into policy discussions and/or to liaise with the party. Sir Douglas Wass, former permanent secretary at the Treasury, claimed that,

Ministers may feel that civil service advisers, though perfectly competent at evaluating and implementing policy free from party political considerations, need to be reinforced by somebody who has got a closer knowledge of what party susceptibilities might be ... It is helpful to a minister, I think, to have someone who is looking at the activities of the department through political spectacles ... Of course, he's doing it himself but he's often so busy that he doesn't have time to maintain all the contacts with the backbenches, the party research offices, or with the party bureaucracy, and the special adviser can do that for him.

This theme partly overlaps with the first and also with the fifth reason mentioned by a number of officials - help with presentation. Speeches to political audiences and the political content of other speeches were the aspects of presentation that advisers were seen as most likely to have been appointed to provide.

Several of these overlapping themes emerged in Andrew Semple's assessment of why Tony Crosland, the Secretary of State for the Environment to whom he was principal private secretary, appointed David Lipsey. He felt that Crosland assumed as a matter of course that he would want Lipsey to help him with the political end of his duties. This was to deal not only with party matters but,

particularly with the sensitivities of the Labour Party in relation to both personalities and the way policy is developed. He was afraid he would not find within the DoE, from the civil service, a proper understanding of that ... There would be speeches with a political content to be drafted ... And someone to talk to about the way his thinking was going in political and philosophical terms as well as in practical and implementation terms.

Some officials, however, felt it was difficult to know why ministers had appointed advisers. A few felt advisers had almost become a status symbol. Yet others suggested that the main reason for appointment was the encouragement or pressure applied to the minister rather than his own assessment of needs.

SECTION C: APPOINTMENT OF SPECIAL ADVISERS FOR REASONS OTHER THAN NEEDS PERCEIVED BY MINISTERS.

In Section A we saw that it is not sufficient merely to examine the reasons in terms of ministers' perceptions of their needs. In some cases a specific analysis of needs was the prime factor. In others, consideration of needs played some part, but a range of organizations and individuals who believed ministers needed special advisers also influenced the decision. This section explores the nature of this influence and who exerted it.

The influence ranges from specific pressure on individual ministers, to the generation of a climate of opinion that ministers should appoint special advisers and the creation of opportunities for them to do so. It was primarily associated with Number Ten and with the party, but outside commentators and the civil service occasionally played a role. These points are examined in mainly chronological order and the emphasis will be on the assistance that other organizations and people thought the ministers needed. However, it is sometimes difficult to disentangle this from the reforms that an organization, such as the party bureaucracy, was advocating because it perceived them to be in its own best interests.

In 1964 a Fabian Working Group produced a pamphlet, The Administrators, claiming that if an incoming government was to be able to, 'succeed in devising, presenting, and executing new policies' (p.41), there was a need for, 'explicit provision for two types of political appointment - experts who are called in to help to implement the particular policies of the government of the day, and personal aides to provide general help to Ministers in their private office.' (p.42) The experts would be wanted for their expertise rather than general political advice and might not even be associated with the party in

power. It was thought that there was already adequate formal provision for temporary appointments, although the Labour Government would need to make fuller use of them than some preceding governments. The reasoning behind the second type of political appointment was that ministers,

may feel the need to have near them persons whose personal and political judgment, as well as expertise, they trust ... a Minister would be able to make a number of outside appointments - up to say, three or four - as assistants in his private office ... they would not make administrative decisions; they would be there to assist the Minister in making use of the machine to formulate policy (p.40).

The Working Group did not propose that such appointments should be made automatically in all departments. They also advocated greater recruitment of specialists into the civil service and wanted them to be more widely used at a policy-making level.

In practice, Labour ministers appointed many experts and encouraged greater recruitment and better deployment of specialists. In both cases, these were predominantly economists. Only the appointment of John Harris clearly fitted the second category of political appointments. Paradoxically, the three ministers who appointed him - Patrick Gordon Walker, Michael Stewart and Roy Jenkins - were probably on more harmonious terms with their civil servants than were many other ministers. This paradox, which was noted by Jenkins, shows that the appointment of advisers should not be seen solely as a response to presumed civil service obstruction. There was no encouragement from the Prime Minister for ministers to make outside appointments to their private offices. Shortly before he became Prime Minister in 1964, Harold Wilson was asked by Norman Hunt whether there was a case for a minister having, 'his own private little cabinet'. He replied,

My own experience, having tried as a minister to bring in one or two outside experts with the right political approach, was that I did far better when I relied on loyal civil servants who knew what I wanted, in my private office, and who saw to it that the rest of the department knew what I wanted (Hunt, 1964, p.18).

Nevertheless, some consideration was given by various ministers to the introduction of a political cabinet. Barbara Castle recorded in her Diaries (1984) that on 13 April 1970 she discussed the idea with a group of civil servants. However, none of the ministers introduced one. The

reasons for this were explained, and justified, in Wilsonian terms by the arch critic of the civil service, Richard Crossman:

The danger is, if you bring in two or three people to a British Department, they may merely isolate you from the Department. You sit there with them and the Department makes sure nothing happens. A total frigidity sets in because Departments are very hostile to foreign elements, and they feel very strongly that the link between a Minister and his Department is not something that he must introduce from outside ... I am reluctantly convinced after six years' experience that if you want to get your way in a Department the worse thing you can possibly do is to say, 'I trust you so little that I am bringing with me four of my own people from outside who will be my Private Office.' (1972, pp.68-9).

The Labour Party, as distinct from the Labour Government, continued to advocate both types of political appointment. It did so in its evidence to Fulton quoted earlier. The party recommended that ministers should have the right to appoint personal assistants because the load on the political head of a department had grown greater and the result was that, 'a Minister can be a lonely man' (1968, Vol.5 (2), p.665). The evidence suggested personal assistants might have three functions: to help with departmental policy formulation by keeping the minister in touch with what was going on in the department; to brief the minister on cabinet agenda items and to liaise with members of other ministers' cabinets and thus form a network to parallel the informal link between officials; and to transmit the policy impulse from the minister to officials working in the department who never saw him. The Fulton Report welcomed the practice of ministers bringing in a small number of experts but did not lend its support to the introduction of ministerial cabinets (1978, Vol. 1, paras. 129 and 285).

Tory thinking in Opposition in the 1960s about the need to reform the machinery-of-government partly reflected the discontent with the civil service expressed by some Labour ministers. However, the main impulse for appointing outsiders came in the form of the push for the Businessmen's Team to be brought into government and for the establishment of the CPRS. In 1970 there was little, if any, concerted pressure on ministers to introduce political secretaries and it is

difficult fully to support Rose's contention that, 'the Conservative government of 1970 moved to strengthen the influence of party by appointing a group of men to act as political secretaries or special advisers to senior ministers.' (1974, p.451). He also suggests that they were, 'not intended to become involved in the administration of policies, but rather, to strengthen the party element in the presentation of policies and the partisan definition of the minister's mind within his department.' (p.421). It is correct that there had been, as noted earlier, an unprecedented effort by the Tories in Opposition to develop policies. This work, reassessed recently by many of the participants in a Contemporary Record symposium (1990), produced particularly detailed policies on taxation, trade union reform, and the organization of central government. Furthermore, advisers were appointed by ministers dealing with each of these key areas.

When these and other appointments are examined individually, however, it is difficult to see them as part of a systematic attempt to strengthen the influence of the party. Robert Carr's opposition to advisers in general was noted, as was his explanation of the peculiar circumstances that led to his appointing Stephen Abbot. Carr felt that in the Conservative Party, there was, 'a gradual, evolutionary growth of bringing people in, rather than a conscious policy to do so.' Commenting on his appointment of Miles Hudson in 1971, Lord Home said he, 'never viewed it as part of the development of a system.' And Hudson, despite having been head of overseas affairs at CRD, said that once he became political secretary to the Foreign Secretary, his links with the party machine, 'were rather tenuous.' A similar point has already been noted in the cases of Mark Schreiber and Brendon Sewill, and the latter was not brought in at the start of the Government. The adviser appointed by Chancellor Iain Macleod immediately following the 1970 election, was Arthur Cockfield, but, because of his experience and career, he felt his role bore 'little resemblance' to that of the other advisers. Finally, Douglas Hurd believed his appointment as Political Secretary to the Prime Minister was much more in the tradition of personal appointments by the Prime Minister, than it was part of the development of a system.

David Howell illustrates the paradox of advisers being introduced partly to help implement policies developed by the party leaders in

Opposition, but not really being seen as a strengthening of the role of the party. Commenting generally on appointments made by the incoming Conservative Government he said:

The party in those days didn't come into Conservative politics the way it came into politics of the left ... it was basically an organizational idea and what we felt we were doing was adding an organizational thrust... There were certain policies which the Conservatives had dreamed up, of tax reform, of trade union reform, of organizational reform ... We were anxious to get those through, and in so far as it was felt that the civil service machine wasn't going to help too much with that, then we thought that ministers should have extra eyes and ears in the form of research appointees. But there was never a mention anywhere of a sense of a party line, and we have got to get it through.

Nevertheless, in 1970, according to Hurd in An End to Promises, there was a determination that there should not be a repeat of what had happened at the end of the Macmillan Government in 1963. Then, there had been, 'a general feeling in the Conservative Party that Ministers had drifted out of touch with their own supporters in the country, partly because there was not enough regular contact between Ministers and Central Office' (1979, p.93). Machinery was established in 1970 to try to ensure there was not a repeat but Hurd does not mention the political secretaries in this context. However, he does point out that the reason why senior party advisers always feel that their advice begins to carry less weight when the party enters Government is that, 'The Official Secrets Act and (far more important) the entrenched habits of Whitehall turn the familiar friend into an occasional acquaintance' (p.94). For William Waldegrave, who became Hurd's assistant as Political Secretary to Prime Minister Heath and was intended eventually to succeed, 'the key to the rise of the political adviser is the Official Secrets Act.' He referred to, 'the well-known phenomenon of the party advisers being excluded from any up to date knowledge and therefore, the rapid outdateding of any advice they gave.' Having been close to party spokesman in Opposition, the people remaining in CRD resented the way they were, 'steadily edged out by the civil service using the secrecy barrier ... therefore the jobs were getting boring and so they thought couldn't they get inside the departments somehow.'

Perhaps it was this pressure, combined with both the concern to maintain thrust and the degree of effort devoted to developing detailed policies in Opposition, that led to the creation of a climate of opinion in which a number of individual decisions were taken to appoint advisers in 1970-71.

One of the projects suggested by the Businessmen's Team following the election was a review of the organization of ministers' private offices. Behind this proposal lay a desire to examine the advantages of the French cabinet system and see whether private offices could include experienced political aides as well as permanent officials. The civil service, 'resisted this proposal and its supporters were unable to persuade the Prime Minister of its desirability.' (Pollitt, 1980, pp.88-9). Mark Schreiber and Tony Hart had been sent to Paris to report on the adaptability of the cabinet system to British purposes. Their finding, according to Hennessy, 'was surprisingly wishy-washy - "If British Ministers feel the need for some personal reinforcement ... there are features of the cabinet system which could be adapted to fill the need" - and nothing happened.' (1989, p.238).

As noted by Hurd, there was concern in 1970 that the party and the Government should not drift apart. Inevitably this began to happen and he became so concerned about it that he sent a paper to the Prime Minister entitled, The Party as Auxiliary to Government. In it he developed the theme that, 'There seems to be greater difficulty in getting Ministers to think politically about their daily problems. As a result there is a tendency in the Party to criticize the Private Office and Press Departments of Ministers who sometimes appear to keep them in a sort of cocoon, over-protected from the outside world.' (1979, pp.94-5). Hurd's anxiety about the lack of coordination between ministers and between the Government and the party, especially over the presentation of policy, echoed earlier fears expressed by John Wyndham from Conservative Central Office in 1951. (Egremont, 1968). In 1972-3 Hurd's concern led him, as explained in the quotation at the start of this chapter, to encourage more ministers to appoint political secretaries. He played a part in the subsequent appointment of John Cope and Robert Jackson by John Davies and Maurice Macmillan respectively.

When the Labour Party produced Labour's Programme for Britain in 1972, its thinking was similar to before but went one stage further than the evidence to Fulton and advocated the full French system of cabinets. According to a party official then working at Transport House, the introduction of special advisers, 'was part of the policy discussions leading up to the '74 election.' There would be a group of people, 'to maintain links with the party and provide a form of alternative advice to the minister. We were already aware that Cabinet papers were often circulated late, and that ministers could be isolated, because we found this in the '64-'70 period.'

Barbara Castle records (1980) that at the very start of the 1974 Labour Government Harold Wilson told the NEC of the Labour Party: "My job is to be the custodian of the Manifesto. I have already recruited a political team at No.10 which will have access to all the documents. I am asking all my colleagues to appoint political advisers to their private office". (Diary entry, 6 March 1974). It is important to assess how, and why, the thinking in the party was translated into the adoption of special advisers in 1974 in a way that had not fully occurred in 1964.

One factor, again demonstrating the appropriateness of the 1970 starting date for this study, was that Labour noticed the developments made by the Tories. The party official recalled, 'we were quite impressed by the use they made of them.' Similarly, Harold Wilson (1976, p.98) suggests special advisers represented a formalization of a step started under the Tories: 'Reference has been made to Edward Heath's political appointments, some of whom were integrated in to the official machine as full-time, though temporary, civil servants. The incoming Labour Government in 1974 regularized the position by treating them as a special category of "political advisers."'

Perhaps more importantly, a climate of opinion had been created in which it was felt that the civil service had been partly to blame for the failures of the Labour Government between 1964-70. This view was

cogently expressed by Marcia Williams in the passages quoted earlier from Inside Number 10. She went on to claim:

During the Opposition years from 1970 to 1974 Labour carefully introduced into each Shadow Minister's office a political administrative assistant. Many came from the Rowntree Trust. Others were personally recruited. All trained for the day when Labour would return to power. They trained to become the political ears and eyes of their Minister. Since 1974 they have become a formidable team of able men and women keeping ministers informed of political developments, and maintaining political contacts throughout Whitehall and the country, and watching the work of their departments for political content (p.284).

It is here that the greatest difficulty arises in distinguishing between the generation of a climate of opinion, the creation of opportunities and the exertion of pressure. One of the Rowntree Political Fellows, Roger Darlington, wrote of Marcia Williams's claim:

It was not like that at all. There were almost no assistants until 1972, and those who arrived then never took it for granted that they would be moving into Whitehall. Indeed the concept of Political Advisers was barely discussed ... The surprising point is that this most important constitutional innovation just happened. It was not exactly an accident, but it was certainly not planned (p.12).

Darlington stressed that the impetus for the introduction of political advisers came from the action of the Joseph Rowntree Social Services Trust in offering the Political Fellowships. Influenced by the Secretary of the Trust, Pratap (now Lord) Chitnis, the Directors took the view that party political spokesmen in Parliament did not have the day-to-day political back-up which they required and that, in terms of research, Opposition parties were at a substantial disadvantage compared to the Government which had the full resources of the civil service. The Political Fellowships allocated to the Parliamentary Labour Party were awarded to Roger Darlington, Adrian Ham, Vicky Kidd, David Lipsey and Matthew Oakeshott. They worked for Merlyn Rees, Denis Healey, Ted Short, Tony Crosland and Roy Jenkins respectively, each of whom joined the Cabinet in 1974, in the post which they had been shadowing.

Therefore, Darlington concludes, 'it was a totally natural process for these five Rowntree people to be taken into Whitehall as Political Advisers' (p.10). This implies that it was the creation of opportunities to appoint people, rather than any central planning, which was the major outside influence in these ministers' decision to appoint advisers.

The extent to which the Rowntree Fellows expected to be taken into Government with their ministers varied. Whereas Vicky Kidd did not remember the issue featuring at all before the election campaign, Matthew Oakeshott said, 'we never discussed it particularly but it was assumed that obviously that was the logic of it.' Adrian Ham felt that, 'it wasn't assumed to be absolutely automatic ... amongst the Rowntree Fellows it was regarded as quite a likely situation.' In early 1974 Labour politicians had not been expecting to fight an election - let alone, as David Lipsey said, form a Government - and so detailed planning had not begun. Asked whether he had assumed he would take Darlington in with him when Labour were next in Government, Rees replied, 'I don't think I did ... I didn't think we were going to win the next election so I hadn't really thought ahead.'

The contrast between the preparations made by the two Labour politicians who both wrote in June 1973 of the need for political advisers, Benn and Castle, illustrates the difficulties in interpreting the factors behind the expansion of special advisers in 1974. Two entries in Benn's Diaries (1989) indicate the extent of his preparations. On 17 March 1973, he wrote, Bish, Jackson and Holland, 'came in to tidy up the industrial policy paper. I had prepared a great chart showing what our objectives were and adding equality and redistribution of power under the general heading of "A fundamental and irreversible transfer of power and wealth", as the main objective of the next Labour Government. We have also included an advisory structure whereby Ministers would have personal cabinets attached to them.' Six months later, the entry for 21 September states: 'I offered Frances Morrell a job as political adviser in my department if we won the next Election.'

Strong evidence of the limitations on whatever planning there might

have been comes from Barbara Castle. Despite her firm advocacy of political advisers she was not a shadow minister in the run-up to the election and had nobody pencilled in for the slot. She was surprised when Harold Wilson said that ministers should make such appointments. Jack Straw, whose name was suggested to Mrs Castle by her husband, was equally taken aback when first asked to fill the position.

After Harold Wilson told ministers they should appoint special advisers, Transport House (Labour Party headquarters) offered to second staff (Rose, 1974). Eventually four special advisers were recruited from there - Ann Carlton, Margaret Jackson, Tom McNally and Terry Pitt. However, there was no suggestion that Transport House were exerting pressure on ministers to adopt special advisers. Indeed its position seems to have been rather ambivalent; Darlington (p.40) quoted a newspaper report in Autumn 1974 claiming that staff in the Labour Party Research Department in Transport House felt, 'peeved' about political advisers and were worried that they, 'might act as a buffer between Ministers and the general party.'

Harold Wilson, in his statement to Commonwealth Heads of Government, explained that there were two main reasons behind the political advisers experiment. The first was the pressure of work on ministers which made it almost impossible for a minister to, 'carry out his departmental and political responsibilities and at the same time sustain a detailed analysis of all the various nuances of policy ... he finds it increasingly difficult to play a constructive part in the collective business of the Government as a whole' (1976, p.202). The second reason was the nature of the civil service which, because of its permanence, 'can become isolated from changes of mood and structure in our society.' He summed up the case thus:

The Political Adviser is an extra pair of hands, ears and eyes and a mind more politically committed and more politically aware than would be available to a Minister from the political neutrals in the established Civil Service. This is particularly true for a radical reforming party in government, since, 'neutralism' may easily slip in to conservatism with a small 'c' (Wilson, 1976, p.204).

In addition to Marcia Williams, other key figures around Wilson who

advocated the use of special advisers included his press secretary from 1969-76, Joe Haines. In 1977 he wrote, 'it is essential to the future of democratic government, I believe, that Ministers should have access to more than one source of expert advice, particularly from those who are not civil servants' (p.39).

The pressure from Number Ten went further than merely generating a climate of opinion that was favourable to special advisers. Bernard Donoughue is thought to have persuaded several ministers in both the Wilson and Callaghan Governments to make appointments. In some cases ministers, including Stan Orme in 1976, readily agreed when the suggestion was made, but there were others where Donoughue had to exert whatever pressure he could before the minister agreed. He was keen that there should be advisers in as many departments as possible. Some of the Labour ministers, however, refused to recruit. The combination of the attitude towards the civil service expressed by Marcia Williams and the encouragement given to Ministers to appoint advisers was commented on at the time: 'That suspicion of the Civil Service goes a long way to explain why 38 political appointments have already been made by Mr Wilson and his ministers, and why all Cabinet ministers are under pressure to follow the trend.' (Wood, The Times, 10 June 1974).

The Labour Party had envisaged special advisers being located in private offices, but very few advisers formally did so. One who did was Tom McNally who took over the place of Miles Hudson, his Tory predecessor. McNally soon moved out because it was easier for him to work from a separate room close to the private office. In no department did the special advisers become the cabinet envisaged in Labour's Programme for Britain, (1972) although several ministers took steps towards building an unofficial cabinet.

The climate of opinion generated by Margaret Thatcher in 1979 was rather hostile to political - as opposed to expert - advisers. One of the Treasury's ministers in 1979, John Biffen claimed that Thatcher was, 'not a great enthusiast', and one of the department's advisers, George Cardona, suggested she was, 'very, very sceptical at first.' The attitude in 1979 partly reflected the strident opposition to Labour special advisers seen on the Tory backbenches and: 'there was a general feeling that it was time to "clear the board" of patronage, and in

almost deliberate contrast to the previous Labour Government, the number of special advisers was severely restricted.' (Butler, 1986 p.13). Furthermore, according to Adam Ridley, 'she saw quite rightly there was a problem about the Government bringing in large numbers of special advisers and then saying to officials, "You are grossly overstaffed. Cut. Cut."' Thatcher was thought to be more concerned with installing ministers with political will than with changes in the machinery-of-government. (Simmonds, 1988). Nevertheless, the Tories had developed radical policies in Opposition and, as we have seen, some ministers were keen to bring in people who had worked with them. Many people felt that the new Prime Minister came to office suspicious of bureaucrats, believing they would present obstacles to the implementation of her programme (Hennessy, 1989, p.627; Fred Ridley, 1983, p.36; Hugo Young, 1990, p.157). Others shared Thatcher's fears: 'Joseph, Howe and John Hoskyns were particularly exercised about the problem' (Hugo Young, p.157).

There were, therefore, a variety of factors at work in 1979 but only a few advisers were appointed and generally it was as a result of pressure from ministers rather than prime ministerial encouragement. Since then there has been, in the words of one minister, 'incremental' growth of the system. The 1980s saw a growing climate of opinion that political advisers were a 'good thing'. Several of the earlier quotations from ministers implied that this was one of the reasons behind their decision to make an appointment. However, it was probably ministers themselves who took the lead in generating the climate of opinion. Furthermore, in most individual cases it was up to the minister to persuade Thatcher to agree to the appointment of an extra special adviser. There were only a few instances where the opportunities created and/or prime ministerial encouragement could be seen as a reason for appointment. These include the initial decision that several of the CRD officials who had originally been destined for the Number Ten Policy Unit could instead go to the relevant departments they had been covering. Whilst reference has been made to encouragement given by the Prime Minister to Patrick Jenkin to reappoint David Young, Jenkin had already demonstrated his belief in advisers by appointing Roger Dyson at DHSS. Jenkin thought that, 'she has always been a supporter of getting more interaction between the private sector

and the public sector.'

It is clear that during the 1980s the number of special advisers increased and the bulk of the pressure for this came from the ministers. It is less clear whether Thatcher merely grudgingly tolerated the expansion or actively welcomed it; and if there was a change of mind, when it occurred. According to Jenkin, Thatcher came to realize, 'that the ministers who had them were sometimes more effective than ministers who didn't ... and particularly sometimes ministers who lack some of that political flair ... the ability to coin the phrase.' Some felt the tide had turned in favour of special advisers before the 1983 election but there was almost universal agreement that Thatcher was impressed with the performance of some of the advisers drafted in to help with that campaign. She was so pleased with the work of Stephen Sherbourne that she recruited him to be her political secretary. Some think that he was then in a position to encourage her to take a liberal attitude towards requests by ministers for permission to recruit special advisers. One minister also felt that Bernard Ingham supported the spread of special advisers in some departments.

Many of these points were brought together by Tom King who provided important illustrations of some of the general points. As Shadow Secretary of State for Energy in the late 1970s he had, as had his predecessor Patrick Jenkin, picked up from the department vibrations of unease about the role of advisers. Amongst the Tories in 1979, therefore,

initially there had been some aversion to too many political advisers but a number were taken on ... Then gradually people began to find they were very useful and they played a pretty valuable role in the 1983 election ... The Prime Minister recognized that they did have a useful role to play in government and I think also that the civil service found that whereas they had had some unhappy experiences with some in the past, the calibre of many of the people who came in was good ... An important element was the development of the Policy Unit at Number Ten. For the special advisers it was an important linkage and it provided a major strata in the political steering of the Government and certainly for Richard [Ehrman] that relationship was an important part of his work.

Various advisers believed that the advisers' role in the 1983 election campaign finally convinced Thatcher of their usefulness. Several advisers described the process, including Rob Shepherd (1983) and Chris Butler who in 1986 wrote:

The 1983 General Election was a watershed. Much of the responsibility of briefing the Prime Minister before the daily press conferences fell on special advisers. They performed well, and easily outshone their less experienced counterparts in the Conservative Research Department (CRD). In the Prime Minister's eyes, special advisers were now a 'good thing', no longer an unknown species so cunningly conceived under Socialism (p.13).

Many similarities exist between the factors behind the development of special advisers in the UK and those responsible for the transformation of the private offices of Australian ministers into teams of personal advisers. Perhaps the most striking comparisons are those between the reaction of incoming right wing governments, under Fraser in 1975 and Thatcher in 1979, to the development of advisory systems under their Labour predecessors. Fraser had come to office, according to Walter, 'with a commitment to cutting back government spending and the ministerial staff system - particularly given its criticism fostered by the conservative parties when in opposition - seemed one of the obvious targets.' Initially, numbers in the private offices were cut back but grew again eventually to reach the previous level as, 'faced with levels of complexity and demands for actions ... Fraser's ministers came to realize the value of, and need for, private staff' (pp.78-9).

In the UK a noticeable reduction in the number of departments in which there were special advisers occurred in 1979. However useful some civil servants had undoubtedly found special advisers to be, there was little encouragement from the civil service for the incoming Conservative Government to make such appointments. At some stages though, certain civil servants have encouraged ministers to recruit special advisers. Ian Bancroft told the Treasury and Civil Service Committee: 'I count it a minor triumph to have been one of the few

former Permanent Secretaries (perhaps the only one for all I know) who persuaded a reluctant Minister to appoint a special adviser' (1986, Vol.2, p.251). In the story quoted earlier from the The Times Diary about a special adviser being sought to work for the Lord Chancellor, David Walker alleged that: 'It is not clear that Lord Mackay has himself approved the idea. But his officials, who complained at a recent internal meeting of the high level of demands now made on them, think it an excellent scheme; the minister will, as necessary, be prevailed upon'. (The Times, 26 August 1988).

In a very few cases an existing special adviser was able to persuade his minister that an additional adviser was required. Anthony Lester for example, was faced with a major responsibility for assisting in drafting the proposals for sex discrimination legislation, in addition to acting as a more general adviser to Roy Jenkins on Home Office and other matters. He therefore, sought Roy Jenkins's approval for the appointment of an extra special adviser to work with him on plans for the Sex Discrimination Bill. Paul Chapman, one of the junior special advisers recruited to assist Brian Abel-Smith, suggested that his post, 'was created by Brian Abel-Smith who said to Barbara Castle that he needed some help and was it OK if he recruited someone to provide it.'

These three sections have shown that ministers decide to appoint special advisers for various reasons. In some cases the decision was not solely or specifically linked to the assistance the special adviser could provide in meeting the needs perceived by ministers.

CHAPTER FIVE. SELECTION OF SPECIAL ADVISERS, AND SUPPLY AND DEMAND.

SECTION A: SELECTION.

Special advisers are a minister's 'own people' and he is responsible for selecting them. A wide variety of methods have been used, but their selection cannot be entirely divorced from the reasons for their appointment. Sometimes the decision to recruit an adviser was explicitly made because there was an individual whom the minister wished to bring into the department. This usually occurred when a new government was formed. The clearest examples of individuals being recruited rather than people being selected to fill an existing slot occurred with Michael Heseltine's appointments although even here he was certain there was a problem to be tackled:

I met Tom Baron at a meeting organized by him of the Volume House Builders to teach, to tell and argue with ministers about what ministers should be doing in the housing policy. This was obviously a man with a contribution to make and when I left lunch I asked my permanent secretary if there was any way in which he could come and work for me within the Ministry.

In many other cases where the selection and the reasons for appointment were strongly linked, it is not clear to what extent the decision to appoint was influenced by the presence of a specific individual ready to come in or to continue in post. Once such decisions to appoint had been made, however, there was no question of a selection process; the obvious person was appointed. Included in this category were specialist special advisers such as David Young who were 'inherited'. This term was used by a number of ministers, including Patrick Jenkin, who came into a department in which an adviser had already been working. There was some debate about how far it had been planned that the Rowntree Political Fellows should become special advisers; nevertheless, in practice, they were all appointed. The ministers do not appear to have looked elsewhere for political advisers, although several of them appointed an additional specialist. Roy Jenkins said of Matthew Oakeshott, 'he had been a considerable success as a general political adviser and assistant and when I went back to

the Home Office, I kept him on, as most people did.'

In June 1979 not all the people from the CRD were appointed as special advisers. However those ministers who did appoint advisers mostly selected the relevant CRD official. Jim Prior not only appointed Rob Shepherd, the desk officer on Employment Affairs, but also Robbie Gilbert who was Shepherd's predecessor at the CRD. We have already seen how the Treasury Affairs team at CRD moved en bloc to become special advisers at the Treasury, and one of the ministers, Peter (now Lord) Rees, said they had, 'been part of the furniture for a long time in Opposition.'

Generally where a minister did not consider anybody other than the person appointed there were two possible scenarios. If it was as a specialist adviser then he was the obvious candidate for the department, and if it was as a political adviser he was the natural choice to go with his minister to whichever department he went. A slight variation on this came from Roy Hattersley. In a thoughtful answer to the question as to how automatic was his selection of David Hill and Maurice Peston to be his two special advisers, he commented that David Hill was an automatic choice and, 'he came along with me to the Ministry on the first morning', but Maurice Peston, as an economist, would have been, 'the inevitable nominee for a large number of ministries but not for every one of them.' The selection of Brian Abel-Smith at DHSS was almost automatic. Barbara Castle wrote in her Diary entry for 6 March 1974: 'I am losing no time in appointing staff. I rang up Brian Abel-Smith this morning and said simply, "Will you come to me?" to which he replied equally simply, "Of course." What a relief! He is unmatched' (1980). Sometimes, especially since 1983, a political adviser has become the obvious candidate to be retained in a department: the best example is John Whittingdale who was appointed by Norman Tebbit and 'inherited' by Leon Brittan and subsequently Paul Channon. Usually when a political adviser is inherited, his previous master has left the Government, or in the case of Tebbit ceased to be a departmental minister.

There were many cases where the minister had to find somebody because there was no one, obvious, person. Here too there were a range of approaches. Sometimes a minister asked a specific individual he knew personally, for example, several of the advisers appointed to the Treasury were known to Nigel Lawson, including Howard Davies, a former assistant secretary in the department, who had been the principal dealing with monetary policy when Lawson was Financial Secretary. Over a third of the special advisers, however, were not personally acquainted with the minister who appointed them. Some of these fall into the category of advisers who worked for the minister's predecessor and therefore became 'the obvious candidate', but many of them do not. A selection process then became necessary. A number of advisers suggested that they were chosen after the minister interviewed several candidates. This was not always well remembered by the ministers. Names are suggested to ministers from a variety of sources. Reference has already been made to the important role played by Douglas Hurd and Bernard Donoghue. Sometimes a departing minister, for example Mark Carlisle, recommends his former adviser. Richard Luce recalled that when Patrick Jenkin left the Government, and his replacement as Secretary of State for the Environment proposed to bring his own adviser with him, Jenkin telephoned saying he had had a very good adviser, Andrew Tyrie. After Tyrie moved on to the Treasury and Luce was looking for a replacement Nicholas Edwards recommended Chris Butler, who had resigned from his position as special adviser to the Secretary of State for Wales to contest unsuccessfully the Brecon by-election.

Within the Conservative Party there is a strong network amongst current and former members of the CRD. Indeed, whatever their method of selection, the CRD has been by far the most important source of special advisers for Conservative ministers. In the lists produced by the 1986 Treasury and Civil Service Committee, this fact is somewhat obscured; several advisers, including Tim Boswell, Michael Dobbs, Douglas French and John Houston are not recorded as having come from CRD because they had moved to other occupations prior to becoming special advisers. When Keith Joseph recruited a family friend and university don, Oliver Letwin, to help him in the DES there was no opportunity for him to become a paid adviser because Stuart Sexton had by that time been reinstated by Joseph. Letwin, therefore, was simultaneously appointed

to be both a special adviser and the Education desk officer at the CRD but only paid in the latter capacity - by the party not the state. Initially he also continued as a Cambridge fellow. Furthermore, he was one of the few advisers not to be a member of the Government party at the time of appointment. He did subscribe to broad Conservative principles and joined six months later although like other advisers in a similar position the lack of party membership had not been causing him any problems.

As Director of the CRD Robin Harris accepted that there was some degree of responsibility on it, when necessary, to help ministers find advisers. According to Peter Davis, the normal course of events for desk officers is that 'they will move on after doing a stint in the research department for two or three years. If they are lucky, they will be recruited as a special adviser.' Davis himself went from being special adviser to Kenneth Baker at Environment to become head of Home Affairs at CRD.

Several other advisers have taken posts, but not concurrently, in the CRD, most noticeably Peter Cropper who went from the CRD to the Treasury as a special adviser, returned in 1982 as Director, and in 1984 went back to the Treasury as special adviser to the Chancellor. It had been originally hoped that there would be some cross-fertilisation between the special advisers and the CRD. No one source was so predominant for Labour advisers. More came from the universities - especially specialists appointed on a part-time basis.

Ministers were not always clear about the qualities they were looking for. Even when they knew what they wanted, their requirements varied considerably. This inevitably reflected the various reasons for appointment and the diverse nature of ministers, who often wanted somebody who would be compatible. A party background and commitment was often required. Writing in 1976, Darlington claimed that sometimes ministers and advisers disagreed about major issues but, 'on the whole, however, Minister and Adviser are close to each other in political position and style, with the Adviser usually being that much more radical than his boss' (p.33).

Several ministers stressed that the demands of the job required somebody of high quality. Thus Barbara Castle outlined in the Mandarin Power speech how difficult it would be to introduce political advisers and thought it required somebody not only with a political background but also sufficient self-confidence and intellect to be able to withstand the pressure from the civil servants.

Sometimes the minister wanted somebody who would stand up to him. David Metcalf was suggested to Stan Orme by Bernard Donoughue. Metcalf claimed 'he wanted someone who had a track record in the local Labour Party, which I had, and we got on very well, in large part because I stood up to him.' Similarly, Harold Lever, 'asked Donoughue if he knew a good, reliable, intellectually courageous man who wouldn't be intimidated by me - who would challenge me.'

Advisers sometimes helped recruit other special advisers. Several retiring special advisers, including Jack Straw and David Young, were asked by their minister, including Peter Shore and Patrick Jenkin respectively, to propose a short list or to find a successor before leaving. In the few cases where pressure from an existing adviser helped persuade the minister to appoint an extra adviser, it was usually the senior adviser who proposed the new recruit. Anthony Lester proposed Angela Byre and Brian Abel-Smith proposed Paul Chapman and subsequently Geoffrey Alltimes, both of whom had been students of his at the LSE.

A few examples illustrate the variety and lack of standardization in the selection process. When David Ennals decided to appoint an adviser with experience of the social work world, David Townsend was proposed by Ennals's PPS. Townsend, a social worker and former Labour parliamentary candidate, had acted as press agent to the PPS. When Bill Rodgers was appointed to the Cabinet, Roger Liddle, an industrial relations officer who had had political experience as an Oxford City councillor, was suggested to him as a possible special adviser by Frank Pickstock, a mutual friend and former Chairman of the Gaitskellite Campaign for Democratic Socialism. At that time Rodgers did not intend to recruit an adviser, but he soon decided to do so and said that he finally chose Liddle after hearing the speech he gave as best man at the wedding of Matthew Oakeshott. In another case the person who was

appointed by the minister seems to have been deliberately chosen partly because he would cause as little trouble as possible to good relations between the minister and his officials.

Evidence about the diverse methods of selecting special advisers can be related to the themes of the place of special advisers and the degree of formalization in the system. As a group, special advisers are probably more varied in age (from 22 to 65 when first appointed) and in background than any other category in Whitehall, including private secretaries, permanent secretaries, or ministers. This contributes to the fact that special advisers can occupy a range of places as suggested in the model developed earlier. However, to the extent that a higher proportion of them now have a more political than expert role there has been a limited degree of standardization. Nevertheless, in terms of actual recruitment there was probably less standardization at the end of the 1980s than when the government was newly formed and the most obvious candidates were people who had worked with the ministers when they were shadow spokesmen.

SECTION B: SUPPLY AND DEMAND.

We have observed that if it is clear there are people to fill the posts then the reasons for making such an appointment might become more apparent and/or compelling. With reference to the appointment of political secretaries between 1970-4 Rose claims, 'the number of appointments was not limited by a low demand, but rather, by the party's inability to locate men with the appropriate background, abilities and inclination to undertake the work on the terms offered' (1974, p.452). Some more recent Tory ministers, for example, Leon Brittan, have referred to some difficulties in finding a suitable person; and in several cases part of the reason why no appointment was made was that nobody with the appropriate qualifications appeared. One minister said that he did not think the need was all that great but, 'if the right chap had come along I would have said, "Yes please, let's have him", but short of that I didn't bother too much.' Fred (now Lord) Mulley, 'has argued that a pertinent reason why he did not have a special adviser at the Ministry of Defence was that no-one sufficiently able or experienced in defence matters was known to him' (Fraher, 1981, p.18). Interviewed

in early 1987, Chris Butler commented, 'it is very difficult at the moment to fill special adviser places.' The former permanent secretary at the DoE, Sir George Moseley, made an interesting comparison in stating that he did not think the minister, 'could reach out and say to somebody, as we can do in the civil service, we will have three or four for me to look at next Monday.' Some special advisers had several offers and there were some attempts at poaching. One permanent secretary referred to himself and the minister 'playing in the transfer market'. Even when a good person has been identified it is not always easy to persuade them to accept. Initially, Tom Baron, 'was quite horrified at the prospect,' of leaving his company and coming to London as an adviser for some months.

By contrast, some ministers found that a number of people offered their services and/or individuals were proposed by third parties. Norman Fowler believed it had become a popular career episode for some people and there was no shortage of volunteers.

There is a complex overlap between questions of motivation for special advisers. How far is the role satisfying? Does it help or hinder a subsequent career? Knowledge about the satisfaction and job prospects of earlier advisers could motivate prospective advisers. The variety of motivations partly reflects the diverse backgrounds, so that academics and specialists might be more likely to be interested in observing the policy making process in specific fields, and even influencing it in certain directions in which they believe. With his strong views on educational policy, Stuart Sexton, for example, went to considerable lengths to gain an advisory position, initially in Opposition and then in Government. (Knight; Edwards *et al.* 1989). Many younger political advisers viewed it as an extremely interesting job with the advantage, noted earlier by William Waldegrave, of being inside the Official Secrets Act, unlike the research posts at party headquarters. Various advisers would fit Walter's description, noted earlier, of people motivated by a desire, 'to be at the centre of events' (p.178). Butler (1986) similarly wrote that, 'the reasons why advisers put up with all the disadvantages must be their interest in politics. It is one of the most interesting and fascinating jobs to be undertaken in the political world, outside of being a government

minister' (p.19).

One disadvantage reported by many advisers was the comparatively low levels of pay and other benefits, especially considering the insecurity. Despite critical comments of an 'excessive' level of pay noted in Chapter 2, money was not the motivation behind most decisions to become an adviser. Indeed many advisers took the role despite, not because of, the salary. This was recognized by some civil servants, including one time CSD official, George Moseley, who noted: 'A lot of them, though they didn't kick up a fuss about it, were, I suspect, considerably out of pocket. They had some different motivation from money.' Echoing these remarks, John Whittingdale, who was only 24 when appointed and thus on the equivalent of a senior executive officer's salary, said: 'I wasn't doing the job for the salary. It is a fantastic job and to be quite honest I would have taken a pay cut. It is the sheer enjoyment you get from that job.'

Overall the level of satisfaction felt by advisers varied. Writing about departmental and Policy Unit advisers in late 1976 Darlington (p.17) estimated, 'that at least 27 advisers have passed through the system in less than three years; that is, more Advisers have been and gone than are currently in post. The "survivability rate" then is not high. However, the reasons for leaving have been varied.' Those he listed include: the minister leaving; disillusionment with the policies; return to original employment; becoming an MP, or a minister in the Lords; found to be unwanted or unsuited.

Despite the frustrations, which are discussed in detail later, many advisers found the job very satisfying. There is some scepticism from outsiders about what the role could offer to academics/specialists unless they were committed to achieving certain policy aims: 'it is hard to see what attractions such a post, lacking both public recognition and a career outlet, could offer to candidates of experience and ability unless (like Brian Abel-Smith) they had strong commitments in a particular policy area' (Brown and Steel, p.331-2). Several academics have, however, made it clear that there is considerable satisfaction beyond the ability to push policy preferences:

Who does not want to see history being made?... What did I gain from a spell in government service? First, an awareness of the process of government which no book could give me ... If it is the task of academics to teach students about the real world, a spell in government is invaluable for obtaining a deeper understanding of it (Abel-Smith, THES, 27 June 1980).

It must be of interest to those who work in the field to examine the actual way policy is formulated and put in to practice (Peston, THES, 11 July 1980).

For an academic who is constantly involved in researching and teaching with health service personnel it's extremely useful (Dyson).

All three of these academics held chairs prior to becoming advisers, so they were not looking to their spell as advisers to assist further promotion. Overall, however, many more thought that having been an adviser had helped their career development than considered it a hindrance. Several advisers, including David Lipsey, nevertheless felt that, whilst the experience could be an advantage, the clear association with a particular party was sometimes a handicap - especially when that party was in Opposition. Furthermore, there were occasions on which advisers complained they had subsequently suffered from having had disagreements with civil servants.

For some advisers the contacts gained, plus the first hand experience of the process of government, were extremely valuable. David Stephen, for example, thought it was, 'undoubtedly' useful in his career development: 'Clearly one gained an experience in foreign policy formulation in this country and contacts with people in other countries doing the same thing.' Walter develops this point much further and links it with his discussion of the role of the intelligentsia. Walter's views, which relate to all those - including civil servants - working as personal advisers in ministers' private offices, are not generally appropriate for the UK. They do though, illustrate how the role's potential, especially if expanded, might be viewed:

While there is no security for the ministerial staffer, and no institutionally prescribed career path, the options facing him/her at the end of service are far from limited ... the transition ... to influential bureaucrat, highly placed business consultant, well-paid lobbyist or senior academic is common ... This may be seen as part of a broader pattern in

that the modern intelligentsia is characterized by occupational mobility, but there is much to indicate that a trajectory through the ministerial staff may be the fast lane to success. The knowledge developed within the system and the contacts with those in power, and also the networks built up through the reciprocal relations between politicians and minders contribute to this (p.187).

We have seen that a major weakness of Walter's approach, particularly if applied to the UK, is the understatement of the degree to which advisers are ambitious to play a front line role in the political battle. Far from becoming a special adviser because they have, 'difficulty in coping with aggression', some people are motivated to become advisers because they believe it will enhance their chances of being selected to be a parliamentary candidate. Indeed, it is widely assumed by civil servants, politicians and commentators that this is the main motivation of most younger political advisers. Sometimes advisers are spoken of in a highly critical, and often dismissive, way because of this ambition. This is particularly so if it is suspected that the advisers are, in the words of one official, 'anxious to help their ministers, and achieve greatness for themselves by the minister's rise - on the coat tails.' John Hoskyns saw a danger that young special advisers from the research department who were anxious for a political career might lack the independence to upset their ministers by speaking bluntly. For some Tory MPs this was yet another point to add to their list of criticisms of advisers. Thus the former diplomat turned MP, Ray Whitney, in arguing the case against Roger Darlington's suggestion of an increase in the number of advisers, wrote: 'The tribunes of the people would bitterly - and rightly - resent the pretensions of a bunch of placemen, many of whom would be (as they are at present) aspirant parliamentary candidates who have been rejected by constituent selection committees.' (The Times, 3 August 1978).

For ministers such as Richard Luce the fact that their prospective special adviser, in his case Chris Butler, wanted to get into Parliament was a factor to consider favourably. Being a special adviser provided very good experience and given that it was a risky occupation with no clear career structure, somebody aiming for a political career could be well suited to it. There was a tradition that some CRD staff successfully sought to become parliamentary candidates, and so the role

now played by advisers can be seen as a logical extension of this.

About a third of departmental special advisers appointed since 1970 have at some stage stood for Parliament and others are known to have parliamentary ambitions including probably a majority of more recent Tory advisers. At least a further seven advisers have been given peerages, three of whom have served as ministers (Lords Cockfield, Crowther-Hunt, and Young) and two as Opposition spokesmen (Lords Peston, and Prys-Davies). Including those who served at Number Ten, four of the 1970-4 political secretaries (John Cope, Douglas Hurd, Robert Jackson, and William Waldegrave) became ministers. Three of Judith Hart's advisers were elected to Parliament (Tony Banks, Stuart Holland, and Margaret Jackson); and Jack Straw 'inherited' Barbara Castle's Blackburn seat in 1979, which also saw the election of Terry Davis (who had briefly been part-time adviser to Albert Booth) and of Tom McNally.

In the 1987 election the former head of the Policy Unit (John Redwood) and three former advisers (Tim Boswell, Christopher Butler, and Douglas French) entered Parliament. Colin Moynihan, who had briefly worked in a personal advisory capacity for Foreign Secretary Pym, was elected in 1983, and Michael Portillo won the Enfield Southgate by election in 1984. Robin Cooke became an adviser after being an MP and Adam Fergusson was appointed by Foreign Secretary Howe after losing his seat in the European Parliament. Some of these advisers and several others had also been local councillors.

Opinions differ about how far having been an adviser assists selection as a candidate. Echoing comments recorded above by Richard Luce, his second minister, Chris Butler claims: 'many special advisers have political ambitions, and the knowledge and perspective they gain does help them win the confidence of selection committees' (p.19). Butler was first chosen to fight a by-election, as was Michael Portillo who believed that the experience of being an adviser, especially dealing with the media, was helpful in securing selection for a by-election in which much media attention was expected. Other advisers, including Douglas French believed 'it would have been of benefit in securing interviews.' He further thought some constituencies would be attracted

by a person who was, 'special adviser to a man who was well known, well respected and liked.' Although selection committees were thought to vary in their attitudes, several advisers shared the views of one who believed that most local parties 'are not particularly impressed by some very young chap who has spent all his life in Whitehall with his head in the clouds ... special advisers are not popular by and large with selection committees.'

Many proposals exist for increasing the number of special advisers appointed by ministers (see Chapter 10). However, any such scheme would run serious risks of some unsuitable people being appointed (as seemed to happen in the 1980s, according to one interviewee, in Canada under the Conservatives) unless there was a large pool of good potential advisers from which to choose. Various people, including Stephen Sherbourne, doubt the existence of such a reservoir in the UK: 'You can't have a structure which assumes a calibre which isn't always available.' Demonstrating that experience as an adviser is often of benefit to career prospects, including enhancing the likelihood of selection as a parliamentary candidate, might result in an increase in the number of would-be special advisers.

The introduction of the 'Short money' ensures that at any future change of government there is likely to be an improved source of advisers, although this was not part of Ted Short's original thinking behind the scheme. This funding provided to assist Opposition parties in Parliament, has led to a considerable increase in the number of research assistants working directly to shadow ministers. Stuart Sexton was funded in this way when he was working for the shadow Ministers of Education. According to a Labour Party official speaking in the late 1980s, there is an assumption on the part of shadow ministers that they are going to have a cabinet or special advisers, 'partly because they have all got their own little teams of advisers that are on a friendly basis with one another.'

Walter Williams is a strong advocate of reform of the bureaucracy and the introduction of outsiders to become policy analysts. Even he recognizes, however, that, 'on the outside too the supply is thin ... The search will be difficult. Political executives are well advised to

draw on civil servants as much as possible' (p.65 and 175). He believes, however, that the shortages could be overcome and policy analysts trained and developed as they were in the United States from the mid-1960s onwards. In the second edition of his book Meltzer (1986, p.300) wrote: 'With its association, journal, schools, and an increasing membership, we should no longer refer to policy analysis as an emerging profession. It has emerged with a defined identity and is working towards standards of performance and practice.' Most British advisers would not consider themselves to be policy analysts and this underlines the importance of examining what advisers currently do in the UK before consideration is given to possible reforms.

CHAPTER SIX: FUNCTIONS OF SPECIAL ADVISERS.

SECTION A: HOW THEY SPEND THEIR TIME.

Given the diversity of reasons for appointment it is not surprising the functions of different advisers vary enormously. In the words of Ian Bancroft some special advisers are bit players, some scene shifters, and others 'fairly considerable actors in their own right.' In the model of the potential place of special advisers it was suggested that a key feature was the flexibility advisers bring to the system, with their ability to occupy a number of possible positions and informally move along various channels of communication. The flexibility comes in several forms. Michael Dobbs, for example, argued how difficult it was for civil servants, who have to provide continuity and the same service for all ministers, to have the flexibility to cope with the unique demands of individual ministers. In some ways it can be more easily done by advisers. Furthermore, several advisers also provided added flexibility by each performing a range of functions, with certain activities being more important at one time than another.

These general comments can be illustrated in various ways. Thus Butler claims the adviser possesses a, "roving commission" - acting as cement in the brickwork, as an early warning system for departmental difficulties or political "banana skins", or as antennae for the minister, picking up gossip from the other special advisers and elsewhere' (p.17). The unpredictable nature of the role was stressed by David Lipsey: 'It varied quite a bit as to what sort of thing one was doing... There were core elements to it like liaison with party committees and certain things just varied depending upon what was on. It was a question of filling in the gaps.' Similarly Adam Ridley, with the concept of the adviser as a 'residual legatee', saw the functions of advisers such as himself fluctuating very widely. This point is reinforced by the comments of ministers, including Bill Rodgers, who stressed the importance of, 'the freewheeling nature of the individual' who was able to help out wherever the minister wished. Two sets of answers to the questionnaire are particularly relevant here. The findings from questions 15 (how frequently special advisers were in contact with various people) and 16 (how they spent their time) are

given in Tables 3 and 4. These answers give an overall picture and this was used to produce the list of functions given, in approximate order of importance, in Chapter 2. However, several activities that scored quite low were a major feature of some advisers' work. Briefing for Cabinet, for example, was not high in the list but, as noted earlier, for certain advisers it was important.

In the following analysis, evidence from the questionnaires is interpreted alongside opinions expressed in interviews. When considering Table 3 it must be remembered that about one-fifth of the respondents, in both parties, were working only part time. This accounts for a percentage of the cases in which the adviser did not see the Cabinet minister, the private office or other civil servants on a daily basis.

Half the advisers had contact with other ministers' advisers less frequently than weekly, and in some cases never. This underlines the extent to which, to use the words of Roger Darlington, many advisers thought the network of special advisers was, 'loose and inadequate'. The figures for contact with backbench MPs and with party officials are similar to one another and both reflect wide variations in the extent to which party liaison was seen as a function of special advisers. Reference has been made to Mark Schreiber's role in helping to carry into Government Tory Opposition thinking on the need for a CPRS. Apart from him only one other had more than spasmodic, if any, contact with the Think Tank. A few advisers reported that when working on specific issues they might be in contact with the CPRS. This finding accords well with the CPRS perspective of Blackstone and Plowden who conclude that although there could, 'be mutual benefits in communicating and occasionally cooperating ... Many members of the CPRS had little or nothing to do with political advisers of either main party' (1988, p.68). Although for some advisers contact with pressure groups was frequent, for the majority it was not significant.

TABLE 3: Questionnaire Findings on Frequency of Contact with Various People - Percentage Response.

15) How frequent was your contact (either face-to-face or by telephone) with:

	Daily	Several times a week	Weekly	Less frequent	Never
a) The cabinet minister	63	22	7	7	1
b) Junior minister(s)	27	49	10	6	8
c) Parliamentary private secretary	16	29	23	22	10
d) The private office	82	12	3	3	0
e) The permanent secretary	6	41	25	20	8
f) Other civil servants	59	26	4	10	1
g) Advisers in the PM's policy unit	12	9	23	40	16
h) Advisers to other ministers	1	21	27	35	16
i) Backbench MPs	1	27	27	27	18
j) Party officials	4	26	26	25	19
k) Members of the CPRS	2	0	2	35	61
l) Members of relevant pressure groups	0	5	25	43	27
m) Academics/other specialists	0	14	12	58	16
n) Government whips	2	13	19	31	35
o) Journalists	8	25	17	31	19

TABLE 4: Questionnaire Findings on How Time was Spent - Percentage Response.

16) What amount of time did you spend on the following aspects of your work.	Substantial	Considerable	Moderate	Slight	Insignificant
a) Examining papers on departmental matters going to the minister and briefing him on them.	35	40	19	3	3
b) Preparing reports on policy on departmental matters.	18	24	31	16	11
c) Chasing up the progress on implementing the minister's wishes.	4	11	25	42	18
d) Preparing briefs on non-departmental agenda items for cabinet or cabinet committees.	8	18	23	21	30
e) Attending meetings of all the politicians within the department.	11	22	40	12	15
f) Corresponding with party MPs, officials etc./ attending party meetings/ receiving party deputations on behalf of the minister.	13	11	34	15	27
g) Speech writing.	26	21	29	15	10
h) Discussing issues with the minister.	31	35	24	10	0
i) Attending meetings, visits, receiving deputations - other than party ones - with the minister on departmental business.	22	32	18	16	12
j) Attending departmental meetings and receiving deputations - other than party ones - on behalf of the minister.	4	17	25	23	31
k) Advising the minister on (and involvement with) the presentation of departmental policy and the minister's general views.	32	33	17	11	7

Outside the department, journalists were the people with whom, on average, advisers had most frequent contact. This is consistent with 'helping with presentation' being the reason for appointment cited most often as being substantial. It is perhaps surprising that contact with journalists was more frequent than that with party officials or advisers to other ministers. This degree of contact also indicates that for a number of advisers helping with presentation amounted to more than just speech writing.

The pattern of frequency of contact with the listed categories was broadly similar for 1974-9 Labour advisers and 1979-87 Tories, but there were a few significant differences. Those correlate with findings from interviews and other tables. Interviews, for example, revealed even less collegial activity by Labour advisers than by Tories and the number of Tory advisers having weekly, or more frequent, contact with advisers to other ministers was almost twice as high (at 64 per cent) as for their Labour counterparts. Half the 1979-87 advisers had contact with party officials either daily or several times a week, whereas from 1974-9 the figure was a fifth. This possibly reflects the importance of the CRD background in the recruitment of Tory advisers. Only 15 per cent of Labour advisers, as opposed to 54 per cent of Conservatives, had contact with Government Whips weekly or more frequently. This again partly reflects the greater importance of the party liaison role for Tory advisers and correlates with their spending a greater proportion of their time in prayer meetings, i.e. gatherings of all the politicians attached to the department, and which, for Tories at least, often included the relevant Whip. The same factor may partially explain why at 41 per cent the figure for daily contact with junior ministers was over twice as high for Conservatives as for Labour.

Before examining how advisers spent their time it might be useful to list Harold Wilson's seven examples of advisers' roles in his 1975 Statement on Political Advisers (1976, pp. 203-4):

- 1) A 'sieve'
- 2) A 'deviller'
- 3) Medium - and long-term planning
- 4) Contributions to policy planning within departments
- 5) Liaison with the Party
- 6) Outside interest groups
- 7) Speech writing and research

In the questionnaire, and interviews, an attempt was made to examine in rather more detail how advisers spent their time. Often there was not much difference between the pattern of responses from the two main sets of advisers. Examining submissions to the minister and briefing him, (16a), was the major way in which many advisers spent their time. Several advisers thought 'commenting' a more appropriate term than briefing. There was no consistent pattern as to how advisers received submissions. A few of the senior advisers achieved the position of having material routed through them. Roy Hattersley regarded Maurice Peston as playing almost a deputy secretary role. Many advisers, however, received copies of submissions from civil servants - especially after a working pattern had been established. Thomas Brimelow argued that not only can political advisers never cover the whole field but, also, especially in Foreign Affairs, issues come up unexpectedly. Therefore, the department has to know when to alert the political adviser to take an interest in development X. The general rule towards Tom McNally was, 'be helpful to the man'. McNally saw the situation similarly and thought the secret for the political adviser, 'is to make sure that there is an understanding that he or she sees all the key papers.' In some departments guidelines were issued indicating the area of particular interest to the adviser(s).

Where a strong relationship developed with the private secretary he made sure the adviser saw copies of any submission not copied to him on which, as private secretary, he knew the minister would value the adviser's comments. Several advisers, again especially those with a close relationship with the private office, looked through the minister's box and read anything they thought they ought to see. Advisers such as John Cope, John Harris (at the Home Office and the Treasury), and Miles Hudson, who sat in the private office, saw things

as they went through. Sometimes ministers asked advisers to read and comment on a particular submission.

The type of comments made were often political. In this way the adviser was carrying out the 'mine detector' role that even such an experienced politician as Jim Callaghan told Tom McNally he wanted from him. Some ministers also expected advisers to comment on what the party had said about the subject dealt with in the submission. Bringing the two points together, and linking with one of the reasons he gave for appointing advisers, David Ennals said that Mike Hartley-Brewer reminded him where the party stood or the political implications missed by the civil servants and, 'he sniffed out potential trouble and traps.' Hartley-Brewer was one of the advisers who spent more time on examining submissions and briefing than on any other activity. A good example of how an adviser could make political comments on submissions, and consequently have some impact on the policy, came from John Houston. Over many months he criticized the lack of awareness, in the Foreign Office submissions, of the public's concern about the failure of foreign diplomats to pay parking fines. His role was recognized in a newspaper profile of Geoffrey Howe which claimed that Houston, 'gives him advice the Foreign Office does not always relish. It was Houston, for example, who argued that the political advantage of punishing foreign diplomats stationed in London who refuse to pay their parking fines outweighed the risk of retaliation against British diplomats abroad' (Sunday Times, 6 April 1986).

Advisers also made more substantive comments, largely depending on the extent to which they were specialists. This was taken to exceptionally detailed lengths by Stuart Sexton at the DES who acted as a first filter for all the proposals for Section 12 and 13 reorganizations, under the 1980 Education Act, of schools within a Local Education Authority (LEA). He not only read the large reports but sometimes also talked to officials in central and local government before producing a two to three page memorandum for the junior minister who commented on the reports before they went to the Secretary of State.

Many advisers commented on only a small proportion of the papers they saw. Nevertheless, as Chapter 4 revealed, ministers often thought it was of great value to have somebody independent of the department, and politically committed and aware, to go through submissions. In this way the adviser was acting in the 'sieve' role described by Harold Wilson: 'a "sieve" examining papers as they go to Ministers, drawing attention to problems and difficulties, especially ones having Party political implications or electoral considerations, and looking for "landmines" - especially in politically sensitive areas' (1976, p.203). Some advisers, for example John Cope, stressed that the type of political comment made covered more than just potential landmines:

if there was some political initiative that I thought could be taken, or insufficient being made of something politically, or political danger in some proposed course of action, or a political element in a choice between options, then I could add my pennyworth to the advice that was going to the minister.

Time spent by advisers on reading submissions was necessary not only for them to be able to brief the minister, but also to enable them to fulfil other roles, including more generally discussing issues with the minister and helping with presentation. If he was to be 'on top of things for the following day' Roger Liddle worked most evenings from 10.00 p.m. to 1.00 a.m. reading both departmental submissions and papers for Cabinet and its committees, and writing briefs. Even so he had to be selective and decide what was politically important. He claimed that, 'as time went on I got a better sense of when you should do a written brief and when you should just have a word.'

Briefings or comments from advisers could be made in a variety of ways: in discussions between the adviser and the minister or ministerial team; in meetings with the minister and officials; and on paper. A few advisers, including Jeffrey Sterling, rarely put things on paper. Ann Carlton consistently discussed points with Tony Crosland and John Silkin but met with disapproval early on at the DoE. A permanent secretary told her she 'was an unsatisfactory special adviser.' In explanation he said, 'you don't put things in writing and Mr Lipsey is so much better and puts everything in writing.'

One reason why many advisers, including Liddle, preferred to produce written briefs was so that they could copy them round the department. According to Liddle, and others, copying minutes was important, 'in terms of maintaining good relations with officials. What they don't like is the thought of you secretly getting the minister on his own and giving him lots of steers away from what's being said without them being in a position to challenge what you're saying.' Similar points were made by David Cowling and both of them gave credit to Jack Straw at the DoE for suggesting the best way to behave as an adviser. Straw and others also saw it as enlightened self interest to copy round: 'it was a two way process. What is the point of not copying if they had an interest in it and they copied stuff to me?' When Straw started in the DHSS the pattern of keeping officials informed was set by the experienced adviser, Brian Abel-Smith. In his opinion, 'it didn't matter what you said as long as you said it in writing and they got a copy.' Not only was this good for officials and the adviser but also it was 'good for the Secretary of State for the officials to think out what the difficulties were in what the adviser was proposing.'

Many others stressed the importance of officials being consulted and warned in advance so that, in the words of Adam Ridley, 'they had a chance to stop us doing something disruptive out of ignorance or misjudgment.' Quite apart from these arguments for not going behind the civil servants' backs, Miles Hudson felt, 'it's not the way Alec would like to carry on.' A few ministers took a contrary view. Thus Tony Benn stated, 'I would not expect special advisers to give copies of briefs supplied to me to the civil servants. They had no responsibility to the department, the responsibility was to the minister.' Often it was difficult to make an absolute rule covering all situations. Jim Prior said he would generally 'expect them to circularize anything ... but they might then write me a very private note saying, for example, "I think you ought to be saying such and such a thing but I know that X civil servant will not like it."'

Where there was a group of advisers they would sometimes copy their comments to each other, although each of them, such as those in the DHSS under Labour, or in the Treasury under the Tories, tended to specialize on certain topics or activities. Paul Chapman, however, the first assistant recruited by Abel-Smith, worked mostly to him rather than sending material to the Secretary of State.

Whereas in question 16a) the emphasis is on reacting to departmental submissions, the focus in 16b), the preparation of policy reports, is on the proactive function of advisers. The distinction is not always clear cut. Sometimes an adviser produced a policy report in response to a departmental submission; at other times when briefing on a submission an adviser developed alternatives and went beyond the reactive mode. Nevertheless, most advisers spent less time on writing policy reports than on reading submissions and briefing the minister. Some reports took the form of 'think' pieces; others developed the party's election commitments. Oliver Letwin claimed that his main role at the DES, working with Stuart Sexton, was to develop workable solutions to the obstacles confronting the introduction of educational vouchers. He was, 'constantly writing papers to Sir Keith, copied to officials, saying, "officials have identified this problem, let us deal with it this way."' The officials would knock his ideas down and he would keep trying something else in a process described by Halcrow (1989, p.173) as a 'stately quadrille'. Heseltine gave Tom Baron major problems to examine, and he produced reports containing proposed solutions. Sometimes advisers produced reports following meetings with groups or visits either domestically (for example, David Coleman) or abroad (for example, David Stephen who was able to make some trips, such as to Namibia, to report on the SWAPO guerilla campaign, which would have been more difficult for somebody with a formal position). Specialist advisers who had helped develop policy in Opposition were well placed to produce substantial reports detailing proposals to implement the policy once the party was in power.

Various other occasions give advisers a greater opportunity to do long-term thinking and produce proactive papers. Sometimes when a new minister takes over in a department he welcomes fresh thinking. When Leon Brittan became Home Secretary in 1983 Robin Harris put in several

long papers on the review of the criminal justice system. Frances Morrell and Francis Cripps produced various policy papers for Tony Benn but a particularly important one came some months after they moved to the Department of Energy. Sometimes the ministers, senior officials and special advisers of a department spent several days - perhaps at Sunningdale in September - considering the strategy of the department. Certain advisers, including David Metcalf, produced papers for such meetings.

There were two views as to when proactive reports should be copied to civil servants. Some advisers and ministers felt it was inappropriate for the department to receive, and perhaps work on, policy proposals that did not have the minister's approval. Others thought that officials should have the opportunity to examine anything that went to the minister.

Although the term 'report' is not quite appropriate to describe White and Green Papers and Circulars, a number of special advisers played a part in drafting them that went far beyond examining and commenting on departmental drafts. A good example, to be examined in detail later, is the work of Anthony Lester and Angela Byre on the Sex Discrimination White Paper of 1974, Equality for Women (Cmnd. 5724). Work on White and Green Papers was included by some advisers as part of their involvement in helping ministers with presentation. Again, however, Jim Prior demonstrates the difficulty in drawing a precise line around advisers' roles. Commenting on the work of his advisers on Green and White Papers at both Employment and the NIO he said, 'it would be a little bit more drafting and presentation than it would be substance but I wouldn't say there was no impact on substance, because there was.' Sometimes advisers played an important role in producing Green Papers or other policy statements which then got over taken by events, such as electoral defeat; advisers could sometimes play a substantial role in writing statements which civil servants felt uneasy about handling. Stella Greenall wrote much of the Orange Paper, Progress in Education (DES, 1979), which reviewed the Labour Government's achievements and plans in Education.

Although Wilson included the role of acting 'as a "deviller" chasing up Ministerial wishes', in his list of possible functions, this was not something on which many advisers spent much time. The role of the private office helps explain why this activity was not important for most advisers. Advisers, including Jack Straw, realized that the formal relationship between the minister and the department was best left to the private office. Straw agreed, however, he had a role: 'I might say to Barbara, "Look, I think, you really ought to cause a fuss about the fact that this hasn't come out; you haven't had a submission on this." And Barbara would say, "OK, tell Norman [Warner]", or she would say to Norman, "I think we ought to do something about that."'

Preparing briefs on non-departmental matters arising in Cabinet (question 16d) did not occupy any time for a third of the special advisers. As noted this was a less important reason for appointment for Tories, especially after 1980. From his investigations Alastair Ross Goobey reported in interview that he had concluded Labour special advisers, 'felt that most of their time was spent on Cabinet warfare of one sort or another.' There was rivalry even amongst those who were allies in Cabinet. As Bill Rodgers suggested, ministers wanted to be more effective in Cabinet than even those of their colleagues who were friends. The proportion of advisers who spent a substantial or considerable time on briefing for Cabinet was twice as high, at one third, for Labour as for Conservative.

Opinions differed about the Cabinet agenda items with which it was appropriate for advisers to become involved. Question 16d) referred to briefing for non-departmental matters, but some advisers were also, or primarily, involved in preparing briefs and speaking notes for ministers on departmental issues. This became a tradition in the DHSS team under Labour, with Brian Abel-Smith describing it as condensing what the officials had written into either a speaking form that was most likely to convince Cabinet or something that Barbara Castle could modify. These advisers were heavily involved in briefing during the Public Expenditure Survey Committee (PESC) round of discussions, including those in Cabinet. Some advisers also played a role in canvassing support for their minister's line by briefing other ministers' advisers. Jeffrey Sterling's role was exceptional because according to a BBC

profile he sat 'on two secret Cabinet committees, one on broadcasting and the other on privatisation' (Fryer, 1989). At both Industry and Energy Tony Benn was also unusual in using his advisers to write papers for Cabinet and its committees. Their role in the disputes over nuclear reactors was particularly controversial and is chronicled in detail by Sedgemore (1980) and in Benn's Diaries (1989, and 1990).

More frequently advisers were used to brief ministers on non-departmental issues. Again Tony Benn is a prime example with the economist Francis Cripps saying that, in practice, his main job was 'to do research and write the papers to expose Treasury questions from a non-Treasury minister's point of view in Cabinet'. Other economists who spent much of their time on this included Joan Mitchell, Michael Stewart, David Metcalf, and - once he became adviser to Lord Gowrie - Adam Ridley. Some of the other advisers who briefed their ministers more generally on non-departmental issues included John Lyttle and Vicky Kidd, who spent most of her time doing this. The range of activities that could be involved in the Cabinet briefing role are well illustrated by Rob Shepherd. Jim Prior explained that not only might Shepherd give him an independent brief on some issues, but he might also approach people suggested by Prior - especially economists - to discuss the issues in general terms without letting on it was coming up in Cabinet. Shepherd could in addition make a political input in the briefings and on one occasion obtained the election addresses of several ministers, thus arming Prior for a Cabinet battle (described in Prior, 1986) in which he was able to help defeat a proposed benefit cut by pointing out that the ministers had promised to maintain its value.

The procedure adopted by some ministers was to select the non-departmental topics on which they wanted briefing. Other ministers let the advisers take the initiative; sometimes a mixture of approaches was used. Some advisers provided a comment on virtually anything, others, including Anthony Lester, concentrated on non-departmental matters within their knowledge and competence. Some ministers expected that the adviser would contact other advisers - especially in the lead department - when preparing a brief. The extent to which this occurred was less than several ministers seemed to assume.

Question 16e) caused some difficulty. Certain advisers reported that they attended all of the prayer meetings, but that they did not occupy much time. These meetings tended to be more frequently held by Tory ministers and, at 45 per cent, the proportion of Tory advisers who spent a substantial or considerable time on them was twice that of Labour. As noted, the Conservatives were more inclined to include other political figures; often the relevant Whip, the PPS and the CRD desk officer attended at least some of these meetings.

In some cases, most noticeably the Treasury since 1979, these meetings have been significant, lasting anything from half an hour to over an hour, and advisers played a full part. No civil servant was present at Treasury prayer meetings and it was the responsibility of an adviser to produce minutes reflecting as much as the Chancellor wished to be reported. Practice elsewhere varied widely: some advisers, including Peter Davis, told the private secretary what had happened rather than producing any minutes; as private secretary, Norman Warner attended the DHSS meetings but Jack Straw wrote the minutes; in other departments, including the Home Office, the private secretary made the record. Sometimes advisers were given work to do arising from the meetings. Thus not only did John Cope minute the DTI meetings but he was also left with the action column, and particularly if one of the numerous ministers in the department was not there, Cope had to inform him of relevant matters or discuss them. David Townsend reported that it was at the DHSS meetings that it was sometimes decided an adviser would do something for a junior minister. In some departments, including the Treasury, they were held first thing in the morning, but in others, including the DHSS under Mrs Castle, they were at lunchtimes. Some ministers preferred ad hoc meetings.

Party liaison, 16f), did not occupy any time for over a quarter of special advisers. Again there is a party difference, with three times as many Tory advisers (42 per cent) spending a substantial or considerable time on it as Labour. In both parties the largest response was in the moderate category. This is perhaps surprising given the way this activity has almost become synonymous with special advisers. There are several possible explanations. First, as Edward Bickham argued, it was important but did not occupy much time, typically consisting of four

or five telephone calls a day to Central Office. Second, to be in a position to conduct at least some of this work, the adviser must spend time on other activities including reading submissions and attending departmental meetings. Third, political liaison is often an activity which civil servants would not perform and, therefore, it is more clearly identified as a 'special adviser's function'. These final two points illustrate the model developed of an adviser as somebody, 'in the know', who is close to the overloaded minister and able to operate, often informally, on his behalf along various channels of communication. Therefore, in the words of Adam Ridley, 'the adviser is uniquely well placed to act as a channel of communications, if he is reliable and trusted.'

A variety of activities, some of them unglamorous chores, contribute towards party liaison. Some, according to Coleman, 'are potentially important, others astonishingly trivial' (1991, p.422). Overall, despite overlaps, these matters can be split into two categories. Many of them related to the minister's departmental responsibilities; but to varying degrees ministers also wanted help in liaison for their wider political role. The many aspects of party liaison on departmental issues include letters, telephone calls and meetings with a wide range of people and groups. Some advisers helped with letters - especially political ones, including those from MPs and party supporters. This activity, which a few advisers regarded as the bane of their lives, could involve: replying on behalf of the minister; drafting replies for ministers; drafting paragraphs to be used in standard replies written by officials; and/or checking civil servants' drafts.

Some Labour advisers, including Ann Carlton and Elizabeth Thomas, who was working for the Leader of the House, liaised with backbenchers. However, Tories did this more frequently. By virtue of their research role in Opposition, advisers from both parties such as Carlton, Miles Hudson, Adam Ridley, and Stuart Sexton had developed close links with MPs particularly interested in their field. Sometimes advisers, for example Hudson, approached backbenchers to find out what was behind particular Parliamentary Questions. Where advisers were well known to them, backbenchers might contact the adviser on a point, knowing it

would be easier to get through to them than to the minister. Whilst some Tory advisers attended the weekly meeting of the relevant backbench committee, a CRD official would be present to take the minutes and report back. One adviser, therefore, felt that some of his colleagues, 'used to go to those meetings because they wanted to get personally known to as many MPs as possible.'

Generally advisers spent more time on liaison with party offices than with MPs, but according to a Labour official, 'there was no coherence in approach between ministers and us - it depended on the personality of ministers and advisers.' In the two parties the liaison worked both ways between advisers and party headquarters. Chris Butler was one of several advisers to refer to themselves as 'lightning conductors' between the minister and the party structure, often dealing with minor matters without these having to go to the minister. For post-1979 Tory advisers who had worked in the CRD, it was natural to have links with party officials. One role played by Tory advisers, which was particularly important in the Treasury, was preparing the Central Office briefing for backbenchers before major debates. Several Labour advisers, including Brian Abel-Smith, Tony Lynes and Stella Greenall, were members of sub-committees of the NEC prior to becoming advisers. Many others involved themselves in the work of committees relevant to their minister's department in a way that the minister did not have time, or in a few cases the inclination, to do. They saw their role as being to inform, explain and, where necessary, defend the views and policies of each to the other, though most gave priority to the policies of their minister and the Government. Tom McNally went from being International Secretary of the Labour Party to being adviser at the Foreign Office and attended all the meetings of the International Committee of the Labour Party until they asked him to stop:

I attended as an observer but I think it was because I spoke too much ... and some of them felt I was being used as an understudy and this was beneath their dignity ... The original intention was that Jim Callaghan would attend all meetings of the party's International Committee but it became less and less realistic for the Foreign Secretary to be present.

Some advisers met party groups on behalf of the minister. Obviously care was needed not to offend people who thought they should see the minister. A good example of how the adviser could operate was given by David Owen. He met pressure groups and party groups concerned with human rights in particular countries the first time they requested a meeting. Thereafter, he suggested if the group wished to contact him their usual route should be via David Stephen, his special adviser and an expert in human rights issues with particularly good links with Latin America.

Often advisers were used to gather information or as messengers, possibly either at the minister's request or because party people would contact the advisers - sometimes if they could not get through to the minister. Such an 'intelligence gathering service', as Bill Rodgers called it, was frequently important for ministers who had to deal with local councillors. Consequently, most advisers working in the DoE, including David Lipsey and Peter Davis, were amongst those who regarded this as being one of their major occupations. Chris Mockler, also at Environment, said it is 'not the job of special advisers to tell ministers the facts of life on politics ... but there is quite a lot of information in circulation which they need someone to assess the importance of, or judge, and bring to their attention if need be, and to liaise with Central Office very closely and with councillors.' Advisers were well placed to gather information that could be useful in negotiations and also to talk to leaders of minority groups on councils.

Liaison with the Welsh and Scottish parties played a part in some advisers' work - including two at the Welsh Office. Gwilym Prys-Davies regularly discussed issues with the Secretary of the Welsh Labour Party, and for Chris Butler the Welsh Conservative MPs formed a distinct group, with which he thought it important to remain in close contact. Part of Vicky Kidd's work for Ted Short, minister with responsibility for devolution, involved attending Scottish Labour Party and Trade Union meetings and conferences: 'I was sent off as his eyes and ears to come back and prepare a report.'

Many ministers travelled the country on trips combining departmental and party meetings. Such trips were particularly common for ministers dealing with local government and the arrangements especially complex, because, for example, the adviser might be involved in helping the private office arrange which of the party's councillors in the town visited should be invited to meet the minister on the official part of his trip. Certain advisers, for example David Lipsey, assisted with the arrangements for party trips, or the political elements of official visits. This is moving into the field of assisting the minister with party liaison in his general political activities.

For ministers on Labour's main NEC there was considerable scope to use advisers to make arrangements, liaise, and provide briefing. Thus Banks and Margaret Beckett said that the party liaison work they did for Judith Hart involved her wider role on the NEC in addition to ODM issues. The two elements of party liaison were seen perhaps most clearly in the work of Shirley Williams's advisers. Whereas Stella Greenall continued her membership of the Education Sub-committee of the NEC, and was asked by Hugh Jenkins (now Lord Jenkins of Putney), Minister for the Arts, to attend the Arts Sub-committee as well, John Lyttle spent much time liaising on general political issues. This went far wider than just NEC liaison. There was close contact with Roger Liddle who, in turn, spent considerable time, 'being the link man between Bill Rodgers and our faction.' This entailed organizational work within the Manifesto Group of Labour MPs and the extra parliamentary, Campaign for Labour Party Victory. A similar function had earlier been performed by Matthew Oakeshott, according to whom the Jenkinsites, 'were quite a close knit group'; in keeping in touch with them he was continuing a role he had played in Opposition. The MPs concerned were not necessarily particularly interested in Home Affairs, but rather were the pro-European group. Oakeshott conducted much liaison with Brussels, especially with the cabinet of George Thompson (now Lord Thompson of Monifieth), and was heavily involved in the referendum campaign. On the other side in that campaign Frances Morrell, Tony Banks and Jack Straw were called 'our permanent officials' by Tony Benn (1989, p.363). Benn's Diaries not only record the considerable role of Morrell in that campaign but also her work for Benn in the 1976 leadership contest. Similarly Jim Callaghan relates how

three of his former PPSs 'rallied at once and with Tom McNally, my Political Adviser, formed a small inner team to conduct the contest on my behalf' (p.392). The delicate nature of some of this political activity was demonstrated in a minute from Harold Wilson which, according to Darlington, stated that advisers should not be involved in the leadership campaign.

Speech writing, 16g), was a major occupation for almost half the advisers. There was a marked party difference in the proportion of advisers spending substantial time on this - Labour 11 per cent, Tory 45 per cent. However, the most striking distinction was between advisers appointed after 1980, and the rest. Of the former, 55 per cent spent a substantial time on speech writing as against 22 per cent (two out of nine) of those appointed in 1979-80. This correlates both with the analysis of the figures on reasons for appointment and the statements quoted earlier from Patrick Jenkin about the development of the system. Some of his advisers, including Stephen Sherbourne and Christopher Mockler, were among those who spent most time on speech writing. Others for whom it was a major occupation included Home Office advisers Edward Bickham, David Coleman, and Robin Harris. Brendon Sewill estimated that three quarters of his typed output consisted of speeches and briefing for broadcasts. For some advisers, reading submissions and attending meetings was primarily essential background work for this activity, but Treasury advisers found that presentational work could give them a reason for having good access to, for example, budget discussions and for others, including Edward Bickham, it provided a 'justification for dabbling in more things than otherwise might have been possible.' Bickham thought it was impossible to divorce the substance of policy from its presentation:

If you are trying to build a strategy and framework within which to present policy you have to have regard to the merits and the detail of that policy. Although I tended to play quite a large part in the writing of speeches and had a general public relations role I would also usually attend all his [Douglas Hurd's] substantive policy meetings and aim to make a contribution.

Some advisers had to have a row with the department to establish that they were not going to spend all their time on speech writing, and others were unhappy at the extent to which they spent longer than anticipated on, to quote one, 'the wretched speech writing business, which is a bug bear of a whole host of special advisers.' The tension is perhaps best illustrated by the department in which officials were told that advisers would occasionally prepare major speeches, but speech writing was not a major part of their work; nevertheless, they wanted to see copies of all draft outlines and full draft speeches, and would advise on the proposed content of speeches and on presentational aspects of particular occasions.

This illustrates some of the many ways advisers contributed to speeches. Sometimes they produced the first draft, especially for party political speeches. On other occasions they commented on, or redrafted, speeches prepared by civil servants. This was at the request of the minister or as a result of officials copying speeches to the adviser. A few advisers, including Mockler, had prime responsibility for the full range of the minister's speeches outside the House of Commons once he had made it clear what he wished to talk about. For others, such as Brian Abel-Smith, it came to be accepted that they would coordinate the speeches. For a general speech on the National Health Service (NHS) this might include taking various contributions in different styles from the civil servants and rewriting them to provide a common style, memorable phrases, an introduction and conclusion as well as finding the basis of a press handout in it.

Many other advisers were responsible for inserting political paragraphs into departmental speeches. Often there was close liaison, with civil servants and adviser usually recognizing that it was important that anything relating to the minister's departmental responsibilities should be checked by officials. However, for Jim Callaghan's first major speech, as Foreign Secretary, to European ministers, Tom McNally was asked to prepare a text based on the party's manifesto; it was not well received in some quarters. The requirements of ministers, and their degree of involvement, varied widely. Some preferred to speak from brief notes and the adviser's role was to discuss the main themes for the speech. Others, or the same minister on

other occasions, wanted detailed drafts which they might read and return for alteration, until they were satisfied. Advisers also sometimes took part in discussions of the themes the minister should develop in speeches over the coming months.

Two thirds of advisers claimed to spend a major part of their time discussing issues with the minister (question 16h). The interview evidence suggests some have possibly exaggerated the time spent on this role. This might reflect the importance they attached to it and also indicate an overlap with other functions. Nevertheless, it was clearly the most important activity for Ray Richardson about whom Harold Lever said, 'his main role was to discuss issues with me but Ray won considerable respect at the Treasury and he often discussed matters in detail with Treasury officials. He had a cooperative, not combative, relationship with them.' If the adviser had a set time for seeing the minister it was usually first thing in the morning or in the early evening. Sometimes discussions between a minister and his adviser were related to specific issues, including presentation and policy decisions, but for many ministers the adviser was a confidant with whom he could hold wide-ranging discussions. This is well illustrated by Tony Benn's Diary entry for 18 February 1975: 'I talked to Frances Morrell about all sorts of things' (1989). When interviewed Benn agreed with the comment of Morrell, that advisers attempted to help form a 'political community' around the minister. For other advisers, including Brendon Sewill, the wide ranging early evening chats were often an opportunity to review the day's events or decisions over whisky.

How far the private secretary was a party to discussions between the minister and his advisers varied. Some ministers had a small group of confidants, often including special advisers, private secretaries and the chief information officer. Some referred to them as a cabinet, or a 'mafia'. Various advisers, including several who worked for Nigel Lawson, saw their role in discussing issues as being one voice amongst several in a central core around the minister. Thus during some crisis weeks Howard Davies referred to being part of 'a sort of rolling meeting', and at Energy, Lynda Rouse said that at 'meetings with Mr Lawson at 6.30 or 7.00 in the evening, when the whisky was out, it would be the chief press officer, the private secretary and me.' In other

instances where ministers, including John Silkin and Roy Hattersley, spent time talking things over with a close-knit group, the advisers would, in addition, have frequent opportunities for private discussion with the minister and there was more scope for playing an aide/confidant role.

Discussing issues with the minister overlaps with 16i), attending meetings, visits and receiving deputations with him - another major way in which advisers spent their time. They generally had free access to departmental meetings with the minister, sometimes choosing which to attend and at other times being requested by him to appear. Where there was a team of advisers, for example in the Treasury after 1979, some meetings including budget ones, might be attended by more than one adviser. Rob Shepherd and Stuart Sexton are amongst those advisers who said that their ministers deliberately brought them into the discussion at some meetings. Other ministers, including Tony Crosland and Merlyn Rees, did not expect their 'chocolate soldier' (i.e. former Rowntree funded research assistant) to start arguing on substantive points with senior officials. Irrespective of how involved they had been in the discussion, some advisers, including David Lipsey, Elizabeth Thomas, and John Whittingdale, frequently remained with the minister after meetings to consider the decision, the politics involved, and/or how it should be presented. How far advisers were invited to meetings between the minister and other Cabinet ministers, or distinguished guests from outside the department, varied but could be controversial.

Ministers who travelled extensively often took advisers along. This could be domestically, for example Ken Griffin accompanied Tony Benn, when he was at Industry, on industrial visits including his meetings with workers. It was particularly important for ministers with many overseas visits and negotiations. Several Foreign Secretaries took advisers with them, including Alec Douglas Home who was accompanied by Miles Hudson to Rhodesia where he would be 'the sort of fellow on whom you could sharpen your wits'. Ann Carlton was regularly in Brussels as part of John Silkin's team when he was Minister of Agriculture and Tony Banks, Margaret Jackson, and Maggie Sidgreaves all, at different times, accompanied Judith Hart on trips, or to negotiations in Brussels or for the Lome Convention. On such occasions the adviser could act as a

sounding board and provide an immediate opinion about the likely political reaction to the negotiating position and also be, in the words of Judith Hart, 'someone to blow one's top to.' Furthermore, in the case of Carlton, the adviser was able to get points out of the negotiations to people such as the fishermen for an instant reaction. Since 1979 there have been much greater restraints on the foreign travel of advisers.

Question 16j) proved to be ambiguous. A few advisers thought they had done things 'on behalf of the minister' including: attending departmental meetings; receiving deputations; presenting conference papers; and talking to pressure groups. David Coleman, for example, was sometimes asked to 'field' groups, especially on the political side, who wished to see the minister when he was particularly busy and, according to John Patten, Coleman sometimes, 'spoke at conferences, as it were, with my voice.' The account by Edwards *et al.* (1989, p.36) of Sexton's role in promoting the Assisted Places Scheme illustrates how this activity could be seen as an exception that proves the rule: 'far from remaining discreetly in the background, as political advisers were generally expected to do, he appeared increasingly as a public spokesman of the Party's commitment, often deputising for Carlisle at official functions both before and after the Election.'

Generally the response to this question was low, partly reflecting the ambiguity of the phrase 'on behalf of' - especially in relation to advisers whose status is somewhat unofficial. Only rarely did advisers attend departmental meetings or receive groups in a clearly deputizing role for the minister who would normally have been expected to do it. Some advisers attended departmental meetings, but they were generally ones the minister would not have expected to attend because of lack of time and/or it would have been inappropriate. This was a method by which some advisers fulfilled the 'eyes and ears' role, although it was sometimes made clear to them that they should not immediately report everything to ministers before the department was ready to present its submission. How far advisers' attendance at departmental meetings could be interpreted as being on behalf of ministers varied. In one sense virtually everything done by most advisers, as personal appointees, could be thought of as being on behalf of their masters. Sometimes,

however, ministers explicitly stated that advisers, including Sexton and Anthony Lester, had a specific brief to work alongside officials on the production of White Papers and plans for legislation. Some acted in a liaison capacity for the minister with the department's Planning Unit and sometimes advisers were asked to represent the minister on a departmental working group.

On other occasions advisers attended departmental meetings on a more ad hoc basis, or even at the request of civil servants. Several permanent secretaries invited advisers to the permanent secretary's policy group meetings with deputy secretaries, at which they examined the policies being developed. In explaining to colleagues why he intended to ask Michael Portillo to the permanent secretary's steering committee in the Department of Energy, Sir Donald Maitland

argued that it would be very much better for the political adviser, who was an utterly discreet person, to hear our discussions and how it was we decided on our advice. I thought he would be an ally if he had taken part in the discussions, and felt able to subscribe to the advice we were offering. Alternatively, if we were going off the political rails, he would be able to alert us.

Ann Carlton and Maggie Sidgreaves attended the meetings at MAFF and ODM respectively and Derek Scott, Denis Healey's adviser in the late 1970s, attended the equivalent meeting in the Treasury, called the Policy Coordinating Committee. George Cardona (1981), one of his Tory successors, thought it a pity they did not go to it.

Aspects of the independent work of advisers within departments on behalf of their ministers are both complex and controversial. Thus, on advisers attending interdepartmental official committees, Mitchell wrote: 'Harold Wilson says firmly they do not. This is not literally so, occasionally they have done so, but only at lower working party levels.' (1978, p.95). Mitchell, for example, attended some interdepartmental meetings on energy pricing by nationalized industries, and advisers from other departments were present. Anthony Lester was a member of two interdepartmental committees - on nationality and on the legal protection of human rights. Advisers were officially encouraged to join in departmental deliberations on matters being prepared for submission to the ministers.

A further reason why many advisers replied that they spent only a slight or insignificant amount of time acting on behalf of their minister was because the question referred to departmental meetings. Many spent more time talking to officials on an informal basis than they did at formal departmental meetings. An adviser such as Brian Abel-Smith argued that he was too busy to spend perhaps three hours at an official meeting. Rather, he would wait for a copy of the submission and spend an hour or so commenting on it, informally discussing the issue with officials when necessary.

Sometimes a minister asked his adviser to talk to a civil servant and perhaps explain the minister's thinking on a particular issue or his comments on a submission. Geoffrey Howe requested Adam Ridley to do this a number of times and Norman Lamont stated, 'if I am uneasy about something I might ask a political adviser to think about it and discuss it further with the department.' Occasionally ministers asked officials to talk to the adviser for a fuller explanation of the minister's thinking than the latter had time to give. In the above cases the discussions could be regarded as being on behalf of the minister. More frequently the meetings were initiated by the adviser or by the official.

Some permanent secretaries were unhappy at special advisers, in the words of one, 'getting at subordinate staff.' Furthermore, several officials felt it was inappropriate to suggest there was a role for advisers to play in helping to convey the ministers' policies into the departments. However, the subtlety of the additional nature of the adviser's contribution is demonstrated in the following quotations, starting with Donald Maitland referring to circumstances in which Tom McNally made himself useful:

One would be where the party view represented quite a departure from previous policy, in which case people had to be coached in that. Although everyone had read the manifesto and knew what was entailed, nonetheless, in the detailed application of that, Tom McNally might well have thought it helpful for people to get a bit of guidance about the way ministers wanted to play it.

When I arrived at the DoE I was astonished by the word perfect way in which senior officials could recite our programme. I spent happy hours instructing them on the correct exegesis of some of its less pellucid passages (Lipsey, 1980).

I was not really there at the beginning when Keith Joseph first handed down his reading list of about a dozen books. ... That was the method that Keith chose to ensure that his civil servants made policy suggestion along lines that were likely to be acceptable to him and his colleagues. ... I ended up with an additional job, as for many months afterwards I acted as a sort of unofficial interpreter. I was always being asked what would be the monetarist line on this, or where should the line be drawn between the state and the private sector (almost invariably those in the Department wanted to do too much) or how should we express this or that in a minute to the Secretary of State (Young, 1990, p.37).

These quotations give only a flavour of the diverse reasons for, and nature of, the informal contacts between advisers and officials. The advisers might initiate the face to face or telephone discussions to emphasize points in the manifesto, or as Lipsey did, to explain the philosophy behind it. They might wish to advocate the addition of extra options in the submission being planned by the officials. Tony Lynes, especially after he became based in the Supplementary Benefits Commission rather than the DHSS's main offices, spent more time talking informally to officials at meetings than most advisers did. He thought it important, 'to persuade the official that even if you are not right, at least you have got a serious, arguable, point of view that should be incorporated in the advice they are giving.' Advisers also initiated contact with officials when they were helping their minister to pursue a particular strategy and when they had useful information from the political field. Thus Jim Prior stated:

We used to have a weekly meeting with the officers of the backbench committee. Civil servants would never be present at that meeting but Rob Shepherd and Robbie Gilbert were there. They would tell the department what went on ... The meetings with the backbench committee were very important and bound to have an effect on policies pursued within the department; but without a special adviser there is no way the department can find these things out. I suppose a minister can always tell the department what the political nuances are, but ministers are fairly busy people.

A range of civil servants initiated contacts with advisers. At the DoE, Ian Bancroft, 'used to have a regular weekly chat with David Lipsey.' A similar procedure was adopted in the DHSS under Labour by the permanent secretaries. The advisers involved in these meetings were also amongst those who, in the words of Mike Hartley-Brewer, acted as a 'conduit from assistant secretaries and principals to the minister.' David Ennals saw Hartley-Brewer as his eyes and ears across the whole field, and the concept implied here of an adviser as somebody capable of hopping up and down the hierarchy of the department and acting as a channel of information fits with the model developed earlier. Furthermore, given the informality of their position, advisers, in discussions with officials or at formal meetings, could do as Maurice Peston did: 'I would always make it clear if I went to a meeting, that if the meeting came to some conclusion I certainly didn't regard myself as necessarily committed to that conclusion, because to me it was just a meeting at which we were discussing the issues; and therefore none of this agreed view stuff would I ever go for.'

Civil servants, to varying degrees, are under pressure to support the agreed line contained in the submission to the minister which helps explain why assistant secretaries sometimes seek out advisers. According to David Stephen, 'Officials use the special adviser to say, "look the paper coming up says this, but we think that." There was quite a lot of what the State Department calls "the Dissent Channel" there and I had to be very careful not to become that. I wasn't a Dissent Channel.' Stephen, and many other advisers, believed there were other, more common, reasons why officials approached advisers including to increase their understanding of the political perspectives involved, and to get a steer on the minister's likely reaction to their planned submissions. Occasionally officials turned to advisers for guidance as to why their submission had been rejected by a minister. The full variety of reasons that officials had for viewing favourably the opportunities to discuss points with advisers will be examined later.

From her perspective of having been, at different times, diary secretary and special adviser, Maggie Sidgreaves described several ways in which advisers could sometimes explicitly do things on behalf of the minister. Periodically as diary secretary she would put the advisers in

to see Labour Party people if Judith Hart became involved with other matters and was, at the last minute, unable to meet them. When she became an adviser Sidgreaves sometimes explained points to civil servants on behalf of the minister and she accompanied Hart on her overseas visits. On such trips she often had her own programme of events and sometimes, for example, visited refugee camps and made contacts it would have been difficult for either ministers or officials to have made. Occasionally it was also planned that she would open things or meet people when Hart had a full programme and could not perform those tasks.

Some advisers went on trips without their minister, but often accompanied by officials. Gwilym Prys-Davies, for example, spent three days looking at the Islands and Highlands Development Board with a civil servant from the Welsh Office when they were developing ideas about the proposed Mid Wales Rural Development Board. In addition to travelling extensively with the Foreign Secretary, several special advisers made visits on the minister's behalf: John Harris to Vietnam, Miles Hudson to Rhodesia, and David Stephen not only went alone on fact-finding missions for David Owen to various countries, including Mozambique, Zambia, Namibia, and South Africa, but was also used at times as an emissary, in Belize, for example, meeting the whole Cabinet for discussions in June 1978.

Part of question 16j) included a reference to receiving deputations, other than party ones, on behalf of the minister. A few examples were given above; however, it was sometimes difficult to distinguish between party groups and groups of people not officially from the party but consisting largely of people from one political persuasion. The phrase 'on behalf of' again caused difficulties. Despite allowing for this, the interview evidence supports the picture given by Table 3 that even when the wider concept of any contact with members of relevant pressure groups was considered, for many advisers it was not an important activity. Over 60 per cent had such contact either less frequently than weekly, or never. One area where the contact was least obviously 'on behalf of' a minister was where it was initiated by the groups. The point is illustrated by successive advisers appointed to the DHSS in 1978 and 1979. Malcolm Dean, having been a journalist

specializing in social policy, was appointed by David Ennals. He found that many groups that he had written about contacted him believing they now had a friend at court. Although Roger Dyson thought that the gathering and relaying of information from the field was something Patrick Jenkin wanted, it got rather out of hand: 'I found myself continually got at, sought out, and invited to do activities all over the country, far more than I could manage.'

One variant of the contact being initiated by groups is the expanded role of political lobbyists. Increased use of special advisers by lobbyists was advocated by Miller (1987) and in Business Magazine, 'Scrutator' wrote: 'Political lobbyists these days often refer to the importance of making one's number with special advisers' (1987, p.22). Jenny Jeger, a political consultant or lobbyist with experience of having previously worked at the Number Ten Political Office under Labour, also stressed the importance of having good contacts with political advisers. In addition to the regular two-way liaison she thought the contacts could prove particularly important in '"cases of desperation" when you have got to speak to the minister.' If you had a political point to make it was much better to go to the political adviser who had direct access than filtering it through elsewhere.

John Whittingdale, whilst special adviser at the DTI, was in contact with pressure groups and industrialists three or four times a week. He would listen to them, find out if they had a case, usually discuss it with officials, and see what the Government's line was. If it was appropriate he, 'would say to the Secretary of State, "I have been contacted by so and so and he has got a case, why don't we do something?"' He also felt that advisers had become, 'one of the prime targets for political lobbyists ... they were constantly ringing me up and would regard me as a route in to the minister.' At least for advisers serving up to 1987 Whittingdale was unusual in having so much contact with groups and lobbyists. This was probably a reflection of his working at the DTI but such activity has increased in importance for advisers since 1987. Lobbyists can sometimes be of value to advisers who wish, for example, to find out the facts behind an argument, or gain information quickly about an issue that is just breaking.

As noted earlier, Douglas Hurd, and other ministers, came to realize the value of having an adviser who was able to, 'do a little skirmishing work of the kind the civil servants also do, but he can do it a little more freely, a little more loosely.' His adviser, Edward Bickham, agreed he spent quite a lot of time talking to groups including ones concerned with broadcasting, and the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders. He would convey their ideas directly back to the minister and/or the department. Other aspects of this role that ministers appreciated include the advocacy performed by some advisers and their ability to assess the likely reaction to planned proposals - especially any political dangers. Liaison with trade unions was performed by several Labour advisers. Amongst the Tory orientated groups Richard Ehrman talked to whilst he was Tom King's adviser at Employment were the Centre for Policy Studies (CPS), the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA), and the IOD. He relayed their views; told them of, and justified, King's policies; and tried, 'to influence their policies and the tone of their publications.'

Sometimes advisers already had clear links with groups relevant to the minister's portfolio - in some cases it was a reason for appointment. Certain advisers, for example Tom Baron, could talk to the group with which he had good links and play a number of the above roles. Several of the Treasury advisers, including Peter Cropper, Douglas French, Rodney Lord, and Alastair Ross Goobey had good links with groups in the financial and/or taxation field. However, the necessary secrecy surrounding activities such as the preparation of the Budget meant that sometimes more emphasis was given to bringing ideas directly in to the Treasury ministers, than advocating proposed changes to outside audiences.

One of the reasons why contact with groups was generally not important, and those who did engage in it were often very circumspect, is that leading interest groups often had very good links with officials and a deputation from such a group would expect to meet a minister and/or senior officials. According to Clive Booth, former principal private secretary at the DES, if a group such as the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals came to meet the Secretary of State, 'it would be unthinkable to say, "the Secretary of State can't make it, but

the special adviser is here.” Advisers were sometimes seen as attempting to dilute the strength of the traditional relationships between departments and established interest groups. Thus in respect of the DES Kogan suggests, ‘Advisers are brought in to help cause radical change. Their concern is not with the practitioner networks and the more enduring achievements and liabilities of the system but with ways of dislodging them’ (1987, p.230).

For ministers wishing to challenge the existing policy community and bring a wider range of interest groups or policy think tanks into the discussions, advisers could play an important part. Advisers played a variety of roles: encouraging ministers to develop such consultations; encouraging groups to be more forthcoming; facilitating links between the groups and the minister and his officials; and acting as a conduit for the ideas of the group or think tank. Perhaps the clearest example comes from MAFF where, as noted in Chapter 3, a strong policy community exists. John Silkin’s adviser, Ann Carlton, wrote in Farming News on 27 January 1989:

in 1976 the civil servants suggested that the new minister, John Silkin, should meet the NFU. They were surprised when he also wanted to meet the fishing industry’s representatives at the earliest possible opportunity. Similarly the idea that he should meet consumer groups and the agricultural unions had to come from the minister or his adviser and not from the permanent civil service. This was not because the civil servants were malevolent; but because they were going by past precedent.

The press officer at MAFF, Terry Dawes, suggested that Carlton had an important role in liaising with some of these groups - especially, for example, with the owner-skipper in the fishing industry, in particular during negotiations at Brussels. Not only did Carlton play a part in the liaison, sometimes facilitating it, she also felt that in some cases, such as with consumer groups, she had to encourage the interest groups into greater activity. She claimed, ‘maybe the civil servants could have done that but they wouldn’t have had the will to do it, or the contacts, and I don’t think the minister would have had the time.’ This is partially compatible with Martin Smith’s argument that, ‘in British agricultural policy the existence of a closed policy community and a firmly established agenda limited the

role that excluded pressure groups could play in raising new issues ... The difficulty of challenging the agenda from outside means that often the pressure for change will only come from within government.' (1989, pp.163-4 and 161). However, whereas Smith stresses that major changes generally did not occur in agricultural policy until the 1980s, and did so then because of the emergence of new external problems, Carlton emphasizes the importance of the role in the late 1970s of various individuals - the minister, backed by both his adviser and changes he forced through at senior levels in MAFF.

Helping with presentation, 16k), occupied a great deal of most advisers' time (almost two thirds spent a substantial or considerable time on it), and encompassed more than just speech writing. Advisers could be involved in: discussing the strategy for presentation; talking to journalists - especially political ones; drafting and/or redrafting press releases; organizing the release of political speeches; drafting articles for the minister; preparation for Parliamentary Question Time; briefing the minister before television and radio interviews. John Harris and Michael Dobbs are examples of advisers who were effective at presentation and yet never, or in the case of Dobbs rarely, became classified as speech writers. They illustrate, however, that involvement in presentation overlaps with the roles described earlier because, for example, both were heavily involved in discussing with their ministers presentational strategy and the handling of specific issues.

Discussing the way to present an immediate issue can itself be part of crisis management. When the DHSS was split into two departments in 1988 Margaret Thatcher said in Question Time on 26 July that the burden of the two departments was, 'more than one person could legitimately undertake' (Official Report, Vol. 138, col. 251). It is, therefore, perhaps not surprising that Norman Fowler, who was Secretary of State at the DHSS for five years, described the key role of Nick True, his adviser, as helping with crisis management and that in most of the crises he faced he required help with presentation, 'particularly in getting draft statements/speeches to the minister quickly. Speed is of the essence.' Similar points were made by Labour advisers at the DHSS. Brian Abel-Smith commented, 'Jack [Straw] was very good at presentation

and he was much better than I on thinking how to react to a mini-crisis.' Mike Hartley-Brewer also felt there was a role for advisers in helping to handle the many crises that beset the department. According to Francis Cripps there is often a need in politics to respond very quickly, for example, by sending out press releases; but it is not just a question of presentation: 'creative thinking in a hurry is required ... [as] lines get developed to respond to emergencies'. Tony Benn's Diaries (1989, and 1990) record many examples of Cripps and Frances Morrell discussing aspects of presentational strategy - both in crises and, more generally to expound his position during disputes within the party and the Government. Assisting with crisis management could combine several of the activities described earlier with some presentational ones and again demonstrates aspects of the model of the place of advisers. It shows why they have to be on hand, close to ministers, and perhaps flexible enough to be free from too many compulsory, routine activities.

There was similarly a range of motives among those advisers who spoke frequently to journalists. Often advisers talked most frequently to political correspondents. John Harris even retained his lobby card. However, a division of responsibilities was again clearly seen between Shirley Williams's advisers: Stella Greenall talked to educational correspondents and John Lyttle to political ones. In talking to journalists, often over the phone or at lunch time, advisers might provide the background behind recent speeches or policy developments, or trail certain stories in the press. Having talked to a journalist an adviser sometimes suggested to his minister that he should meet the journalist. Several advisers, including Edward Bickham, also talked to journalists working on the increasing number of current affairs programmes. They would 'have a background, off-the-record chat about a subject rather than wanting to work on a news story.' Some advisers spend a considerable time briefing the press about their minister's position on departmental and general issues and this fits with the view of advisers as people who assist ministers in their continuous competition with colleagues. One Labour adviser, whilst admitting to some liaison with the press, said, 'I wasn't the constant call box that a number of my colleagues were.' A permanent secretary suggested that one of the main roles of the adviser in his department was to ensure

that the minister received better coverage in the Guardian than other ministers.

Advisers who had been journalists were in a good position to assist with presentation. Thus one of Malcolm Dean's activities was to draft articles for his ministers. In helping prepare ministers for interviews some advisers would play the part of 'a nasty left wing interviewer.' Similarly, many advisers, including Lynda Rouse, were part of the team which helped prepare their minister for Question Time.

In addition to all these activities advisers such as Abel-Smith were, as noted above, involved in drafting or amending documents coming out of the department for public consumption including Green Papers and Circulars. Where, however, advisers became directly involved in journalism, there could be controversy. Thus Tony Benn's Diary entry for 11 March 1979 reads: 'I had a note in my box that the Prime Minister wants to talk to me about Frances's work on Labour Activist, saying that she is in breach of her status as political adviser' (1990). On the other hand it was recently conceded officially that advisers were entitled to be involved in some controversial areas of presentation. In 1990 a memorandum entitled Costing of the Policies of the Opposition Parties was submitted by the Head of the Home Civil Service, Sir Robin Butler, to the Treasury and Civil Service Committee for its Fifth Report, Session 1989-90: The Civil Service Pay and Conditions of Service Code. In it he explained the role that civil servants could legitimately play and stated that, 'When the factual material has been provided, it is for Ministers (assisted by their special advisers) to determine the form of presentation.' (1990, p.30). Advisers such as Nicholas True had been involved in this activity prior to the 1987 election.

Another long-standing area of controversy and discontent referred to earlier is coordination of government policy. Michael Wolff assisted with this in the early 1970s. In 1986 Butler wrote, 'This Government has had immense difficulties in coordinating its actions and presentation ... Attempts have been made to cast special advisers as "banana skin spotters", and to make them pool timings of all major departmental manoeuvres and policy announcements into a central clearing

house' (p.20).

To varying degrees, advisers also performed a similar range of roles for junior ministers although in most cases they spent far less time working for them. We have seen how Norman Lamont valued the assistance of the advisers at the DTI, and when he was a junior minister at the Department of Energy he thought Michael Portillo was 'excellent' at providing speeches and felt free to approach him whilst recognizing Portillo's first loyalty was to David Howell, the Secretary of State. Some advisers, including Stuart Sexton (especially after Mark Carlisle's departure) although attached to the Secretary of State, carried out various functions for certain junior ministers. In the DHSS under Labour and the Treasury under the Tories the existence of a team of advisers made it easier for assistance to be given to junior ministers. In particular, several DHSS advisers, including David Townsend, found themselves supplying special adviser services for junior ministers, especially Alf Morris, the Minister for the Disabled. This involved discussing issues, attending meetings, writing speeches, and briefing directly on submissions. The Welsh Office covers a wide range of issues and both Gwilym Prys-Davies and Chris Butler sometimes worked for the junior ministers with responsibilities in particular fields. On becoming an adviser in 1974 Prys-Davies, who had chaired the Welsh Hospitals Board since 1968, was especially active in advising the Parliamentary Secretary dealing with health matters.

In keeping with the wide ranging nature of the role described at the beginning of this section, some advisers were involved in more activities than would fit neatly into even the exhaustive list covered in the questionnaire. These included helping to prepare the election manifesto and occasional work in relation to their minister's constituency. Again there could be overlap with other activities. Thus several advisers, including Derek Scott and Roger Liddle, travelled with the minister to his constituency, taking the opportunity to discuss departmental or other issues.

Whether advisers had any involvement with election manifesto preparation, and even the election campaign, depended partly on the time at which they served. Such activity could necessitate considerable

liaison with the party. John Houston spent 70 per cent of his first year working for the Foreign Secretary in preparing for the 1984 European elections. An interesting example of how work on the election manifesto links with the role of some advisers in attempting to ensure policies were developed in the department in line with the manifesto commitments came from Gwilym Prys-Davies. Based on his experience as special adviser in the Welsh Office from February 1974, he felt it would be useful if there was a stronger commitment to a Mid Wales Rural Development Board in the October 1974 manifesto so as to help overcome resistance to the idea from within Whitehall. He helped edit the Welsh Labour Party manifesto for October and was therefore able to draft appropriate changes to strengthen the wording that had been used in February. Several Labour advisers, including Malcolm Dean and Vincent Cable, referred to working on manifesto preparation in 1979, with David Lipsey playing a coordinating role. In the Tory Party in 1982, Geoffrey Howe invited Conservatives to serve on nine groups considering different aspects of policy which crossed departmental boundaries. Their remit,

was less to suggest items for the manifesto than policies for the longer term, i.e. five years ahead. The reports were collated by Peter Cropper (Director of the Research Department) and Adam Ridley (Political Adviser to Sir Geoffrey Howe) and submitted to Sir Geoffrey Howe, to Cecil Parkinson ('to reassure ministers that the political factor would not be neglected'), and to Ferdinand Mount, the head of the Prime Minister's Policy Unit. In effect this was to be the manifesto drafting team ... The first complete draft of the document which took account of new ministerial proposals was written by Ferdinand Mount and Adam Ridley (Butler and Kavanagh, 1984, p.39).

The role of advisers during election campaigns varied enormously but in general if they became actively involved, they had first to resign their special adviser's position. The value placed by Mrs Thatcher on the contribution of Tory advisers has been described. Again this demonstrates the ability of advisers - in this case ones who have just resigned their posts - to cross boundaries. According to Adam Ridley, the role of briefing ministers for press conferences and responding to leak stories was very complex and required a knowledge of official business, election timetables, and how public relations works.

Many other items accounted for a small part of certain advisers' time, for example, several, especially in the DHSS, were consulted about appointments such as those of chairman of health authorities. A few other advisers played very different roles from those described so far in this section. When he moved to the Supplementary Benefits Commission, Tony Lynes almost became, unofficially, special adviser to the chairman, David Donnison, who greatly valued his assistance (Donnison, 1982).

The impression that advisers were very busy is reinforced by the record of a month's work for one adviser compiled by his secretary at the time. During the month the adviser wrote: 65 minutes (covering 131 pages); 56 letters; eight draft ministerial letters; two speeches (and substantial modifications to speeches drafted by officials); two press releases; and seven other papers. He spent 63 hours in meetings and his secretary arranged 196 outgoing telephone calls in addition to those he made himself. The wide range of individuals to whom the items, especially letters, were sent is in keeping with the model set out in Chapter 3.

SECTION B: ROLE OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S POLICY UNIT.

When he returned to Number Ten in March 1974, Harold Wilson not only permitted his ministers to appoint special advisers but also established his own Policy Unit under Bernard Donoughue. The Policy Unit has remained in existence since 1974 - which is far longer than any of the earlier attempts to establish an equivalent unit that were described in Chapter 2. The Policy Unit, as its name implies, concentrates primarily on policy whereas more overtly party political functions are mostly dealt with by the Political Office and Political Secretary.

Despite its comparatively brief history, three clear periods were identified by David Willetts (1987) in an authoritative article: 1974-9; 1979-83; and 1983-7. In 1987 Donoughue gave a detailed description of the recruitment and role of the unit from 1974-9 in his book, Prime Minister. He was responsible for recruiting the unit's members. In this way the selection process was similar to that of only those very few of the departmental special advisers who were recruited by the

senior adviser in their department. All the members of the Policy Unit in 1974 were special advisers and Donoughue was offered the title, 'Coordinator of the Special Advisers', but declined on the grounds that he did not wish to be responsible for people (the departmental advisers) over whom he had no control. This is important because it is the first of a number of points in this section that reinforce one of the central features of the model of departmental special advisers, which is that they are the minister's 'own people'.

The members of the unit were mostly chosen for their policy expertise as well as their political commitment. Wilson described their role to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Conference:

They advise me directly on the immediate decisions to be made, whether in Cabinet or elsewhere, and on longer term issues and developments. They work closely with my Private Office staff as well as with the network of Special Advisers serving other Ministers and with the CPRS and the Cabinet Secretariat, and keep in touch with thinking outside Government through contacts in universities, industry, trade unions and pressure groups. The purpose of this Policy Unit is not only to bring in experts to extend the range of policy options from which the Government - and particularly the Prime Minister as head of the Government - has to choose. The Policy Unit was set up, and its members were selected, to provide a team with strong political commitment to advise on, propose and pursue policies to further the Government's political goals. For policies without politics are of no more use than politics without policies (1976, p.204).

Some people thought this was rather an idealized picture, but, to the extent that prime ministers gave it its head, others believed it operated effectively. When interviewed Donoughue felt there were considerable similarities between the work of special advisers in departments and the Policy Unit in: acting as the minister's 'eyes and ears'; looking for landmines; and making suggestions on policy initiatives. The concept of assistance to the person at the nodal point is again appropriate. Donoughue negotiated good access for members of the Policy Unit to a range of committees and they spent much time monitoring what was happening and in giving the Prime Minister policy advice. Mike Hartley-Brewer, whose wife Elizabeth Arnott was a member of the unit, thought that to the extent that advisers were providing a politically sensitive, independent, and technically competent input to policy issues, their role was similar to that of effective members of

the unit. Furthermore, the unit was well placed to be highly influential because of the power of Number Ten.

It was not always easy for the unit to obtain information from departments under the British system, which is 'very tribal', in the words of the former Cabinet Secretary, John Hunt (now Lord Hunt of Tanworth). He observed that the Policy Unit members, 'fairly rapidly found it was as difficult to get information out of special advisers in other departments as out of other civil servants because a special adviser owed his allegiance to his own minister and not to Bernard Donoghue.'

Under Margaret Thatcher the Policy Unit was reduced in size. Initially there were only two members - John Hoskyns and Norman Strauss. Although a civil servant was soon seconded to it from the Department of Industry, it remained small and was essentially concerned with key strategic objectives to do with, Hoskyns claimed, 'the economic turn around'. They briefed the Prime Minister on these. Thatcher soon also appointed her own Economic Adviser, Alan (now Sir Alan) Walters, who was not a member of the unit but worked closely with it at times (Burch, 1983). Although not responsible for devising it, Hoskyns played an important role in supporting the Medium Term Financial Strategy (Hoskyns interview; Thain, 1985).

Willetts suggests that, 'Under the leadership of Ferdinand Mount in 1982-83, the Policy Unit went through a period of transition with the new style emerging clearly under John Redwood who arrived in November 1983 and became Head in January 1984' (p.446). The unit expanded - especially with the abolition of the CPRS following the 1983 election - and included several permanent civil servants on secondment from their departments. In interview Mount, Redwood, and Willetts all stressed the extent to which the post-1983 election Policy Unit should be seen as successor to the CPRS as well as to earlier Policy Units and that it was the abolition of the CPRS that allowed a cost-conscious Thatcher to expand the unit. With its larger size and new style the unit aimed to cover virtually all areas of domestic policy. It played both a reactive role in commenting in papers going to the Prime Minister from departments, and a proactive role in making policy proposals to the

Prime Minister, and in working with the departments on suggestions that had the Prime Minister's backing. The presence of career civil servants in the Policy Unit highlights the importance of making a distinction between the unit and other advisers. According to Redwood, 'the Policy Unit isn't like the departmental advisers for a number of reasons. The first, and most important, reason is the Policy Unit is a group of people who are part of the civil service and work as career civil servants would work.'

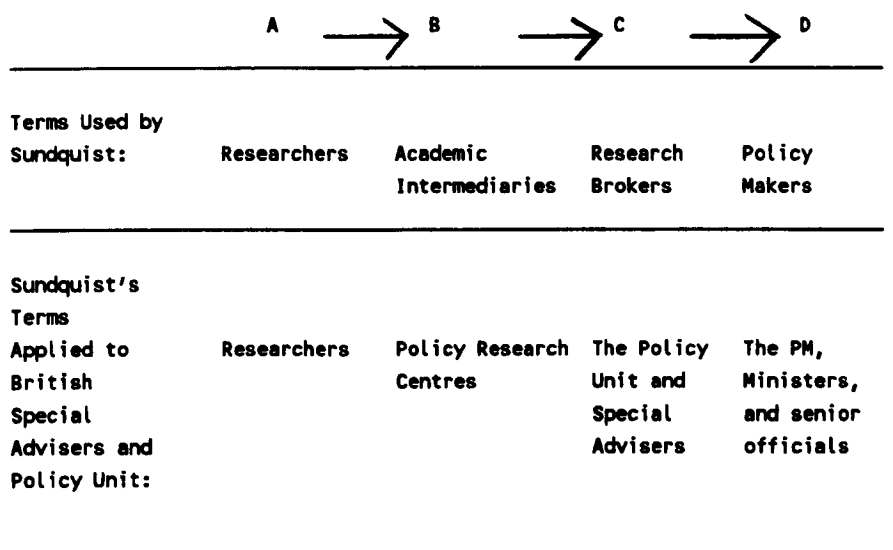
Mount emphasized that on their own the small group in the unit lacked the capacity to generate many new ideas. However, they were in a position to talk to policy research centres and, when they thought their ideas were good, feed them into the Prime Minister and eventually sometimes to departments. The policy research centres - including the CPS and the IEA - often included academics in their research groups. Mount agreed it was appropriate to see special advisers and the unit as brokers for ideas produced by these centres. He commented: 'to think purely in terms of special advisers as isolated beings underestimates the extent to which they must feed off the humus outside.'

An important source of policy ideas, according to Kavanagh, 'has been policy - brokers who operate between the political and academic worlds' (1987, p.68). He examined the role played in developing Thatcherism by various individuals and groups, including the ASI, CPS, IEA, IOD, and the Social Affairs Unit. More recently he re-examined some of the ideas produced by these groups and claimed that,

Reforming ministers could use these ideas to challenge 'yes minister' officials in their departments. Members of Mrs Thatcher's Policy Unit kept in touch with the think-tanks and helped her in battles against allegedly status-quo inclined departments ... There is an impressive overlap between members of these think groups, Conservative MPs, special advisers to ministers and desk officers in the Conservative Research Department. Members of think-tanks get appointed to Conservative policy groups and consult with special advisers to ministers (1992, p.27).

It might be appropriate to adapt a figure developed in the United States by Sundquist (1978 p.127) and apply some British labels to illustrate how policy research brokers sometimes could operate in the process of transferring ideas from researchers ('A' in Figure 6) to the

FIGURE 6: Special Advisers as Research Brokers.



Adapted from Sundquist, 1978, p. 127.

politicians and senior officials ('D' in Figure 6). David Willetts, as Director of CPS, thought advisers were one of their target audiences and The Economist (6 May 1989) referred to the Policy Unit as being 'a conduit' (p.28) for research centre ideas. Figure 6 is an oversimplification and many ideas may get through to the politicians and senior officials directly, without going through the Policy Unit and advisers, but, on occasions, there is no doubt that the unit and advisers can have an important brokerage role. It might be argued that the policy research centres are really the research brokers. Given the links between some groups and certain individuals in the Policy Unit it is perhaps more appropriate to view it as a continuum. However, in his article Sunquist referred to: 'the staff units or individuals who serve Presidents, department heads, bureau chiefs, congressional committees, and individual members of Congress as links with the academic world. They carry many titles - economic advisers, research and statistics offices, policy analysts, legislative assistants, and many others. They need a generic title and "research broker" is as good as any.' (p.127).

The Policy Unit could also be seen as a broker in those cases, highlighted by Redwood, where the unit had a role in bringing the views and interests of various previously under-represented groups into play in Whitehall. Redwood argued that his slightly enlarged group was too small on its own to provide a serious critique of all the material coming from departments, so they relied on gaining information from business, interest groups, policy research centres, and academics and specialists outside Whitehall.

Several aspects of the Policy Unit's post-1983 change in style were important. Greater emphasis was given to the details of a range of policies rather than a concentration solely on strategy. Furthermore, it played a more active part in discussing policy issues with departments. This went far wider than just involving the departmental special advisers but they could be an obvious point of contact for members of the Policy Unit and some strong links were formed. This was perhaps symbolized by the exceptional role of Oliver Letwin in being simultaneously an adviser to Keith Joseph and a member of Margaret Thatcher's Policy Unit - only possible because of the extraordinarily close relationship between the two. Within the unit Letwin also had

responsibility for Employment matters and this department provides a good example of the Secretary of State (Tom King), his adviser (Richard Ehrman), and the relevant Policy Unit member, all emphasizing the value of the link between the departmental advisers and the unit.

According to Ehrman the liaison took several forms including trying out ideas from the minister on the unit which would be able to give the adviser an indication of the likely response and any possible re-shaping that might be desired by Number Ten. The unit could sometimes play a central role in helping to resolve inter-departmental wrangles by, 'being the broker almost, in the case of someone like Oliver, who was very effective and worked very closely with John Redwood who was an equally effective head of the unit.' By operating with them Ehrman would be able to inform King of the likely attitude of Number Ten in the dispute. The unit did not deal with Northern Ireland, therefore, Ehrman believed, when he moved with King to the NIO one reason for his reduced effectiveness was that he lost much of his clout and usefulness because he was much less part of the network with the Policy Unit.

Similarly, Tom King believed that when he was developing new policies it was useful for the adviser to liaise with the Policy Unit. The unit would have the freedom to say whether or not they thought the policy was going to run and they would have the broader view and know how the proposal might fit with others from elsewhere: 'it was very helpful to have these sounding boards at a lower, more informal, level.'

Letwin viewed the situation in the same way and commented:

In many ways we enhanced the position of advisers ... I had in the end a closer and more open relationship with the advisers than with anybody else in the departments with which I dealt ... it was only with the adviser I didn't feel any kind of distance. I thought we were part of the same team trying to achieve the same things always. Sometimes with ministers there would be a distance because I was the servant of another minister ... I was on the 'phone very frequently to advisers in all the ministries with which I dealt ... It was a common enterprise. They would ring and say, 'look my minister is coming forward with this, it has got this sentence in it. What do you think?' ... and vice versa we were always trying to make sure that ministers came forward with plans which the Prime Minister would accept.

The Treasury and DTI were other departments where several of the post 1983 advisers, including Howard Davies, Rodney Lord, and John Whittingdale referred to the existence of close links with the Policy Unit. Links between the Policy Unit and departmental special advisers were not always good; certain Policy Unit members regarded some departmental special advisers as being uninformed about policy developments in their own department and, therefore, not of great influence or help. Despite the post 1983 changes, neither Mount nor Redwood saw themselves being the coordinator of a network of special advisers any more than had Hoskyns. Similarly, most departmental advisers, including Lord, did not see the unit as playing a coordinating or focal role amongst the advisers in the various ministries. Apart from Letwin and Lipsey there was virtually no interchange of personnel between the advisorate and the unit between 1974 and 1987. Throughout its history, relations between different ministers, departmental officials and the unit have varied. Letwin believed that the presence of an adviser in a department was a necessary, though not on its own a sufficient, condition for a good relationship between the department and the unit: 'The biggest difference was between those ministries that had advisers and those that didn't.'

A former member of Mrs Thatcher's Policy Unit, Christopher Monckton, wrote of John Redwood: 'He was a devastatingly effective head of the Policy Unit and, like other special advisers throughout the Government, was quick to learn how to overcome the inertia, obstruction and obscurantism that is still endemic in the civil service.' (Evening Standard, 10 May 1988). Such thinking would clearly not endear the unit to Whitehall. Whereas some ministers and officials regarded the unit as uninformed and meddlesome and some thought it uninfluential, others have viewed its contributions as effective and constructive. Frequently, but not invariably, the relationship between departmental special advisers and the Policy Unit reflected their minister's attitude towards the unit. This is yet another reinforcement of the concept of the special adviser as the minister's 'own person'. One official agreed that the adviser could be a contact person with the relevant Policy Unit person: 'Yes, that is right, "find out what he is up to and stop him. Let's muzzle it." It was fascinating to see the special advisers operating as civil servants, protecting the minister ... the

departmental minister is still the great power in the land.' In the late 1980s the role of the Policy Unit was at times more publicized and controversial.

CHAPTER SEVEN: INFLUENCES ON THE ROLE OF SPECIAL ADVISERS AND HOW FAR A PLACE HAS EVOLVED FOR THEM IN THE SYSTEM.

It was established in Chapter 4 that not all ministers had clear reasons for appointing advisers and, even when they did, these were not always firmly linked to a perception of needs. Furthermore, the functions carried out were not always strongly tied to reasons for appointment or an analysis of needs, and even where there was a link, the functions appropriate to fulfil a particular reason could be variously interpreted.

Many advisers at the time of appointment were not exactly clear as to the functions they were expected to perform - only a quarter said that they had a formal job description or terms of reference. Many people opined that the role of each special adviser evolved. A number of overlapping and interacting factors influence the process of evolution. They include:

- (A) the minister's developing wishes and needs;
- (B) the capabilities of the adviser;
- (C) the capabilities, expectations and attitudes of people already in post; and the extent, therefore, to which there is a place for advisers;
- (D) the exercise of discretion by the adviser in the light of other factors.

This list is similar to the one, already described in Chapter 3, Section D, that Meltsner used when discussing the influences on the role of policy analysts in America. He did, however, also include 'the policy arena' (1986, p.4) and in his 1988 review of James Walter's book he was critical of the failure to address this issue, claiming:

we must consider the effects of the policy area, because some essential aspects of advisory behaviour are likely to differ by the type of policy. Some policy areas may have a great deal of knowledge that supports a political consensus about the design and choice of policy; other policy areas have little knowledge and policy may have to be formulated under conditions of political disagreement. With different knowledge and political conditions, advisers may have to use different skills and do different work (pp. 227-8).

Whilst this issue will be further examined when the impact of advisers on policy is considered, the small number of British advisers, and the variety of roles most performed, make clear generalizations difficult. Several ministers who challenged the existing consensus found advisers valuable, but the analysis in this chapter will concentrate on the four points listed above and end with an examination of the evolution and formalization of the role.

SECTION A: THE MINISTER'S DEVELOPING NEEDS AND WISHES

The functions performed by special advisers correlate fairly well with reasons for appointment. This might indicate that the minister's wishes do exert considerable influence on their functions. This was most obviously demonstrated in many of those cases where, sometimes despite the lack of a formal job description, the adviser felt at the time of his appointment that the functions he was expected to perform were clearly defined. The letter of appointment received by many advisers stated that their duties would be 'those set down by the Secretary of State'. The evolution of an adviser's role was frequently dictated by functions his minister wished him to perform. Even with a minister who was as clear about the need for advisers as Tony Benn the adviser could initially still feel unclear about her precise role: 'we political advisers had no job description. It was like being put into the army and having to work out what your duties were in the middle of a pitched battle, shells falling overhead' (Morrell, Guardian, 25 March 1980).

Despite this she felt, as did many other advisers, that their role, 'was determined by the needs of the minister.' Such an opinion was generally shared by many ministers and officials with Clive Booth stating: 'You could define the special adviser's role as being entirely that which the minister who has appointed the special adviser wants it to be.' The general rule and the way it operates, is well illustrated by the exceptional position of Paul Chapman, one of the few advisers who was basically selected by another adviser. Just as most advisers worked to the minister, Chapman, in practice, worked to the senior adviser. His role was never formally stated: 'it was very much on an ad hoc basis, responding to what Brian [Abel-Smith] wanted doing, which could

be anything, even to delivering things to the minister.'

Even when it is asserted that a range of factors influence the role of advisers, it is often accepted that the ministers' wishes and needs are the major determinant. In his pamphlet, Darlington lists a wide range of roles played by advisers but stresses that not all advisers played all the roles. The choice and balance in any particular case depended on: 'the nature of the Department, the seniority of the Secretary of State, the abilities and interests of the Political Adviser and, above all, the requirements and wishes of the Secretary of State' (p.30). Darlington's minister, Merlyn Rees, also felt that the role of the adviser depended upon what the minister wanted.

Evidence to support this point comes from advisers, including John Whittingdale, David Coleman, and Stuart Sexton, who served more than one minister and found that their role varied depending on the requirements of the different ministers. Whittingdale served three successive Secretaries of State for Trade and Industry and not only thought that each required him to fulfil a somewhat different role, but also found that as he gained more experience and knowledge of the department's affairs he was increasingly able to brief his ministers on them. The further factor sometimes thought to influence the role and impact of the adviser is the nature of the policy issue with which he is dealing. Coleman felt that whereas both the ministers of state for whom he was working wanted him to be involved in political work, he had a slightly different role in relation to the policy matters with which each dealt. William Waldegrave, as Minister of State for Environment, put particular emphasis on his assisting in maintaining contacts with outside bodies and bringing in new ideas. In housing, for which John Patten was the minister, there was a major review of policy and therefore a substantial role for the adviser in participating in far-reaching discussions with the minister and officials and in scrutinizing and commenting on submissions from officials.

Even when an adviser was serving the same minister, he often found that the minister's requirements evolved as circumstances changed and the minister became more aware of his needs. Sometimes ministers, for example Robert Carr, found there was less need than they had anticipated

and the adviser's role diminished. More usually, however, the minister became aware of new demands and the adviser, being 'the minister's person', and always on the spot, was often amongst the first to be asked to respond to them, even if, later, more permanent and official ways were developed. Ministers often discovered a need for contact, perhaps of an informal nature, to be made with people within the party or pressure groups, and the adviser was on hand to provide it. The minister, for example Bill Rodgers, then sometimes realized, especially if he had dealings with local councillors, that it was useful to ask the adviser to develop this function. Similarly, many ministers found they wanted extra assistance with presentation and again relied on the special adviser. Although involvement with presentation was often a major reason for appointment, some advisers said that speech writing became a more important function than they had originally expected. This was the case with several advisers at the DHSS including Nicholas True and Abel-Smith. The latter said, 'most of my time was spent presenting policy, either writing White Papers or writing speeches, and I hadn't realized that this would be a major part of the time compared with that spent discussing policies.' Treasury ministers after 1979 (according to Hennessy, 1988, in common with other ministers and their officials) found that the development of the new select committees of the House of Commons involved them in more work. Consequently, there was a role for advisers in preparatory activities.

Despite the importance of the minister's wishes and needs in determining the role of advisers, there are limitations. In describing the influences on the ministerial staff in Australia, R. Smith (1977), covers a similar list to the one given above. He goes on to argue that they did not form a rigid framework: 'Within the boundaries of the specific situations in which ministerial officers found themselves they had important opportunities for defining their own roles. Indeed, this became a responsibility, for if they did not do so, many ministers did not have the time and skill to define their role for them' (p.145-6).

In the UK a few advisers were critical of their minister's inability to define their role or to use them properly. But before considering the degree of discretion advisers can exercise, other influences must be examined.

SECTION B: CAPABILITIES OF SPECIAL ADVISERS.

Although it is difficult to distinguish capabilities from discretion, the aim in this section is to consider how far advisers' abilities determine their role. In the selection process - especially of specialists - ministers choose people with certain talents because they want specific roles fulfilled. Here, the concern is more to examine how advisers' capabilities interact with other factors in the continuing evolution of their role. Inevitably ministers sometimes wished their adviser to be more involved in certain activities because they noticed the adviser's success in fulfilling that task. For example, ministers who found an adviser, such as Tim Boswell, to be good at speech writing usually asked him to write more. Conversely, advisers who did not perform well in certain areas were less likely to be used again in that role. Several ministers found that their advisers were not as good at speech writing as they had hoped.

Efficacious advisers generally found that their role expanded. Perhaps the best example is David Young. Keith Joseph recalled that, 'he was given a cubby hole somewhere remote in the department until by sheer force of niceness and effectiveness he was given a proper office near me.' In his autobiography Young describes his transformation from a specialist role to taking 'a wider interest in the work of the Department' and actually becoming a special adviser. (p.45). Various other advisers whose role was initially seen in rather specific terms, including Roland Brown, John Harris, and David Metcalf, were, according to their various ministers, increasingly brought into departmental affairs because of their capabilities and inclinations. Also advisers with specialist knowledge, though recruited to play a general role, may find themselves, as happened with David Stephen and Latin American issues, increasingly drawn into discussions on substantive matters in their specialist area.

Civil servants as well as ministers may make increasing use of an obviously capable adviser. Some of the younger political advisers who proved that they could usually be relied on to give an accurate steer as to their minister's likely reactions to a proposal, and/or the political constraints in a situation, came to be consulted more frequently by

officials. Examples include Edward Bickham, Ann Carlton, Richard Ehrman, Robin Harris, David Hill, David Lipsey, Tom McNally, Michael Portillo, Roger Liddle, Rob Shepherd, Stephen Sherbourne, Jack Straw, and John Whittingdale. This is extremely important. It links back to the earlier discussion on the informal role of talking to officials and thus adding flexibility to the system by being an additional channel of information in the way proposed in the model showing the place of advisers. Out of many possible supporting quotations the following give a flavour of the arguments, starting with Tom King who believed that they not only applied to his advisers but were also relevant when Michael Portillo became adviser to David Howell who was appointed Secretary of State for Energy in 1979 after King had been shadowing the department:

I encouraged officials, if they couldn't get hold of me or the ministers, to talk to a special adviser if they wanted a steer as to what was the background to party policy or the attitude of government supporters. The adviser would be able to say, '... if you put that up to the minister he'll chuck that out because his backbenchers will rubbish it.'

He got on immensely well with the civil servants. They very quickly found that he was an ever-open door to which they could go and try their ideas: 'How is the Secretary of State going to react if we say this? How shall we put it?' ... [He got on well with both the private office and] with assistant secretaries and senior principals and people of that level who suddenly found that they had access, a short cut, to the political top of the department without having to go up through the whole rigmarole, and the whole thing being done on an official level (Patrick Jenkin on Stephen Sherbourne).

I don't think at the beginning we had quite thought of the way that David would be involved with the department as things were worked up... become in a sense, a sort of political adviser to senior civil servants as well ... pointing out to them the constraints of party policy and pressures that they would have to allow for (Andrew Semple on David Lipsey).

Towards the end of the three years, under secretaries would seek him out and say ... 'could he just look at this note before they put it up' (Roy Hattersley on David Hill).

He wasn't long there before people in the Foreign Office were coming to him and saying, 'look, there is this problem, we are thinking of putting this proposition, what do you think?' I would say he was in many ways the ideal special adviser ... They were absolutely delighted to have somebody like that they could try things out on before they got to the minister. It was like litmus paper really. (Sir Tom McCaffrey, Head of Foreign Office News Department, 1974-6, on Tom McNally).

Sometimes it was felt that the adviser, for example Lipsey, made an effort to demonstrate to officials that by involving the adviser in their deliberations, and taking note of what he said, they would enhance the likelihood of a favourable response from the minister. This illustrates the subtle processes of interaction between the various factors. Thus Jack Straw recalled that a civil servant told him they had expected him to be a conduit from the minister to the department but, 'as things had turned out it was also the other way.' The role evolved, Straw thought, depending upon one's skills and people's judgment about how useful you were going to be: 'The key was what use you were to the minister you were working for and how far the department saw that the minister thought you had a use.'

There are further considerations where there are several special advisers, each with a range of capabilities. When he became Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1983 Nigel Lawson inherited Adam Ridley, took with him Lynda Rouse who had been his adviser at Energy, and brought in Rodney Lord. Lord felt that, 'the job to some extent develops rather according to one's own interests and talents and of course one's minister's requirements'. Lord was brought in chiefly to write speeches for the Chancellor, but soon Rouse left and, 'when Michael Portillo arrived, he took over that role.' Lord was also the main adviser concerned with public expenditure matters, his area of specialist interest. When Rouse went, Lord, 'was asked to take a close interest in tax policy', which had been Rouse's area. Peter Cropper later filled the place of the departing Ridley and, 'he took over the tax role because that was very much his scene.'

SECTION C: CAPABILITIES, EXPECTATIONS AND ATTITUDES OF PEOPLE ALREADY IN POST: HOW FAR IS THERE A PLACE FOR ADVISERS?

The extent to which an adviser's role is influenced by other people is complicated. To some degree the use of advisers implies that others are not allowed to, or are not totally capable of, satisfactorily performing certain functions. Partly, therefore, the adviser's role is prescribed by the gaps that are perceived in the services rendered by others.

However, especially as it becomes more formalized, other people might have expectations of the role an adviser will fulfil, or, by their positive attitude, encourage the adviser to work with them in particular activities. Furthermore, officials might encourage an adviser to perform some tasks as a way of preventing him from having the time to perform more sensitive ones.

In Chapter 3, Figure 2 showed the place of many of the categories already assisting the minister. Figure 4 showed that some of the areas in which advisers might operate are already fairly crowded. The question must therefore arise as to how far there is room for the special adviser. As Blackstone asked (1979, p.8), 'How far then can it be said that this new animal does anything more than poke its nose in a variety of other areas where other people were already doing an effective job?' These issues will be explored with each category, although, as Bickham claimed, there is a case for having one person performing the range of tasks that constitute the adviser's role, even if, in some areas, the adviser is merely providing something similar to existing services:

For many years others did work that advisers do. The fact that ministers felt the need, however, to bring in special advisers suggests that perhaps they weren't doing it in as coordinated or effective a way as could have been possible ... I was just an extra pair of hands for certain duties; an extra mind that wasn't weighed down with departmental wisdom, to take an independent look and be somebody else they could rely on.

The categories to be considered are:

- (i) The private office
- (ii) Other civil servants
- (iii) Junior ministers
- (iv) Parliamentary private secretaries
- (v) The press office
- (vi) Party officials

(i) The Private Office

Relations with the private office although often good, were occasionally difficult. Some advisers were physically located in the private office and others regarded as part of it by ministers and officials including some serving Roy Hattersley. A few were seen as 'the political private secretary'. Reference was made in Chapter 3 to the difficulties faced by someone liaising between people, or parts of an organization, with different organizational cultures. It was suggested that such a person might welcome assistance. Many private secretaries were glad that the adviser was there to carry out tasks including party political liaison, letter writing, and speech writing. They often gratefully encouraged advisers to be involved.

Interview evidence supported the picture revealed in Chapter 3 of practical, constitutional, and time limitations on the private office staff's ability fully to service their minister in some of these activities - especially the party political ones. On the other hand, before the advent of special advisers, ministers and private secretaries coped. There is some evidence that in the past the demands were not so great. Sir Geoffrey Otton, a DHSS second permanent secretary, suggested there is a dimension of activity, 'which is better done by non-civil servants, and indeed in propriety I think ought not to be done by civil servants.' Having special advisers, 'helps to unravel some of the conflicts of responsibility that arise at these top levels for permanent secretaries and private secretaries, in a world which has become increasingly political.' He did not think people 30 years ago had worried about these issues; even when he was private secretary in the Home Office he could not recollect having much to do with party organizations. This suggests increasing demands have resulted in gaps appearing in the private office's ability to respond.

As principal private secretary to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Andrew Semple contrasted the situation under Geoffrey (now Lord) Rippon with that once Tony Crosland took over in 1974 and brought in an adviser, David Lipsey. Planning the programme for a visit, for example, for Rippon might have involved discussion with the minister, the constituency secretary, and Central Office for the party political

part and inevitably the PPS was not always immediately available. Under Crosland, the presence of an adviser made it easier than it otherwise would have been to sit down together and develop a single programme. Similarly, as private secretary for a Labour Secretary of State, contact with the party, without Lipsey,

would all have been very awkward and we'd have had to have made Crosland make his own calls. We'd have inevitably been dragged in, you always are at the margin; ... It was far easier to know that party liaison directly was not our business and that there was somebody who actually understood it and would do it.

The party offices too, regarded it as generally easier and more satisfactory to liaise with a minister through the special adviser than the private office directly.

Responsibility for preparation of speeches straddles many people within a department especially given the multi-modality of speeches. Again there are grey areas surrounding the extent to which the department and private secretary may help gather and collate material for a speech to a party audience or on general political matters. Sometimes the private office is left with the task of rewriting departmental speeches so that they are more to the minister's liking. Clearly ministers often explicitly wanted advisers to help fill some of the gaps in the speech writing services, but private secretaries too, frequently welcomed and encouraged such involvement of advisers. Thus Sir John Graham, principal private secretary at the Foreign Office said that Miles Hudson, 'did increasingly turn to writing speeches and that certainly was a burden off one's back.' At the DTI an official claimed the private office was glad to have Stephen Sherbourne to prepare speeches. Norman Warner at the DHSS felt that although civil servants had always written speeches, the issue was the time the ministers or private office had to rewrite them. The advisers, he thought, made that process easier and probably enabled the minister to take on more, major speeches on policies. He stated that given the existing staffing levels in the private office, 'it would have been impossible for me to provide to the minister the kinds of services that were provided by Jack Straw, Brian Abel-Smith, and Tony Lynes ... the quality of the briefing, the speeches, the material that was provided to Mrs Castle was much higher

with them than it would have been without them.'

Evidence from David Willetts perhaps best illustrates that there is a role for advisers even where the private secretary is explicitly both politically and personally sympathetic to the minister. Willetts briefly served as a House of Commons research assistant to Nigel Lawson prior to becoming a civil servant. He was later at an appropriate stage in his career to be appointed private secretary when, as Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Lawson was looking for a new one and chose him. Despite his background, Willetts felt there was still a place for advisers because, for one thing, he did not attend the ministerial prayer meetings. Furthermore, he continued:

Private secretaries are often personally close to their ministers but it still leaves a whole host of jobs for the special advisers, simply because people are all very busy ... you are not fighting demarcation disputes trying to keep people off your patch. If anything, what you are trying to do is to unload some of this work on to somebody else to help you do it, otherwise you are not going to get home until midnight ... if the adviser could possibly do that speech writing rather than the hard pressed official or the hard pressed private secretary, you were grateful.

In several areas respondents were less agreed about the need for an adviser to fill gaps. This raises questions about how far there is a role for advisers to play in assisting with the traditional private office role of progress chasing and of helping to make the minister's mind known in the department. The limitations on the advisers' role in progress chasing were discussed earlier as was the scope for advisers to talk to officials in departments. It is in the latter case that possibly the greatest difficulties arise in distinguishing what advisers are for, as opposed to what they can usefully do. Some officials believe that if a minister feels his mind is not being made clear to the department, he should change his private secretary rather than appoint an adviser. Some interviewees criticized the idea that advisers are better able to advocate a minister's policies within his department because they are committed to them.

The earlier account of discussions between officials and advisers revealed many strands in such contact and that there were aspects, including political sensitivities, and the background to manifesto

commitments, where advisers could have a depth of knowledge which it would be unreasonable to expect private secretaries to have developed. Advisers sometimes had access to meetings, for example David Hill to Roy Hattersley's prayer meetings, denied to private secretaries. Furthermore, many officials saw advisers as a valuable additional, but secondary, source of information - more usually on how the minister might react, than on the policy commitments of the incoming minister. At Energy Donald Maitland saw Michael Portillo as, 'an additional channel between the political head and the department as a whole.' The private secretary and other officials were the main link but, 'the fact that there is this other channel does not diminish the channel of communication of Secretary of State to his private secretary or to his officials.' Similarly Sir Michael Palliser thought that Foreign Secretaries found it useful to have advisers (for example David Lipsey and David Stephen), in addition to private secretaries, as two way channels with the Foreign Office.

In some instances ministers felt that even private secretaries found it beneficial to discuss the minister's priorities with advisers:

A lot of officials at middle level would actually regard the advisers as sounding boards. Is the minister really set on doing this? ... in that sense it is a two way flow rather than one of the advisers going to the appropriate civil servant and saying she is absolutely determined to do this thing ... one way in which they were very helpful - even in relation to the private offices - was in being able to say to the private office, 'she really does mean this.' (Judith Hart).

The general picture emerges of advisers playing a role in this area that is at least as much adding to existing resources as filling gaps. To this extent the private office is not exercising a major influence on the role. A further aspect of this, however, is the argument that most advisers have a freedom to pursue and advocate the minister's policies, irrespective of the traditional values and consequent policies favoured by the department. This links with another disagreement - how far ministers wish advisers to play the aide/confidant role because they believe advisers have a sole loyalty to them instead of the dual loyalty of the private secretaries. Most people accept that private secretaries have a dual loyalty. There is perhaps a greater diversity of opinion about whether this is detrimental. Generally the stronger the belief it

is bad, the greater the feeling that the balance of private secretaries' loyalties lies too much in favour of the department and the permanent secretary. The point can be illustrated from various interviews commencing with Francis Cripps who thought the private office could not perform the same role as advisers because:

They are civil servants - they spy on the minister. They have divided loyalty ... they are incredibly tactful, very nice, very helpful but they are briefed by permanent secretaries almost non-stop to try to guide the minister in particular directions by sabotaging appointments, manipulating his diary, in the interests of preserving the department's policy line.

Whilst I don't hold the Tony Benn view about divided loyalties and sabotage and all that, you always feel that private secretaries have a vested interest in telling the permanent secretary things that you may not want the permanent secretary to know (Roy Hattersley).

It is a big problem they've got ... although I think to be fair we had two private secretaries during those three years, both of whom were excellent, extremely good, extremely able, very easy to work with, played it straight and well. Did a very good job of balancing their minister versus the permanent secretary (David Hill).

Mostly it's true that a private secretary, if you like, has a divided loyalty, but his main loyalty will be to his minister ... And there is a positive advantage to a minister in having a private secretary who does these things for the department, knows how to operate with the department to their minister's advantage (Sir Kenneth Clucas, permanent secretary, DPCP whilst Hattersley was the Secretary of State).

The special advisers were personally committed to the minister, so that the minister felt when she was talking to them, that these people were wholly on her side. When I was a private secretary ... primarily I was there to help my ministers, but my ministers also knew it was my duty, they wouldn't have had it otherwise, to represent my permanent secretary's views and the views of the department .. a good private secretary has got to be an open double agent (Patrick Nairne).

These diverse comments reveal how gaps in the service provided from the private office might influence what ministers require from advisers to satisfy the need for personal support described in Chapter 3.

Further clear analysis of how this impacts on the adviser's role comes from Bill Rodgers:

A busy minister leading a very hectic, emotional life, therefore needs somebody around with whom he feels comfortable. A private secretary can do this but he has executive responsibilities and cannot share your party political views and exhilaration or sadness at by election results etc. Ministers need somebody to talk to, drink with, without cutting the private secretary out ... civil servants are very adaptable but you cannot expect them to be totally at home with you and share your political role.

Rodgers's comments highlight the importance of the triangular relationships between ministers, private secretaries and advisers. Usually the adviser's role was seen as the subsidiary one and often private secretaries thought it was important that they controlled even the advisers' access to the minister's room. Many private secretaries believed that they could have made life difficult for the special advisers had they wished to do so. Some appreciated, however, that getting on with somebody in whom the minister already had confidence could be useful for them. There was an element of this in the Foreign Office when Tony Crosland and David Lipsey arrived from the DoE. According to Susan Crosland, her husband's former private secretary told his new one, "he has his extended family to which D. Lip. is admitted. Don't you attempt to mix personal and official life." She continued, 'except with D. Lip. and Margaret [his diary secretary] he drew a boundary round himself which the sophisticates of private office were very hesitant to cross' (1982, pp.322-3).

Most advisers felt that a good relationship with the private office was crucial if they were to function effectively and receive key papers. The relationship could not only influence the type of activities advisers engaged in, but also the depth and effectiveness of their involvement in key issues. Good relations were highly desirable where the adviser sat in the private office. Alec Douglas Home's belief that there was a good accord between his private secretaries and his adviser was shared by John Graham, who referred to 'total trust', and Miles Hudson, who thought that Graham's attitude was very important. Although Tom McNally moved out of the private office after a while, he stood by his remarks to the Re-skilling Government Seminar in May 1986:

the five years that I did spend as a political adviser in Whitehall were both enjoyable and educative. This was helped by the attitude of the two private secretaries I encountered ... there is a lesson there in how to make political input mutually advantageous; if the civil servants themselves are receptive and constructive, the idea of political advisers in Whitehall can be made to work (IOD, 1986, p.9)

As permanent secretary in the Foreign Office at the time, Thomas Brimelow also felt that, 'if the political adviser is to work effectively he has to work in harness with the private office.' As a result of their expertise in the relevant field, at least two advisers, Tom Baron and Vincent Cable, initially knew the private secretary better than they knew the minister. Both greatly valued the assistance they received from the private offices. It had been arranged that John Whittingdale should take up his appointment as special adviser to Norman Tebbit on the Monday following the 1984 Tory Party Conference. Whittingdale thought that the private office was very helpful to him in the exceptional circumstances of his commencing work whilst his minister was in hospital following the IRA bomb. Furthermore, he established a very good, cooperative, relationship with a series of principal private secretaries from which he, and they, benefited and he suggested that that relationship was, 'the key to the job'.

The attitude adopted by private secretaries was not always so positive and could vary within one department. Thus Willetts suggested that some Treasury private secretaries wrongly regard special advisers, 'as a threat and try to keep them out of the way ... unfriendly private secretaries who just want to keep special advisers down because they regard them as amateurs.' Sensible private secretaries, however, cooperate and find advisers useful: 'they can exchange information, and the special adviser can do the tasks that the private secretary does not think it is quite proper for him to do.'

This is but one example of the widely, but not universally, held view that the roles are complementary. The strong relationship formed between Roy Jenkins and his principal private secretaries, David Dowler and Hayden Phillips, underlines the argument that the aide/confidant role can be played by civil servants. Nevertheless, Jenkins also found it very useful to have advisers who could play this role and provide a

political dimension. He regarded Dowler and Harris as being equally important to him in providing advice, but both could perform tasks he could not expect from the other. John Smith believed the roles to be complementary because although the private secretaries could help sustain the Secretary of State and be loyal they may not share the political commitment of the minister. Therefore there is 'room for somebody to look at departmental affairs from a political standpoint ... a Secretary of State can come to grief if he relies totally on civil servants.' Barbara Castle demonstrated in her Diaries (1980) how good private secretaries and good advisers can work well together with a positive attitude towards each other's role. Top quality ministers, respondents felt, can get the best out of their private secretaries and their special advisers.

The principal private secretary with perhaps the most extensive experience of working with special advisers is Callum McCarthy who served both Roy Hattersley in 1976-7 and Norman Tebbit between 1983-5. He felt that whilst the private office could have been run without advisers it would have been somewhat less easy and he would have missed them. One principal private secretary commented:

I never felt when I was doing the job of principal private secretary that the special adviser was in any way a threat to my position and I actually felt that I could do my job very much better, and the Secretary of State could do his job very much better if there was a good special adviser working in the right way.

For Keith Joseph the roles were not complementary, but 'quite different'. The private secretary's role was, 'service to the minister, not service to the minister's ideas ... They can't provide that particular pepper and salt that the advisers can.' Such an approach leads to an examination of the role of other categories who work for the minister, and who might influence the adviser's role, starting with departmental officials whose traditional roles have included servicing the minister's ideas. The remaining groups will be looked at in less detail than the private office, which for most advisers was the key relationship after that with their minister. Furthermore, it is to the private office that reformers usually look when considering where an expanded group of ministerial staff should be located; combining with

traditional private office duties a capacity to service the minister's ideas, is often the central focus of such schemes.

(ii) Other Civil Servants.

In the first edition of his book, Meltzer (1976) suggested that American policy analysts, as practitioners of an emerging profession, were more shaped by the forces around them than were members of a mature profession. This was one of the factors behind his view that policy analysts were very susceptible to bureaucratic influences. Although, as we saw in Chapter 5, by 1986 he thought policy analysis had, 'emerged with a defined identity' (p.300), his original comments still have validity for the UK. We saw earlier that advisers in the UK have a wider range of roles than even the diverse policy analysts. It is not surprising therefore, that as Klein and Lewis observe:

To the extent that special advisers play a role complementary to the officials, as they do in their quasi-political activities, so they may even be welcomed by civil servants, who may be relieved that they are not asked to carry out tasks which might endanger their neutral stance. But to the extent that special advisers play a role competitive to that of officials, as they do when they challenge the department's monopoly of advice-giving on policy issues, there is a much more direct conflict (p.22).

Inevitably in discussing civil service influence on the role of advisers, evidence can be drawn from earlier points related to both the constitutional limitations on civil servants assisting with party political activities, and the place of specialists in British government. The role of most advisers involved some combination of party political and policy making activities. Jack Straw felt that as the relationship with his two ministers developed it became clear in each case what additional skills he could bring to any particular policy question, and where it became obvious he was duplicating what officials were doing he would drop out. Straw showed how, for a non-specialist, the role could be influenced in both major fields by the activities of, and/or gaps left by, officials. Given that the administrative civil servant was supposed to be politically neutral, he stated: 'There are things that advisers can do that officials can't do ... I was bound to have a deeper knowledge of the Labour Party than they were and just

bring a different perspective.' On at least one policy, removing pay beds from the NHS, there was departmental scepticism:

'so I got heavily involved in that, redrafting the consultative document, and things like that. It could have been done by officials but I think that was an illustration of where you had a very contentious policy it was useful to have somebody around who was willing to do the redrafting.'

Advisers were more likely to find gaps, or certainly be more likely to be encouraged by officials to fill gaps, in the political activities than the policy making ones. An official believed the Department of Employment was much more receptive to Rob Shepherd's positive comments about how to get the policies through than it was to Robbie Gilbert's questioning of substantive points contained in the submissions to the minister. The picture is slightly muddled by the suggestions from some witnesses that officials worked more readily with advisers whom they could recognize as being knowledgeable about the department's field.

Labour ministers believed that the DHSS more readily accepted specialist advisers than political ones. Even on policy matters, Klein and Lewis thought, 'there is a subtle and complex two-way trading relationship between civil servants and special advisers. They are both adversaries and allies' (p.11). There is evidence, however, to support their proposition of a greater welcome from officials for the political role of advisers. Certainly some civil servants thought that advisers should (or did) concentrate on the political aspects of the minister's life rather than getting too involved in the department. Many ministers felt the department could not provide adequate assistance to meet their requirements for political speeches to be produced and party liaison maintained. The greater freedom of advisers to liaise informally with party offices and local politicians, is appreciated not only by ministers but often by officials. By carrying less authority than ministers or officials, advisers sometimes gain valuable information, for example, that a local council's private position in negotiations may be different than the one it feels obliged to adopt in a meeting attended by neighbouring authorities. Officials usually wanted their ministers to be as well informed and prepared as possible, without having to endanger their own political neutrality. Some of the best

examples of appreciating the value of this come from the DoE:

David [Lipsey] had a different dimension and it's a dimension the civil servant doesn't properly understand ... civil servants say, 'Ah but you know that won't go down well in the House' or, 'Will the Party like it?' but we are talking, not from ignorance but from semi knowledge; whereas the political adviser ought to have a genuine feeling for the party policy and for, just as important, the workings of the party; who matters, who doesn't (Andrew Semple).

He had extraordinarily good antennae and contacts in not only the Labour political world but in the socio-political world generally and was able to paddle off to meetings of this, that, or the other and bring back bits of information relevant to Crosland, and to the department, which no civil servant would have been able in any proper way to get hold of, and which no politician in ministerial office would have had the time to get hold of ... the main thing was to ensure the minister was properly serviced and there are nooks and crannies to do with the responsibilities of the very big departments which no civil servant can get anywhere near (Ian Bancroft).

It is easier to show there might be a place for advisers in filling gaps in the services provided by officials, than it is to suggest officials have a positive influence on the role of advisers. There are some examples of the latter. Peter Davis, again from Environment, found that he was able to use his contacts with leaders of the Conservative opposition in various councils which were opposing government policies. He was able to feed his minister with the inside information he needed to do his job. Davis stated that once civil servants found he had all the channels and could get good information, 'they were very keen to tap in on it and I had civil servants approaching me.' They would ask if he could get specific papers.

Some interviewees questioned how far there were gaps that required filling. In response, others argued that even if officials could perform the political liaison and information gathering roles, the advisers had a different mode of operation which resulted in their specializing in this type of activity, rather than dabbling in it as bureaucrats tended to do as one of their many duties. Ironically, it was aspects of the advisers' general mode of operating that were most liable to be influenced by the bureaucratic environment. Advisers often found it desirable to adopt certain civil service traits. Malcolm Dean

recalls that as a journalist he was used to discussing ideas with colleagues, but soon discovered the importance of the memorandum. The point is developed by Anthony Lester:

The longer I was there, the more I became a civil servant and the less I was a special adviser in the political sense. That was because I learnt you could only get things done by working with the grain of the civil service and not always against the grain. Therefore a conflict developed between the original job specification to make a nuisance of myself for my minister and my wish to get the job done properly ... I was determined to be professional and to adopt the same ethos as the civil servants while I was there, otherwise it seems to me they would have grounds to complain and I wouldn't be able to be effective.

By saying that being professional meant adopting the civil service ethos, Lester shows that advisers in the UK have not even started to emerge as a separate profession. According to Tom Baron, 'six months is long enough. At the end of that time you end up talking, writing, thinking like a civil servant and that is the last thing the minister wants - he's got hundreds already.'

Lester and Baron are prime examples of specialist advisers appointed to help develop radical policies. How far there are gaps to fill and places for expert special advisers to occupy raises issues about the role of specialists within the bureaucracy that have already been examined, including the argument that if there are any gaps they can be filled by the department appointing temporary outsiders. It was claimed, though, that key features of the place of expert special advisers are the direct link with a minister, and their commitment to and/or understanding of, his policies and philosophy. Many officials seem prepared to acknowledge and/or accept that central elements of the advisers' role distinguished them from other specialists. A former permanent secretary felt that when ministers recruited experts, 'it was usually because they wanted to bring about some change in attitude.' Given the conservative nature of most professions it was, therefore, not surprising, 'they would really want to hand pick their people.'

A senior official at the DoE thought there ought not to be a need for outsiders to provide professional expertise because the department ought to supply it, but Tom Baron brought in business experience and

status in relation to what he was saying. Furthermore, he said, 'when the department takes on an adviser it feels free to ignore his advice, but if the Secretary of State brings in somebody he has his endorsement and the burden of proof is on the department.' This highlights the potential significance of the role some expert advisers could play, but Baron shows how the department can shape the parameters of the role in that to preserve his credibility he thought it important not to get caught by arguing too strongly in an area outside his expertise: 'if you venture away from the subject that you're an expert in, then they run rings round you and that debases your expertise.'

Most specialists, including Lester and Baron, believed they would have been in a much weaker position had they been appointed by the department and not had a direct line to the minister. As seen earlier (Chapter 2 Section D) however, Timothy Josling was partial exception. When he moved from being a special adviser to being a consultant to the same department, he experienced no great change although he might have been in a weaker position had he started as a consultant. Access to the minister was somewhat less but access to information was better as the role became more formalized. This is perhaps explained by the part time nature of his role and by his concentration on only one, highly specialized, part of the department's work. Josling stated: 'No one in the department could have fulfilled the role I was playing ... I wasn't coming in and doing their job.' An official thought that Maurice Peston's role as a specialist with direct links to the minister was not resented by civil servants because they could accept he was looking at issues from a political perspective. Similarly, speaking of Peston, and his predecessor, Joan Mitchell, the former permanent secretary, Kenneth Clucas, said, 'it was useful to have a couple of economists who were very much geared in to the politics.'

Where officials welcomed the adviser as a specialist, they could have an influence on his role by generally encouraging him to become more involved in the department's affairs. Furthermore, officials might request that advisers help them tackle specific problems. At the DTI a senior official thought that David Young was 'good news' for the department in providing an input that they lacked, and developing the capacity of the department. A permanent secretary in the department,

Sir Brian Hayes, said in the BBC profile of Jeffrey Sterling: 'He zooms in when he's invited to zoom in and the great advantage is that we know that Jeffrey's on tap, he's willing to help and when we need his help, we seek it and we invariably get it.' Fryer, 1989).

This sub-section illustrates that interactions at the point where the administrative and political systems meet are complex, but the partnership models described in Chapter 3 may be at least as applicable as the conflict ones. Nowhere is this clearer than in the previously described regular meetings held between some permanent secretaries and the special advisers. However, that advisers had different, and/or possibly greater, knowledge and skills than those held by officials in specific areas of a department's work certainly did not guarantee that the civil servants would react positively. In some such cases the influence of officials on the adviser's role was an attempt to curtail it. Thus Patrick Jenkin thought that Roger Dyson, 'got across ... the industrial relations people in the DHSS because it quickly became apparent he knew vastly more about how it actually worked on the ground than they did.' The experience of Dyson, and others, suggests that officials have a particularly strong potential to exert negative influence when an adviser becomes involved in what the department regards as its management role. The dividing line between management and management policy is narrow. Jenkin, Dyson opined, 'conceived of me as filling a gap, I think, in other words providing something that civil servants didn't provide, rather than doing something instead of them doing it.'

Finally, whereas ministers recognized that departments had well developed links with many client groups, new ministers often wished to establish relations with other, possibly more radical, groups or policy think tanks, or strengthen relations with a particular group. Advisers were sometimes able to do this and on occasions have almost a brokerage function with outside groups, sometimes even where there were already good relations between the department and the group. Examples include David Young and Jeffrey Sterling with 'the City', Tom Baron with the Volume House Builders Study Group, Stuart Sexton with public schools, and Ken Griffin with trade unions. In each case the adviser was able to talk to the group in a way which would have been impossible or

inappropriate for officials. Here again, advisers are seen as the ideal people to liaise across uncertain boundaries. Such thinking is not, however, universal and others believe that between them officials and junior ministers and the PPS can provide all the liaison a minister should need with pressure groups and political figures.

(iii) Junior Ministers

The greater number of junior ministers in the UK than elsewhere makes it pertinent for Theakston to observe that, 'The proliferation of special advisers in recent governments has been interpreted as evidence that Cabinet ministers are failing to use their existing resources of political support as fully as they might' (1987, p.98). How far there is a place for advisers to fill gaps that otherwise could be occupied by junior ministers will be examined, before the potentially positive influence of junior ministers on advisers is considered.

Theakston claims one reason why governments in Germany and France are smaller than those in the UK, 'is that in those states top civil servants are politicized' (1987, p.178). Robert Jackson has served as a political adviser; as a member, and director, of cabinets in Brussels; and most recently as a junior minister. He believes that, 'the functions junior ministers perform are in many ways similar to those that members of the cabinet on the continent perform ... [but] ... they do have, because they're political figures, an independent political position, and a high profile political role, or public relations role, that members of the cabinet don't have.' His experience as a parliamentary under-secretary suggested to him that despite his earlier support of cabinets, 'if you thought of the ministerial team as like a cabinet and stressed its collegial aspects, you could do without a cabinet.' Perhaps one or two advisers could be appointed to work with such a team.

Special advisers remain, however, 'an understandably attractive option for secretaries of state.' (Theakston, 1987, p.99). In contrast to most junior ministers, they owe their position and influence to their personal loyalty to him; they are more readily available; and they sometimes offer impressive subject expertise. Much of the evidence

gathered in this study supports Theakston's view. But respondents had diverse views about where there were gaps in the services provided by junior ministers that could be plugged by advisers. Thus Jackson still thought there was some role for advisers, partly because junior ministers were unlikely to provide a briefing service on Cabinet items. Similarly, whilst Michael Heseltine argued that a minister did not need political advisers, he did appoint several expert special advisers.

When ministers want to introduce more capacity for specialist advice to be given directly to them, they are not usually able in the UK to select a suitable junior minister to do this. Sometimes MPs possess expertise in the field for which they are given ministerial responsibility, and very occasionally a non-parliamentarian with relevant knowledge and/or experience is ennobled and thus available for ministerial appointment. Heseltine himself was involved with one such instance when the Conservative Leader of Leeds City Council, Irwin Bellwin, was given a peerage and ministerial responsibility for local government within the DoE. Generally though, Heseltine, in common with others, felt specialist advisers could make a contribution in a way that ministers could not: 'The junior ministers haven't got the time and they often haven't got the experience ... and that is why the fusion of talents and experiences is so valuable.'

Theakston also referred to junior ministers' lack of time. There used to be a contrary view, expressed for example by Boyle (Kogan, 1971), that there were too many underemployed junior ministers. This opinion is still heard but many think there has been a change in the last two decades. Thus Brendon Sewill suggested that it was only as government grew more complicated that junior ministers developed their own empires, needed to spend more time in the House dealing with the increased volume of legislation, acquired tasks to fulfil and talks to give and, therefore, were not always available for chats with the senior minister. Brian Cubbon felt that the development of special advisers happened at the same time as the role of junior ministers expanded and, as explained in Chapter 4, Section B, there were the same forces behind both. Indeed, Cubbon's department, the Home Office, was one in which in the late 1980s junior ministers felt very busy. So much so that far from believing advisers were usurping their role, they

joined with the Home Secretary in successfully arguing for an extra adviser to be appointed to help them and relieve the considerable burden on the one existing adviser who had been assisting them in addition to fulfilling his commitments to the Home Secretary.

Some still believe that junior ministers are not used properly, but this idea is not necessarily incompatible with the idea that they are too busy. John Hunt claimed they were 'too busy opening things', but he thought the advent of advisers had not been responsible for the lowly status of junior ministers, which had recently improved. The majority view is that junior ministers have neither the time to perform the full range of advisers' tasks - especially onerous ones such as speech writing - nor the availability to be 'on the spot', as and when required. This is consistent with our model of the place of advisers.

The concept of the adviser as the minister's 'own person' was also a major element in the model because junior ministers are not usually selected by the senior minister. They may even dislike him and/or be on the opposite wing of the party. The argument was strongly put by one official:

I couldn't underline too strongly how ineffective were the ministerial teams that I observed in the 60's and 70s - very much people who wanted to get on and do their own things; pretty awkward at working together; more jealousies and back biting than cooperation ... It ought to be that a special adviser is your person and offers you total loyalty and doesn't have an independent agenda of promoting him or herself on the political stage.

However, the case for saying that there could be a place for advisers in addition to junior ministers goes wider and is valid even where relations are much better. Favourably disposed junior ministers will still usually have their own careers to think about. Thus a junior minister might not have the time to play an aide/confidant role. Richard Ehrman suggested, 'the special adviser is in the personal service business, and the junior minister isn't.' Ministers who have been demonstrably happy with their ministerial teams have still been keen to appoint special advisers. The best illustration that even the presence of a strong friend and confidant in the ministerial team does not necessarily obviate the need for advisers comes from Roy Jenkins.

Despite having his former highly-valued special assistant, John Harris, in the Home Office with him as Minister of State, he still appointed special advisers in 1974. One of those advisers, Matthew Oakeshott, felt the junior ministers could not serve the Secretary of State in the same way because, 'they are not on call when you want them in the way a special adviser is.' Jenkins asserted that there was still a role for advisers to play and he showed Harris could not play the role he had done in the 1960s: 'apart from anything else John Harris was only dealing as Minister of State with about one third of Home Office affairs ... and obviously without upsetting the whole ministerial hierarchy you couldn't bring him in on that which was the business of the other Minister of State, or even of the Parliamentary Secretaries.' Referring to these issues in his recent autobiography Jenkins observes, 'Lester came in May, and helped to fill several gaps. John Harris was not lost to the Home Office, but he had been half lost to me on the formation of the Government' (1991, p.375).

Several ministers stressed that the adviser's role was of a different order and lower status (if not always influence) from that of most junior ministers. Many advisers believed, in the words of David Cowling, that much of their work was, 'mundane, menial stuff,' which ministers would not have done. He went on to claim, in common especially with others who dealt with local government, that young researchers in party offices or people in local authorities could talk to him more easily and informally than they might to a junior minister. Not all agreed. But perhaps a more contentious issue is the provision of political advice, especially on departmental issues. It is here that the argument was most strongly put by some respondents that a minister should rely on his ministerial team, rather than young political advisers. Heseltine linked it to a discussion about prayer meetings:

I used PPSs, and invited the Whip of the department into the policy driving core of the department for the morning meetings [of ministers] ... for me that open approach is a strengthening approach and I found it immensely valuable and to me removed the need for political advisers ... the best political advisers are in the House of Commons. They have a combination of talent and antennae which add up to the political advice you want.

It is difficult to generalize about the extent to which ministers who involved junior ministers in prayer meetings also appointed advisers. Perhaps the two best known and successful examples of extensive use of prayer meetings are the Walker-Heseltine tradition and the Treasury team under the Tories. The former have made limited use of political advisers; even such an influential special adviser as Tom Baron was not invited to the prayer meetings. The Treasury ministers have made greater use of advisers than any of their colleagues since 1979 and advisers play an important role in the prayer meetings. These contrasting examples raise doubts about how far the role of junior ministers, or a particular model of their use, is a determinant of the role of advisers in general, beyond confirming the case developed in this sub-section that there can be an important place for both junior ministers and special advisers if the senior minister wishes.

There is a little evidence, however, that junior ministers can influence the specific role of individual advisers. Some junior ministers encourage the adviser to provide support for them; others do not. Stuart Sexton's role, especially under Keith Joseph, was strongly influenced by junior ministers in that some, especially Rhodes Boyson and Robert Dunn, were keen to involve him, and others were not.

(iv) Parliamentary Private Secretaries.

The central finding of our analysis here is similar to that for junior ministers. Namely, it is evident that there is a place for advisers, despite the existence of PPSs, but not so clear that the latter play an important part, in general, in shaping the parameters of the advisers' role. This arises because variations in the role of advisers do not correlate consistently with the degree of involvement of the PPS. It was possible for a minister, for example Geoffrey Howe, heavily to involve his PPS in the political team in the department, and yet also make extensive use of special advisers.

The difficulty of making generalizations about the role of PPSs was stressed by those who argued that not only did ministers use their PPSs differently but also diverse PPSs wanted to slot into a variety of roles. Two of Tony Benn's PPSs illustrate some of the different

approaches. Benn records in the Diary entry for 4 December 1974: 'Frank McElhone ... said I didn't see enough of him and I didn't care about the PLP. He criticised Frances Morrell for being "an intellectual influence"' (1989). By contrast Brian Sedgemore worked closely with the advisers in a way envisaged by Benn in his 1973 article quoted in Chapter 4 Section A. Writing of his experiences Sedgemore included as one of the good things, 'the enjoyment of the company of his [Benn's] two distinguished "political advisers"' (p.10).

Whether advisers occupy a unique position that is not really the preserve of the PPS was doubted by several interviewees. There are unquestionably similarities between the roles: the appointments are personally made by the minister; there are no formal duties; and, in practice, a wide variety of functions evolve. In advising businessmen on lobbying government, Miller (1986) frequently brackets the advisers and the PPSs together into one category. This is symptomatic of the way they are perceived. Some think there is considerable overlap between the job of the PPS and that of the political, if not specialist, adviser. Ted Short, for example, thought that the PPS's role was nearest to that of the adviser.

It was more widely believed, however, that their tasks are distinct, if complementary. This is examined by looking first at the departmental role played by some PPSs and then at their more traditional backbench liaison role. It was claimed PPSs were not playing the departmental/speech writing role filled by advisers because they were not 'on the spot' and did not have the time. This also limited their ability to act as aides/confidants. Further, being outside the Official Secrets Act, they lacked the routine access to information that advisers officially enjoyed. In the Report of the Committee of Privy Counsellors on Cabinet Document Security (Cmnd. 6677, 1976, para 12), for example, the special advisers were included as a category whom the minister could instruct were to receive Cabinet papers, but there was no mention of PPSs.

Margaret Beckett moved almost directly from being Judith Hart's special adviser at ODM to becoming her PPS. Although she felt her role hardly changed at all, because she already knew all the people, she was

no longer in the department all the time and could not travel with Hart in the same way, so there was still room for a replacement adviser, Tony Banks, in addition to Stuart Holland continuing in post. The distinction between the roles was clearer to Michael Portillo who also moved rapidly from being adviser to backbencher to PPS - but in a different department. He observed:

When you are a PPS you are not part of the department, you do not have access to the papers. You don't go to meetings and therefore you can't perform as a special adviser. You are not devoting one hundred per cent of your time to the job, you have got lots of other things to do and when the Secretary of State wants you to bang off a speech or give him some thoughts on something, you just don't have the background that the special adviser has because he is there full time.

It was seen at the start of Chapter 4 that one of the original arguments used by ministers in favour of the development of advisers was that, partly because of the need to operate within the Official Secrets Act, they were isolated. Occasionally, though, PPSs were involved much more in departmental business and at their minister's behest gained access to some papers. Several permanent secretaries, including Ian Bancroft, thought PPSs had been used to a much greater extent before the development of special advisers. He was not sure whether the role of PPSs, 'got attenuated because of the presence of special advisers or it became attenuated and therefore special advisers came in.' Sometimes ministers who had been actively used as PPSs, including Robert Carr, made active use of their own PPS. Carr suggested he now realized Sir Anthony Eden, as Foreign Secretary, appointed him to be one of his PPSs because Eden wanted him, 'more as a special adviser', to be somebody with outside industrial experience and in the 'one nation' tradition on social policy, rather than being somebody who would perform the traditional PPS role of talking in the tea rooms. Carr's PPS at the Home Office, Nicholas Scott, was more readily available than most to write speeches because he was one of the few PPS to have a room in the department. Coincidentally, but almost symbolically, when Roy Jenkins succeeded Carr, this room was occupied by Matthew Oakeshott, his special adviser. Despite these arguments it is clear that since the advent of advisers, however much ministers involve their PPSs such as Sedgemore, they do not see them as invalidating the need for advisers.

Shifting the focus to the primary scene of PPS activity - being the ministers' eyes and ears and mouth amongst parliamentary colleagues - reveals a different picture. Generally it emerged that ministers considered that the major role of representing their interests in Parliament should remain with PPSs. There was some backbench disquiet at the activities of advisers - especially in 1974 - with some MPs resenting the advisers' privileged access to the minister and to information. Furthermore, in the words of one minister, 'MPs are funny creatures and they deal much more readily with someone who is an MP.' It is not surprising that some ministers regarded the PPS's work as being distinct and it was obvious to the adviser that he was not expected to be involved in this area. A few advisers thought that their minister's PPS was not very active and therefore there was a role for the adviser to play in liaising with Parliament and providing political support. Some PPSs had a positive attitude towards advisers and encouraged close co-operation which was seen as a way of enhancing both roles. In such situations the role of the adviser was occasionally influenced by the activity level of the PPS. One long serving adviser found it much easier to liaise with the most active of the minister's PPSs on, for example, finding out what was behind a Parliamentary Question, than he did with the less active PPSs, when he had to do much more such work directly himself.

Certain advisers had more contact with backbenchers than most; usually they had developed such contacts whilst working for the party in Opposition. These advisers, including Ann Carlton, could work closely with the PPS. The above-average involvement of Ian (now Sir Ian) Stewart, Geoffrey Howe's PPS, in Treasury affairs, including the prayer meetings, demonstrates that greater than usual liaison between some backbenchers and advisers need not be related to any gaps appearing in the services that individual PPSs would be expected to provide. The advisers, especially Adam Ridley, worked closely with Stewart. Nevertheless, they felt that even with the information gained at prayer meetings, there were issues on which the PPS could not as easily as the advisers have the sustained level of debate with MPs that depended on intimate knowledge of what was going on in the department. Ridley also argued the PPS could not, 'get back to the minister in the quick way that we could.' Stuart Sexton also referred to the importance of being

able to talk to MPs from a basis of knowledge, and thought he was often functioning almost as an additional PPS.

These examples are consistent with the model of advisers being able to act as channels of information across various boundaries. Generally such instances strengthen the picture of complementarity between advisers and PPSs, with the PPS having the status in the House and the feel for the Commons, and the adviser possessing the information and the position within the department. They could work together by, for example, the adviser devising Parliamentary Questions to be planted and handing them to the PPS to pass to a suitable backbencher. When meetings were being arranged between a minister and backbenchers, the adviser, for example Denis Healey's Derek Scott, might be in a better position to help organize the meeting at the private office end, but the MPs would probably expect to be invited by the PPS.

(v) The Press Office.

The theme of complementarity is again significant. It is easier to analyse this and suggest there is a place for advisers than it is to develop any consistent pattern of the influence exerted by chief information officers on their role. Some ministers used advisers to assist with presentation because they thought the information office in the department was not very satisfactory. A few information offices were thought by advisers to be mainly concerned with keeping their minister out of the news or satisfied with taking a reactive rather than proactive role towards publicity. A number of chief information officers agreed that the standard of information offices varied with some being poor, and agreed, when the proposition was put, that in such circumstances advisers could help:

in some cases, if there was an inadequate set up in the press office a special adviser would have to carry an extra burden in this respect (Donald Maitland).

It seems to me entirely plausible that, depending on just how good other press officers are, ministers should sometimes feel that their press office is not sufficiently effective and the political adviser, who is more of a political animal, should be able to do it a bit better (Hamilton Whyte, Head of Foreign Office News Department, 1976-9).

It is impossible to make generalized correlations between the use of advisers for assistance with presentation and the abilities of the press office. A contrast to the above scenario was the experience of John Harris, probably the adviser most synonymous with having made a positive impact on presentation on behalf of his minister. The Heads of News Department with whom Harris operated in the 1960s included some of the highest rated ones two of whom, Donald Maitland in the Foreign Office and Tom McCaffrey in the Home Office, went on to head the Prime Minister's press office. Illustrating there was room for Harris, McCaffrey said, 'People would try to get from John a bit more information than they could get from me or others - he didn't usurp my role, which was to explain the policy; but when you came to the infighting and the intrigue and the political thing he of course dealt with the lobby.'

This also illustrates that the roles can be seen as complementary and that whilst there might be some overlap, the advisers are generally thought of as making a real contribution rather than duplicating the press office's work. In addition to the specific tasks of information work including sometimes keeping ministers abreast of likely public reaction to policies, some press officers have become very close to their ministers and acted as aides/confidants, if not actual political advisers. However, this does not happen consistently, nor mean there is no place for advisers to play these roles. Indeed, some press officers found that the adviser's stress on the importance to the minister of presentation made their voice even more influential within the department.

The ways in which advisers were involved in presentational work were discussed earlier. Often this was complementary to the work of press officers, sometimes on departmental issues working in the way described by Roy Hattersley:

The refusal to allow an increase at the Ford Motor Company was a Cabinet decision on a paper from me; it was a political decision so you would expect Mike Garrod would be talking to the industrial correspondents, you would expect David Hill to be talking to the political correspondents; in fact both of them overlapping.

Not only could there be a distinction between the political and specialist journalists, but also, as McCaffrey showed above, the same correspondent might hope to go further into the party politics of an issue with an adviser. According to one minister: 'being a little freer than the chief information officer, the adviser could say to a journalist, "well you know [the shadow minister] made an ass of himself on that and the real point is this ..." whereas a chief information officer has to be just that much more circumscribed and mustn't get too political.'

There are other ways in which advisers can go further than officials. A former chief information officer claimed, 'advisers are useful for floating ministers' ideas and trial balloons in a way that no finger marks show ... in a way that you wouldn't use, if it was highly political, your press officer.' The concept of advisers being freer than civil servants to be political fits in with the model of their place, as does the idea that advisers are often engaged in activities because their ministers are too busy to do them. The two points were combined by Howard Davies:

I did have a slightly freer reign, by agreement with the Chancellor and with the knowledge of the press office, to do things like background briefing for Weekend World ... and political commentators ... the sort of thing really that very few other people can actually perform. The press officer is the spokesman, therefore what he says is on the record normally; other officials wouldn't really want to do that. The Chancellor could easily but he doesn't have the time'.

Like Davies, Michael Portillo felt the press office was quite happy for him to play such a role. He saw the roles as not entirely overlapping since,

when they were talking to the press they couldn't really get in to the political aspects of the policy, whereas the special adviser can quite happily ... in a way the special adviser gets sent on the riskier missions too, you can trail something in the press without dragging the press office into difficulties ... I was really struck by how willing the press officers were to work with the special advisers rather than to see him as a threat .. or being in conflict.

The potential complementarity in the roles is demonstrated by the number of advisers who felt the press officers were quite happy to have others performing the more political tasks. There was a proviso, though this strengthens the notion that the roles were complementary: as far as possible the adviser should tell the press officer when he had talked to a journalist. Michael Dobbs worked closely with the press office and regarded himself as the 'political press officer'. He was succeeded at Employment by Richard Ehrman who felt the department in general, including the press office, 'was well used to dealing with special advisers and had them fitted in to its way of doing things.' At the Foreign Office John Houston thought the News Department was, 'extremely good'. However, when they were, for example, rehearsing the type of questions likely to be raised in a television interview, his role, unlike that of the News Department, included considering, 'how is this going to effect Geoffrey Howe as a politician?'

Some press officers expressed support for the presentational work of advisers. Hamilton Whyte, commented that David Lipsey and David Stephen, 'were both helpful and valuable in that area . . . they were allies.' At MAFF the press officer, Terry Dawes, and the adviser, Ann Carlton, had adjoining rooms and would knock on the wall if they wanted to contact one another. They often discussed draft press notices and she would add political elements to statements the minister was going to make in the House. Dawes was, 'glad to have her political reaction' and felt 'she had a lot to do with political correspondents as well as getting to know senior agricultural ones.' She always told him of conversations with agricultural correspondents when they contacted her and, 'that was one of the reasons why we got on so well.' Similarly Carlton believed that Dawes was delighted she was there and stated, 'quite often I briefed the press, but the press officer and I at MAFF worked very well together, he never compromised his civil service impartiality.'

One indication why some press officers may welcome the activities of certain advisers, and believe there is a place for them in presentational work, can be seen in the concern expressed about the position of civil service press officers in recent Treasury and Civil Service Committee reports (1986, and 1990). The 1986 report proposed

that, 'ministers who require their press officers to do more than present and describe their policies should make political appointments' (Vol.1, para 5.20). In its 1986 response, the Government asserted that press officers could go further than presenting and describing - provided it was Government, and not party, policies:

Civil service departmental press officers are in exactly the same position as any other civil servants: they may properly be called upon to present and describe the policies of the Minister, and to put forward the Minister's justification and defence of these. They may not properly be called upon to justify or defend those policies in party political terms, or expressly to advocate policies as those of a particular political party. Ministers who wish to present their policies in a party political dimension have other means and channels available to them for doing so (Cmnd. 9841, para. 29).

Advisers, by being in practice one of 'the other means and channels' might well be seen as not only occupying a separate space in the system, but also helping to maintain the position of the civil service press officers. Dawes, for example, claimed that the presence of the special advisers meant he, 'could stand back from any politically sensitive issue and say, "that is Ann's job not mine."' In general he believed that advisers helped civil servants maintain their neutrality by 'providing the service the particular minister wants.' This theme will be developed at greater length in the final chapter, but for some, the combination of special advisers and civil service press officers was much preferable to a politically appointed press officer, although there have been some very good ones introduced, for example by Barbara Castle.

Not all however, see it this way. Some press officers believed that the advisers were interfering with their work and at times there was anger at serious mistakes made and failures to tell the press office about contacts with journalists. Furthermore, although advisers' discussions with journalists were, on average, more extensive than with any other group outside the department, only just over a third had such contact more frequently than weekly. Some advisers kept well away from journalists. Clearly the bulk of a department's contact with the press was maintained by the press office, even where the adviser was also active in this field.

(vi) Party Officials

Traditionally, there was thought to be some decline in the role of party officials when a party changed from Opposition to Government. The development of special advisers has both accentuated this and alleviated the consequent difficulties. Writing about the CRD in The Times on 15 October 1987, Ronald Butt commented, 'Its young officials have less contact with ministers than their predecessors because ministers' special advisers are always at hand to write the speeches that once came from the Research Department.' This suggests advisers are partially occupying a space previously occupied by CRD officials. A similar comment came from Brendon Sewill, former Director of the CRD, but he also showed one reason why advisers were thought to be in a stronger position: 'I felt a bit sorry that we were taking ministers' time that otherwise would have been spent with the CRD officers, but we were inside the Official Secrets Act.' Quotations earlier from Douglas Hurd and William Waldegrave (in Chapter 3 Section C) illustrate that the difficulties of being outside the Official Secrets Act were one of the factors encouraging party researchers to press for advisory positions to be established. Many respondents, for example Nicholas True, referred to this as a reason why party officials could not fulfil the role of advisers.

The official sanction given by Sir Robin Butler to advisers' involvement in the controversial area of asking civil servants to cost Opposition policies, has been reported in Chapter 6 Section A. Butler referred to advisers assisting ministers on, 'identifying the text of commitments together with any further interpretations and assumptions necessary to allow the commitments to be costed.' (Treasury and Civil Service Committee, 1990, p.30). True suggested that as an adviser examining the Opposition's policies, 'having the ability to have these costed and checked, and knowing what is going on in policy in the department, you are able to see what is significant rather faster than somebody who just came in as a researcher.'

Other advisers who had worked in their party offices and felt that these were not able to fulfil the same role, included Ann Carlton, Lynda Rouse, and John Whittingdale. Rouse suggested, 'they are complementary

roles and certainly fully understanding and explaining the Government's policy is jolly difficult if you are not seeing the papers.' She added another dimension to the discussion by stressing that ministers, 'set store by the personal relationship with their own person in the department.' This meant, however, that although Michael Portillo, adviser in the Energy Department when she was the corresponding CRD desk officer, was, 'very good', he concentrated his efforts primarily on the Secretary of State. Therefore, although the junior ministers sometimes used him, they also turned to her for assistance. The valuable flexibility inherent in the place of advisers is seen in many activities where the advisers were believed to be in a position to be helpful. One example was the earlier comments from Andrew Semple concerning the adviser being in a better position than central offices to help plan ministers' visits.

Whatever resentment there may have been about advisers gaining greater access to ministers, those who remained on, or newly joined, their party's staff soon realized the adviser had a different status and could thus be useful to them. Many saw the roles as complementary and although party officials perhaps rarely influenced the advisers' role, they welcomed being kept in the picture by them and found some to be very useful contact points in a department. Sometimes when advisers were on holiday, party officials were asked to provide some of the political support that ministers had come to rely on from the advisers.

SECTION D. ADVISERS' EXERCISE OF DISCRETION.

This fourth influence on the functions performed by an adviser is of a different kind from the previous three which all imply to varying degrees that the adviser's work is determined by factors beyond his control. The position occupied by a special adviser has been described as being a perch on which he sits and carves out a role, rather than a niche in to which he is slotted. Whilst it is true that there are no tightly defined niches for advisers, the extent to which an adviser's role is carved out for him by the forces described above varies enormously. One of those influences was, of course, the adviser's own capabilities, but the question here is: given the adviser has certain abilities, how far is he free to define his own role? The most capable

advisers were perhaps more likely, as was David Young, to be in a position to exercise discretion. Similarly Maurice Peston claimed, 'I was a bit of a free wheeler in the sense that I did what interested me and on the whole if some things didn't interest me, I managed to neglect them ... indeed it's hard to see my role as formal in any sense.'

Generally the degree of discretion is a product of the interaction between the adviser's capabilities and wishes, and the other influences examined. Smith's comments that ministers' advisers in Australia often influence their own roles, were noted earlier. Walter believes that, 'the absence of job descriptions and the centrality of personal relationships mean that, in the first instance, adviser roles are open to negotiation, and to the adviser's own decisions (drawing on established skills and preferences)' (1980, p.142). Even Meltsner, who thought there were a number of factors influencing the role, suggests, 'the bureaucratic context has sufficient discretion or slack to allow the mutual expectation of both client and analyst to operate' (1986, p.12). He also states, however, that, 'the bureaucratic context does not allow the analyst to act like other intellectuals' (p.8).

When academic researchers become special advisers there can be difficulties over the degree of discretion they expect to enjoy. Denis Healey felt that Nicholas Kaldor was an outstanding economist but, having appointed him, he soon realized Kaldor was, 'basically an academic economist who treated government as a laboratory to carry out his experiments.' Healey records in his autobiography: 'in the end I did not discourage him from going back to academic life' (p.391). Some of the greatest difficulties with advisers come when they have somewhat different ideological preferences and agendas from those of their minister and are determined to pursue them. A small number of advisers had sufficient discretion to perform tasks their ministers did not wish them to do and fail to carry out some duties the minister had expected them to do.

For many advisers there was a degree of discretion but this entailed working close to, and in the interests of, their minister. This was well captured by Butler:

When I was appointed special adviser in the Welsh Office the civil servants were particularly wary of me because they did not know what I was going to do: but, neither did I. What happens in practice is that special advisers carve out a niche around their ministers once they have come to know them and their individual requirements (p.17).

He felt there was considerable 'self starting' and particularly in relation to party liaison he would often 'pick up the ball and run with it'. Tim Boswell thought that as an adviser, 'basically you are your own man,' and that just by being around things tended to start flowing. A private secretary drew several of these themes together in his comment on advisers:

You have to prove yourself, you have to earn the respect of other people on every transaction for a long time before they automatically seek your advice ... no amount of rules will help you round it; you do it by making yourself useful, making yourself accessible and he did that. They can have as large a role as they are prepared to take on, and the minister and the department are prepared to let them have.

Some advisers considered that they had rather more discretion over particular subjects on which to get involved and, for example, brief the minister on a submission, than they possessed when it came to deciding the type of activities in which to engage. Care is needed to avoid a dichotomy between the concept of an adviser assisting the minister in dealing with overload - and therefore not being an extra burden whose work needs supervising - and being 'on tap' to meet the minister's needs.

Advisers who volunteered their services tended to be more free to take initiatives to develop their role. Miles Hudson emphasized that as a political secretary he did not have any constitutional duties to perform and Sir Alec Douglas Home did not expect him to perform any specific duties.

There are indications that certain advisers have had only a limited degree of discretion. Some were overwhelmed with work and found it difficult to establish clear areas on which they could concentrate their effort. Others remained marginal and lacked discretion to move into activities that were more important. In general advisers found pressure of events forced them to be less proactive and more reactive than even

some senior figures had originally envisaged.

Some advisers referred to having many tasks that their Secretary of State soon established as functions which were the adviser's responsibility, for example, speeches, letters, and party liaison. Where the adviser had perhaps more discretion was in agreeing, or refusing, to perform functions at the request of junior ministers or civil servants. One adviser felt there was a quid pro quo by which in return for the drudgery of speech writing and party liaison he was allowed some involvement in policy work.

The role of special advisers in briefing ministers for Cabinet is a useful example to use when analysing the interaction of many of the points raised in the four sections of this chapter. In line with Hennessy, the Treasury and Civil Service Committee concluded that this was, 'arguably the function that ministers perform least well.' (1986, Vol. 1, para.5.23). There is insufficient space to analyse the full range of theories and discussions about the nature of Cabinet Government, and how far ministers are permitted and wish to become involved in issues outside their departmental concerns. (See, for example, Hennessy, 1986; and Burch, 1988). For the present study the important consideration is the lack of consensus about these points and the corresponding inconsistency in the extent to which ministers originally appointed advisers to perform this function. Furthermore, some ministers who had not originally perceived it as being a reason came to see it as being useful. It was an extremely difficult task and advisers with the ability to do it satisfactorily were more likely to be requested to do it again.

Generally ministers felt it was not an area in which they were well served by officials. This was partly because often the department did not attempt to perform the function - limiting themselves, where relevant, to a comment of 'no departmental interest'. Furthermore, even when officials attempted to do it, albeit reluctantly in the case of one permanent secretary described by Bruce Headey (p.118), ministers have not always been happy with the results. Sometimes it is suggested that it could be performed by civil servants if more manpower was devoted to it. Ted Heath suggested to the Treasury and Civil Service Committee

that a private office should contain civil servants to advise on non-departmental cabinet items (1986, Vol.2, p.118). Commenting on this, Douglas Hurd told the 1986 RIPA conference, 'I doubt somehow whether this would in practice work very well' (p.12). Hurd not only felt this was something his adviser, Edward Bickham, could be more effective at doing because he would be more prepared than civil servants to chance his arm and he would be able to contact counterparts in other departments, but Hurd also believed there was a gap created by the demise of the CPRS. Hecló and Wildavsky claim that, 'Politicians' collective deliberations on allocating public money are rarely serviced by their department's officials' (p.141).

When considering whether there is a gap for special advisers to fill, several features of our model again appear appropriate. The permanent secretary at the Foreign Office, Sir Michael Palliser, thought that there were economically literate officials in the Foreign Office who could have provided the type of briefing on economic matters for David Owen that his adviser, Michael Stewart, supplied, but,

it wouldn't have been seen as an appropriate function for a Foreign Service officer and it would have caused problems in Whitehall because it would have become known Mr X was advising the Foreign Secretary on the Chancellor of the Exchequer's paper ... it would have been seen as wholly inappropriate to second a Treasury principal to the Foreign Service to advise the Foreign Secretary so that he could criticize the Chancellor of the Exchequer in Cabinet - in that sense you needed Michael Stewart to do it.

The theme of the advisers being better placed than officials to do this briefing because of their flexible, independent status was also thought to be important by advisers at the DHSS including Brian Abel-Smith and Mike Hartley-Brewer. The latter thought that even if officials had the combination of intellectual ability and political sensitivity and antennae to do it, there is no way, 'to insulate them enough to make them independent.' Officials providing such briefing would be answerable to the permanent secretary, who in turn would be likely to adhere to the line agreed amongst the permanent secretaries.

One more way in which officials might influence the role of advisers in this field was suggested by one adviser who commented that briefing as a result of contacting other advisers through the network, 'is the thing the civil servants will always try to get a special adviser in to do because it is a wonderful way of neutralizing him if they want to do that.' This is a minority opinion.

How far advisers have discretion in performing this role can be examined at several levels. First, the choice of topic is sometimes left to the adviser. Second, for some of the general political advisers it seemed to be something they did if they had time. Despite strong contrary opinions it is often seen as something advisers ought to do. In interview John Hunt felt this was a role for advisers to play and as far back as 1977, he had told the Expenditure Committee:

Most Cabinet Ministers have now got one or two political advisers. This is very much one of the functions they are supposed to be there for ... departmental Ministers seem to have more and more pushed on to their shoulders ... discharging their collective responsibility and getting advice on their colleagues' policies is a very real problem but this is something where I think the introduction of political advisers ought to have helped (1977, Vol.2 (2), p.758).

Many official reports and commentators also see this as a major role for advisers. (See, for example, Klein and Lewis, 1977; Mitchell, 1978; Shepherd, 1983; and all the proposals outlined in Chapter 10, Table 8). How far advisers are expected to perform this, and other functions, leads to the question of whether there has been any formalization of the role of special advisers.

SECTION E: EVOLUTION AND FORMALIZATION.

There is a dichotomy between the concept of the gradual evolution of the role of the special adviser into a fixed pattern which amounts to formalization, and the idea of continued evolution of the role which is inherent in the model of the adviser as an independent individual whose informality and flexibility are important. This section concentrates on how far the role has been formalized. There are several levels at which this could occur: the individual adviser; advisers in a particular department; and the system of special advisers. Any formalization must be largely a result of evolution because it has been demonstrated that

the introduction of advisers was not well planned in 1970, 1974 or 1979.

The role of individual advisers frequently evolved. But it may reach a stage where a minister and his department have a clear picture of the adviser's main duties even though he retains greater flexibility in his role than exists for most permanent officials. Several private secretaries, including Norman Warner, who were appointed after certain advisers had been in post for a while referred to the role of those advisers as being clearly established. To some extent they had to accommodate to it.

At the departmental level reference was made earlier to how several advisers in departments, including the DHSS, the DoE, the Foreign Office, and the Department of Employment, suggested that their task was made easier because the ground had already been broken for them by their predecessors. Despite some attempts, however, it was often difficult for an incoming adviser to gain much benefit from discussing the role with his predecessor - especially if he was attempting to establish himself in a new department. Where an adviser helped in recruiting the new adviser, and explaining the role, this was naturally more feasible; and in several of these cases, including David Cowling and John Whittingdale, incoming advisers felt their predecessors had broken the ground. David Cowling commented: 'I had the great benefit of following not only Jack Straw but also David Lipsey and both of them are formidable men who had carved out a relationship with the department and who gained respect in the department. I was very conscious that I was inheriting the good will that they had created.' Cowling, who seemed to retain this goodwill, illustrated how this would help in practice: 'the principle had been accepted to copy quite a few things to me, not because I was David Cowling, but the special adviser.'

At the DTI Whittingdale thought his 'predecessors had been good and had got on well with officials.' The adviser, Michael Dobbs, who proposed him to the minister, and who in fact continued to advise part time, also provides an example of how goodwill can be passed on in a department through a series of advisers. Dobbs's successor in his first advisory position at the Department of Employment was Richard Ehrman whose comments about the department being used to accommodating the

advisers were reported earlier. Dobbs took over from Rob Shepherd about whom he said, 'Rob had broken a lot of the ground, so I felt no resistance at all in the department.'

Another circumstance which gives an adviser the opportunity to benefit from examining the role of his predecessor, occurs when the incoming adviser had been the relevant central office link with the adviser. Lynda Rouse stated that at the CRD she 'had always worked with the political adviser, making sure the message went to the backbenchers and party publications.' She agreed that the relationship between the minister and adviser was important in helping to determine the reactions of officials, but, continued, 'I didn't know Nigel Lawson when I joined and they [civil servants] were helpful and friendly right from the start. I think I was much more helped by the bridges that Michael Portillo had built up.'

Where there were teams of advisers, especially at the DHSS and the Treasury, there was a somewhat greater need to attempt to establish formally each individual's responsibilities and when newcomers joined the team, others could help orientate them. Many of the DHSS advisers paid tribute to Brian Abel-Smith's role in establishing both a substantial place for advisers and a pattern of good working relationships with officials. Paul Chapman referred to Abel-Smith's position amongst the advisers as being pivotal and commented: 'I always felt he got on with the permanent staff extremely well and made a point of doing that.' In the Treasury since 1979 there have consistently been three advisers despite nine changes in personnel up to the election of 1987. Immediately it was known that a vacancy was going to arise steps were taken to fill it and maintain the team at full strength. Within this framework, however, there was some flexibility with the major topics on which each would concentrate being partially reallocated depending on the strengths of the new recruit. This flexibility was illustrated when Howard Davies completed his 15 months secondment; he was replaced by another special adviser and eventually a departmental speech writer.

Some advisers, including David Stephen, made an important distinction between conditions of work and precise role. They thought ground rules had been established in the department in terms of access to papers and treatment to expect from officials. However, the role their minister wished them to play was not necessarily the same as that performed for his predecessor. Sometimes incoming advisers deliberately wished to establish a different pattern of working from that of their predecessors. The role that David Hill had pre-determined with Roy Hattersley meant that Hill wanted to be much more involved in discussing and examining the policies of the DPCP than his predecessor in the political adviser's slot, John Lyttle. Hill believed, however, that, 'after the initial period of fencing and working out everyone's position, my role in the department was properly understood and worked pretty well.' The functions performed for Ted Short by Vicky Kidd did not really relate to his role as Leader of the House but were associated with his responsibilities as Lord President of the Council. When Michael Foot succeeded, much of Elizabeth Thomas's work for him was linked, by contrast, with the duties of Leader of the House.

Many departments operated for a while without advisers, and some of those who came in after a break reported that ground gained by previous advisers had been lost. Despite there being a succession of special advisers to foreign secretaries in the 1970s, Lord Carrington did not appoint one and Colin Moynihan only briefly assisted Francis (now Lord) Pym, in a very part time capacity and was not formally a special adviser. Appointed to serve Geoffrey Howe in 1983, John Houston felt he was breaking new territory: 'there weren't any tracks there when I arrived.' He suggested it was amazing how many officials, 'cooperated to a reasonable extent, given that no one in any serious way attempted to organize them to cooperate ... Nothing is ever done officially to slot the special adviser into the system.' A principal private secretary who served a minister who had an adviser and his successor who did not, thought being a special adviser was, 'like rowing a boat through weeds; the moment you stop rowing, the boat stops. You have to make all the rowing yourself.' A contrast emerges between the sometimes ephemeral nature of the advisory role and the great continuity and momentum of the department. Whilst officials in many departments found advisers useful, this did not mean that the role had become such an

integral part of the department that advisers were particularly missed when new ministers came in without them, especially in 1979. There were, however, exceptions. In the DHSS, for instance, advisers had perhaps consolidated their position to a greater extent. Roger Dyson agreed that officials had their perception of the role and coming in part time he could not be, 'an academic adviser in the Abel-Smith model.' The Chairman of the Supplementary Benefits Commission, David Donnison, writing about his first meeting with the new minister, Patrick Jenkin, said,

I also intended to press gently for the appointment of special advisers to replace those we had just lost. Tony Lynes, David Metcalf and Malcolm Dean of the Guardian (along with Brian Abel-Smith ...) had together been one of the best teams of advisers assembled to advise any Minister. For the future I had my eye on two excellent people who had been working on social policies in the Conservative Central Office, and was pleased to find that both permanent secretaries seemed to support the idea (p.163).

Although Dyson's successor at the DHSS, Nicholas True, was full time even he felt that working on his own it was hard to meet all the expectations that some civil servants had about special advisers providing political inputs to policy developments and forward-looking strategic analysis, in addition to performing the presentation and political liaison roles.

The reduced role of advisers in 1979 is also relevant when examining the degree of formalization in the system. It inevitably interrupted the process of formalization because Mrs Thatcher, and some colleagues, deliberately wanted to make a break with what they saw as excessive use of political appointees under Labour. By the late 1970s it had seemed as if the system was becoming widely accepted and some ministers, including Bill Rodgers, believed that development and formalization would continue to a greater extent than has occurred. The current of opinion at that time is captured in the following quotations:

We believe that the installation of special advisers should become an accepted feature of administration. Only with the assistance of such advisers can Ministers maintain a level of political control over an increasing Civil Service (Expenditure Committee, 1977, Vol.1, para 148).

There is now little doubt that special advisers are here to stay. They have proved to be a lasting feature of successive administrations, a real assistance to many cabinet ministers, and broadly acceptable to the career Civil Service. Nevertheless, the special adviser system is still evolving and its potential has not yet been fully developed (Roger Darlington, The Times 18 July 1978).

this system has gained widespread acceptance (Brown and Steel, 1979, p.330 - see also their comment quoted in Chapter 3, Section D).

Following the partial hiatus in 1979, however, and increasingly in recent years, the system has become formalized in a number of ways. First, there is a greater degree of similarity, although by no means uniformity, in terms of the advisers' age and functions. Second, there are advisers in more departments than ever before and it is very much regarded as standard practice for a minister to have one. In 1987 political advisers arrived for the first time in the Scottish Office and, if Peter Levene's six month spell as personal adviser is discounted, the Defence Department. The position has now been reached where several publications (see, for example Miller, 1987; and Vacher's, February, 1987) state that in some departments in which there is no special adviser, the post is 'vacant'. Third, the current advisers have been specifically selected to fill a slot, as opposed to being people taken in almost automatically by an incoming government in the manner analysed earlier. Fourth, new ministers have increasingly had experience of serving as junior ministers in departments with advisers and so know what to expect from them. Similarly many civil servants have now had considerable experience of working with special advisers and have developed expectations of what the role entails. A permanent secretary today would not have the same excuse for misunderstanding the nature of the role as did the permanent secretary at the DoE in 1974 who thought David Lipsey should be placed in the department's Central Planning Unit.

The evidence from David Howell is very important in the discussion about the evolution of the role and the diverse forces at work. He was keen on the development of advisers in the 1970-74 Government but by the mid 1970s was aware of a contrary feeling:

which perhaps explained why I didn't have a candidate lined up in '79, and that was that we shouldn't go too much overboard on political advisers. The best personal advisers to senior ministers were junior ministers and PPSs in Parliament and there was a mythology that Ted Heath had fallen because he had got out of touch with the Parliamentary party and had relied too much on special advisers and civil servants and so on; and therefore ministers should be careful to make sure that their first line of personal advice was people rooted in the Parliamentary party.

In 1979 he was appointed as Secretary of State for a department, Energy, which he had not been shadowing and therefore, as we have seen, despite his scepticism about the need for an adviser he accepted the offer of the service of Michael Portillo, the CRD desk officer on Energy, who had originally been destined for the Policy Unit. Howell felt that Mrs Thatcher's attitude towards advisers changed: 'She started very much with a view that advisers were supernumerary but obviously with the growth of the Policy Unit she began to realize that they had their uses.' He had a similar change of opinion: 'We came in thinking there wasn't a role for advisers and then we found there was, and they helped'. Furthermore, he is now one of the former ministers who, reflecting on the work of advisers, are able to specify the role and assess how well their own performed the various tasks. He thought that in addition to playing the aide/confidant or 'soulmate' role, and being proactive in some policy formulation, Portillo,

performed the modern roles of research adviser excellently: he wrote speeches for me; he liaised with the party, the party machine, and the research department; he kept me in touch with the bush gossip and messages of Whitehall and Westminster; he knew what was going on from his talks with other personal advisers around Whitehall; he knew what was going on in the department. Altogether he performed admirably.

The reduction in numbers in 1979 did not prevent observers from continuing to think of the system as established. In 1981 Hecló and Wildavsky wrote, 'By now the system of special advisers has probably become a permanent feature of British government.' (p.xlix). Since then, the developments mentioned above justify the references, for example, by Rose (1986, p.50) and Drewry and Butcher (1988, p.50), to acceptance of the system. Butler (1986, p.20) observed that, 'an individual special adviser's position may be tenuous, but the future for special advisers as a species is assured, under any government. Indeed,

the immediate prospect is for their number to grow gradually, and with it for their role to develop'. In keeping with this, the Treasury and Civil Service Committee reported: 'none of our witnesses was against Ministers having their own advisers around them.' (1986, Vol.1, para. 5.21). Widespread, though not universal, agreement with this was revealed by the present study. As the Committee also emphasized, there is support for a further expansion of the system. Before scrutinizing plans for reform, the effectiveness of the current system must be examined.

CHAPTER EIGHT: ASPECTS OF EFFECTIVENESS AND LIMITATIONS.

A major problem facing special advisers is the lack of a defined role. Without such a description it is hard to measure your achievement or to know what is expected of you (Butler, p.17).

Assessing the effectiveness of ministerial advisers is not easy. No straightforward measures of effectiveness exist ... As experienced administrators and politicians know, practically anything can, after a fashion, be made to work. Preferences for one set of arrangements rather than another cannot, however, be grounded easily in an understanding of what is better and what is worse. In the case of ministerial staff this is made more difficult by the diversity of their work (R. Smith, 1977, p.133 and 154-5).

Given the great difficulty in measuring effectiveness, it is appropriate to examine separately a range of specific contributory items. This is attempted in Chapters 8-9, a final assessment being left to the last chapter. In making judgments it will be necessary to rely mostly on opinions, in particular, those of ministers, advisers and officials. Some outside commentators also have valid views and there are several more independent indicators, including how far ministers who used an adviser subsequently appointed another. Probably the opinions of the ministers are the most important because arguably the major aspect of effectiveness is how far advisers satisfactorily perform what the ministers wished them to do. This is an important question in several of the substantive areas to be considered in this chapter:

- A) Activities in which advisers were effective overall
- B) Effectiveness of the network
- C) Limitations experienced by advisers
- D) Ambivalent attitudes adopted towards advisers by politicians and consequent difficulties
- E) Response of the civil service
- F) Ambiguities in the role

SECTION A: ACTIVITIES IN WHICH ADVISERS WERE EFFECTIVE OVERALL.

Generalizations are difficult because ministers and departments varied in their requirements and advisers in their abilities. Evidence from question 17) of the questionnaire is set out as Table 5 showing advisers' opinions as to the extent to which their contribution was effective in various aspects of their work. Despite additional evidence being available from interviews, interpretation of the figures is particularly awkward for various reasons. Fewest advisers answered this and they regarded it as the hardest to answer. Generally the answers mirror those given to questions about time spent on various functions. Some advisers specifically gave this as the answer to the question. This means, of course, that where an activity was an insignificant part of an adviser's activities, the answers somewhat misleadingly suggest he was ineffective in this field. Nevertheless, ministers and civil servants broadly agreed with the pattern of effectiveness suggested by the table. On some questions no further discussion has been added to the evidence from the table, especially where the answers are very much in line with the time spent on the activity.

Examining submissions and commenting. Answers to question 17a) showed the most significant differences between time spent and effectiveness. This probably partly reflects the nature of the 'sieve' role in which advisers had to read a great deal of material but only a small proportion contained anything on which they would want to brief the minister. Reference has been made to the way in which many ministers greatly appreciated having a politically committed and aware loyalist to check through submissions, even if they found nothing on which to comment. A few officials, especially in departments dealing with local politicians, suggested that they were relieved to know that their material was passing through the hands of a politically astute adviser. The difference between advisers' perceptions of time spent, and of degree of effectiveness, possibly also reflects the time advisers needed to spend on reading submissions in order to carry out other functions including speech writing, discussing issues with the minister, attending meetings, and helping with presentation.

TABLE 5: Questionnaire Findings on Effectiveness - Percentage Response.

17) To what extent was your contribution effective in the following aspects of your job:

	Substan tially	Consider ably	Modera tely	Slightly	Insignif icantly
a) Examining papers on departmental matters going to ministers and briefing ministers on them.	22	23	30	11	14
b) Preparing reports on policy on departmental matters.	13	23	22	22	20
c) Chasing up the progress on implementing the minister's wishes.	5	18	12	27	38
d) Preparing briefs on non-departmental agenda items for cabinet and cabinet committees.	6	21	19	22	32
e) Attending meetings of all the politicians within the department.	13	25	29	14	19
f) Corresponding with party MPs, officials etc. /attending party meetings/ receiving party deputations on behalf of the minister.	8	25	19	19	29
g) Speech writing.	34	24	20	10	12
h) Discussing issues with the minister.	32	36	19	8	5
i) Attending meetings, visits, receiving deputations - other than party ones - with the minister on departmental business.	13	19	20	14	34
j) Attending departmental meetings and receiving deputations - other than party ones - on behalf of the minister.	8	6	23	18	45
k) Advising the minister on (and involvement with) the presentation of departmental policy and the minister's general views.	29	27	23	7	14

Cabinet Briefing. The responses to question 17d), briefing on non-departmental issues for Cabinet, are difficult to analyse. We saw earlier the very strong variations in the extent to which respondents felt that advisers should brief ministers on non-departmental Cabinet agenda items. They were mirrored in equally strong divergences of opinion (among ministers, officials, and advisers) about how far advisers effectively performed this function. Some, but not all, members of Labour's Cabinet who were interviewed agreed with Bernard Donoughue's assessment that:

The introduction in 1974 of special advisers working to most Cabinet Ministers was another factor which improved the quality of Cabinet debate at that time. It meant that, ideally, Ministers received high-level briefing on fields of policy outside those for which they were departmentally responsible. This was especially important during the IMF crisis, when it was striking how wide a range of Ministers contributed to the discussions. This applied to the younger ones in particular - Hattersley, Owen, Rodgers and Williams - but included more senior spokesmen such as Lever, Shore, Benn, and of course the Prime Minister, all of whom were assisted by qualified economists as special advisers. By contrast, the majority of Ministers who were often silent - including Peart, Mason and Mellish - had in general chosen not to employ special advisers. Indeed, the regular civil servants in the Private Office often mentioned to me that the introduction of a system of special advisers had altered the way in which Cabinet worked by producing much wider debate.... Having economics policy analysts as special advisers certainly enabled non-economist Ministers to participate intelligently in Cabinet economic discussions (1987, pp.36-7).

Several interviewees thought the crucial factor was the propensity of ministers to participate in Cabinet discussions, and that those who were most likely to want to contribute were often also, therefore, the ministers who could see the desirability of appointing advisers. This highlights the difficulty of isolating particular factors. Whilst believing his own adviser had been of assistance, as had several other special advisers who were economists, one minister suggested that some of his colleagues could have been given Keynes as adviser and still not had anything useful to say. Peter Shore commented, 'I do think the economic background ministerial experience is crucial if you are going to have any influence in Cabinet and that to have your background topped up by independent economic advice, by good people drawn in from academia

or elsewhere, was also very helpful.'

In general, just as briefing for Cabinet was a more important reason for the appointment of Labour advisers than Tories, and occupied more of their time, so too were 1974-9 advisers somewhat more likely to think they were effective in the role. Overall, however, the patterns of ratings for effectiveness were similar to those for time spent, but rather lower. Various civil servants questioned the value of the advisers' activities in this field. Most advisers who were performing the role as one of many activities, felt limitations on time precluded them from providing the service they would have wished. Furthermore, they were frequently trying to comment on issues about which they did not necessarily know a great deal.

Ministers often seemed pleased with the briefings from advisers. David Ennals, for example, found it 'very valuable'. One of his advisers, Mike Hartley-Brewer, knew that Ennals was using his briefs as the basis of his contributions, because they were the ones that bore Ennals's annotations. Even where advisers had not been recruited with this function primarily in mind, ministers were often pleased with the assistance they received. Where it had been a major reason ministers were usually very satisfied with the services provided by the likes of Michael Artis, Francis Cripps, Roger Liddle, Vicky Kidd, David Metcalf, Maurice Peston, Adam Ridley and Michael Stewart. The flavour of the argument is well captured by David Owen's comment, in his recent autobiography, on the activities of Michael Stewart: 'As a result I felt more confident participating in domestic Cabinet economic discussions and in the mysteries of international economics. His expertise was also very helpful when the Prime Minister invited me to the seminars he chaired on monetary and exchange rate policy' (1991, p.263). Stan Orme thought Metcalf was 'invaluable' and said, without him he 'wouldn't have been so well briefed for Cabinet.' He felt that 'initially the Civil Service didn't like him because it was an extra political animal as they saw it; not a Brian Abel-Smith, but somebody who was coming in to brief me about other aspects of Government.' Eventually they acquiesced and Orme was convinced that Metcalf, with his Labour Party background, could provide the briefing he wanted in a way officials could not. On various issues Orme was thought to have made an impact in Cabinet discussions (see, for example, Barnett, 1982). Likewise, Peter Shore

commented:

Civil servants don't find it all that easy to contribute independently on issues before Cabinet which are not the issues of the department. It doesn't mean to say you won't get a departmental brief on a submission from another department but it tends to be one that has been cleared with that minister's office - unless there is a real dispute and they are on one side of it and you are on the other. So I think the independent economic adviser is a very valuable person to have ... [As departmental economic adviser] we had Professor Peacock, and I had no difficulties with him in personal relationships and he wrote some very good pieces, but in no way was he in tune with my priorities and thinking.

Similar points were made by other ministers, including Tony Benn at the Department of Industry and Roy Hattersley at DPCP. This illustrates two themes. First, the interest shown by ministers from economic departments in having their own adviser to brief on economic issues wider than their departmental concerns is compatible with Burch's concept of there being domains of interest in matters reaching Cabinet. Rather than dividing issues into departmental and non-departmental, Burch (1988) thought it more appropriate to stress that there were areas of interest and ministers might contribute particularly in an area such as economic policy. Second, and broadening the argument, some advisers, such as Roger Liddle, were able to provide a generalist briefing because, according to Bill Rodgers, they could cross boundaries and discuss issues more widely.

Ministers often valued the assistance they received from advisers. They did so even if, like Bill Rodgers, they would have welcomed more, and despite evidence that many advisers were aware of the limitations of such a service and officials sometimes doubted its efficacy. Both of Edward Bickham's ministers for instance, Jim Prior and Douglas Hurd, valued the help provided by advisers and Bickham believed he could perform the function in 'a more structured and political way' than officials, even though he was acutely aware of the limitations imposed by often receiving papers from other departments which were not only late but also lacking in detailed information. The views of several advisers are well illustrated by the opinion of Lynda Rouse that Nigel Lawson valued her contribution, relative to that of the officials, more highly in this field than he did on most departmental policy matters.

An analysis of the role of ministers in Cabinet helps explain their positive attitude. In Cabinet, ministers are expected, often briefly, to look at issues from a wider political perspective. Here somebody who has a political background and shares their values, has an independent status, is 'in the know', and has some time available, can be invaluable in pointing out to ministers factors they may wish to consider and raise. Shirley Williams used both her advisers, John Lyttle and Joan Mitchell, at DPCP for this. She told the RIPA (1980, p.100) it was, 'one of the important functions of political advisers' and in answer to a question about having advice direct from the department concerned, she demonstrated the minister's role:

no, I would very much not want to have that. You may say, because you'd rather live in a state where ignorance is bliss; I don't think so. I think in many ways one of the most effective roles of Cabinet is in a sense to put the detail of knowledge and understanding and commitment of a Minister to his department and his department's brief to the test; you cannot easily put it to the test if you yourself are no longer expressing the common reaction of other people in Parliament, or of the public, but are beginning to be coloured by the department's own set of attitudes (1980, p.100).

In explaining why he originally appointed Adam Ridley, Lord Gowrie stated that one reason was,

I wanted to talk over the policy aspects I was unhappy about because I wanted to argue my case well in cabinet when need be ... as I was in Cabinet without portfolio I could take a fairly wide ranging position on things. I wasn't shooting the department's line ... It was better to have had Adam because I don't think a Treasury civil servant, other than on financial aspects, would have been so happy advising me on things outside my responsibility.

Furthermore, although Gowrie was also pleased to discuss Cabinet issues with his private office, they clearly could not devote the time to it that an adviser could. Therefore, he believed, Ridley, 'saved an awful lot of time of my sweating up the stuff I didn't know; I knew it from the papers and ordinary political discussion like anybody would, but he gave me insights that would have taken me days to cover. It was like having a very clued-up person helping you with your homework, and that was a great help.'

The DHSS under Labour stands out as the department where ministers and advisers alike referred to the importance of assistance provided by advisers both during the public expenditure round, and when the department's own papers were being prepared for Cabinet. There was felt to be some civil service unease at the attention paid to the advisers' briefings. Norman Warner, however, acknowledged they were, 'particularly effective at public expenditure time' because, for instance, they appreciated the need to be brief and to add the political dimension - such as lists of new hospitals to be built in Cabinet ministers' constituencies, which would be threatened by DHSS cuts. Barbara Castle wrote in her Diary entry for 9 January 1975, 'one more victory to make the department wonder how I get away with it. (In fact, I do it by very careful preparation and very well-prepared arguments. This is where people like Brian A-S, and Tony Lynes are so valuable)' (1980). Perhaps even more revealing is the entry for 4 March 1976 which describes a Cabinet discussion on a non-departmental paper she had not had time to read and on which, because Jack Straw was indisposed, she had no briefing: 'This, as Norman [Warner] agreed, was just another example of how indispensable political advisers are. Jack would have read it all and alerted me to any dangers' (1980).

Prayer meetings. For question 17e), the slightly higher figures for effectiveness than time spent reflect the consideration that advisers are often actively involved in meetings of all politicians in the department, but they do not occupy much time. The importance of these meetings in the Treasury, and the advisers' role in them, was stressed by Campbell (1983) but rather dismissed by Bruce-Gardyne (1986). Several other Treasury ministers thought the meetings, and the advisers' role, were valuable. Describing these meetings in the But, Chancellor programme, Peter Cropper said:

it was helpful for the Chancellor, who, after all, had known us as people for about five years, to have around him some people who had grown into his way of looking at things, who had shared common past experiences, who could share a few in-jokes ... It was really all a matter of the Chancellor being able to try out an idea or a reaction on us, and being either encouraged or discouraged if we came out with the same answer as he did (Young and Sloman, 1984, p.38).

Given the determination of the Chancellor not to have civil servants present, the involvement of advisers was important in allowing the meetings to be serviced. Several advisers recognized there was some civil service fretting about this but, according to David Willetts, the attendance of advisers and not officials gave the former, 'extra authority' and meant officials needed to contact them:

Part of this operating in Whitehall is being able to trade information and influence, and if you know things that, maybe, would be useful to other people, it puts you in a much stronger position for getting information out of them ... because special advisers had been present at these discussions and had known what had gone on, and the minutes were quite rightly brief to the point of being elliptical ... they had information that might be of help to officials in preparing their advice.

Party liaison. The higher figures for effectiveness on party liaison than for time spent, question 17f), reflect an opinion shared by ministers and officials. A range of points were made in this connection. Ministers who played an active role in party affairs much appreciated having somebody near to them who was both more knowledgeable, and less restricted, than civil servants could be in this field. The role of advisers on Labour's NEC committees and sub-committees was particularly valued, as shown by the action that was taken to allow this activity to continue when it was felt to be under threat of a ban from Harold Wilson. Barbara Castle wrote to him pleading that they be allowed to continue attending. Liaison with the party machine was valued by ministers active within the NEC and some, including Bill Rodgers, who were not. Rodgers said of Roger Liddle's role: 'I was detached from the NEC Transport group and he helped in this field which I would have neglected. He encouraged me to write reports and he represented me at meetings of the NEC group. He did the party briefing on the White Paper.'

A number of Tory ministers equally valued the party liaison role played by advisers - especially those who had come from the CRD. Again good examples come from ministers concerned with local government, with Patrick Jenkin saying of Christopher Mockler: 'he was able to be a very useful channel for Conservative groups in Labour held councils who felt

that they could have a direct ear to the Secretary of State by ringing up Christopher and saying, "look, Patrick might like to know what is happening here." Similarly William Waldegrave thought that Peter Davis was a highly effective source of political intelligence:

he was a provider of material of a tough, political kind that the civil service can't gather and won't gather ... not policy advice as such but saying, 'this is what is actually happening out here, this is what the Labour Party are going to do and this is their weak-spot, and this is what is worrying our councillors'. And he did that extremely well.

Some ministers thought that officials valued the advisers' liaison work and certain civil servants emphasized this as the prime role of the advisers.

Speech writing. The even higher figures for effectiveness, than for time spent, on speech writing, question 17g), reflect the widespread feeling of ministers, officials, and advisers, that speech writing is something that many civil servants are not particularly good at, and/or are pleased to leave to advisers where possible. The difference between the parties when examining time spent is accentuated when analysing effectiveness. Of the 1979-87 Tory advisers 55 per cent believed their contribution as speech writers to be substantially effective - five times the Labour number. Many of the younger Tory political advisers were valued as effective speech writers by ministers and officials. They included: Edward Bickham, Richard Ehrman, Robin Harris, Michael Portillo, Rob Shepherd, Stephen Sherbourne, Andrew Tyrie, Nicholas True, and John Whittingdale. The importance of speech writing in the work of Home Office advisers has been highlighted and Brian Cubbon thought that most officials in the department would identify it as an area where they valued the role of advisers.

Examples from the DHSS demonstrate why advisers were often thought to be effective in this field in ways officials sometimes found difficult to match. Mike Hartley-Brewer was thought by advisers, ministers, and officials alike, to have a dynamic writing style. Malcolm Dean illustrated the point by saying that Hartley-Brewer would be very good at putting lines into a parliamentary statement to get cheers from the backbenches and thus bolster the minister. In addition to being

more free to draft party speeches and the political elements of other speeches, some advisers recognized the potential significance of speech writing. Whilst, according to one private secretary, civil servants often viewed speech writing as, 'a bit naff', advisers saw the possible importance of speeches in setting the agenda in certain fields. Brian Abel-Smith's role has been described and the DHSS permanent secretary, Patrick Nairne, provided the example of a major speech made by Barbara Castle at Oxford. For its drafting, 'instead of turning to boring old civil servants, she had Abel-Smith and he was able to do it from a much richer vein of knowledge and understanding, plus, of course, his political sympathies with the Labour Party.' Depending on the nature of the speech, Nairne was often keen for it to be drafted by Abel-Smith or Jack Straw. Abel-Smith himself commented, 'the outside academic may well find he has a skill in drafting which is of more use to the politician than that of the average civil servant' (THES, 27 June 1980).

Lord Home described various aspects of the value of Miles Hudson's role in this field. Civil servants were glad that usually for speeches with political content, 'they could shift quite a lot of the responsibility for the speech on to him.' In particular, for parliamentary speeches on Rhodesia, 'he was quite good at spotting points that might be made or points that might be omitted'. Home faced the same, potentially explosive, issue at party conferences and Hudson was, 'a useful fellow in those circumstances'.

There are, naturally, exceptions both ways. Some advisers were not as effective at speech writing as the minister had hoped; and a former civil servant, Howard Davies, became a special adviser and was most adept at speech writing. Furthermore, there were occasions when officials felt advisers had made mistakes by interfering and trying to alter policy through the content of speeches.

Discussing issues. This was the activity in which, overall, advisers considered their contribution to be most effective. Strikingly few of the advisers (10 per cent) answering this question thought they were only slightly or insignificantly effective. The various circumstances already identified when ministers particularly valued the presence of advisers to discuss things, included: travelling and/or breaks in

negotiations abroad; making decisions following meetings with officials; and reviewing or previewing the events of the day. Often, though not always, this involved playing an aide/confidant role. Various features of the model of advisers help explain their effectiveness in this. These include: being inside the Official Secrets Act, available, and the minister's 'own person'; and often possessing political knowledge and sympathy and/or subject expertise. Thus in the words of Keith Joseph, David Young was a 'friend and confidant and a sharer of perceptions' who was highly effective in two ways: 'one, he was a strong ally in private discussion on policy.' A similar picture often emerges in Tony Benn's Diaries. Stan Orme explained that as somebody who left school at 14, without therefore an academic background, he valued Metcalf's ability to clarify issues on paper. In addition, Orme, who was widely admired by advisers and officials, shrewdly observed, 'I am the sort of person who really needed oral briefings and we would sit down in the evenings and have a think and go through it.'

Despite these and other important examples described earlier, doubts remain about how far ministers overall saw this as the area in which advisers' contributions were most effective. It is easier to accept that it seemed to advisers to be of greatest significance than that most ministers thought this. In at least one case a junior minister thought the Secretary of State used the adviser as a punch bag, and yet that adviser had thought his effectiveness in discussing issues was considerable. A partial explanation of the general discrepancy perhaps comes in the comment of another adviser, Brendon Sewill:

it was more a question of him finding our discussions of value when he was making a decision rather than him taking notice of what I said. A senior minister is in a lonely position: he cannot try out his ideas or his arguments on his officials, for fear of ridicule if they are not well founded. So he needs an intelligent and well informed, but loyal and discreet, sparring partner.

Departmental meetings. The lower ratings for effectiveness than time spent on attending departmental meetings and visits with the minister, question 17i), has several probable causes. First, the frequency with which many advisers found themselves attending meetings on issues with which they had little previous involvement, and the concern expressed by several not to lose credibility by commenting in areas where they lacked

knowledge. Second, the extent to which their presence at such meetings was related to performing other functions. Third, the comparatively low status special advisers often felt they had when attending meetings between the minister and senior officials, and the varying degrees to which advisers felt comfortable about participating in such meetings. Tony Lynes recalled he was not good at large meetings when the Secretary of State turned to him and said: "Tony, what do you think?" That is not the way I find it possible to give useful advice. I want to go away and think about it and preferably put it on paper; so that wasn't a role that I found I was really good at, whereas Brian Abel-Smith, for example, was superb at it.'

Activities on the minister's behalf. The low figures for effectiveness again reflects the belief that much of the liaison between officials and advisers is conducted informally, and not specifically on behalf of ministers. The effectiveness of some advisers at doing this was demonstrated by the way this function became increasingly important. This supports the comments from William Plowden:

The major contributions of policy advisers, specialist or political, are that they help ministers to feel less isolated in the face of their departments; and that they can greatly extend the number and range of the minister's effective contacts with his department. They thus improve communication in both directions and, I believe, ministerial effectiveness (1985, p.534).

The effectiveness of some advisers in liaising on behalf of their minister with outside groups was also analysed earlier. Although advisers could be very effective at this it was an activity engaged in regularly by only a minority. Some ministers appreciated the ability of advisers sometimes to cross boundaries in ways that would be difficult for others. On one occasion a minister was able to use an adviser to arrange pressure from a union against a project which he no longer wished to go ahead with on a matter of principle. There were demands from other departments to proceed with the project; he wanted to be able to say to ministers that they could not because of the union reaction. He felt he could not have arranged the union pressure himself or asked junior ministers or civil servants to do it. The importance attached by Jim Prior to receiving advice from a range of people, not only on industrial relations but the economy and industry generally, has been

noted and, without advisers, he, 'certainly wouldn't have been able to keep as close a contact with outsiders.' According to William Waldegrave one of an adviser's most important functions is to act as a representative, 'who can go and talk to the pressure groups and the outside policy groups and who can be trusted as your eyes and ears ... David [Coleman] was good at going out and you could send him off to places and people would take him seriously because he was a heavy weight character.' Both Prior and Waldegrave suggested that it would have been difficult to have used officials in the way they used special advisers as secretaries to their informal advisory groups.

Presentation. The answers to question 17k) correlate well with the high level of effectiveness at speech writing and the extent to which presentational work was an important use of advisers' time and a major reason for appointment. The Tory advisers were even more inclined to believe their contribution was effective. Whereas a quarter of Labour advisers answering this question felt their contribution had been insignificantly effective (and only eight per cent said it had taken an insignificant amount of time), none of the Tory advisers gave this reply. Tory ministers, for example Norman Fowler, often felt the adviser's contributions had been very effective and in Fowler's autobiography (1991) most of the references to his adviser's role concern speech writing or other aspects of presentation. His adviser for many years, Nicholas True, observed: 'one of my long running efforts that did eventually prove successful was to create a new information system on the hospital building programme whereby politically useful information was brought up to ministers in advance on a regular basis.' Some doubts were expressed by officials about the degree of involvement and/or the effectiveness of advisers in press activities. Illustrating the latter point an official from a different department alleged that advisers, 'talked to the press incessantly, much too much, and gave away a lot of stuff - some of it intentional, some of it unintentional.'

General. The effectiveness of advisers in these various activities partially depends upon the ability of ministers firstly to decide the functions they wish to be carried out by advisers, and second, to select an adviser capable of performing those functions. A few advisers were critical of the minister's ability to use them properly.

SECTION B: EFFECTIVENESS OF THE ADVISERS' NETWORK.

The development of an effective network amongst political secretaries is a key feature of the Finnish equivalent to the UK system of special advisers. This is demonstrated in the title of Westerlund's book describing their role: Political Secretaries in Finnish Departments: the Informal Coordination Mechanism of the Cabinet (1990). The UK, however, did not see the emergence of a network as effective as some people in both parties had hoped. Analysis of the interviews reveals fewer than a third of advisers thought that overall the network was effective, but it is difficult to be precise because the diverse aspects of the network were variously viewed. Generally, bilateral contact, or (especially in the case of Labour) small group meetings, were seen as more effective than meetings of all advisers.

Attempts were made to organize a network of advisers in each of the three periods since 1970, but the regular meetings of Tory advisers in the early 1970s only began as the crisis winter of 1973-4 developed: 'As things became desperate, the newcomers began to join the veterans in occasional meetings in my office at Number Ten. It would be absurd to claim that we made much difference, though we would have made much more difference if as a team we had come in to being earlier' (Hurd, 1979, p.38).

There were only infrequent meetings of all Labour advisers. Most of the early meetings were on salaries and conditions of employment and according to Darlington:

those on policy have been comparatively rare. So far, policy meetings have been confined in the main to economic policy (and especially public expenditure) although there have been a number of other meetings on such subjects as devolution and human rights ... On the one occasion when advisers as a group were invited to an outside meeting Harold Wilson vetoed the proposal. It was in October 1975 when Geoff Bish tried to convene a meeting of Political Advisers and Transport House researchers to discuss economic strategy (1976, p.52).

Monthly lunchtime meetings for Tory advisers and the CRD were organized by the Director of the CRD but they petered out. Stuart

Sexton started organizing monthly/six-weekly lunches for advisers at his large office at the DES. Through their common background in the CRD many Tory advisers already knew one another, and the Sexton lunches proved to be a good opportunity to meet others thereby facilitating future bilateral contacts. Advisers without a CRD background recruited to play a political adviser's role, including David Coleman, found this particularly valuable. However, the lunches were generally not felt to be very useful in terms of discussing policy. There were grumblings that the meetings tended to be dominated by Treasury advisers. Later there was an attempt by Stephen Sherbourne to organize weekly meetings at Number Ten but it was impossible to find a time when everybody could be sure of turning up and they fizzled out. After Stuart Sexton's departure meetings were organized by Robin Harris, Director of the CRD, but they too petered out.

There continued to be a network, however, with Christopher Monckton (1988) referring to a 'spider's web of young special advisers'. Monckton was an adviser at the Policy Unit, the staff of which were very much part of the network, as was the political secretary at Number Ten. Indeed Bernard Donoughue and Stephen Sherbourne were at different times seen as being at the network's centre.

Several functions could, with varying degrees of effectiveness, be performed through the meetings and/or bilateral contacts. It was rare for an agreed policy, or strategy line, to be hammered out at meetings of advisers, other than occasionally on issues of pay and conditions.

Nevertheless, particularly for advisers working alone in a department, it could be valuable to share experiences. The cohesion and effectiveness of the network tended to improve in the run-up to elections; the role of advisers in assisting with manifesto preparation was described earlier. The network could be effective in connection with the advisers' role in drafting political speeches to party audiences. Advisers to ministers who wanted help in pushing a particular policy could ask colleagues to include suitable paragraphs in their drafts. Alternatively, when they were composing a wide ranging political speech, or if the minister wanted to cover a particular topic, an adviser could check the details with his counterpart in the relevant

department. Sometimes advisers could use the net when there were bilateral negotiations between their departments and ministers. To do this effectively required advisers to be both skilful and trusted, but it is now recognized as part of their role, and in at least some departments civil servants are recommended to contact advisers if it is felt that they could usefully take informal soundings of other departments' views. This was appreciated by advisers such as Tim Boswell who claimed, 'the existence of a separate special advisers' net comparable to the private secretaries' net can again be useful to the department in removing or smoothing occasional roadblocks without loss of face.'

The network could be important for advisers engaged in briefing on non-departmental Cabinet items. Some thought it worthwhile to contact their colleague in the 'lead' department to get a feel for the reasons behind a recommended course and the drawbacks behind alternative options. Whilst some advisers considered it was also valuable to telephone colleagues occasionally to 'plug' the line of their department, at least one Tory adviser claimed not to pass such information on to his minister. Nevertheless, some ministers, especially groups of Labour ones, undoubtedly valued the ability of their advisers to keep in touch - particularly over issues coming up in Cabinet. According to Roy Hattersley, David Hill would tell him that David Lipsey, '"wants you to know that Tony doesn't agree with this and he will have to tell you he disagrees with it in Cabinet", or "Tony wants you to know he is pushing this, can you support him?" That sort of thing would certainly happen.'

One of the contentious issues over which the political advisers' network was mobilized was the choice in the mid 1970s of which type of nuclear reactor to order. The role of Benn's advisers in helping to produce the Department of Energy's papers for meetings of Cabinet and its committees, was referred to in Chapter 6 Section A. The CPRS became involved in the issue on the side of the Prime Minister and the Department of Energy's officials and, 'engaged in extensive lobbying throughout Whitehall', to such an extent that James Callaghan later told Blackstone and Plowden it, 'had gone rather beyond its proper role' (p.81). Commenting on the support received from other ministers for

Benn's position in this intense conflict Sedgemore wrote: 'This may be due to the fact that Tony's political advisers had spoken to the political advisers of the various ministers before the meeting. They really are doing an excellent job' (p.116).

It was not only in contentious issues that advisers could attempt to use the network. Lord Gowrie thought that Adam Ridley, who was 'built into, and knew, the network so well,' was a great help in getting tax changes on charitable giving accepted by other ministers through contacting their advisers.

Notwithstanding these and other examples, most advisers were not entirely happy with the effectiveness of the network. Various problems were identified including its incompleteness. Several Labour advisers, for example, would have valued having a colleague at the Department of Employment, and it was noted earlier that Bernard Donoghue was keen for there to be advisers in all departments. However, the major reason for the chronic weakness of the network lies in the nature of the adviser's role. The adviser is primarily the minister's 'own person'. His first loyalty should be to his minister. Networking effectively assumes, therefore, according to Bill Rodgers, a 'commonality of views on all the issues and a single destiny of purpose.' Many advisers felt that such a situation did not exist, but, although there were difficulties, Adam Ridley commented, 'in general we had enough common interest for the system to work.'

Despite the undoubted departmental tribalism of civil servants, which modifies the constitutional notion of the unity of government (and there are even divided loyalties within a department), there is probably greater cohesion amongst the bureaucracy than exists between politicians. Hecló and Wildavsky (1981) have also demonstrated the existence of considerable loyalty to the Treasury throughout Whitehall. The policy and personality differences between ministers, and their conflicting career aspirations, restrict the degree to which advisers could have a loyalty to the collective entity. Furthermore, some advisers recognized that ministers, and others, might think advisers were getting above themselves if they became too organized. In the words of one adviser, they tended to act like 'squirrels' with their

hoards of information. Speaking about their rather unsuccessful attempts to organize meetings of advisers, Sherbourne referred to the unwillingness of people to talk and their lack of clarity about what they should do collectively, and Harris observed: 'by the nature of the way they are chosen and by their contract, they are bound to a particular minister, they are not bound to the Government ... currently all the forces are decentralist.'

Jack Straw believed the network of Labour advisers provided an additional channel and was certainly useful, particularly where ministers were trying to follow a certain line in relation to the Common Market, economic policy or other internally controversial issues. However, it was not as useful as he would have liked: 'I sometimes used to think there ought to be more cooperation between us, but the truth was there could be no more cooperation between us as advisers, than there was between the ministers we worked for, because our only loyalty really was to our minister.'

It is significant that the run-up to elections was the time of greatest effectiveness for the network, because these were the periods when the common interest was prominent. Several former advisers and reformers hoped that the network could be improved in future governments. Straw believed that the network developed between research assistants to the Shadow Cabinet in the 1980s was more cohesive than that of the 1970s advisers and he hoped that under a future Labour Government the network would be better.

SECTION C: LIMITATIONS AS EXPERIENCED BY ADVISERS.

Overall it is perhaps a little surprising that the special advisers thought their effectiveness was limited to such a small extent by the various factors included in question 18) of the questionnaire. The findings from this question form Table 6 and very little was written into the 'other' limitations row included as question 18k). The results from questions 18 a-d) reflect well upon: the willingness of the civil service to make the system work; the importance attached by many ministers to ensuring that their advisers were accepted; and the abilities of the advisers. There is some interview evidence that

**TABLE 6: Questionnaire Findings on Limitations on Effectiveness
- Percentage Response.**

18) To what extent was your effectiveness limited by the following:

	Substan tially	Consider ably	Moderat ely	Slightly	Insig nific antly
a) Inadequate access to the minister.	1	3	4	17	75
b) Inadequate access to official information.	2	4	8	26	60
c) Inadequate active support from the private office.	1	3	9	23	64
d) Inadequate active support from the rest of the civil service.	6	5	12	28	49
e) Inadequate experience of the way the department(s) operated.	2	9	24	29	36
f) The lack of a proper position within the administrative chain of command.	5	3	22	19	51
g) Difficult relations with junior ministers in the department.	0	1	4	12	83
h) Inadequate knowledge of the policy issues.	3	10	14	17	56
i) Inadequate time to carry out all the tasks.	20	20	22	14	24
j) Absence of research staff.	17	16	13	9	45

certain officials felt they could, when necessary, by-pass or neutralize advisers. However, with over 90 per cent of advisers reporting that their effectiveness was only slightly or insignificantly limited by inadequate access to the minister, question 18a), a somewhat different picture emerges than that sometimes associated with advisers as portrayed by Frank Weisel in Yes Minister (Lynn and Jay, 1984). A few part time advisers found difficulties in always getting access on the day(s) they were in; the problem for Gwilym Prys-Davies was exacerbated by his working in the Welsh Office at Cardiff whilst the Welsh Secretary was in London for most of the week.

Whilst advisers generally thought that inadequate access to information, question 18b), was not a great problem, a number made the point that if papers were not being shown to them, they might well not know of their existence. One adviser claimed, in answer to a question about the types of information to which he was not allowed access: 'What the department, or individuals within it, did not want me to see. Reasons were thought up later'. He felt he risked being overloaded with useless bumph and deprived of interesting material but his minister was able up to a point to stop this happening by, among other things, insisting on consultation with the adviser before a decision was taken. Several advisers made a guarantee of good access to the minister, and to information, a condition before they agreed to accept the position. There were a number of initial disputes over access to information; sometimes the minister had to make it clear that advisers were to receive virtually all information going to the minister, apart from that of the highest security classifications, commercial information about individual companies, and matters related to civil servants personally. Several more junior advisers within teams experienced some difficulties when material was copied only to the senior adviser. In their accounts of their experiences both Butler and Cardona regretted, as have some other advisers, that they received copies only at the end of the process, when papers were submitted to ministers. They would have preferred to have been involved at an earlier stage. Sometimes this was, in fact, officially encouraged but advisers could run the risk of getting overloaded with preliminary papers and deliberations.

Advisers often relied on private secretaries to copy key papers to them if their name had been left off the list. This underlines the picture portrayed in answers to question 18c). It correlates with the earlier discussion about the generally good relations advisers believed existed with private offices, and how most recognized the importance of good relations because private secretaries could have made their lives more difficult (Chapter 7 Section B (i)). Private secretaries often, but not always, took their cue from the minister and were usually, therefore, positive about advisers, even if, privately, some wished they were not there. However, they would block access if they considered the minister did not want it. Occasionally, even where the minister backed the adviser, the private office was unhelpful. One adviser felt the private office initially regarded him as an alien intruder to be frustrated: 'an attempt was made to freeze me out.'

Generally advisers were slightly more limited by a lack of active support from the rest of the civil service, question 18d). Here, as with several other limitations, the post 1979 Tories felt the limitation to be marginally greater than did Labour advisers. This is perhaps surprising given the reputation of some Labour advisers, and the belief that there had been a growing formalization and acceptance of the system. It is possible that expectations had risen and/or that the more recent the experience, the more vivid the memory of any difficulties. More important, however, is that over three quarters of advisers considered this to be only slightly or insignificantly a limitation. Advisers sometimes found particular officials or parts of the department, less cooperative than the rest. Several advisers felt, perhaps naturally, that it was generally the most capable officials who could take advisers in their stride.

Several of the most effective, heavyweight, advisers with strong ministerial backing experienced some difficulties with officials, especially when they proposed radical changes. Tom Baron considered resigning because he thought he could not get his ideas through. Various people, including the private secretary and a colleague in the building industry, helped persuade him to stay and he had successes and developed a relationship of mutual respect with officials. Anthony

Lester thought there were considerable problems with some civil servants, especially in the period up to the October 1974 election, after which the situation eased as it became clear the Labour Government would remain in power. Evidence was given by Home Office officials to the Select Committees established in both Houses to consider the Anti-Discrimination Bills in 1971-3 (see, for example, Special Report from the House of Commons Select Committee on the Anti-Discrimination (No.2) Bill, Session 1972-73, Vol.1, pp.15-25). Such evidence lends credence to Lester's comments that officials:

didn't really like the policy and they were minimalists and I was a maximalist on the policy and so we had that argument. They were not sufficiently self-confident to play it with all cards on the table. So they manipulated, unsuccessfully. That is where being able to work to the Home Secretary in the end was decisive ... The deviousness of behaviour was no more than you find in any large organization, it seems to me. The politics of the bureaucracy is not confined to the civil service.

A minority of other advisers were never able to tackle the obstacles placed in their way or overcome the lack of positive help from officials. This was sometimes linked to one of the comparatively more serious limitations - inadequate experience of the way departments operated, question 18e). The longer an adviser stayed, the less of a problem this became.

Lack of a proper position, question 18f), was only slightly or insignificantly a limitation according to 70 per cent of advisers. This raises doubts about the argument that the position or status of advisers within the department needs to be enhanced, perhaps by putting them in to the private office. Some advisers specifically commented that it was an advantage not to have an official status which might tie them too rigidly to, and in, the hierarchy. There were undoubtedly some who believed their effectiveness was limited because, in the words of Robbie Gilbert, 'You are a transplanted organ and the body is constantly trying to reject it - it is not conscious, it is an unconscious thing because you are not part of it ... I don't think there was any deliberate hostility - it's just that you're not part of the machine and you tend to get ignored.'

**PAGE
MISSING
IN
ORIGINAL**

themselves as political advisers were not expected to be contributing policy expertise. Lack of time, question 18i), was considered to be the most significant limitation. Although perhaps it was the easiest to state as being a limitation because it implies criticism of nobody, it does correlate well with the answers to the question about hours worked. About 40 per cent of the full time advisers worked 60 hours or more a week and some of the 'part time' advisers worked 40 hours. This raises interesting questions about the position of special advisers. They might have been under particularly strong time pressures because, almost to the same extent as ministers, they were at the point where the political and administrative systems met and often had to produce comments rapidly on an issue that was new to them. Although, conversely, a few advisers suggested that unlike the civil servants they did not have a responsibility to 'spark' on every issue that came before them, those who played a sieve role often had to spend a considerable time perusing submissions. Tony Lynes describes the role well by suggesting there was 'an irreducible minimum of perfectly useless paper' you had to wade through to ensure it was useless. It was difficult to ignore any paper and say:

'well, I don't think that is important enough for me to bother about', or, 'I don't think that is something I know enough about to make any useful input' ... because you felt it was actually your job if ministers were being asked to make a decision within your field of competence, then you must try and read all the papers.

How far the adviser felt time to be a major limitation was partially linked to the type of role adopted. Where an adviser had wide ranging roles, such as the adviser whose diary of a month's work was reproduced earlier (Chapter 6 Section A), the adviser might be more likely to comment, 'I have this self-pitying feeling of being grossly overworked most of the time.' If an advisory role was seen as full time it proved a limitation to perform it on a part time basis. When Maurice Peston changed from full time to part time, he felt this diminished the effectiveness of the role he could play, a view shared by Roy Hattersley: 'I think you need him to be always there... looking at things on his own initiative, turning things over himself.' Roger Dyson explained he could not meet the civil servants' expectations of the role as it had been performed by Brian Abel-Smith:

a senior adviser who is full time and who works with officials becomes a sort of deputy secretary in all but name ... a part timer cannot fit in to the civil service deputy secretary model because a part timer isn't there when he is wanted, isn't in the room when he can be called to a meeting and therefore his contacts with civil servants become formalized ... doing one day a week officially, you can't work in the civil service mould.

Sometimes advisers, including David Metcalf, started on a full time basis, and when they became part time they felt they had developed sufficient knowledge and contacts to ensure that by establishing priorities they could still cover the important tasks. Such an approach endorses the advice contained in the Fabian evidence to the Fulton Committee: 'Experience suggests that the irregular in an administrative post or in a "research" or "policy planning" job is wise to begin his period of work on a full time basis' (1968, Vol.5 (2), p.562). Two Labour Secretaries of State for Trade, Peter Shore and John Smith, and their advisers, Michael Artis, Vincent Cable and Michael Stewart, believed that performing the advisory role on a part time basis was a limitation. After serving in a part time capacity for several years, Michael Dobbs argued for John Whittingdale to be brought in, 'to broaden the scope of the operation.' Dobbs commented: 'Part time is not satisfactory; it is not something that I would particularly recommend because being a political adviser is not an easy job anyway.'

Some full time advisers who worked alone in a department opined that the time pressures on a single adviser were too great. Darlington wrote: 'The volume of work and the pace of events is such that one Adviser can only provide a limited service based on a narrow selection of the most politically important departmental and non-departmental issues.' (1976, p.51). However, perhaps the key factor in determining how far time pressures were regarded as a limitation was the extent of the role that the adviser was expected, or wanted, to play. The advisers who thought inadequate time was a substantial limitation were almost equally divided between working alone, and having at least one colleague.

The largest responses to question 18j) were at the two extremes, reflecting a marked divergence of opinion about the potential value to

advisers of research assistance. Discussion in the interviews broadened into a general assessment of how far the help provided for advisers matched their requirements. Several advisers were severely limited by having no secretarial provision or having to rely on private office staff or a general typing pool. Many advisers were satisfied with their secretaries, even if, as in some cases, it took a while to secure them. Sometimes there were problems with the work they could perform, with disputes, for example, over whether it extended to filing in addition to typing. A few advisers were provided with assistants or private secretaries. Describing a period some time after he became a special adviser, David Young writes, 'By now I was spending so much time with ministers that I was given new quarters. Now I had a ministerial suite on the seventh floor, a large room with windows on three sides, and next door I now had my own private office. My first Private Secretary came from Treasury' (p.53).

The pattern was retained at the DTI of having somebody to link between the advisers and the department, and 'flag' papers on which the advisers might wish to comment. In the Foreign Office, Michael Stewart initially thought not having an assistant was a limitation and after a while, with the support of David Owen, an assistant joined Stewart from the economic section.

Generally, advisers who felt that the lack of an equivalent person in their department was a limitation, would have preferred an assistant to a researcher, and would have favoured a civil servant - perhaps at executive officer level - rather than the arrangement at the DHSS where Brian Abel-Smith had another adviser working to him. It was felt that although a civil servant would be restricted from performing overtly political tasks, this would be outweighed by their knowledge of, and acceptability to, the department. Others felt it was advantageous not to have an assistant because they would not have wanted to have spent time organizing such a person's work.

One reason why, as with their pay, there were limitations on the resources that could be devoted to advisers was the constant danger that there would be complaints, especially from MPs, about the favourable treatment afforded them. On 29 July 1974, for example, a Government

backbencher, John Prescott, complained to the Leader of the House about the secretarial allowances and facilities for MPs in the following ironic terms: 'does he agree that this also means that political advisers, who get more for their secretaries and their facilities than a Member of Parliament, contribute more than we do to the political system?' (Official Report, Vol.878, col.34).

Several advisers thought it was a limitation their office was not nearer to that of their minister, so that they would be immediately available and more aware of comings and goings. Others, believing it would be a limitation not to be near the minister, successfully fought battles to secure an appropriate office. One adviser was installed on the morning of his arrival in an office next door to the minister and the private office. After lunch, the permanent secretary came in to apologize for a 'very embarrassing' mistake. He then conducted the adviser to an enormous office one floor down; the adviser wistfully commented, 'I remained there, under protest after the implications became clear.' For a few advisers the problems over an office were an aspect of the limitations of being part time. Michael Artis thought that, 'the system wasn't set up to provide for this requirement of having a room near the minister once a week, not always on the same day.'

A few advisers, including John Cope and Miles Hudson, thought it an advantage to be inside the private office but Tom McNally saw it, on balance, as a limitation and moved out. Brendon Sewill also moved out of the private office, but into a room close to Tony Barber who had a buzzer on his desk with which he frequently summoned his adviser. Most advisers expressed a preference for their own room as close as possible to the minister's. Since 1974, over two-thirds of advisers have had an office on the same floor as the minister, with about a third of those being opposite or adjacent to him.

The debate about the importance of the position of the office is sometimes conducted in terms of Yes Minister. George Cardona's reference to his mistakenly expecting to be obstructed on becoming a Treasury adviser was quoted earlier. In his article in The Times on 11 November 1981 he continued:

I soon realized that the Treasury civil servants had also absorbed the 'Yes Minister' myth that officials obstruct ministers and advisers. An important part of the myth is that an adviser must be given an office near the minister, and that the Civil Service will do its best to prevent this happening. I realized how powerful the myth was on my first contact with the Treasury. I was telephoned by the Establishment Officer who said: 'A room is ready for you. It is very near the Chancellor.' The security guard who met me at the door, and the messenger who took me to my room, expressed their delight that I had been given an office near the Chancellor. So did the woman who brought me tea several times a day.

By contrast Ann Carlton had two very different experiences of rooms. She was happy with the 'strategically placed' room at MAFF on which she had insisted, but had been dissatisfied at having inherited a room at the DoE several floors below the minister and had 'camped out' in the private office for much of the time. In Tribune on 19 December 1986 she wrote:

In Dorothy, the Prime Minister's adviser, the script writers of the BBC Television programme, Yes Prime Minister, have created a character whose tactics aspirant advisers to the next Labour government would do well to study. The first thing to learn from Dorothy is that the location of the advisers' rooms is very important. It is essential that they are very near their Ministers so that the advisers know what is going on all the time. The civil service will want them as far away from Ministers as possible.

A few other limitations were caused by particular circumstances of the department or the adviser. Some advisers, including Roger Darlington, felt that their age was a disadvantage. Although academics possibly found it easier than some others to spend a few years as advisers - full time or part time - some encountered difficulties and Blackstone (1980) analyses various reasons why United States administrations recruit so many more academics than those in the UK. Finally the particular limitations of being an adviser in the Welsh Office are described by Thomas (1987):

an adviser in the Welsh Office is likely to be frustrated if the ministry's own civil servants are not themselves sufficiently involved in the early stages of policy formulation. The breadth of functions in the Welsh Office will also be a problem ... An adviser (like a minister) who wanted distinctive Welsh initiatives would threaten to upset a

Whitehall consensus as well as creating additional work (p.173-4).

It is evident from this section, and earlier chapters, that the attitude adopted towards advisers by politicians and bureaucrats varies enormously. Some of these diverse views, and the impact they have on advisers, are now examined in detail.

SECTION D: THE AMBIVALENT ATTITUDE ADOPTED TOWARDS ADVISERS BY POLITICIANS AND CONSEQUENT DIFFICULTIES.

Ministers.

Some ministers were not keen on appointing advisers and yet were prevailed upon to do so. Where this reluctance continued, or when, as happened in a few cases, the minister became disillusioned with the adviser, it was soon detected by officials and the adviser was marginalised. According to one permanent secretary some of his colleagues reported that their ministers regarded advisers as 'monkeys on their back'. Another permanent secretary suggested that some ministers were always suspicious that it was another minister's adviser who was responsible for leaks. However, he stated, 'I don't think it was that source'. Sometimes when advisers became involved in issues involving other departments, ministers in those departments disliked the advisers' activity. One adviser reported that a Minister of State in a different department unsuccessfully asked his Secretary of State to dismiss him over some dispute.

An adviser whose activities were strongly criticized by other ministers was the 'precursor' of the advisers, John Harris. According to Roy Jenkins's biographer, John Campbell, in the mid-sixties Harris, 'was assiduous and extraordinarily skilful in promoting Jenkins in the press as Labour's one successful Minister in a general picture of incompetence and economic failure. His activity was not unnaturally resented by Jenkins' senior colleagues' (1983, p.99). The diarists Richard Crossman, Barbara Castle, and, according to his wife's biography, Tony Crosland, all recorded critical comments about Harris's role. On 22 November 1968, Crossman, for example, reported on a Cabinet meeting: 'on the whole there was a universal conviction in that room

that John Harris had become Roy's evil genius and that Roy was sitting in an ivory tower with John Harris and David Dowler, cut off from the rest of the world, planning Roy's political future' (1977, p.269). Harris argued that although he retained his lobby card and talked to his friends in the lobby, he did not get in the way of the department's 'very good' information officer, Tom McCaffrey, and that, 'if Roy Jenkins got a good press, it was because he was a damn good minister'. Harris also stressed that his role was much wider than just being the public relations officer his critics liked to portray.

There is an important reason for this reference to Harris's perhaps exceptional role. It highlights the difficulty of generalizing from the statement that 'advisers are appreciated by the minister receiving the services they can successfully supply', to the proposition that, 'they are appreciated throughout the system of government for the strengthening they provide to the effectiveness of the Government as a whole.' Nevertheless, in some cases ministers who did not appoint advisers accepted that others might find them useful.

Parliament.

Backbench MPs have at times been highly critical of special advisers, with a number of Tories, along with some newspapers, running what amounted to a campaign against the newly appointed Labour advisers in the mid 1970s. As seen in Chapter 2, Ian Gow asked a series of Parliamentary Questions on the subject. Tories were concerned about both the cost (in particular the use of public funds to provide political advice) and the Government's refusal to provide either information on individual adviser's salaries or a copy of official guidance given to ministers on the use of advisers. Furthermore, on 21 June 1976, Gow, as part of a question, asked Charles Morris, 'whether he is satisfied that none of the leaks to which my hon. Friend has referred came from those special advisers?' Included in his reply Morris said:

The hon. Gentleman has tabled over 30 Questions on special advisers in recent months. In addition he has asked a host of supplementary questions, and on 23rd March we had an Adjournment debate initiated by the same hon. Gentleman in respect of special advisers. With the greatest of respect I appeal to the hon. Gentleman, without infringing any of his parliamentary rights and responsibilities, to bring this squalid campaign against special advisers to an end so that they can get on with the job (Official Report, Vol.913, col.1091).

Unease about the role of advisers was not, however, confined to the Opposition benches. According to Margaret Beckett, some in the Parliamentary Labour Party were strongly against advisers because they believed backbenchers were left out anyway, and this would make it worse. Opinions were divided and support for advisers came, for example, in the 1977 report from the Expenditure Committee which, as noted previously, called for the expansion and acceptance of the system. Nevertheless, the generally hostile atmosphere that prevailed at times in Parliament probably contributed to the restricted development of the system after an explosion in numbers following the election of the 1974 Labour Government. Indeed Knight (1990, p.105) even claims that, 'The Callaghan Government (1976-9), as a result of fierce Tory opposition, reduced the number of these political apparatchiks from 29 to 24.' During Business Questions in the House of Commons on 27 June 1974 the Leader of the Opposition, Edward Heath, requested a parliamentary debate before the rules were altered to allow special advisers paid from public funds to stand as candidates for Parliament or local authorities. Ted Short replied:

the Government intend tomorrow to table an amendment to the Servants of the Crown Order to the Privy Council. This is an amendment to the 1960 Order, which is a prerogative order, and no parliamentary action is required. Out of courtesy to the Opposition, I told the right hon. Gentleman about this amendment ... We take the view that as these advisers are political, it is ridiculous to try to prevent their having normal political rights (Official Report, Vol.875, cols 1728-9).

His refusal to allow debate before the amendment was put caused a storm of protest from all sides of the House. Subsequently, Heath intervened yet again:

The right hon. Gentleman is therefore overriding the views of the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues and the Opposition as a whole. He is now overriding the views that are expressed by some of his hon. Friends. I must again ask him to postpone the order tomorrow and to let the House debate the Order first ... it affects a group who are at a high level in the Civil Service and in the closest contact with Ministers. This breaks the whole tradition of the Civil Service (Official Report, Vol.875, col.1734).

The criticisms continued, with Members reluctant to let colleagues move on to other subjects; but it was only after Heath moved an emergency debate under Standing Order No.9 that Short backed down, and agreed to defer laying the order for a month to allow the opportunity to find time to debate the issue. Short described these events as the 'biggest row I'd been involved in.' The matter was dropped by the Government, but has been a source of continued irritation to Tory and Labour advisers, although some ministers would not have wanted their advisers to have been distracted by nursing a constituency.

Whilst the attitude of Parliament has probably contributed to the curtailment of the system's development, William Waldegrave astutely put the issue in a general organizational context. He observed that backbenchers and sometimes junior ministers resented non-elected young people getting more access and information than they had, 'but it was the perennial complaint of junior members of an organization against the staff officers.' In Australia, Smith reports, 'some Labor backbenchers thought the experiment was a failure, for reasons similar to those advanced by backbenchers in Britain. Ministerial acceptance had to be balanced against an amount of backbench discontent.' (1977, p.155). Policy analysts and advisers in America are, often characterized as, 'something almost illegitimate, as grey eminences, working in shadow governments, or as bureaucratic mandarins usurping the rightful functions of clients' (Meltsner, 1986, p.300).

The Prime Minister.

The hostility liable to flare up in Parliament against advisers partly explains the ambivalence of various prime ministers towards advisers. This is because it was sometimes the premier who had to face critical questioning about them. Tom McNally said of Jim Callaghan: 'like Mr Wilson he was cautious about the system getting out of hand, sensitive to questioning about how much special advisers were paid, how much it costs the taxpayer.'

According to John Hunt, 'Prime Ministers, again of both parties, have always severely limited their role.' (1987, p.67). Perhaps the ambivalence of Labour Prime Ministers is illustrated by the lack of consensus among Labour advisers as to the attitude, if any, Number Ten adopted towards them. Bernard Donoughue's role from the Number Ten Policy Unit, in encouraging and assisting ministers to appoint advisers, was described earlier. Even as late as 1979, Vincent Cable thought that Number Ten welcomed his appointment to a department that had not had an adviser for several years: 'John Smith had regularized the position by bringing one in; I think that was how they saw it.' Many believed, though, that prime ministers wanted to restrict development of the system despite Harold Wilson's initiative in establishing it. Perhaps the major reason for this came as an inevitable consequence of the role of advisers as loyal servants of departmental ministers. The resentment generated by Harris's activities on behalf of Jenkins in the 1960s led to jealousy that was, in the Prime Minister's case, according to Campbell, 'verging almost on paranoia' (p.99). In the 1970s Tony Benn felt the Prime Minister had some doubts because a minister with a team of advisers might be a potential centre of opposition to policies, if the minister opposed the Prime Minister. The major area of prime ministerial concern was often thought to be the role of advisers in briefing ministers for Cabinet. There was both agreement and disagreement with Suzanne Reeve's assessment at the May 1986 Re-skilling Government Seminar that one of the two great sources of opposition to Barbara Castle's team of advisers was, 'the Prime Minister himself, partly because her executive office actually struck at his political power base as well as at his management of government business. He did

not want a Chinese warlord who was actually pointing out where he was going astray and stopping him from doing what he wanted' (IOD, 1986, p.39).

Mrs Thatcher's more fundamental reservations about the desirability of putting advisers on the public payroll resulted in a contraction of the system in 1979. How far her subsequent attitude changed was discussed earlier but Butler argues that advisers have been called 'Maggie's Moles.' (p.14). He goes on to suggest that, 'since they are personally known to her, gave her a good service in the 1983 Election, are "Keepers of the Ark", and are generally discreet, she relaxes in their presence and calls them "her boys"'. (p.16). Most interviewees did not believe Thatcher had generally encouraged the expansion of the system since 1979, and they did not see the majority of advisers as 'Maggie's Moles' or 'Mrs Thatcher's boys'. One adviser highlighted the central issue by stating, 'the only advisers who can be described as Mrs Thatcher's boys were those who were working for Ministers who were Mrs Thatcher's men.' If advisers became seen as agents of the Prime Minister it might reduce some of the limitations that currently exist because of the unwillingness of prime ministers to see the system develop rapidly; but it would change the whole concept of the special adviser and give rise to new limitations. As was argued at the start of this sub-section, if a minister is seen to be unenthusiastic about his adviser, the latter's position soon becomes untenable.

SECTION E: RESPONSE OF THE CIVIL SERVICE.

Although questionnaire evidence suggested many advisers did not think their effectiveness was limited by civil service attitudes, there were considerable variations in the opinions expressed by officials about the system. It is difficult to categorize these, given that each official might have different views about: the various advisers with whom he comes into contact; the several types of advisers; and the diverse activities in which they are involved. Furthermore, a growing acceptance may be detected, and certain ranks of civil servants are sometimes thought more likely to adopt a favourable attitude. This is an issue on which, despite Whitehall's reputation for uniformity of outlook, views differ widely and no consensus emerges.

Generally, the more hostile the civil service, the more likely this is to impose limitations on the effectiveness of advisers. However, there is insidious danger that the impact of an adviser could also be blunted by incorporation and the 'bureaucratic embrace': 'the normal Foreign Office tendency will be to embrace newcomers rather than to reject them, a bear-hug that may nevertheless be suffocating for the newcomer' (Henderson, 1984, p.121).

Categories of Responses from Civil Servants.

This sub-section attempts to categorize the range of civil service responses to the development of special advisers and record the approximate strength of four types of reaction.

(i) Some officials adopted an attitude of outright hostility and saw no room or role for advisers, arguing that the civil servants possessed all the expertise required, and politicians who became ministers should not need political advice. This is now a minority, if strongly held, view. However, Heclo and Wildavsky, based on research they first reported in 1974, claimed that such an attitude was prevalent:

Ask any minister about his experience with outside advisers, and you are likely to hear a biological analogy in which a self-contained system rejects foreign elements. 'Alien bodies', 'expelled like white corpuscles', 'considered bulls in the civil service's china shop', 'they castrate you', - these are the expressions used by four ministers. Tensions and rivalries are inevitable at this level. Even the most successful outside advisers can be expected to survive little more than two years before being enveloped, rejected, or worn down by the established Civil Service (p.378).

Their evidence was collected prior to the expansion of advisers in 1974, and although some respondents agreed there were inevitable frictions with the advisers introduced from 1964 onwards, the general impression from the interviews is that the reaction was not as extreme as it was portrayed above. Nevertheless, the widespread scepticism about the desirability of introducing outside advisers was reflected in the comments Lord Roll reported he was able to make once he had left the civil service: 'I expressed considerable doubt about the value of a major extension of, and reliance on, this method of bridging the gap

between politics and administration' (Roll, 1985, p.188).

Even according to some officials who held advisers like Brian Abel-Smith and Jack Straw in the highest regard, the expansion of numbers in 1974 had a 'shock effect'. One thought, 'this sudden influx of people worried civil servants quite a bit.' Resistance to change was probably inevitable, especially when it threatened the existing power structures, and seemed, as it did to some, to challenge the underlying values of a politically impartial civil service which thought itself capable of meeting the needs of all politicians. This issue was discussed in Chapter 3 and the view of some officials is illustrated in the words of a principal private secretary at the time of the change in Government in 1974: 'A lot of senior civil servants saw this as an intrusion in to the system, and a very difficult one to handle because they had been used to being regarded, and accepted, as politically neutral in their advice; and here was something suggesting that they weren't.'

Young and Sloman claim, 'Whitehall, of course, saw no need for these politically motivated invaders' (1982, p.89). They suggest that the value sets motivating advisers and officials are very different. Advisers, 'were an affront to everything the civil service stands for: committed, loyal to a party, prejudiced in favour of Yes not No to what the minister wants ... At first Whitehall saw this experiment as a threat, and therefore froze it out' (pp.89-90). The political commitment of advisers makes them a slightly different case from some of the earlier specialists, but parallels can be drawn in the way officials reacted. In the words of Joan Mitchell, the special adviser who had earlier written a history of British economic planning:

It was not unknown, after all, for the same sort of hostility (though greatly magnified) to be shown to statisticians, economists and similar interlopers coming in during the Second World War, and towards the scientists and operational researchers, then or later. The special advisers probably represent far less of a revolution in government administration than the economists and scientists coming in (p.97-8).

Even some who thought the attitude of the civil service had been very negative believed there was some softening in attitude. Following their comments just quoted above Young and Sloman added, 'But later

Whitehall got wiser and even began to find merit, of a strictly peripheral kind, in special advisers' (p.90). Perhaps one reason for the initial disquiet, and for its subsequent diminution, lay in the fear, so far groundless, that the introduction of advisers was only the forerunner for more radical changes. Antony Part stated:

Once one starts talking about special advisers, of course, the spectre of French type cabinets is raised; and there were certainly a number of civil servants who felt, well we don't want to get on a slippery slope about this - once we start on special advisers, where will it end? So should we start at all?

Whilst the general attitude in the civil service towards advisers has mellowed as part of a growing acceptance of their role within the system, there are still critics. Hostility ranges from officials who dismiss advisers as being unnecessary and having nothing to contribute, to those who still see advisers as a potential and undesirable threat. One official claimed:

The appointment of special advisers is an unsatisfactory and unsuccessful attempt to overcome the difficulties faced by ministers when they get into some of the awkward and often technical details of policy which, when processed by their officials, tend to influence the kind of policy advice they get ... the solution, that is special advisers, to the genuine problems of time and legislation, has been worse than the disease and created new problems.

Sometimes officials took the opportunity of a change of minister to suggest to the incoming one that he did not need an adviser. One instance of this, alluded to earlier, occurred when Keith Joseph entered the DES and is described by his biographer:

The Joseph regime got off to a curious start which did nothing to offset the Secretary of State's reputation for being a soft touch for civil service mandarins. When he arrived, the suggestion apparently came from the officials that Sexton had served his purpose and could be dispensed with. The new Secretary of State did not demur, indicating that he was in favour of saving on the salary bill (Halcrow, 1989, p.172).

Linking the officials' reactions to either the conflict or partnership models examined in Chapter 3 is complex, but overseas examples demonstrate that a permanent bureaucracy is likely to be

somewhat antagonistic towards the introduction of advisers. Commenting on the Australian equivalents to advisers in the UK, Walter observes, 'as a group they are disliked by the public service' (p.132). Nevertheless, the Australian advisers' views on their working relationship with the public service mirror those of their British counterparts, with almost 90 per cent thinking it was good, very good or excellent (p.136). Evidence from the survey conducted for the Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration suggested that officials adopted a similar range of opinions about advisers to those of the British civil service (1976, Appendix Vol.1). In Canada the equivalents to advisers are called executive assistants. Recent research on the relationship between Canadian ministers and their permanent secretaries (called deputy ministers) cites evidence which, 'puts at 30 percent the proportion of cases where, "the assistant has created enormous problems and greatly harmed the relations between the Minister and Deputy Minister"' (Bourgault and Dion, 1990, p.169).

(ii) Quite a few officials were prepared either to accept, perhaps sometimes grudgingly, or at least not oppose, the idea that there was a place for advisers. However, even within this second category there was a broad range of views. Generally, the acceptance was provided, first, the role was limited to servicing the minister (especially in party political and speech writing activities) and/or second, it was tightly restricted. There is some overlap here with the earlier discussion about officials being more likely to welcome activities in the political field than the policy arena. One private secretary, for example, suggested that civil servants could accommodate irritations when they were to a purpose and although he could not see the purpose with some of them, he accepted that a minister might need someone who was partisan to be a bridge to the political world. Antony Part commented:

In theory a department is there to serve the minister, it's there to serve the Government of the Day, and it's there to help ministers move in the direction in which they were elected to move ... I rather doubt if the civil service would ever positively suggest that there should be special advisers, because in some ways they would think that if they were doing their job properly they would be able to do the whole thing themselves. They can appreciate that if the Secretary of State thinks there is a gap then there is no particular reason why they should oppose any such appointment. Civil Servants would accept special advisers as a fact of life and would try to weld them in to the team as far as possible - of course

they didn't always wanted to be welded into the team.

Part's notion of welding the advisers into the team was not entirely shared by all in this category. Some emphasized the concept of an adviser as somebody working primarily with his minister rather than the rest of the department. Thus a permanent secretary described the usefulness of the adviser to the minister as a political leg-man or in direct talks with his minister, but stressed that the adviser would not be advising the department directly. He also suggested that the attitude other permanent secretaries recommended adopting in 1974 towards the influx of Labour advisers was one of 'benevolent neutrality'. Another agreed that, 'benevolent neutrality' was a fair indication of the general attitude, although initially some worried about the numbers. In 1976 Douglas Allen told a seminar at the LSE that 'the presence of special advisers in departments has not created the kind of internal strife which many people tend to assume must have occurred' (1977, p.144). Yet another permanent secretary in 1974 thought that a certain amount of outside input was a good thing but he believed that if one wanted new ideas brought into the civil service it was better to have someone brought in to the established structure. He stressed that the advisers, 'were very much helping the minister to do his job.' Clive Booth felt that advisers are, 'never going to be taken into the bosom of the civil service', but nevertheless commented, 'I don't know any reason to say they haven't been a generally helpful part of the system ... in their present rather muted form I think they have probably got a role to play.' This belief, held by many officials, that advisers can play a helpful role, links into the next category.

(iii) The third type of civil service reaction was to consider that special advisers played a useful role for their ministers both in their party political and departmental activities. These officials appreciated that it could be useful for the department to have a special adviser, but they did not necessarily miss them when they were not there nor advocate that a minister should have one. When asked whether he felt officials found it of value to have advisers in the department, Kenneth Clucas replied,

Yes, we found it was useful to have the advisers we had under the Labour Government between '74 and '79. Did I miss them from '79 onwards? The answer is no, because things were done in a different way ... they can make a useful contribution, but if a minister doesn't see a need for them, then you don't miss them, provided he is communicative, has other ways of handling the sort of things that political advisers might do.

Pragmatism is often seen as a feature of the British civil service, and some officials shared the view of one who worked with Jim Prior's advisers at the Department of Employment that the advisers were, 'an extra resource - it would have been silly not to have used it.' A similar argument, and one that was referred to with the previous category, is that a major part of the ethos of the civil service is that they loyally serve the Government of the Day. Therefore, if ministers wish to have advisers, it is up to officials to make the system work. In the words of Thomas Brimelow, 'if this is what ministers want, we are here to serve ministers; OK, in they come, we get on with them and help them to do their job.'

Addressing an LSE audience in 1988 the former Head of the Home Civil Service, Lord Armstrong, said: 'That ministers should have access to political as well as administrative advice and opinion is incontestable, and I have never seen any objection to the appointment of what we have come to call special advisers; indeed I have welcomed it and regard it as a useful development in government.'

There are various ways in which officials believe, if advisers are appointed, they can be of value to private secretaries and other civil servants. Some of these were described earlier, and many of the views, perhaps in an even stronger form, are shared by those in the fourth category.

(iv) Some officials positively welcomed the appointments and/or advocate that ministers should have an adviser. The welcome given in the Department of Industry to David Young and Jeffrey Sterling has been referred to, as has Ian Bancroft's opinion that certain large departments should have a special adviser to ensure that the Secretary

of State was properly serviced. A later permanent secretary in the DoE, George Moseley, similarly commented:

Given the right sort of person is chosen, I think it is entirely to the advantage of the permanent staff that there should be these people available, in some circumstances to provide lines of communication in depth that perhaps don't always emerge in the busy day to day business. It is so useful for civil servants on a policy desk to be able to take soundings of the political implications from somebody that they know is well regarded by the minister, trusted by him and is like a sounding board.

The DHSS has also been identified as a department where the advisers' role was appreciated. Roger Dyson's statement that, coming in as a part timer in 1979 he was unable to meet the expectations of the officials, has been noted. On the social security side, where there was not even a part time adviser appointed by the Tories, the second permanent secretary, Geoffrey Otton, said, 'it is a pity they didn't continue with it ... there were some strong doctrinaire strands of policy which were quite difficult for departments to come to terms with and I think might have been eased if there had been that kind of lubricant in the system.' Patrick Jenkin also opined that the permanent secretary, Patrick Nairne, 'thought it was a pity' he did not have a political adviser. These comments support the view noted earlier from David Donnison. Furthermore, both Nairne and Otton believed that most other officials were not opposed to advisers. In response to the question about his attitude towards advisers Otton said, 'this is the boring consensus that you are probably encountering, but on the whole, it worked rather well.' He was aware of a danger of portraying an unrealistic picture of harmony with the advisers between 1974 and 1979, but thought that was the position: 'It's all made to sound a bit too cosy, isn't it? But actually it seems to me, in my experience, that it added a dimension to the good functioning of the top levels of the department, and there wasn't any unease, but I bet there was in other places.'

Foreign Office officials too, have sometimes welcomed advisers. David Owen felt that Michael Palliser, the permanent secretary, was in favour of his having a political adviser and encouraged it. With his wide range of experience, Donald Maitland considered that whatever the

given relationship within a department between the minister and his officials, the situation could never be made less satisfactory with an adviser than it would be without. He stated:

I am absolutely in favour of special advisers, whether their role is a major or minor one; ... the bottom line will show that the effectiveness of the department, and the minister's performance, is better if he has a special adviser, regardless of the other circumstances, than if he doesn't. Does anybody disagree with that?

From his wide perspective as former Cabinet Secretary John Hunt also stated:

Compared to ministers anywhere else in the world our ministers are thoroughly overworked and try to do too much ... anything which can be done to improve the service to them, and give them the opportunity to think must be a plus; no doubt about that. Then I accept that any large bureaucratic institution has an inbuilt inertia, inbuilt conventional view more than inertia, that certain things will work and certain things won't work and it is helpful to ministers to have a few people who they can really call their own, who owe their loyalty only to the minister, not to the civil service at large ... I don't think you can expect this suddenly to solve all our problems and transform government but I think it is desirable. It would be a great pity if it was dropped altogether.

Advisers as Allies of Officials.

In addition to believing advisers could be useful in performing tasks such as speech writing, political liaison, and the provision of specialist knowledge and contacts, advisers were sometimes thought to be of assistance to officials in more subtle ways. Reference was made in Chapter 7, Section C, to Klein and Lewis's view that advisers could be both allies and adversaries of officials on policy matters. It is probably relevant to consider this within the framework described in Chapter 3 of both the partnership model between ministers and officials, and the place of advisers as the ministers' trusted confidants. Based on his experience of how policy analysts can operate in the United States, Walter Williams thought that in the UK, 'in small quantities competent policy advisers may even be considered valuable by civil servants in helping ministers to rid themselves of nonsense and to understand the framework and arguments used by the civil servants' (p.173). He felt that the notion of confidence was very important and

was always double-edged. Therefore, as somebody loyal to the minister, and trusted by him, the expert special adviser could sometimes ensure the minister was made aware of the right information; but, on other occasions could say to the minister, that the officials had not looked in sufficient depth at a certain alternative. Similarly, in Australia, Smith included as one of the advantages for departments of the work of policy orientated ministerial staff, their ability to, 'translate departments' problems in to forms that ministers would appreciate' (1977, p.152).

Whilst such ideas were not widely held in the UK, where they did exist they were most likely to be associated with the third and fourth types of civil service response. Dyson thought that one of Brian Abel-Smith's roles at the DHSS, 'was to concentrate the Minister's mind, when it needed to be concentrated, to do something that the civil service felt needed to be done.' David Metcalf believed that the permanent secretary, Patrick Nairne, occasionally hoped he could use the adviser to assist the minister to take on board particular points - perhaps from a civil service perspective. Nairne thought his weekly meetings with advisers, especially, under Barbara Castle, with Abel-Smith and Jack Straw, were useful in this regard. He explained that as well as being, 'a very helpful additional way in which the political emphases, anxieties, and nuances would be conveyed to us officials,' the meetings might also give him opportunity to appeal to the advisers to, 'try to get her off this one.' To play this delicate role effectively required a skilled adviser to have a good relationship with both minister and officials. Geoffrey Otton believed he could be quite uninhibited with the advisers in saying to them that he felt the minister was mistaken about something. He commented,

I don't think any of the people I dealt with would have gone running off to the Secretary of State saying, 'that man Otton is still being awkward'. I think they would have gone back saying, if they said anything, 'the department is still wondering whether this is the right thing to do and I can see their point', or, 'perhaps we ought to have another meeting'. It would all have been quite constructive.

Perceptive ministers, too, could acknowledge that this was a role for advisers to perform. David Owen suggested that the Foreign Office officials all recognized that working with David Stephen, 'was a good

way of getting the Foreign Secretary to be more amenable.' Interestingly, Owen also claims in his autobiography that had the very experienced political journalist Peter Jenkins been able to agree to become his political adviser in his first year the Foreign Secretary might have been less brash and abrasive: 'Peter would have been tough enough to stand up to me where it was needed, particularly within the Private Office, and I would have been a better Foreign Secretary for having him near at hand, giving me a broader base with his experience' (1991, p.265).

The permanent secretary at the Foreign Office, Michael Palliser saw the liaison role of advisers as very much a two way process:

They provided a channel of access to the Secretary of State when I didn't want to bother him. I would talk to the advisers confident that I would get a pretty faithful expression of the Secretary of State's thinking and that my ideas would be fed by them through to him against the background of their own experience and knowledge and relationship with him. It didn't prevent one talking to him: I talked to Secretaries of State almost every day while I was permanent under secretary. It meant that officials had an additional point of entry, line of communication, and that being so, I found the system extremely helpful.

Maurice Peston felt that, 'the role of an adviser is sometimes to help ministers face reality when they were hoping for something a lot better.' He believed that officials recognized that influencing an adviser could be a useful path to persuading the minister to accept their argument. He gave the example of demographic projections which showed the number of school pupils was going to be less than the Labour Party had thought in Opposition, and that, therefore, the number of teachers required would be fewer than they had predicted. According to Peston, 'The officials couldn't persuade the minister of that, but I was able to because the officials talked me through the material, and once I said, "this is not an attempt by civil servants to undermine a Labour Party commitment, it is just one of the facts of life", then the minister would accept that.'

The analysis here supports that of Heclo and Wildavsky who, as was noted, referred to the 'nagging doubt' possessed by even those ministers who are favourably disposed towards officials. They argued that if

others were around the minister it would help the civil servants, because ministers could take a, 'more objective view of the uses and abuses of civil servants if they were not required to depend on them so completely' (p.376). In similar vein, Adam Ridley observed that, 'if a minister is told one of his policies is unworkable, it helps him to be reassured of this, if the special adviser examines it and agrees.' The permanent secretary at the Treasury, Douglas Wass, echoed this by stating:

It was useful if one could persuade the special adviser that some particular party preference wasn't on, say for administrative reasons ... then he was a very useful ally when the minister had also to be convinced that the policy was not administratively on. If the special adviser could say, 'well, look I've been involved with this for some time and what the department says is absolutely correct, I'm afraid ... ', it was very useful in helping to persuade the minister.

Klein and Lewis speculated whether the willingness of Labour advisers to rub the noses of ministers in unpleasant truths partly reflected the fact that they, 'saw themselves as having an expertise independent of their political role' (p.17). This theme will be elaborated in the section identifying categories of effective advisers.

The Diverse and Changing Response from Officials.

We can now explore several further aspects of the response to advisers from officials. The claims that the role has become more accepted and formalized were examined in general. With regard specifically to officials, there has been some drift in attitude from the more dismissive views in the 1960s and 1974 to greater acceptance in recent years. John Hunt claimed that in the late 1960s and early 1970s, 'a lot of civil servants were probably doubtful of the value of this. O.K., ministers wanted this, but having it, we doubted the value.' By 1977, however, he was able to tell the Expenditure Committee:

I think that there has been something like a sea change of attitudes since political advisers first started coming in. There has been both a recognition by the Civil Service, which the Civil Service ought to have recognised a long time ago, that these people have something genuinely to contribute in terms of political input, political minefields, what their chief is thinking, and so on, and the political advisers, I

think, have seen that the machine has something to contribute. I have got no worries about this at all (Vol.2 (2), pp.758-9).

In interview, he made a comparison with the attitude of officials towards the CPRS, which had been regarded with suspicion when it was established. At its demise most officials were sorry, and, he felt, if the system of advisers, 'were to be abandoned completely, most civil servants would think it rather a pity.'

Brian Abel-Smith felt that although the role he played in the late 1960s was similar to that in the 1970s, he was somewhat more integrated into the structure of government in the latter period and experienced less opposition. Although many officials agree there was a move away from the initial suspicion, it has not been an undisturbed trend towards greater acceptance. In the 1960s, for example, there was thought to have been a hardening of attitudes after the Labour Party gave its evidence to the Fulton Committee and called for an expansion in the system. Similarly, the influx of advisers in 1974 caused considerable dismay to some officials, partly because it was seen as part of a trend of criticism against the civil service.

Generalizations about growing acceptance are also difficult to make. The response varied depending upon individuals, the roles they played, their qualities, and the extent to which attitudes had hardened in a department which had been without advisers for a while. Some Tory advisers in the 1980s reported more hostility from the bureaucracy than most Labour advisers claimed to have encountered. Furthermore, several officials were less impressed with the contribution, and attitude, of advisers in the 1980s than they had been in the 1970s.

The attitude of the civil servants was sometimes difficult for advisers to judge because of the pragmatism noted above. Roger Dyson thought the typical reaction towards him was, 'he is there, a) how can you neutralize him; b) what value can you make of it.' Dyson was also one of several advisers who felt that within the department some divisions were more cooperative and favourably disposed than others. Stuart Sexton reported that his relations with different officials varied, but with some there was, 'some pretty rough talking ... and

sometimes a bitter complaint to the Secretary of State that, "Sexton is exceeding his authority."

Some people suggested that the reaction towards advisers varied between different levels of the departmental hierarchy. There was some feeling that certain permanent secretaries were more favourably disposed towards advisers than officials lower in the department. Many parts of a department may have had virtually no contact with an adviser and there was inevitably some suspicion when such officials learnt that 'the special adviser' was coming to one of their meetings. Again the picture is complicated by the frequently good relationship already referred to between advisers and the assistant secretary or principal heading the private office, and by the role of some advisers in acting as a channel of communication between assistant secretaries and the minister. In such circumstances, the more effective political advisers were often thought to be compatible with bright young officials of their own generation. A few permanent secretaries, however, felt that such officials, outside the private office, might resent the advisers' privileged access to ministers.

One official was particularly scathing about the attitude of permanent secretaries who had come to regard advisers as a convenience and towards whom the advisers were often deferential. He claimed that permanent secretaries frequently saw advisers as, 'just another pawn in the great game of keeping the minister contented. They largely persuaded themselves that special advisers can be put to many good purposes, and they couldn't now do without them, and they can't understand how they ever managed without them. Go lower down in the hierarchy, I think you may find increasing scepticism.'

It was clear, however, that some ministers expected their permanent secretary to smooth relations between the adviser and the department. Questioned about whether there was any resentment towards his specialist advisers, Michael Heseltine replied, 'the permanent secretaries who were involved gave me exemplary support; they would sort out the problems.'

One further dimension that is difficult to unravel is the considerable correlation between officials who thought highly of

advisers, and advisers who were generally regarded as effective. Whilst civil servants would inevitably tend to have a higher regard for effective advisers, it could be argued that one factor in increasing their effectiveness, was operating in a receptive environment. However, certain officials who valued advisers' work thought some were much better than others, which suggests that it is the quality of the adviser that is the most important factor. Nevertheless, even the most talented advisers would find it difficult to work in a department where most officials adopted the attitudes outlined in category (i).

SECTION F: AMBIGUITIES IN THE ROLE.

A possible limitation in the role of advisers, illustrated in some of the above comments from politicians and bureaucrats, lies in the inherent ambiguity in their position. As we saw in Chapter 2 they are politically appointed to play a political role, and, in most cases, are in the same position as ministers in that they may not see the papers presented to ministers of a previous administration. And yet, they are civil servants and bound, in theory, by most of the restrictions on political activities imposed on civil servants, even though the position has eased a little. Several people referred to advisers as being 'hybrids' and others suggested they were, 'neither fish nor fowl'. We have already seen (Chapter 3 Section C) that the position of advisers could be regarded as being anomalous in the British and similar systems. Doubt about the legitimacy of their role helps explain the hostility or reservations of some civil servants and of politicians who take the 'traditional' view that in the system of government there should be only elected politicians and permanent 'non-political' officials, and that the special advisers are neither and so have no place in the system. This view is now, ironically, somewhat shared by Tony Benn:

there should really only be two ways of getting to the top in political power. One is by career and the other is by election, and the thing about advisers is that, although I had excellent ones who did a first rate job and were people of total integrity, if it's possible for people to creep to the top by patronage, even ministerial patronage, there is a danger in that; and therefore much better to bring in elected MPs and use them for the collective control of a department.

Various advisers thought this ambiguity created difficulties and reduced their effectiveness. The point was developed at length by Darlington (1976). He cites a letter of his to the New Statesman shortly after the appointment of Labour advisers:

It is important that the civil service code is not forced upon political advisers, since persons appointed because of their partisan commitment lose some of their value if they are compelled to abandon much of the party political activity that demonstrates that commitment. If this process is allowed to continue, there will be a tendency to treat us as a special breed of civil servant, which we are not. This political castration should be opposed now, before it becomes the established norm (17 May 1974).

The letter, he comments, 'led to a rebuke from Number Ten which rather makes the point' (p.55). He also claims that during the 1975 referendum campaign, political advisers who wished to work for the campaign by anti-market ministers were supposed to resign, but those assisting pro-market ministers were not expected to do so. In practice, no advisers were forced to resign, but Tony Banks illustrated the problems that could arise. He recalled that he and Jack Straw helped organize a press conference for Ministers against the Market; they had been asked questions and were reported in the papers. The permanent secretary called Banks in and sought to establish the basis of his appointment.

An associated difficulty noted by several advisers was also described by Brown and Steel: 'Their position is inevitably a rather vulnerable one' (p.331). Such advisers believed their position, and that of their colleagues, was entirely dependent on support from the minister. They recognized that however strong their place appeared, there was no guarantee it would survive a change of minister. Margaret Beckett felt she enjoyed Judith Hart's confidence, and enjoyed working with her and respected her, but she came to realize it was 'a vulnerable position'. Her clout depended totally on her relationship with Hart. It would have been difficult had the relationship weakened or Hart begun to rely less on her advice: 'It was a strange position, you had no political base of your own, you operated only through your relationship with the minister.'

A related problem mentioned by certain advisers was the unease felt by some about their pay and conditions and a general feeling that, according to Chris Butler,

the rules of work are not adapted to us as special advisers, nor is there the correct degree of openness that you might expect. I am not saying there is open hostility, there isn't, but there are all sorts of ways, subtle and unsubtle, of making you feel different and apart from the rest of the flow.

Whatever the difficulties of integrating into the bureaucracy, advisers have to adapt to the civil service codes to some extent, and therefore inevitably become somewhat removed from their party background. Being, Butler observed, 'in a sense in purgatory between your party and the Civil Service means that the perquisites of either will be denied to you.' (1986, p.18). The ambiguity also helps explain the lack of clarity in the functions of some advisers.

To be effective, and overcome the ambiguity, many respondents thought advisers must have the ability to work with the civil service, but not be absorbed by it. Lord Gowrie observed that to be successful in a department an adviser had to, 'work simultaneously with, and against, the grain of the culture.' One official believed, however, that to be closely integrated, but not fully absorbed, into a department involved, 'a contradiction which is insuperable. That is the objection to having them.' Because advisers could not act as either officials or ministers, he believed that the role required extraordinary qualities if it was to be performed properly; so few advisers possess these abilities that the role should be discontinued.

Starting from a similar position, that of regarding advisers as operating at the point where the administrative and political systems meet, it is possible to develop the argument in different directions. First, some believe there will inevitably be tension. Successful advisers often had to fight to achieve things, including access to certain papers. The tension need not necessarily be destructive. Gwilym Prys-Davies was one of several advisers who thought it could be creative. He wished to see the Welsh Office play more of an anticipatory role even if, as we noted earlier, this could lead to

conflict. He believed that although the civil service thought he was sometimes too critical of their papers, he had to be frank with them. Some ministers who were generally favourably disposed towards the civil service, nevertheless wanted advisers who would combine their expertise with the independence of the advisory position to stimulate new thinking in the department and develop radical policies. Roy Jenkins, for example, said that Anthony Lester's, 'role was to be a slight irritant to the department ... [But] He was very good at getting on with the department and certainly wasn't such an irritant as to be counterproductive from his own point of view.'

There was a degree of ambiguity in Lester's position. Jenkins was known to favour advisers who argued, in the words of Lester, 'to solutions and not to dogmatic conclusions', but he was determined that the legislation on sex and race discrimination should be introduced. It has been noted how Lester was concerned to adopt the civil service ethos and he believed as far as possible the civil service should do the type of thing he was doing because it would be destructive of moral and career structure to have too many outsiders coming in. Despite that, Lester recognized that Jenkins considered that to achieve the desired changes, it would be helpful to have somebody in the ambiguous position of being in 'creative tension with the department'. Notwithstanding his previous comments Lester claimed,

it is very hard for insiders to perform the role I was performing. It requires not only a commitment but also an obsessional commitment, working extraordinarily hard to get a point of view across and battle in Whitehall ... it also requires a breadth of vision for somebody who is inside the system to take on board values from outside.

From this perspective it could be argued that it is the peculiar position occupied by the adviser that, whatever the difficulties, is crucial in enabling him to make a unique contribution.

Interviewees also sometimes commented on the ambiguity in terms of the freewheeling nature of the role. Many advisers and some others felt that this was an advantage, especially when compared with the difficulties that might arise if advisers were tied in more tightly to the structure of the department:

The special adviser must exploit his inherent ambiguity ... I worked around, and in close conjunction with, the private office; but if ever I sensed woodenness or obstruction, I could simply go elsewhere without breaching formal procedures or appearing disloyal. The great strength of special advisers in policy making is that they can chance their arm, or on occasions float a kite for civil servants, without everyone being solemnly committed in advance. This gives considerable flexibility (Tim Boswell).

A lot of our value and power is derived from the ability to 'float like a butterfly and sting like a bee', and to go in at whatever point we like within the system ... our power was derived from the minister, rather than from a particular point within the structure of the ministry (Chris Butler).

In doing one's job it is a great help not to have a formal place in the civil service hierarchy, because if one had such a formal place one would often have been dealing with people who had higher status and that would have been an inhibition on speaking strongly and bluntly and being irritating, as on occasion one has to be in a polite way (David Coleman).

I did talk to anyone and went to any meeting that sounded interesting and reported back very freely to any of the ministers and I thought that was valuable. I thought the lack of position within the administrative chain of command was a huge advantage (Stella Greenall).

The special adviser's power base is the minister, first and last, and that is all he needs ... It is a great mistake to set up a spirit of antagonism with the civil servants but nevertheless one does need to be independent. There would be the danger if one were more firmly part of the machine that you'd get the private secretary or permanent secretary leaning on you (Rodney Lord).

The arguments are complex because the ambiguity has different aspects. Many advisers, including some of those quoted above, would have liked the terms and conditions applied to the system of advisers to have been clarified and some of the discontinuities removed. Boswell, for example, referred to anomalies between the treatment of different individuals in a variety of areas including access to secretaries. Butler has been quoted on both sides of this discussion and was one of several who thought that although some of the terms and conditions should be clarified, officially raising some of the points about the precise role of advisers could cause problems and might be best left alone. As Ted Short discovered, attempts to regulate specifically for advisers can lead to trouble. Similarly, in Australia, Smith comments,

'One suggestion, persistently made, was that the roles of advisers should have been more rigidly defined. As should by now be clear, trying to write detailed job descriptions would have created more trouble and anomalies than it was worth' (1977 p.156).

Whilst a freewheeling role is perhaps inevitably part of the model of the place of special advisers, and might perhaps be appealing to some advisers, it has been argued that it might limit their ability to tackle some of the root causes of problems faced by ministers. Edwin Plowden is quoted by Hennessy (1989, p.211) as telling Ted Heath in relation to Conservative plans in the 1960s for the introduction of businessmen, 'One thing I do know about Whitehall is, if you have people floating about in it, they will do no good and probably do harm.' Unlike the businessmen, the advisers have had some anchorage by being attached to ministers. It was claimed that the cabinet proposal had been welcomed by organizations representing senior civil servants in part because it helped to put the role of political appointments and established officials on a clearer footing (IOD, 1986a). In interview John Hoskyns argued there was a need for a group of advisers and if they were going to play a think tank role within departments they needed to be in a team, not freewheeling individuals. How far advisers have played the role of a policy initiator or analyst has varied greatly, but examples of advisers influencing policies can be identified, and will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER NINE: EXAMPLES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVENESS.

SECTION A: IMPACT ON POLICIES.

Policy formulation was seen in Chapter 3 to be an extremely complex process and new policies are usually the product of the interaction of many forces. Isolating the impact made by any individual on policies is very difficult and often controversial. In Australia, Walter commented, although advisers can identify cases where they had direct influence, 'most of their work is far more indeterminate in its effects ... seeking to trace the influence of individuals is a somewhat artificial quest' (p.159-60). Nevertheless, because the analysis by Hall *et al.* (1975) suggested that there were many variations in the pattern of influences on policy making in the UK, it was claimed earlier that room could be left for advisers sometimes to play a part. Although the analysis below concentrates on discussing how advisers could influence policy, the majority of advisers believed they had not made a significant contribution to policy development, and many instances were cited where advisers made policy suggestions which were not adopted.

The diversity of advisers' involvement, in ways that officials cannot always match, again underlines their potential effectiveness in bringing flexibility to the system of government. Advisers can contribute one or more of the following attributes: political commitment; a background of having worked on party policies; committed expertise; practical experience; links with outside groups; independence from the department. In some of the roles it is difficult to distinguish between an adviser making an independent contribution or acting on behalf of his minister. For most advisers involvement in policy consideration was usually in the reactive mode, but the circumstances in which a more proactive role could be adopted include:

- having a continuing impact on policies which the adviser had helped to formulate in Opposition;
- acting as catalyst, promoter, or sponsor of a policy;
- working within a framework set by the minister to develop policies to achieve his objectives, perhaps in conjunction with officials;
- helping to develop new policy themes through discussing issues with

- the minister;
- helping the minister and officials devise a strategy or policy framework for the department;
 - originating new policies as a result of using specialist knowledge and/or ideological commitment to analyse a problem, perhaps in conjunction with officials;
 - being a conduit for, and analyst of, policy ideas generated by policy research centres;
 - opening up issues by analysing submissions from officials and possibly proposing alternative options;
 - discussing, even negotiating, with pressure groups and bringing their concerns to the department and/or generating support from them for policy options;
 - discussing issues with the minister when he is making his decision;
 - developing policies to go in the party manifesto;
 - using the advisory position in an adventitious way to take an interest in particular issues which were not related to the reasons for appointment.

Advisers often participated in several of these activities, sometimes on the same issue. Generally their role could be that of either protagonists or analysts. A complex and lengthy analysis would be required to match examples of advisers' involvement in specific policies, with each of these activities. It is possibly clearer in the first instance, where the advisers (for example, Brian Abel-Smith on pensions and health policy, Stuart Holland on industrial policy, and Arthur Cockfield on tax reforms) had participated in creating policies in Opposition. Even here, however, tracing their precise role through each of the possible later stages would be complicated.

Instead, several examples will be provided of advisers who were widely thought to be influential on policy, sometimes in particular ways that illustrate general points. In his November 1974 Budget, Denis Healey introduced tax relief on companies' stock appreciation. Healey, in his autobiography, claims that, 'this tax relief was Nicky Kaldor's invention, and his most valuable contribution to my work at the Treasury' (p.393). Others were calling for some type of stock relief (see, for example, MacDougall's account of his role at the Confederation

of British Industry, 1987, p.213). Nevertheless, in interview, Healey saw the tax relief as his adviser's initiative and, whilst Kaldor worked closely with the Inland Revenue, 'without him the stock relief would never have taken place.' Similarly Kaldor's biographer, Thirwall, suggests, 'one major success, which inside the Treasury was entirely Kaldor's invention, was the introduction of stock appreciation tax relief for companies' (1987, p.254). This is a good illustration of the argument referred to in Chapter 3 that demonstrating an adviser had an impact on specific policies did not necessarily show the individual (let alone all advisers) to be generally, influential on policy. Overall from 1974-6 Kaldor's 'influence on the Chancellor was minimal' (Thirwall, p.250) and less than in the 1964-7 period.

In addition to helping Geoffrey Howe carry into Government various policies developed in Opposition, Adam Ridley was responsible, according to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Arts, Lord Gowrie, for the 'lion's share of the work' on developing the proposals for tax relief on charitable giving.

We have seen how Michael Heseltine recruited Tom Baron in 1979 to help find solutions to various problems that had been identified by the incoming minister. Baron's influence was not limited to the months in which he was in the department. He changed attitudes in the department and therefore helped influence policies even after he had left. He had an impact on policies and/or helped draft Circulars on housing and planning matters, including land availability and building regulations. Furthermore, he assisted in urban renewal policies, devising some schemes and encouraging other volume builders to participate in activities, including the docklands redevelopment.

In his long spell as adviser at the Department of Industry (later DTI), Jeffrey Sterling was involved with many issues. The minister who first appointed him, Patrick Jenkin, believed that it would have been impossible to have moved so quickly into the new policy of privatizing British Telecom (BT) without Sterling's, 'expertise, range of contacts, immediate, quick, grasp of exactly what it was we were needing to do, and how we were going to do it.' One of the key things Sterling could do, and that Jenkin felt nobody in the department could have done, was

to liaise with the City and check whether what was then the new concept of privatization, with proper regulation of prices, would be saleable. Jenkin also used Sterling's services to ensure BT's System X was sorted out: 'Jeffrey put that together in six weeks... going round and round, getting to know the people - he knew quite a lot of them already - but gradually actually putting the thing together and seeing the way through; nobody in Whitehall could have done that; they tell me they couldn't.' According to a Sunday Times profile, Sir Jeffrey, 'is asked to do sensitive work because he is thought to do it better than a bright civil servant. His triumph over System X, ... is a case in point' (8 May 1988). Similarly, Fryer (1989) reports that when the computer chip company, Inmos, was sold off to Thorn EMI, 'Sir Jeffrey did more than advise, he actually took part in the negotiations.'

On becoming Home Secretary in 1983, Leon Brittan worked out a complete strategy for the department and claimed it would have been difficult, 'to have worked out a coherent strategy which made political sense without the assistance of a special adviser.' The contribution of the adviser, Robin Harris, was particularly important in planning the strategy for the Criminal Justice system. Having described the problem of the tyranny of case work and short term crisis management in the Home Office, Hennessy (1989, p.459) observes that, 'Leon Brittan managed to offend the hard and soft elements in society during his ill-starred Home Secretaryship in the mid-1980s, but in attempting to solve this perpetual problem he excelled and his efforts have been recognised by knowledgeable outsiders.'

During his time as an adviser in two departments, Maurice Peston illustrated how an adviser could contribute to a range of policies in a variety of ways. Peston influenced the education section of the October 1974 Labour election manifesto. His minister at the DES, Reg Prentice, described Peston's general role to Knight: 'I appointed Maurice Peston as my Special Adviser. We had to create Labour's education policy as far as it went ... The Party's schools policy was devised by myself and Peston, Ernie Armstrong [Minister of State] and William Pile [permanent secretary]' (1990, p.88). One field in which Peston subsequently had an impact was the Adult Literacy Scheme. He thought he was more of a catalyst or sponsor than an originator of the proposals, being in a

position to help canalize the energies of Christopher Price, a powerful backbencher. He was instrumental in seeing some funding was obtained for the scheme and worked constructively with the Minister of State, Gerry Fowler.

Roy Hattersley, Peston's minister at the DPCP, referred to several ways in which advisers could influence policy but found it difficult to remember exactly how new ideas started because they would generally emerge from the evening discussions he quite often held with a group including his advisers, private secretaries, Gavyn Davies from the Number Ten Policy Unit, and Lord Williams, Chairman of the Price Commission. In relation to one of the policies, the converting of prices policies into an efficiency and competition policy, Peston did not think he was the originator, but was one of the key people who developed the view that policy should move in that direction. A further way in which Peston could influence policy, according to Hattersley, was that when submissions came to him, 'Peston and John Burgh were two deputy secretaries who would have the two final notes, so that I would be getting the departmental policy just slightly pushed in my direction.'

A more detailed assessment of the contribution of advisers will be made for two contrasting policy issues - the Sex Discrimination Act, 1975, and the Assisted Places Scheme. In each case I have drawn upon previous detailed research.

Comments from other such authors, however, illustrate some of the complexities when making a thorough analysis of the role of an adviser in policy making. Two books on sex discrimination law written by lawyers stress the importance of Anthony Lester's role. Beloff (1976, p.iv) refers to Lester as the 1975 Act's 'onlie begetter', and Pannick (1985, preface) describes Lester as being, 'the father and mother of sex discrimination law in the United Kingdom.' Other researchers (Callender, 1979; Meehan, 1985), whilst acknowledging Lester's role, stress the wider economic, social and political factors that led to the legislation. They do identify, however, Lester's earlier part in the movement for anti-discrimination legislation. He had already worked with Roy Jenkins on race relations legislation in the 1960s and was a

member of a Labour Party Study Group on Discrimination Against Women which produced a final report in 1972 entitled Discrimination Against Women. The findings of that study group formed part of the evidence before a House of Lords Select Committee on the Anti-Discrimination Bill (Meehans, p.214).

It has already been noted how Lester was recruited primarily to, in Jenkins's words, 'deal specifically with sex discrimination, race relations, and racial equality.' Jenkins was seen as being personally committed to the introduction of legislation in these fields. When asked whether Lester's role was to fill in the details within the framework set by the minister, Jenkins replied, 'Yes, but he was also to some extent an initiator as well, he kept me firmly in those directions. He worked out the details, and he had a very high class legal mind and was extremely good on the issues.' Lester's detailed drafting work on the White Paper, Equality for Women (Cmnd.5724), and later on instructions for the drafting of the Bill have also been referred to earlier.

Lester had a particularly influential role not only because of his committed expertise in this field, but also because Jenkins was, in his own words, 'a fairly detached Home Secretary.' Wider issues such as the debate about British membership of the EEC were of greater concern to him than disputes about the details of the Sex Discrimination Bill. It could be argued that the Secretary of State should have devoted more time to motivating the civil servants to produce the legislation he desired. In the context of the debate about the role of advisers, however, it might be thought it was sensible for a senior minister to recruit an expert who shared his values to advance a major reform, thus leaving the minister greater opportunity to engage in perhaps the more important political debate of the time. Furthermore, as Jenkins explains in his autobiography, whereas in his first term as Home Secretary his emphasis had been on promoting liberal laws, in his second period, 1974-6, he saw his primary task as, 'the maintenance of the proper authority of the state' (p.376). Therefore, in the 1970s, his human rights instincts, 'required a little stimulation' and, he comments,

given the change in my order of priorities, it was both desirable and necessary to have Lester there to keep me up to the mark.

Together we had produced by the end of that summer of 1974 a Sex Discrimination White Paper, which was both a sensible and a popular addition to the Government's manifesto for the October election, and which was turned into legislation in the 1974-5 session. 'Together' was the right word, for although Lester wrote the White Paper almost single-handed he required a good deal of Secretary of State support, for there was more departmental opposition at upper-middle level than I had ever previously encountered (p.376).

Lester's workload was so great he arranged for the appointment of Angela Byre to assist him. According to Jenkins, 'she did that job very well.' She felt that in the area of employment law and tribunals, where she had specialist knowledge, she was able to influence the legislation, 'to a small extent'. She argued that the minister was sold on the legislation, 'but Anthony Lester substantially influenced the way it emerged in a tangible form - he knew how race relations provisions could work and understood the technical ways of producing legislation.' She suspected that without the advisers the policy would not have been turned so quickly from a vague commitment into a piece of legislation. The advisers, she thought, strengthened the minister's position when some civil servants and other ministers questioned the proposals:

in breaking new ground you have got to have strong arguments for doing it in a particular way because people are naturally cautious and conservative about doing it and, therefore, if you have good technical expertise at your elbow that can explain how to do it, and give you a good means of doing it, you are likely to carry much more clout.

Both advisers agreed that Lester did not get his own way all the time. Lester explained that given the aim was to eliminate unfair discrimination, the means for doing so was a matter of argument: 'I was, in effect, in the lead on the formulation of policy with other full time permanent officials expressing opinions about that, and the Secretary of State, as it were, having to form a view sometimes when there were disagreements between us.'

The disputes were generally about the nature of the legislation, not over whether there should be legislation at all, but, according to Rendel (1978, p.900), 'considerable resistance from within the civil

service had to be overcome.' Nevertheless Lester felt that he worked pretty well with officials, especially after the position of the Labour Government had been strengthened by the October 1974 election, and some of the officials dealing with the legislation had been changed. He described the role of the specialist adviser as being, 'brokering business, getting the policy through, winning arguments.' He visited the United States with Roy Jenkins and learnt important lessons about anti-discrimination legislation there.

The importance of Lester's role is widely accepted; Brian Cubbon agreed he did the detailed work on the White Paper and described his position on the discrimination issue as 'dominant'. Cubbon felt that, 'it was more inertia than obstruction', that Lester faced. There is also some way of reconciling some of the apparently contrasting views about the influences on the Act set out at the start of this exposition. Thus, whatever the strength and nature of the various forces that created the situation in which it was thought appropriate to introduce sex discrimination legislation, Lester clearly did influence its precise content. Callender, however, also examined the role of various women's groups and, using the framework provided by Hall *et al.*, claimed that their, 'numerous and varied activities provided the legitimacy, feasibility and support necessary for legislation.' This claim is perhaps most contestable in relation to the feasibility argument. Byre argued that although she and Lester were pushing the proposals further (and the civil servants were saying they had gone far enough), they were not doing so because of what pressure groups were saying. However, she continued:

We were helped by the fact that pressure groups made a very powerful case which we could argue ... it was very useful to be able to channel the arguments that you probably thought were correct anyway, ... 'it has been made very forcefully to us', whereas some of the time it is the argument you would have been putting.

Meehans shows how the women's groups were active in canvassing Jenkins and the relevant Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Dr Shirley Summerskill, and she examines the response of the Inter-Organisational Committee, the umbrella organisation for women's groups, to the publication of the Sex Discrimination Bill in March 1975. The

committee produced a long document:

in which it was stated that many of their original points had been met. They particularly welcomed the inclusion of the idea of indirect discrimination stemming from acts not necessarily intended to be discriminatory. According to a participant, however, this was not included as a result of British women's groups but on American advice (p.53).

Once again Lester's role, in travelling to America with Jenkins, was influential. In general it may be concluded that although there would have been a Sex Discrimination Act had Lester not been appointed, he did influence its final shape.

It is widely agreed that Stuart Sexton exerted a considerable influence on the Assisted Places Scheme introduced in Section 17 of the 1980 Education Act. About 5,000 means-tested places were to be made available each year to academically able children whose parents could not afford the full fees at independent schools. The state was to reimburse the schools for fees remitted for the selected pupils. It is a controversial measure: 'From the outset, it was defended and attacked with a fervour quite disproportionate to its modest scale' (Edwards, *et al.*, 1989, p.1). Their research shows doubts exist about how far Sexton was the originator of the scheme, because, 'the proposals taken up by the Conservative Party in 1976 had been devised and actively promoted by heads of direct-grant schools' (p.35). Furthermore, Sexton wanted much higher targets for numbers of places than others advocated. But, 'while these are reasons for doubting claims that he is the "acknowledged architect" of the Assisted Places Scheme, his importance as its "intellectual broker" is certainly evident' (p.36). Similarly, Salter and Tapper (1985, p.198) say of Sexton: 'Although the eventual scheme cannot be said to be his personal product he undoubtedly left his mark. His role is best described as that of the intellectual broker, although ideas do not originate with him he has the vital function of transforming them into an acceptable political form'.

Knight (1990, p.8) refers to Sexton as, 'instrumental in formulating much of Tory education policy for the 1979 General election, including the Assisted Places Scheme', and Edwards *et al.* (1989, p.36) demonstrate that enthusiasm for it even amongst Conservative politicians

was limited, and,

there was no discernible contribution to its making from the many other policy advisers (formal and informal) who had been engaged in preparing their Party for office. Even St. John Stevas and his shadow successor, Mark Carlisle, ... showed only intermittent interest in it and Sexton's own consistent enthusiasm was therefore invaluable in enlisting political support for the Scheme.

Edwards *et al.*, describe some of the steps taken by Sexton, both to ensure that the scheme became official Conservative policy, and to devise the plans in great detail. His activities included promoting the scheme within the private sector and identifying schools likely to offer places and the terms on which they would be willing to do so. He was, 'determined to establish, by the time the Conservatives returned to office, that there were enough schools willing to enter into a contract' (p.31).

Sexton's role could be described as developing the feasibility of the scheme, although he was also concerned to increase and demonstrate its support and legitimacy. As with the discussion of Lester's role, the account of the part played by Sexton builds on comments made already in various sections of this book. The role that Sexton had played in general in helping to develop policy in Opposition, and particularly his work on the Assisted Places Scheme, led to his being one of the comparatively few advisers appointed in 1979. In interview, Carlisle stated that the Assisted Places Scheme,

was going to require a good deal of push to get it through, firstly, because it was not a policy that was particularly popular with the department, there were a fair number of critics in the area; also it needed a great deal of work and he'd been heavily involved in it in advance and knew the people and schools who would like to take part, and was very important and relevant in that area.

Given, however, that the scheme was a manifesto commitment, once the party had been elected, and the incoming minister confirmed his support, it has been argued in interview by an official that the adviser need not have influenced the policy any more because the civil service would ensure its implementation. This proposition can be examined by considering the progress of the proposals. As always at a change of

Government, the civil servants presented the new minister with their assessment of how to implement the manifesto proposals. According to Edwards *et al.*, Sexton's detailed plan was larger in scope than this, but, 'was certainly not ready-made for implementation' (p.37). Carlisle reported that he instructed officials that Sexton was to be involved, with Lady Young, the Minister of State, in developing the scheme. It could be argued that the differences between Sexton's plan and that drawn up initially by officials suggest that without Sexton's input, the final scheme would have been more restricted; but the differences between Sexton's blueprint and the final Act, as implemented, imply there were limitations on his influence.

Before considering some of the details of Sexton's role, we can consider several general assessments. Edwards *et al.* (1989, p.35-6) refer to, 'the crucial role in the development of the Scheme', played by Sexton, 'both as a "broker" mediating between the pressure group and the relevant civil servants and as a direct influence on the decisions which were being made by ministers.' They identified several factors which, together, 'all enabled him to influence the details of the eventual scheme as no minister would have been able or would have wanted to do.' These factors included: his long experience in Opposition as a political adviser; his regular presence in the DES; his commitment to assisted places and his relative freedom from other responsibilities; and his many contacts in the private sector. In terms of the distinction used earlier, Sexton was a protagonist not an analyst. In reviewing the evaluation by Edwards *et al.*, one of the junior ministers of the period, Rhodes Boyson, said of the scheme that, 'it was really the child of Stuart Sexton - the indefatigable political adviser' (THES, 18 May 1990).

Salter and Tapper (1985) suggest that when the Assisted Places legislation was framed, the traditionally important role of DES officials (as described in their earlier, 1981, study) was eroded by the degree of detailed preparation which Sexton had deliberately engaged in to avoid the scheme being emasculated by the caution of officials or a ministerial change of priorities. Knight also states, based on information from Mark Carlisle, that, 'in 1979 the APS was opposed by most Conservatives involved in Education, and was not popular at the

DES' (pp.147-8).

In an interesting analysis Edwards *et al.* (1989, p.36-7) describe the influence of the independent schools' representatives, and of career civil servants, as well as that of Sexton on the contents of the scheme. Although the leading figures in the independent schools' campaign had come to value Sexton's, 'promotional skills and his energy', when the details had to be worked out, they 'welcomed the clarity which civil servants brought to early discussions about the terms of the Scheme and their relative wariness about how dependent on assisted places any independent school could afford to become.' Having referred to the, 'interaction between commitment and practicality' in the final shaping of the scheme, the authors state:

we found no evidence that the civil servants responsible for constructing a workable Assisted Places Scheme were either dilatory, or obstructive, or uneasy about the close cooperation with the private sector which it involved ... The civil servants had to consider (as Sexton did not) the possible impact of the scheme on the public sector, and the consequent need to initiate at least nominal consultation with local authorities and teacher unions ... There was a more general contrast too, noted in an internal DES memorandum, between Sexton's dedication to the detailed application of 'his' particular scheme, and the obligation of civil servants to assess the merits of various alternatives.

Many of these points reflect the discussion in Chapter 3 with the officials being seen to have values, such as equity, which mean that, whilst they will implement manifesto proposals, they are concerned about the long term maintenance of the system as a whole. As we saw, public administrators conform to public organization norms and, 'are concerned with establishing an equitable and accountable system in which the work of the schools can take place.' (Kogan and Van Der Eyken, 1973 p.65).

Carlisle stated in interview that they were under pressure not to go ahead with the scheme, but Sexton was very supportive. He thought it would be, 'slightly overstating it' to say it would not have gone ahead without him, but 'his presence there helped.' Salter and Tapper (1985, p.204) claim that,

Although the preparation for the necessary legislation was proceeding very smoothly in a technical sense, the scheme was running into rough political waters. In a memo to the Secretary of State Sexton ... clearly suspected a perfidious DES: 'It is infuriating to read so many inaccurate "authoritative" accounts of the Assisted Places Scheme ... At the appropriate time I would ask that I be allowed to write a short, concise, accurate summary of the Scheme, to be made public as a press release, and I would rather I write it and you checked it. Rather than the Press Office or anyone else in the DES'.

Edwards *et al.* (1989, p.40) also describe Sexton's various activities aimed at ensuring continued ministerial support when the scheme faced hostility. He drafted a statement, which Carlisle incorporated almost unchanged into a speech, giving the clearest commitment to the scheme. He also wrote several memoranda to Carlisle, including one expressing alarm at rumours that the scheme might 'be dropped altogether' and referring to a manifesto commitment that, 'could not have been clearer.' Here Sexton was acting as 'Keeper of the Ark of the Manifesto' - a role we saw earlier (Chapter 4 Section B) that he accepted.

The greatest threat to the scheme came from the controversy surrounding the increase in public expenditure from a measure to support independent schools, at a time of proposed cuts in public expenditure elsewhere. Sexton was anxious for the scheme to be introduced as rapidly as possible so that it could involve a large number of pupils, and be confirmed a success, before the next election, thus making it difficult to dismantle even if Labour won. The decision was finally made to go ahead with the scheme, but on a smaller scale than originally intended, rather than postpone it. In discussing whether the decision represented a victory or defeat, Edwards *et al.* (1989, p.41) conclude: 'in view of Carlisle's reputation for weakness in defending educational expenditure, and the undoubted Treasury and other pressures to abandon the Scheme altogether, its retention in reduced form could be regarded as a considerable victory for the political skills of Sexton and the independent school lobby.'

In September 1979 Sexton addressed a meeting of the Head Masters' Conference. Opposition to the motion supporting the scheme, albeit from a small minority, generated some publicity, which in turn, 'caused problems for Sexton, who had outlined the Scheme to Conference members

with his usual fervour and was subsequently warned by Saville [the civil servant who was Registrar for Independent Schools] that he risked intensifying the opposition to it by exaggerating its scope.' (Edwards, *et al.*, 1989, p.41). Their evaluation study also provides details of Sexton's role in attending meetings between officials and ministers; internal meetings of officials; and departmental meetings with outsiders, some of whom were surprised to find an adviser present. This role continued after the legislation had been passed and it had to be implemented. Sexton's views continued to be accepted at times, and rejected at others. On the number of schools to be included, Sexton's initial plans went far wider than just the former direct - grant grammar schools that had been included in the DES's first response. Sexton initially got his way and the letter asking for offers of places went to all independent schools providing secondary education; the former direct grant schools constituted about half the total number finally involved. Edwards *et al.* (1989, p.45) observe: 'Throughout the process of recruiting suitable schools, Sexton was more quantitatively ambitious and less discriminating than were the civil servants ... Sexton's advocacy of more liberal entry conditions had only a marginal effect on the final list.'

Whatever the limitations on Sexton's influence, Carlisle agreed that it was probably greater than that exerted by most special advisers and he believed, 'it was invaluable to have him - especially with the implementation of the Assisted Places Scheme.'

In Chapter 7 it was suggested that the type of policy, and the degree of knowledge surrounding it, and political consensus supporting it, may require advisers to use different skills and do different work. The two policies just considered in detail were very different. The Sex Discrimination Act was much larger in scope than the Assisted Places Scheme; it covered the concerns of other departments and in many aspects raised issues about which the department had limited knowledge. Nevertheless, there was a wide political consensus that some such measure should be introduced. There was no equivalent consensus surrounding the Assisted Places Scheme. To this extent, Sexton, unlike Lester, had to engage in activities aimed at ensuring the measure was introduced at all. Whilst Sexton's knowledge of which schools might be

interested in participating was valuable in demonstrating the feasibility of the Assisted Places Scheme, the scheme did not require the introduction of new legal principles such as Lester was advocating.

There were some similarities between the policy areas, for example, in both cases there was a political imperative for speedy action and in neither case was there a clearly established policy community. The political consensus surrounding the sex discrimination legislation did not, as we have seen, extend to the officials as would have been necessary for a policy community to have developed, and the Assisted Places Scheme did not fall with the central concerns of the education policy community. In these circumstances there was perhaps more room than usual for an individual campaigner to become a special adviser and engage in whatever activities the particular situation required, and allowed, in relation to the formulation of new legislation, although representatives of the independent schools were also heavily involved in planning the details of the Assisted Places Scheme with the DES (Salter and Tapper, 1985; Edwards *et al.*, 1989).

Perhaps a greater contrast in the impact of a policy area on the work of advisers may, ironically, be seen in the differences between Sexton's success with the Assisted Places Scheme, and his and Oliver Letwin's failure to persuade the DES and Keith Joseph that it was practical to introduce an Educational Vouchers Scheme. This is one of the exceptions noted by Holmes (1987) to his general comment, quoted in Chapter 3, about Margaret Thatcher's Government not being deflected by the civil service. The opinion that the civil service blocked this scheme is vehemently expressed in 'public choice' terminology by proponents of the scheme such as Seldon (1986, Summary): 'Bureaucrats as a class must be expected to oppose it because it would substantially reduce their authority.' Other commentators suggest that ministers simply came to accept the advice of officials that there would be enormous difficulties in implementation. Letwin commented:

it is mistaken to represent officials as if they were obstructive against the wishes of the minister. They were in my view wholly obstructive, but not against the wishes of the minister. I think they were fulfilling their duty perfectly well in the sense that Sir Keith thought vouchers was an attractive principle and he would like to explore it. My job was to explore how to do it and their job was to explore how not.

The difference in scope between the two schemes partly explains the different roles played by the advisers, and their degree of success, in advocating the adoption of the policies. Furthermore, Sexton's knowledge about schools willing and eager to participate in any Assisted Places Scheme, provided a stronger knowledge base than the arguments supporting the Vouchers Scheme which were largely theoretical despite the strength with which they were advocated and some preparatory work undertaken by Kent County Council (Seldon). Even the comparable experience from the United States (primarily the experiment at Alum Rock, California, see Seldon) was much less substantial than that (described, for example, by Meehans) available to Lester and others in support of the need to tackle 'indirect discrimination'.

SECTION B: EXAMPLES OF EFFECTIVE ADVISERS.

The study has demonstrated the diverse nature both of the needs of ministers for assistance and of the background, recruitment, and roles of advisers. Therefore, it would be unproductive to attempt to produce a full typology of advisers covering all the possible categories. Furthermore, the previous chapter illustrated various ways in which advisers could be ineffective and/or receive a hostile reaction from the civil service. For these reasons this section will be limited to identifying several categories of effective advisers. The two clearest categories are: 'the All-rounder' and 'the Highflier'. Of the advisers interviewed, outstanding examples of the former include: Brian Abel-Smith, Anthony Lester, Maurice Peston, and Adam Ridley; and of the second category: David Lipsey, Michael Portillo, and Jack Straw. Examples of the effective work of these advisers have been used at various points throughout this study. Favourable comments about them were made by most, though not necessarily all, the ministers, officials, and other advisers who knew of their work; and sometimes even by politicians from the other party. Patrick Jenkin, for example, commented that Jack Straw, 'was very much respected by the department - they thought he was the best special adviser any minister had ever had.'

A few of the All-rounders might even have been in a category that could be called the 'Depsecs'. Even the Depsecs were not, of course, full permanent deputy secretaries, but some had the equivalent grade and status; Roy Hattersley explicitly stated, 'Maurice Peston worked like a deputy secretary, with a political view.' Roger Dyson's reference to Abel-Smith almost becoming a deputy secretary was noted earlier. In each case the All-rounder had many roles on policy issues, cabinet briefing, and other areas that involved the need for expert knowledge and political judgment. In some cases they pulled together diverse strands within the department. The width of their role, their perspective on issues, and their political skills, knowledge, and commitment, distinguished them from other specialists and made it inappropriate to regard them as solely specialist advisers.

Various comments demonstrate the way in which their role was seen to be broad. Brian Cubbon said, 'of all the special advisers I have come across I think Anthony Lester was the most mature in the argumentation and background he brought to the preparation of legislation against discrimination.' Although when he appointed Lester, whom he already regarded as a friend, Roy Jenkins specifically wanted him to concentrate on anti-discrimination legislation, Lester was free to, 'pronounce on the whole range of Home Office affairs' in a way in which, as we have seen, John Harris was no longer able to do. In 1980 Brian Abel-Smith wrote, 'What the outside academic brings to government is not depth of knowledge, but breadth of knowledge, what he also brings is a larger historical perspective.' A senior DHSS official echoed these sentiments when he said of Abel-Smith: 'he was right across the board; that was one of his great merits, that he had a view across this very large department.' Patrick Nairne said of Abel-Smith:

He is one of the world's experts on health service systems ... and he provided a particular degree of historical/academic continuity in relation to the build up of the National Health Service. He was able, against that background, to be an adviser about strategy ... and was also able to advise the minister from the standpoint of being a committed member of the Labour Party.

According to Douglas Wass, 'Adam Ridley, with his background in the Conservative Research Department, his previous experience of Whitehall, and his training as an economist, did make quite a big input over a wide area of policy.' Similarly, another official said of Adam Ridley, 'he is very like a civil servant, and indeed would make a very good civil servant. He got involved in everything; very energetic.' David Hill thought that his advisory colleague, Maurice Peston, 'obviously was the economic specialist adviser, but Maurice was also a man who had very strong views on other subjects ... and had general advice to give.'

We saw earlier that both Peston and Roy Hattersley felt that Peston's role was so wide that he could no longer play it satisfactorily when he became part time because of the need to return to his academic career. This illustrates the great pressures on All-rounders. In contrast to the recognized security of the deputy secretary role within the hierarchy, various factors might make it difficult to sustain the role of All-rounder and each point is relevant for at least one of the

individuals cited. The independence of the All-rounder might be weakened by pressure to be absorbed into the civil service system. His influence might be lessened by a change of minister. The length of time he could hold the position might be curtailed by the need to maintain links with a previous occupation on which his expertise might be based.

The term highflier is often applied by the civil service to officials who are rising rapidly in the hierarchy and are likely to spend a period as private secretary to a minister. It was, therefore, deliberately chosen because several of the features that distinguish the effective special adviser who is a Highflier, are similar to those characteristics of good private secretaries, but Highflier advisers also exhibit political skills, being able to liaise with politicians and others, sometimes crossing uncertain boundaries. Quite a number of the younger (usually in their 20's) special advisers have provided good political support for their ministers in terms of speech writing, party liaison, and spotting political landmines. In addition to all those skills the Highfliers have managed to develop a relationship with civil servants in the department that is complementary to that of the private secretary. This relationship is not necessarily based on policy expertise, but on knowing and understanding the minister's mind and the political constraints within which he operates in a way that is made mutually advantageous to the minister and the officials. Furthermore, they were able to develop informal links with politicians and pressure groups that meant that they could bring in information useful to the department. Officials were often keen to engage the Highfliers in the department's affairs. Such officials ranged from permanent secretaries to officials at about assistant secretary rank recognized by the Highfliers as often being people keen to show their abilities at policy making and who might have been proposing options that had been winnowed out of the final submission.

The general point that advisers can help liaise between the minister and the department has been made before, but the following additional quotations, starting with Donald Maitland on Michael Portillo, illustrate ways in which the Highfliers were seen as being particularly adept at it:

If you were to draw up a specification for a political adviser, I think he would get a plus on every point ... I think a 'bridge' is part of the role, 'channel' is part of the role, 'lubricant' is part of the role, 'confidant' on both sides.

Michael Portillo had proved extremely good at being a liaison between me and various parts of the department in a thoroughly constructive way. And I think he got on extremely well with everybody in the department without necessarily becoming too seduced by the department. (David Howell).

They were really a bridge between Barbara Castle and the department, as well as with the political world ... And they were an effective bridge and people whose judgment I respected and trusted, and confidence I trusted. (Senior DHSS Official).

The private office did a lot of the bridging but the political adviser was doing it in a different context, a different dimension (Andrew Semple on David Lipsey).

In contrast to the All-rounder, the Highflier was unlikely to have a major impact on policy development. He was the lubricant, not the powerhouse. Both categories, especially the Highflier, were able, however, to overcome the delicacy in the role described in Chapter 3, and successfully counteract uncertainty absorption, but to do so in an open way so that the officials were generally aware of what was being sent to the minister. As was noted, Brian Abel-Smith had the confidence to see that it was beneficial for the Secretary of State if the civil service knew beforehand what the adviser was saying.

The categorization of advisers developed in this section is less comprehensive but more complex than the division between specialist advisers and political advisers referred to early in this study. It allows the political dimension of the All-rounder's role to be accommodated, and recognizes that the personal skills displayed by Highfliers meant that even without a relevant background expertise, they could rapidly be brought into the dialogue on issues within a department. Commenting on the terms specialist and political advisers, a DHSS official said of Abel-Smith, 'He was that admirable thing, a combination of the two, and this why I said ... we were particularly lucky.' Bulmer's application to the UK of the four Images (See Chapter 3 Section C) is also useful here. Two advisers whose roles he described as being 'consonant with Image IV' (1988, p.38), in which the line between advice and political action became blurred, were Peston and

Abel-Smith.

A further group of advisers are the Specialists and Businessmen. Whilst they might have had more influence on specific policies than even some of the All-rounders, and they combined expertise with varying degrees of ability to work with people in the system, they tended to operate more within a specialist field, rather than displaying a wide range of political skills or roles. Successful examples of this group, including Tom Baron, Arthur Cockfield, Jeffrey Sterling, and David Young, played such disparate roles that it is impossible to argue they form a further precise category. In some cases, for example Arthur Cockfield, their previous Whitehall experience was considerably greater than that of the All-rounders. In other cases, including David Young, it was less. For many of his eight years as an adviser, Jeffrey Sterling was very part time, whereas Tom Baron served full time - but for a period limited to six months from the outset.

SECTION C: CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE ADVISERS.

Characteristics of All-rounders and Highfliers.

Identifying these categories highlights the characteristics of effective advisers and some of these qualities will now be examined, before broadening the analysis. It is a truism to say that individual qualities are important for determining success. However, for advisers who have little inherent institutional status on which to fall back, their individual qualities - as judged by ministers and officials - are crucial.

The importance of personal qualities is perhaps particularly crucial in the case of Highfliers because these were the common factor they shared, rather than any similarity in the extent to which they had prior experience of working with the minister or the subject matter. David Lipsey had been working as research assistant in Opposition for the Shadow Environment Secretary who became Secretary of State. Michael Portillo had been the CRD desk officer covering Energy, but his shadow minister, Tom King, did not become the Secretary of State for Energy. Jack Straw had not had previous experience of working either for Barbara

Castle or in Health and Social Security matters. Indeed in an article in The Sunday Times on 21 April 1974 about the newly appointed Labour advisers, Hugo Young wrote of Straw: 'his party biography catalogues his "special interests" - "education, transport and planning, community development, law reform, race relations, industrial relations". Virtually everything, that is, except health or social security at which department he is now a special adviser.' All effective advisers are likely to share qualities of intelligence, a capacity for hard work, drafting skills, political judgment, and ability to get on with officials.

All-rounders not only possessed considerable expertise and political commitment but, perhaps even more importantly, combined these factors to provide a personal commitment to the policies ministers wished to see introduced, and to the minister himself. Patrick Nairne claimed that in addition to great knowledge and political sensitivity advisers such as Abel-Smith, 'were personally committed to the minister so that the minister felt when she was talking to them that these people were wholly on her side.' John Biffen referred to the 'close compatibility' between Adam Ridley and Geoffrey Howe. In most cases All-rounders had previous experience of working in Whitehall and 'knew the ropes'. Several quotations illustrate how some of these points could be brought together. In the No. Minister series Roy Hattersley described his adviser's attributes:

He was Professor Maurice Peston who, from my point of view, had the supreme advantage of almost exactly sharing my political beliefs ... We both believed in the direct intervention of the government in the economy. In his phrase, we thought that the Department of Prices had the primary job of setting the guidelines for the mixed economy: how companies worked, levels of competition, attack on monopolies, control of prices, influence of advertising. We thought that was the department's job, and when I arrived at the department very many of the civil servants didn't think that was the department's job, and my task was to convince them that it was. Now having somebody who shared my views almost exactly but could also support them with a body of academic belief, with a substantial academic reputation, with that marvellous cachet of being called a professor, was a major advantage (Young and Sloman, 1982, pp.88-9).

In his assessment in The Sunday Times 19 September 1976 of the work of advisers in their first couple of years, Hugo Young thought that the influence of advisers had generally been marginal, but there were a few exceptions:

At the Home Office, Anthony Lester made a major impact by working with the grain of the civil service. He became the principal technical author of the new laws on race relations and sex equality. On a broader front, he gave significant advice on non-departmental matters and was accepted on official committees, notably the recent working party on human rights proposals.

A combination of genuine expertise, tactical flair and strategic vision, backed by the complete support of Roy Jenkins, are held in the department to account for a success which mostly, they do not grudge him.

The Highfliers did not necessarily possess expertise, but, in addition to their strong personal and political commitment to their minister, the striking feature about them was the respect in which they were held by officials. They gained the trust of officials, without losing that of the minister. The general point is well made by Ian Bancroft, who thought highly of David Lipsey and Jack Straw who both were advisers in the DoE whilst he was permanent secretary. Bright young special advisers, he thought, 'can pick up the essentials of a subject very quickly - the most important thing is how to handle people.' They had to be trusted to get information from the department and party offices.

This stress on personal qualities helps explain why it is useful to supply comments on advisers' attributes. A few more can be selected from the many possible, to add to those already used to illustrate this point. George Moseley, who was also permanent secretary at the DoE, particularly valued advisers who would 'engage' with the department and be, 'a policy enabler, a translator, a liaison-man.' He commented that Lipsey and Straw,

are the two who stand out in a sense as being the sort of political adviser that I regard as of significant benefit to the permanent staff ... My thesis about wanting to see some permanent recognition of the means, and indeed desirability, of extending the ministerial private office to include a political dimension, depends very much for its success, and

advantage to the civil service, on having calibre people in there.

An official commented that Michael Portillo, 'was talked to and trusted' at the Department of Energy. More advisers could justifiably be included in the Highflier category than the All-rounders category, with the examples quoted being some of the outstanding ones.

Various points in the model developed in Chapter 3 help explain the effectiveness of these categories of special advisers. First, it was suggested that people who could contribute from both ends of the technical-values spectrum might be particularly valuable. All-rounders can do this, and their strong commitment to, and compatibility with, their minister enabled them to comment directly to him. Their degree of expertise meant, as observed by Klein and Lewis (p.17), that they regarded themselves as having a degree of independence, even though they were close to their minister. The ability of both categories, especially the Highfliers, to get on with a variety of people, added to their political sensitivity, allowed them to operate along many channels of information both inside the department, where they could move up and down the hierarchy, and outside. Furthermore, their intelligence and drafting ability facilitated the processing of the information gathered, to the benefit of their minister.

General Characteristics.

Many of the attributes just referred to will be further explored in this general sub-section, in which characteristics rather than categories are analysed. Not every effective adviser would necessarily expect to possess all the characteristics, but the two mentioned most frequently were, the ability to gain the respect of civil servants, and to be clearly in receipt of strong backing from the minister.

(i) Various elements could contribute towards gaining the respect of officials. They wanted to feel they could trust the adviser and welcomed advisers who 'worked with the grain.' Where advisers, for example Roger Liddle, made a point of being open with officials this was usually much appreciated. Intellect, ability to operate at speed, and drafting skills were admired. In the words of Jack Straw: 'people

recognized certain administrative skills of a similar kind to theirs.' Several officials thought effective advisers were those who were, 'clean about the house.'

Some took the argument further and suggested that effective advisers not only worked with the grain, and eschewed hostility, but also made a point of being friendly. According to Derek Scott, 'much of the written work on this underestimates the importance of personality in the role of special advisers ... a willingness to get along with at least 20 to 30 key civil servants.' Officials in the Treasury thought that Scott got on well with people and according to one, Scott's attendance at the permanent secretary's planning meetings, 'was a tribute to his personality and skills.' The permanent secretary, Douglas Wass, also believed, 'the most effective advisers were those who set about positively to work with the civil service machine.'

Foreign Office officials too, often laid stress on the adviser's personality. John Graham thought an effective adviser had to have the trust of the civil service and the minister. To gain this he believed it important that the adviser should know the subject and have some general wisdom. In addition Miles Hudson was, 'a congenial character'. We have seen that Lord Home thought the individual qualities of Hudson were important reasons for making the appointment originally. Furthermore, Hudson was, 'a very gregarious amusing person and livened the whole place up ... he fitted in very well and was certainly useful'. Similarly Tom McCaffrey thought that if advisers were to be effective they had to, 'gain the respect of civil servants.' This he felt Tom McNally was able to do not only because he was knowledgeable about the politics of Labour Party foreign policy, but also because he adopted a friendly attitude towards the civil service. Another Foreign Office official claimed there was a 'frisson of concern' about special advisers, but David Stephen was, 'Well equipped in personal skills to deal with it. People liked him and trusted him and he had sane views. Personality is the key to special advisers' effectiveness.' In all three examples, and others, the friendliness was only one component of the factors that led to the adviser gaining the trust of officials.

Often the advisers worked well where a good relationship was established with the private office. Although there was some feeling that advisers provided a commitment that private secretaries could not provide, some of the most successful special advisers operated in tandem with successful private secretaries who were close to their ministers, for example, John Harris and David Dowler; Jack Straw and Norman Warner. This fits in with the argument that good ministers know how to get the best out of people. There have been some suggestions that influential well-established special advisers have been in a position to suggest names to the minister when it was necessary to appoint a new principal private secretary.

(ii) All the Highfliers and All-rounders had clear ministerial support, which is the other element often described as the key to advisory effectiveness. Walter (p.175-6) describes some ministers and advisers as having a relationship based on a form of symbiosis and suggests such pairing may be integral to groups around leaders. Whilst the importance of the aide/confidant role has been described, it is noticeable that three of the All-rounders identified and all the Highfliers worked for more than one minister.

Specialists interviewed thought their link with the minister and his support made their position stronger than that of an expert brought in by the department. The importance of ministerial backing was often commented on by ministers, advisers, and officials. At the Treasury in 1979, for example, Douglas Wass believed that, 'the fact that Cropper and Ridley enjoyed the confidence of Sir Geoffrey meant that they were taken seriously by the department.' Similarly, Ridley observed that the reasons why he was able to be involved with the department included, 'absolutely unequivocal ministerial backing, and it became clear early on that if we intervened on something, there was a serious chance that our intervention would carry weight.'

At MAFF, Terry Dawes thought the reaction of civil servants was, 'if they offended Ann [Carlton] they offended the minister.' Richard Ehrman reflected the widespread opinion noted earlier:

the way they deal with the special adviser is they just watch to see how much he has got the minister's ear. If you haven't got the minister's ear you are a nobody ... and if you have got his ear, and you are in on all the important things, then you have clout and influence; so the aide/confidant role is frightfully important to the special adviser.

Some of the junior advisers without any relevant subject expertise recognized how much they relied on their ability to demonstrate to officials that they enjoyed their minister's confidence. Michael Dobbs took the argument further; not only did the press officer and other civil servants show him things because they could see that he had a very close relationship with the Secretary of State, but also his effectiveness was greater because of that of the minister who cast, 'a strong and long shadow in the department.' Where an adviser believed there was a confrontational situation with the department, then support from the minister was important. Stuart Holland commented: 'there are plenty of frustrations from civil servants, but my experience was, both in the '60s (and I have given you one instance of it) and in the '70s, that if you had effective access to a minister who was interested in the issues, you could defeat the civil service.'

Most did not see the requirement for support from ministers in terms of defeating the bureaucracy, but there is considerable room for debate about the exact relationship between the two main characteristics. In addition to stressing the importance of ministerial backing, Ehrman emphasized the importance of the adviser getting on with the civil servants: 'You have got to work on your personal relationships with everyone. You have got to make yourself useful and friendly.' Tom King felt his advisers, Katharine Ramsay and Richard Ehrman, 'were very effective and very helpful' and similarly thought that the ability to get on with the civil servants was crucial: 'it depends a lot on the personality of the special adviser ... the ones I have had integrated themselves well into the team.' Some ministers, including Bill Rodgers, were keen to ensure that officials knew that the minister's confidence in an adviser did not detract from his confidence in them.

Many advisers, whilst recognizing the importance of developing a good relationship with the civil service, were clear that their main loyalty was to the minister who appointed them, and whose support they

usually thought was necessary. It was widely felt, therefore, that rather than, 'working with the grain of the civil service', the attribute should be, 'working with the grain of the civil service, but not being absorbed by it.' Nevertheless, advisers such as Brian Abel-Smith and Jack Straw, who, as we have seen, deliberately developed good relations with officials, were also often in receipt of strong ministerial backing and this combination of attributes was appreciated by officials. Patrick Nairne, who thought highly of both, commented:

Special advisers are an effective and successful development in Whitehall when they are able to add to the political sympathy they have with their minister a considerable degree of expertise or experience in the field in which the minister is operating and also an ability to work well, cooperatively, with officials, without prejudice to their commitment to the minister.

Denis Healey suggested that the relationship developed with the civil service was even more important than ministerial support: 'if civil servants think the special adviser is no good, but has a close relationship with the minister, they have to fix him.'

Jim Prior illustrates the fine balance that has to be maintained. He thought that, 'to start with the private office would try to keep the chap out if they can', but once strong ministerial support had been established, 'there was not much difficulty.' We saw earlier how Rob Shepherd felt he benefited from the strong support Prior displayed for him, and according to an official, 'Rob Shepherd got on terms really quite quickly with senior officials and got their trust.' Prior also believed that, up to a point, the adviser, to be effective, had to get on well with officials:

They must work with the civil service, and if they don't work well with the civil service, then they can be frozen out and they can have very little impact. On the other hand, they have got to keep themselves a little bit at arms length from the civil service, otherwise they become just another civil servant and they are not there to perform that duty.

(iii) Prior's comment is similar to one from Tom Baron, and leads to another quality identified by several interviewees, especially ministers, as being important in an effective adviser - toughness and self confidence. Michael Heseltine wanted his advisers to work with the

civil service, 'as long as they were tough enough characters not to get taken over by it.'

At various points it has been shown that there was inevitably a degree of tension in the role of most effective advisers. But it was often those very advisers and/or their ministers who were amongst the keenest for advisers to be open with the civil service about their advice to ministers.

Reference was made in some interviews to various other aspects of resilience. They include: being a self-starter - particularly important if the adviser is not to add to the overload on the minister; possession of, in the words of Darlington, 'a high tolerance of uncertainty', (1976, p.21); and a degree of independence. Several All-rounders, including Peston and Lester, stressed that they were in a position where if they did not think they were getting adequate access, they could threaten to resign. Furthermore, as John Hoskyns emphasized, it can be claimed that effective advisers need to have an independence from the minister that enables them to speak bluntly when necessary.

(iv) Usually such independence is associated with the possession of expertise, and this is the next attribute to be examined. Klein and Lewis's concept of Labour specialist advisers possessing, 'expertise independent of their political role' (p.17) was also applicable in the case of Roger Dyson, one of few academics serving as a Conservative special adviser. He stated, 'if I had any value it was in my academic expertise, where I gave views irrespective of party stance, or in my knowledge of the service, when I was able to feed in information which warned the Secretary of State.' On issues such as industrial relations in the health service, Jenkin viewed Dyson as being 'a real expert' and, 'found him quite invaluable.'

Possession of expertise was vital for those brought in to play a specialist role, and earlier we examined the attitude adopted by officials towards specialist advisers and noted that Boswell highlighted the Tories' usual preference for practitioners over academics. He commented: 'I had the distinction of being part time and of working the rest of the time as a farmer, i.e. as a client of my own ministry.'

This gave me both an insight in to the practical effects of our policies and something of an expert entree to official discussions.'

Some officials, in common with certain advisers and ministers, believed that if advisers did not possess specific expertise they were less likely to have any impact. Examples were cited, in addition to those in the previous sub-section, where advisers had both contacts and knowledge, for example Alistair Ross Gooby with the City and pension fund investment, and this was thought to be useful. It may be more important for advisers to have attributes such as a policy expertise when the minister wishes to introduce radical policies.

Several interviewees saw the possession of expertise as a factor that would engender the respect of officials. John Smith thought an effective adviser would be, as was his adviser Vincent Cable, 'expert enough to be able to evaluate civil service advice in a way that is respected by civil servants - he should be capable of conducting a dialogue.' Some doubts about the universal importance of expertise arise from the experience of Ann Carlton. She worked for Tony Crosland and John Silkin at the DoE and for John Silkin at MAFF and the contrast in her level of expertise is demonstrated by two reports in specialist journals:

She has unparalleled knowledge and experience of local government within the Transport House staff and a real understanding of the grass roots of the Labour Party's local government activity (Local Government Chronicle, 22 November 1974).

Mr Silkin seems to rely on Mrs Carlton's advice to a considerable degree - though when she accompanied him to the Ministry of Agriculture from the Department of the Environment last autumn she knew perhaps as little as he did about farming (Farm Weekly, 4 March 1977).

Carlton admits that initially she knew little about agriculture. When she talked to a junior minister he said he had found something very useful and produced the I Spy Farm Animals Book. Carlton, amused, thought the Minister himself ought to have something better than a junior minister and so, she comments, 'I went out and bought John The Observer Book of Animals.' She believed that her experience as Labour's local government officer was an advantage at the DoE because she knew:

the issues; the local councillors; and the civil servants with whom she worked as adviser to the Local Government Minister. Nevertheless, as indicated in her 1986 Tribune article quoted earlier, Carlton was happier at MAFF than at the DoE. As previously demonstrated, the strength of the relationship with the minister, and the civil servants appreciation of this, was a crucial factor in her effectiveness, which, in turn, according to Terry Dawes, was an important element in the success of John Silkin who was a strong minister.

(v) Various advisers who had previous experience as civil servants thought that was an advantage. They included: Vincent Cable; Howard Davies; Vicky Kidd; Joan Mitchell; Maurice Peston; Adam Ridley; Derek Scott and Maggie Sidgreaves. John Houston benefited from his earlier spell in the cabinet of a European Commissioner.

(vi) The final attribute is particularly important for the younger, non-specialist, advisers if they are to avoid drifting towards the 'pretender' category identified in Figure 5 (Chapter 3) as somebody without political or analytical skills. This is knowledge of the political scene and the ability to predict developments and the likely reaction by the minister, the party, and possibly the public, to proposals. This is variously described as political sensitivity, flair, or nous and its possession often contributed towards the adviser gaining respect from officials. It is not always clear which qualities are most desirable for a political career, nor how far such abilities are innate, or can be learnt. However, political nous should probably be included, along with several of the others discussed in this sub-section, in a list of characteristics of effective politicians. An indication of the ability of various advisers who were perceived as effective is their subsequent rapid political rise. Of the departmental advisers this applied in particular to Margaret Beckett, Arthur Cockfield, Michael Portillo, Jack Straw, and David Young who became Cabinet or Shadow Cabinet Ministers. A similar point is relevant for others, including Tim Boswell, John Cope, and Robert Jackson, who became ministers.

Situational Factors.

Various situational factors, it has been suggested, can be associated with the effectiveness of advisers. However, few clear patterns can be discerned; several advisers, for example, who worked in small departments thought that that was an advantage, but effective advisers were found in departments of all sizes. Nevertheless, four points can be identified.

(i) Advisers often functioned well where there was more than one of them. All the cited examples of All-rounders operated with at least one other adviser. Many who worked with others felt strongly that it was advantageous, and some of those who acted alone believed that was a limitation. Stuart Sexton, for example, 'welcomed' the arrival of an additional adviser, Oliver Letwin, in the DES and both stated they worked closely together on some issues, especially the proposals to introduce vouchers. Having more than one adviser also allowed a minister to appoint a team with a range of skills. This was noticeable in the DHSS team under Labour and the Treasury team since 1979. It was possible, for example, for Nigel Lawson, because he had other advisers with strong party links, to make some interesting appointments of talented people who were not members of the Tory party. They included Howard Davies, perhaps the nearest British equivalent to the typical member of a French cabinet in that he could offer the minister recent experience of the department as well as sole loyalty.

Where there was more than one adviser, opinions sometimes differed as to how far they could be called a team. The three advisers in the Treasury were widely, though not universally, regarded as being a team, not only by themselves but also by others. For example, although serving at different times, both Arthur Cockfield, as Minister of State, and Norman Lamont, as Financial Secretary, thought that the three advisers worked as a team for the group of ministers. Whilst he was at the Treasury Robin Harris thought there was very much a team under Adam Ridley who 'was a good leader'. The advisers did not meet together as a team, but all attended prayer meetings. There were various, and somewhat diverse, opinions about whether the DHSS advisers were a team, but quotations from David Metcalf and Paul Chapman illustrate the middle

of the range views:

There was quite an element of team work, but it was team work through personal good will, not through any structure.

There were some aspects of team work around it and certainly there was a lot of camaraderie and cooperation ... but it didn't function as a formal team in the sense of having regular meetings as a team.

Various qualifications can be made to the statement that advisers work most effectively if they are not alone. Some advisers functioned well on their own. They included, taking one example from each period: Miles Hudson, Roger Liddle, and Edward Bickham. Each was well regarded by ministers and officials alike. Certain advisers, for example Miles Hudson, would not have welcomed the appointment of an additional adviser. Furthermore, building on the analysis of the degree of team work, it can be shown, first that holding a more junior post in a group was sometimes less attractive than being the sole adviser, second that some advisers did not see groups as teams, and third that sometimes problems can exist within groups. The following points are relevant to discussion later about proposed reforms, and are again taken from the two groups of advisers which are clearly identified as the most effective teams - Labour advisers in the DHSS from 1974-9, and the Tories in the Treasury from 1979.

It may be more than coincidence that in the period from 1979 to 1987 there were two 'Advisers to the Chancellor of the Exchequer', which was recognized as the senior post, and six designated as 'Adviser to the Financial Secretary', although in practice usually appointed by, and working to, the Chancellor. Whilst the six were generally effective and left to take up good opportunities, it was perhaps sometimes a less satisfying role. Robin Harris compared his two periods as an adviser: 'In the Treasury I was the junior special adviser ... and my functions were limited and they were propagandist. When I was in the Home Office I was the only special adviser ... I was not a great confidant of Geoffrey Howe, but I was a confidant of Leon Brittan.'

Lynda Rouse similarly worked as adviser to the Financial Secretary and as the only adviser in a different department - Energy, where she was highly regarded by officials. She moved in the opposite direction

from Harris as she went with Nigel Lawson from Energy to the Treasury, in fact taking over Harris's Treasury slot in June 1983. She commented: 'I never felt as happy there as I had in the Department of Energy and didn't really settle in to a role distinct from the other two advisers that made much sense.'

Several aspects of the experience of Labour advisers in the DHSS indicate issues that might have to be resolved if a group of advisers is to work to maximum effectiveness. The two advisers, Paul Chapman and Geoff Alltimes, recruited essentially as personal or research assistants to Brian Abel-Smith, played slightly different roles, but Abel-Smith found it difficult to use them to full advantage and observed, 'they didn't save all that much time, although they tried very hard.' Chapman believed that his workload tended to be in the more marginal areas and, therefore, stated: 'I suspect if I had not been there, what would have happened is that my areas of work simply would not have had been addressed by any special adviser. I don't think it would have had the effect of diluting what they were doing.' He thought a civil servant who had been exposed to some of the policy issues would probably have been more use to Abel-Smith. He considered that although initially he had been well used towards the end it became less obvious that he had a role, and his work had become less interesting because it was very much about issues of presentation. Alltimes followed Chapman but when David Townsend was appointed, following Alltimes's departure, the role had more clearly evolved into one for a separate adviser, not an assistant, covering the social services brief; and Townsend had greater experience prior to his appointment by David Ennals.

However, the role of Tony Lynes demonstrates that even appointing somebody with a well established reputation for subject expertise needs careful planning. There appears to have been some confusion over how far he was an assistant to Abel-Smith, and how far a special adviser with the brief to cover a specialist field. At the end of 1975, for example, Barbara Castle was questioned in the Commons about her advisers. On 4 November she referred to her four advisers, outlined the work of Jack Straw, and described Abel-Smith as a distinguished expert explaining, 'two support him in his work', (Official Report, Vol. 899, cols 205-6). On 9 December, in a Written Answer, the roles were

described a little more fully. Following the account of Abel-Smith's functions, the answer continued: 'He is assisted by Mr Alltimes. Mr Lynes advises on social security questions and attends appropriate meetings held by ministers', (Official Report, Vol. 902, col.144).

Without referring to this in particular, Lynes argued that being a special adviser but also being billed as somebody else's assistant would mean that nobody knew where you stood. It was one thing for a special adviser to have a research assistant, but, he argued,

once you say A is a special adviser, and B is a special adviser, then the implication of that is both A and B are providing advice to ministers; and you can pay one more than the other if you want to, but basically they are fulfilling the same role; and you can divide the job up by subjects, obviously, but what you can't do is to say you are both special advisers but B's advice has to be channelled through A. So if that is what is happening B is not a special adviser, B is just a research assistant ... that wasn't generally happening in my case.

Although, as has been described, Lynes found a very satisfactory role based in the Supplementary Benefits Commission, and his work was valued by ministers and officials, this discussion raises important issues which would need to be addressed if schemes to expand the current number of advisers were adopted. Furthermore, although the Policy Unit is sometimes viewed as a model, there are differences between Number Ten and departments which would make problematic the successful introduction of a group of senior policy advisers working for a departmental minister. It is easier to allocate responsibilities amongst the seven or eight members of the Number Ten Policy Unit who between them are attempting to cover most departments of state.

So, whilst working where there was more than one adviser was a situation that was likely to increase effectiveness, or, at least, satisfaction, problems could be encountered.

(ii) Several advisers thought it was preferable to be appointed when the minister was new to the department - especially when it was an incoming Government and the adviser had been involved in developing manifesto proposals. It was clear too, to officials, that advisers who had been assisting with policy formulation in Opposition, for example

Robbie Gilbert and Rob Shepherd, should be involved as part of the team in drawing up consultative documents and legislation in the fields most important to the new minister. Similarly, in addition to the previously examined views of Jim Prior, Lord Gowrie, the Minister of State at the Department of Employment in 1979, also thought that the advisers, Gilbert and Shepherd, were 'very good' at pushing the 'step-by-step' approach on industrial relations legislation devised in Opposition.

(iii) Michael Heseltine, Tom Baron, and officials all believed that bringing Baron in for just a six month period was very effective. Heseltine argued, 'it is quite urgent to have the six months, and then if they are going to do it, they have got to do it fast.' Another situation which seemed to be effective was for an All-rounder, Anthony Lester, to pull in a specialist, Angela Byre, to work with him for the duration of a specific major project - the preparation of the Sex Discrimination legislation. He suggested that her appointment to assist him with that issue helped to enable him to engage in a wide range of activities and made a 'big difference' to his effectiveness. These are individualistic, not general, points but they could have wider application in any development of the system.

(iv) Some advisers, for example Tim Boswell and Peter Davis, were appointed when the department was facing a major crisis and felt they were particularly welcome. Other advisers thought that during a crisis their contribution was most appreciated. There are two elements to this. First, 'an extra pair of hands' in performing presentational and liaison tasks, especially of a riskier nature and where the boundaries were uncertain. A general thesis being expounded in this study is that advisers provide flexibility in the system and are an immediate way of responding to ministers' needs. The requirements are intensified during a crisis. Second, having somebody close to a minister to act as a 'safety valve' or 'medieval fool', to absorb the minister's frustrations, to speak bluntly to him, or to provide reassurance, is particularly valued during a crisis. We saw that assistance with crisis management was considered important by several advisers in the DHSS, including Mike Hartley-Brewer who was also one who believed the adviser's role was sometimes akin to that of a medieval fool. His minister, David Ennals, agreed with the idea the advisers could have a

psychological role and added, 'they could also criticize my performance in a way that civil servants couldn't.'

Perhaps the best evidence to support the argument that an adviser can play a medieval fool role comes from Douglas Hurd who thought that the adviser was the only person who was likely to be around who could say, when necessary, "'Well, that as an awful speech", or, "you clearly were exasperated by those people and you shouldn't have been because they were trying their best.'" When he was serving as political secretary to the Prime Minister, he used to say similar things to Ted Heath, 'and not many people did and he used always to say, "what a fool you are sir", but nevertheless it was important.' Similarly, as an adviser, Edward Bickham felt that he was in a privileged position so that on rare occasions when Hurd, 'had done something that I thought could have been performed better, I thought it was actually one of my duties to tell him so.' At other times advisers believed it was useful to provide unequivocal support for the minister. According to Maurice Peston,

A lot of the work is almost psychotherapeutic in the sense that what you are trying to do is either tell the minister that his instincts are right, or reassure him in some other way ... ministers like someone to say, 'Yes, you are right', because they are sitting there being bombarded by people telling them, 'Yes, but.'

These points partially overlap with some made when considering the desirability of having a strong relationship with the minister, and the various aspects and characteristics of effectiveness are important elements in the final assessment of the system which can now be made.

CHAPTER TEN: ASSESSMENTS AND PROPOSALS.

The evidence gathered in the preceding chapters will now be used to draw conclusions and make assessments of some of the major findings. Assessments will be attempted of: the overall effectiveness of individual advisers; how far the system has been accepted; the appropriateness of the model set out in Chapter 3; and the impact of the system of advisers on the system of government. In Chapter 3 the analysis moved from an examination of the needs of ministers to the development of a model of a place for advisers. Here the exposition flows in the opposite direction: from the narrower focus, in Section C, of confirming the appropriateness of the model's features, to the broader and much more problematic issue, in Section D, of whether the system of advisers makes a sufficiently effective contribution to the system of government to provide solutions to the various problems identified. Finally the assessments and the model will be used to examine various proposals for reform.

SECTION A: OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF INDIVIDUAL SPECIAL ADVISERS AND CRITICISMS OF THEIR WORK.

The effectiveness of special advisers varies enormously. It was claimed earlier that the diversity in the age and background of special advisers was probably greater than that of any other group of people in Whitehall. It is not surprising, therefore, that their effectiveness should also vary. However, there was often a broad measure of agreement from different actors about the effectiveness of an individual adviser. There were, though, some notable exceptions. For example, Tony Benn claimed that his advisers:

provided eyes and ears for me which greatly strengthened the position of the minister in controlling the department ... [The functions] I asked them to undertake they undertook brilliantly ... I could have done with more of them, or with more MPs ... I think they were underpaid and under-recognized but that wasn't of my doing really ... [Without them] I wouldn't have been able to write a paper [for Cabinet] on nuclear power; I wouldn't have been able to put in alternative papers on the IMF; ... the EMS; I wouldn't have been able to make contact with other ministers; I wouldn't have had the same relations with the Parliamentary Party, the National Executive; public speeches. It was a comprehensive service they provided.

In an article entitled, How Whitehall's Mandarins tamed Labour's 38 Special Advisers, Hugo Young suggested in The Sunday Times 19 September 1976 that one of the few examples of the concept of special advisers being made to work was provided by Benn's advisers and that 'they have achieved quite a lot.' But various respondents held up the experience of Tony Benn's advisers as an example of how not to operate the system of special advisers. Critical comments were volunteered by diverse civil servants, ministers, and advisers alike during general discussion on the effectiveness of the system of advisers. Depending upon one's position, however, this may be taken to indicate either that they were effective in helping the minister in the confrontational attitude he adopted towards the department and in overcoming what he regarded as civil service obstruction to the extent that he did, or that they made it harder for Benn to achieve his goals in the department. This example is particularly interesting because it represents the clearest clash between what were seen to be the two key attributes of effective advisers - gaining the respect of officials and possessing clear ministerial backing. It was widely agreed that the latter was vital for Benn's advisers.

There was naturally some reluctance on the part of ministers to criticize their own advisers but in general ministers were aware of, and sometimes shared, civil service reservations about the effectiveness of certain advisers. One minister admitted he made a bad appointment and in the end asked the appointee to leave, and another reported that his adviser 'got in the hair' of civil servants and was therefore moved out. A few advisers attracted particular scorn from officials. One suggested that the civil service could, 'eat the little baskets for breakfast' and another described one adviser as a 'nothing'. Very occasionally former permanent secretaries or junior ministers had forgotten the existence of a particular adviser which suggests he had not been effective.

There is some evidence that a minister was less likely to reappoint when either the adviser left, or the minister moved departments, if he inherited an adviser from another minister or from the period of Opposition. This does not necessarily mean the adviser was not effective but might indicate that the minister was not particularly keen to have one in the first place.

An analysis of opinions expressed in the interviews suggests that about 20 per cent of advisers could be classified as being ineffective. This does not, of course, mean the remaining ones were universally regarded as effective, nor that they were effective in all their activities.

Despite the generally reasonably high level of effectiveness, many advisers were limited by the ambiguity in the role, and some by the hostility of the civil service and the hostility or indifference of politicians. It was a very demanding position and one which, in a manner similar to some private secretaries, many of the best felt they could only hold for a number of years. Where advisers were considered to be ineffective they were more likely to be the younger political advisers - whose role was sometimes dismissed even by the specialist advisers. Some specialists found being only part time severely limited their impact. A few advisers suggested that their effectiveness was limited because the minister did not properly work out how to use them.

More ministers than not believed themselves to be (and probably were) somewhat more effective in relation to at least some of their tasks when they had special advisers. This finding seems consistent with the comments of Smith from Australia: 'ministers themselves showed no signs of wanting to revert to earlier arrangements. If they had criticisms of ministerial staff, they were more likely to be about other ministers' staff than their own or of the system as a whole. However, this may have indicated acceptance rather a judgment of effectiveness' (1977 p.155).

In this study only a few examples were reported of civil servants thinking that ministers were less effective, or relations worse, because of the presence of advisers. This was even the case in some situations where advisers were felt to be ineffective or unnecessary; in such circumstances the civil servants usually felt they could neutralize the adviser. Perhaps the greatest problems for officials, and sometimes for ministers, came when advisers had their own agenda, different from that of the minister, and insisted on pursuing it in the department or in the party even after the minister had made his lack of support clear. This illustrates the potential dangers of the adviser as protagonist, rather

than analyst. In a few instances it was felt that advisers were disloyal to their ministers.

If advisers could not build the good working relationship with officials that many ministers wished them to have this could reduce their effectiveness. Having resigned as adviser to Denis Healey, Adrian Ham (1976, and 1981) was critical of the influence of officials. Healey claims,

The role of the outside expert in Whitehall is a difficult one; if he cannot get on with the civil service he can do more harm than good. Either he will isolate his Minister from what should be his main source of advice, or he will kick his heels with frustration and become a source of continual friction. The same is true of an outside political adviser; my first had a reciprocated mistrust of all permanent officials, while the second, Derek Scott, did me yeoman service because he could argue with the Treasury without losing its confidence (p.391).

Some officials also believed that advisers took up an excessive amount of the minister's time. Furthermore, advisers sometimes used their privileged position to draw to their minister's attention items that ministers did not have the time and/or inclination to process. The danger of this would be greater with a larger team of advisers. Judith Hart shrewdly observed: 'One of the problems about expert advisers is that they can create problems for you to deal with which weren't really on your desk before, and you think, "Oh God, I wish I didn't know about this." I am sure it is terribly useful for them to do that but it does create rather than resolve overload.'

Difficulties also arose in a few cases where advisers failed to negotiate with adequate care the delicate balance, referred to in Chapter 3, involved in counteracting the uncertainty absorption, but doing so in an open way.

In considering the overall effectiveness of an individual adviser, the key point was his effectiveness in performing the functions required of him by the minister. Furthermore, the importance of a minister in determining the role of his adviser, and in legitimizing his activities, means that the adviser is likely to be effective only to the extent, and in the form, that the minister wishes to have advisory support. This

underlines the main conclusion emerging from this research - enormous variety exists in the system in terms of effectiveness, reasons for appointment, and roles played.

The influence of the minister's wishes is illustrated by one area in which advisers potentially face criticism. There is a very fine line between being ineffective through acting as a protagonist for views which a minister once supported but has come to realize are impracticable, and possibly being the licensed fool, or political conscience, which the minister appointed the adviser to be. In this situation there can be considerable ambiguity for the adviser. It was noted that Barbara Castle stressed the need for, 'a political conscience at the heart of the departmental battle.' In those circumstances Tony Lynes, for example, was meeting his minister's wishes whilst possibly appearing awkward:

I think the extra that one had wasn't so much to the minister - perhaps it ought to have been - as to ideas and policies. There were times when I was pushing policies which might well have embarrassed the minister, and the department was loyally telling me not to ... to some extent you can act as the minister's conscience in the way the civil service can't ... Part of the civil service's job is to make the minister's job as easy as possible - that is not the job of all special advisers.

Similarly, Adam Ridley's comment about having, 'far more licence to say, "are you sure you want to change that policy?"' is relevant. When playing this role an adviser with clear ministerial backing is not being the 'political commissar' or 'party apparatchik' so despised and derided, especially by civil servants.

SECTION B: GROWING ACCEPTANCE AND CYCLICAL PHASES.

Before making a final assessment about the degree of acceptability the system now enjoys, a slightly different way of examining possible changes in how the role is perceived could be developed. It is tentatively suggested that there are various cyclical phases influencing the need for, and role and effectiveness of, special advisers.

(i) When a party comes to power after a period in Opposition it entertains, as described in Chapter 3, some suspicion about how far the civil service will cooperate in implementing party policies. Chapter 4 discussed how such fears were seen, especially by officials, as a reason behind ministers' appointment of advisers. Such suspicion existed in 1964 and 1974 and was a factor. The same was to some extent true in 1970 and 1979 as noted in the article by George Cardona (1981). However, in 1970 the main emphasis was more on changes in the machinery-of- government than the introduction of political secretaries, and in 1979 the undoubted element of suspicion was, as in 1970, counterbalanced to some extent by a desire to behave differently from the previous Labour Administration. This initial suspicion meant, as we saw in the analysis of reasons, that some ministers and people in the party saw a need for advisers. First, they could provide knowledge of the policies, political commitment, and the technical expertise that might be of value to help push through the department policies devised in Opposition. The suggestion that the development of special advisers has coincided with the growth of adversarial politics seems especially relevant here. Second, they could act as people already known to the minister and therefore able to play an aide/confidant role. As John Lyttle observed:

For a newly appointed minister moving into a department where he or she doesn't know anyone at all, the first few months are critical, and it's rather important, I think, psychologically as well as in political ways, that the minister should have someone whom he or she knows well and to whom they can instantly relate. That relationship develops within a department but it certainly isn't there when a minister moves in.

Support for this view comes from various permanent secretaries. George Moseley thought that ministers, 'need them at all stages, but particularly in policy formulation stages and in the early days in the department.' Similarly, Patrick Nairne described how advisers, 'help the minister stand up to the department sometimes, particularly when he or she first arrives and a department feels it a duty to point out some of the difficulties.'

There is a contrary view, perhaps particularly relevant for 1979, that a newly elected government has greater political will and less need for advisers than a mid-term or dying government.

(ii) After ministers had been in post for a while, some came to depend even more on their civil servants whom they saw not to be blocking their policies. Some ministers came to rely less on advisers, especially specialist ones, but at the same time certain people in the party came to think the need for advisers was greater. The picture was described in general by Ian Bancroft who claimed that new ministers came in:

armed with one or two special advisers who had been invaluable to them in Opposition providing ideas and helping to write speeches and so on ... and then ... the ministers tended to discover that there was really quite a useful corpus of knowledge existing in the department itself amongst the regular officials ... over a period of time the special advisers found that their privileged access to the minister became more and more attenuated. This was not the result of vile plots on the part of the permanent secretary or private secretary, it was simply a question of pressure of time.

One specific example of this phenomenon was described earlier - Robert Carr soon found he had less need than he had anticipated to rely on Stephen Abbott. Pollitt discusses how, also in 1970, even in the first hundred days of the Conservative Government, the new junior minister and adviser at the CSD faced similar problems: 'Howell - and probably Schreiber even more - found their former status on machinery questions somewhat eroded. Neither headed a department. Neither had automatic access to Heath (as Armstrong, Trend, Meyjes, Rayner and Jellicoe did). Most important, their former role as a co-ordinating secretariat was naturally assumed by the Civil Service' (1984, p.90).

Commenting in 1969 Sam Brittan observed: 'one can generalise that irregulars are a phenomenon of new governments, ... This timing is a misfortune ... They would be more useful several years later when ministers have become part of the machine and their ideas have dried up, but that is when they least feel the need for outside influences' (p.331).

A similar development has been observed elsewhere. In Australia, Wilenski commented on the role of 'Staffers' appointed under Whitlam's Government: 'while the influence of these staffs tended to fade after the first six months they did provide continued additional support to the exercise of ministerial control' (p.100). A more scathing assessment comes from Canada:

The classic pattern has recurred: lack of expertise, experience and resources compared to departments has led to ministerial staff losing their influence after leading certain ministers into costly mistakes. The outcome is that the senior civil service has been able to stand its ground against private political staff, although there is a manifest continuing unease (Bourgault and Dion, p.164).

The suggestion that events prove that the civil service will implement any government's policy wishes seemed particularly valid under Margaret Thatcher's Government (see, for example, Rose, 1986, p.50; Fry, 1990). This view has been challenged (see, for example, Simmonds, 1988) by people who believe that some government policies were blocked, and that more advisers or politically appointed civil servants are required to maintain the thrust of policies - in the name of democracy. Sometimes it is alleged that both ministers and advisers were defeated by the bureaucracy. Thus Alfred Sherman wrote to The Times declaring: 'In 1979, John Hoskyns and I decided that since the Treasury team and its advisers had been swallowed alive by the Treasury knights, the PM needed an adviser of her own who was strong enough to close his ears to their siren-song' (1 August 1990).

This is a minority opinion. The bulk of the evidence suggests that the Civil Service did not block the Government in the 1980s, even if the perception in 1979 was that they might well do so. Evidence in Top Jobs in Whitehall, collected by an RIPA Working Group (1987), suggested that although the civil service had not been politicized, more civil servants

with 'a can-do' attitude had been promoted, i.e. officials with an enthusiastic attitude towards implementing the Government's policies. Some advocates of reform recognize that opinions are mixed about whether radical policies have been blocked, but claim that this does not invalidate the argument for reforms such as the introduction of cabinets. John Hoskyns, for example, in introducing the Re-skilling Government Seminar in May 1986, referred to three red herrings which tended to get raised during discussions about reform of the machinery-of-government. The second of which,

is that the Government has already been radical to a surprising extent and therefore there is really no need to do anything. I think opinions might differ about how radical the Government really have been. In any case I think that that is probably in spite of the difficulties inherent in the system rather than because of, and I think that that is indeed a bit of a cop-out (IOD, 1986, p.2).

(iii) In mid-term governments tend to run into presentational problems and might drift away from their parties. This increases the need, therefore, for advisers to help with presentation, liaison, and cohesion. Evidence to support this comes from Douglas Hurd (1979); from the expansion of advisers and respondents' different emphases on reasons for appointment after 1981; and from the efforts at greater liaison made by the Policy Unit since 1983.

(iv) The issues of presentation and cohesion become especially important in the run up to an election when advisers have a major role in helping to prepare the manifesto. The role played by advisers in the 1983 and 1987 elections is thought to have influenced Margaret Thatcher to look more favourably upon advisers. We saw (Chapter 8 Section B) how networks are more effective at these times.

The suggestion that the role of advisers might vary at different stages in a government is compatible with the flexibility of the proposed model of the place of special advisers. As noted by Stephen Sherbourne, it is a further reason against having a blue-print for the introduction of special advisers.

Acceptance by Civil Service and Institutionalization.

Despite a number of caveats mentioned earlier there is now greater acceptance of the role of special advisers and this can probably be associated with increased formalization of the role noted in Chapter 7, Section E. On the basis of his long experience Douglas Hurd linked the two points. By the late 1980s he thought the relationship with the department was much more worked out than it had been in earlier periods: 'he [Edward Bickham] is now part of the Home Office machinery and the civil service would be lost without him ... there are things he does which makes their life easier as well as mine.' There is a potential problem in making phase (ii) of the cyclical sequence compatible with the concept of the growing acceptance of advisers: phase (ii) suggests sometimes as ministers become established they begin to see less need for advisers which might in turn reduce their acceptability to officials. However, often relationships build up between ministers and advisers who were not well acquainted at the time of appointment. Furthermore, it may well be that ministers who come to appreciate that the civil service is not obstructing them, will also find that the special adviser's role flourishes, rather than contracts, in the positive atmosphere. The proposition is expressed most clearly by Michael Palliser, whom it is worth quoting at length:

It starts very often - the idea of having a special adviser - from the notion that you need someone to keep an eye on the civil service to make sure they are doing what you want them to by carrying out the policy of the political party in power ... There is a tendency to think of the Foreign Office as having a Foreign Office policy and that you need someone to keep an eye on that and to advise you and tip you off if things aren't being done. The interesting thing to me was how well the special advisers, after an initial period of getting into the swing of it, got on with the rest of the Office ... The reason why, in my view, it always worked extremely well, (any one of those you mentioned [Miles Hudson, Tom McNally, Denis Grennan, David Lipsey, Michael Stewart, and David Stephen] would tell you they had a very happy relationship) is that there is actually a misconception in the general public, but also amongst politicians, about this thing called a Foreign Office foreign policy ... I have seen this over many years, that where you have a Foreign Secretary, of whatever party, who knows what he wants to do and has a policy, that will be carried out very faithfully by the Foreign Office ... One of the reasons why special advisers, after they have been in the Foreign Office for a short while, got on so well with the Office was because they themselves came to realize that

the Office simply wanted to be told what to do and would then advise to the best of its ability on how this could be done ... and that being so there was almost bound to be a perfectly satisfactory relationship with the special advisers.

Whilst many respondents did not see the situation in quite such harmonious terms or see the bureaucracy as being so compliant, nevertheless, the increased formalization in the role of some individual advisers, discussed earlier, could have been accompanied by greater acceptance of their presence. There was a rapid dissipation of suspicion towards advisers such as Jack Straw, Margaret Beckett, and Ann Carlton. Barbara Castle describes this in her Diaries, and Beckett's account was confirmed by officials: 'When I left, the private office and the permanent secretary said they had been apprehensive at the start, but felt it had worked well. They felt it had been helpful to them.' At first, according to one official, the arrival of Ann Carlton at MAFF:

was a bit of a shock to the system ... what do we want a political adviser for? What does she know about linseed oil? It was obviously that kind of reaction to some extent. But she so quickly made herself useful, and was so agreeable really, people found she didn't have horns, and she could help, and in a relatively short space of time she was accepted.

Several reasons emerge to explain the favourable attitude adopted towards certain advisers. They were found to be: acceptable to civil servants because of the way they behaved; useful to civil servants; and not a threat. In describing the Labour advisers from 1974, Darlington in interview observed: 'There was a bit of suspicion at first, but I think the career civil servants rapidly got the measure of us, realized we were no great threat to them and the more enlightened of them found that on the contrary we could be quite useful to them if we established a working relationship.'

Growing acceptance at the level of the system has been described in Chapters 7 and 8. It is perhaps symbolized in the contrast between the favourable comments about advisers made by the FDA to the Treasury and Civil Service Committee in 1986 (Vol.2, p.73) and the attitude they adopted in 1974, when the FDA chairman was quoted by Darlington (p.40) as saying that he feared 'a barrier between us and the minister.' This, in turn, was rather less hostile than the attitude of the Civil and

Public Servants Association (CPSA) to the appointment of John Cope to the DTI in 1972. His arrival was described by William Kendall of the CPSA as, 'pregnant with constitutional implications of a revolutionary kind' (The Times, 9 October 1972, quoted in Rose, 1974).

Some advisers were highly suspicious of the FDA's reported support for an increase in the number of advisers or their inclusion in an enlarged private office. An adviser commented:

Some of us thought that the whole business of the cabinet, and this sudden acceptance of us, was so unreal it wasn't true, and that, in effect, if you had a cabinet with a special adviser in it, actually in the same room, you would be much more under control of the private office, and it was a self-serving civil service ploy in order to incorporate us and nobble us more closely within the system.

The danger of incorporation will be a theme running through this final chapter. It is also possible that some officials support advisers because they are seen as a way of preventing the development of something 'worse'. Furthermore, there were indications that advisers do not yet enjoy the universal confidence of officials, some of whom still refer to the special adviser 'experiment'. The expansion into new departments sometimes met difficulties and certain officials were thought to be continuing to oppose the system (see, for example, Butler, 1986). At least one adviser thought that the civil service was hoping that this current study would produce evidence to show the system to be an aberration.

Nevertheless, for whatever reasons, and they are diverse, advisers do now seem to be widely accepted. The debate in later sections is not between retention or abolition, but between maintenance or expansion.

Various theories were explored to help explain the establishment of a place for advisers in the Whitehall scene. We saw in Chapter 3 that Walter developed a theory to account for the growth of personal advisers to ministers. In his model advisers were viewed as an inevitable development in Western democracies to assist ministers faced by modern bureaucracies. His final sentences claimed: 'Their emergence is a manifestation of the functional role of the intelligentsia in modern politics. They are here to stay' (p.188).

Within the UK, it is possible to see acceptance of the system of special advisers as evidence of the adaptability of the civil service. This is supported in two ways. First, as has been explained, many officials have been increasingly prepared to work with advisers and appreciate the contribution they can make. Second, in various ways, the civil service has responded by filling some of the gaps in the services provided to ministers that have been exposed by the activities of advisers. In particular, the civil service might well have viewed most advisers appointed in the 1980s as posing less of a threat to them than the group of economists who were introduced as advisers in the 1960s partly because there were then relatively few specialists within the ranks of the civil service. Now that the bureaucracy has adapted and greatly expanded its own economic advisory services, the need for economists to be introduced as advisers has declined although it has not vanished.

The adaptability of the civil service could also be linked to a speculative theory about the increasingly favourable attitude officials have adopted towards advisers. There is much debate about the politicization of the bureaucracy, and many would deny it has occurred even if an increasing number of 'can-do' officials have been promoted. Some people see special advisers as an important mechanism for ensuring that the civil service maintains its traditional role. John Patten stated: 'I am a great believer in the British Civil Service remaining a non-political and non-politicized animal, hence QED I am a great believer in the political adviser system.' Similar views were formulated, even before the politicization debate became so intense, by some Labour ministers such as John Smith who, in interview, argued that the advantage of advisers from the civil service perspective was that they, 'lessen any requirement on civil servants to be partisan in a party political way.' This line of argument was further developed by Smith in a recent speech to the RIPA (1991).

Whilst there is little evidence to take the argument further than claiming that civil servants find it convenient to have advisers around, it could be argued that in a climate in which their neutrality is under greater scrutiny than before, this is particularly useful. These issues were touched on by the Treasury and Civil Service Committee in 1990. A

witness from the FDA pointed out the existence of a continuum of political work, some of which had always been regarded as perfectly proper, and some, including writing the party conference speech, which had always been regarded as improper. He continued:

We are concerned that the point on that continuum at which we stand between what is considered acceptable and what is considered not acceptable has been pushed somewhat, over many years past ... in the direction of officials doing rather more of Ministers' political work for them, as opposed to rather less, and we would like to see some check to that drift (1990, p.8).

The Committee did not specifically argue for advisers to do more of the political work but earlier the same witness had stated: 'there is scope for debate as to precisely which duties within Departments are best carried out by political advisers and which duties are best carried out by permanent career civil servants ... I think one could argue that some press office activities might be carried out by political advisers.' (p.7). This remains an issue which has not been resolved.

Considerable room remains for debate about whether advisers can more appropriately be slotted into a partnership, or a conflict, model of the relationship between ministers and the bureaucracy in the UK. It has been suggested, and demonstrated, in this study that the perceptions of ministers adopting either position have often been that they need to appoint advisers. There is somewhat greater consensus about the model of the place that advisers can occupy.

SECTION C: APPROPRIATENESS OF THE MODEL OF THE PLACE AND ROLE OF ADVISERS.

The extent to which the system has been institutionalized is one of the many indications that there is a place and role for special advisers as set out in the model in Chapter 3. Various illustrations of aspects of the model have been included in this study, and the diversity that was implicit in the model has been amply demonstrated. Most features of the model appear to have been substantiated:

- (i) The importance of being the minister's 'own person', 'on the spot', 'in the know', independent of the department, and politically

committed.

(ii) The possession of an informal, flexible, status that assists the adviser in operating along a range of possible lines of communication all of which are vital for the minister in his nodal position, but time-consuming unless delegated. Some cut across uncertain boundaries which potentially might be difficult for others to cross. Certain effective advisers were able to play the informal brokerage role set out in Chapter 3.

(iii) The existence of a wide range of possible places for advisers to occupy and functions for them to perform. In the discussion of functions in Chapter 3, the independence and flexibility in the model were seen to be important and allow advisers to play many different roles. Advisers with the ability might achieve a position where they have some discretion to choose from amongst a large menu of possible roles and places. However, the role of any adviser is also the product of several interacting factors including: the minister's continuing wishes and needs; the capability of the adviser; and the capabilities, attitudes and expectations of others. Time pressures on ministers in fulfilling all the functions set out in Chapter 3 are great. There is always, therefore, plenty for the adviser to do, even if it is a time consuming chore.

(iv) The existence of a variety of ways in which advisers can influence policy (even though their overall impact is limited). These include: bringing in expertise and/or knowledge of, and commitment to, party policies; being in a position to be able to 'sponsor' certain policies; being somebody independent of the department to look at issues and submissions; liaising with under-represented interest groups and so occasionally widening the relevant policy community; and, especially in the case of the Policy Unit, acting occasionally as brokers for a range of policy research centres. Partly on the basis of their role in policy making it is possible to consider the feasibility of developing a model of advisers equivalent to Meltsner's view of American policy analysts as members of a profession which had 'emerged' (1986, p.300) or Walter's description of Australian advisers as a distinct group within the intelligentsia. In the UK, however, numbers are too few, and roles too diverse, for any such analysis to be very conclusive. Furthermore, we saw that Walter's attempt at psycho-analysis of the characteristics of ministerial advisers was inappropriate in the UK where many advisers

were eventually seeking, not shunning, a public role. However, the growth in the use of special advisers is sometimes seen as one of many ways in which social scientists and academic research may be brought into Government (Banting, 1979; Bulmer, 1987). Kavanagh suggests that advisers form part of a group called, 'for want of a better term', 'political entrepreneurs'. It also consists of, 'members of think-tanks, researchers, and others who, holding no formal party position, contribute to the formulation of party policy' (1992, p.18). Departmental special advisers form only one part of this group and, the present research has shown, at least up until 1987, advisers were involved in many activities in addition to policy formulation. Therefore, the wide-ranging but flexible model developed in Chapter 3 remains an appropriate way of encompassing advisers' roles.

(v) The combination of several of the above points to ensure the provision of a valued counter to the inevitable 'uncertainty absorption' that takes place in departments as a result of the minister being surrounded by generalist administrators. (As mentioned in Chapter 3 the concept of uncertainty absorption is being used here very broadly to cover most of the activities civil servants engage in when preparing simplified policy options to put to ministers.) Playing this role inevitably involves the adviser in operating as an 'extra pair of eyes and ears'. In contacts with officials there is only limited scope for advisers to play an antagonistic role of somehow pushing reluctant officials towards acceptance of their minister's proposals.

The contribution of advisers to countering 'uncertainty absorption' is probably greatest where there is most, rather than least, trust between officials and the advisers. It is important, as Norman Warner explained, for advisers and officials to agree as far as possible on the facts - it is no help to a minister to be presented with alternative sets of facts. Furthermore, whilst a certain degree of robustness may be necessary for an adviser to gain access to information, it is through building up trust with officials that advisers are usually most effective at gathering information. Where, as with Roger Dyson, extra information was being collected from outside the department, but covered the management responsibilities of the department, there was scope for considerable conflict.

Advisers and ministers who adopted a conflict model stressed different points from the majority. Thus, Frances Morrell asked:

Why should it be thought to be in the interests of the minister for his special advisers to be closely integrated into the department that he has brought them into, to provide an alternative? ... of course there was tension between special advisers and civil servants. Any effective special advisers create tensions because they're an alternative source of advice. The tensions didn't reduce our effectiveness at all.

Most interviewees felt that on this issue, at least, the more cooperative approach, in line with a partnership model, paid dividends when trying to counter 'uncertainty absorption'. Often advisers' dealings with the department were seen to be to the department's advantage as well. This forms one part of the 'incorporation thesis' which has perhaps best been described by Young and Sloman (1982), commenting on a contribution to their programme No, Minister by Ian Bancroft:

Now, according to Sir Ian Bancroft, the head of the civil service, they are thoroughly approved of: which is perhaps another way of saying that they've been taken on board, absorbed in to the system, house trained, and, as agents of anything like radical change, ever so politely suffocated.

Bancroft:

'... For the most part they've been of considerable benefit to the ministers for whom they were working, and in a curious sort of sideways effect also to the departments in which they were working for those ministers, because they do provide an extra dimension in terms of being able to go to meetings, keep up contacts with the party of the day in a way which no civil servant possible could ... I found them overwhelmingly useful rather than the reverse.'

If we're talking about power, power as between ministers and civil servants, that sounds almost like an epitaph on the political-adviser experiment. At best they're a minor cosmetic on the great granite face of the body politic: good for appearances, even for a politician's self-regard, but not likely to change very much (p.90-1).

In response to that, Jack Straw, one of the advisers who worked with Ian Bancroft, argued:

You can't win on Hugo Young's basis and I wasn't absorbed. Whether we were successful - to an extent I was successful - depended on getting on with people ... What was the point of having a raging argument if you could get what you wanted without the raging argument ... That doesn't mean to say that there weren't meetings when I took a different view from officials. That happened a lot of the time.

This discussion highlights the importance of the arguments at the end of the previous section about advisers fitting into both conflict and partnership models. Clearly the perceptions of ministers about the need for advisers, and of advisers about the most productive ways to function, vary widely. The systems theory used in Chapter 3 to help develop the model was useful in both indicating how factors such as the overload of information might contribute to the need for advisers, and identifying possible locations in which they could operate. However, although advisers have been shown to fulfil a variety of roles within systems theory as set out in Chapter 3, Section 4, the processes within the 'black box' of government can only be properly illuminated if the perceptions of the different actors are also analysed. Thus, for example, many agreed that ministers are overloaded, but only some ministers perceived of advisers as a way of relieving the overload. Acknowledging this duality of looking at the perceptions of actors within the framework of understanding the structural forces has been useful in helping to demonstrate the appropriateness of the flexible model developed in Chapter 3, and will also be important in the final assessments in the next section.

SECTION D: EFFECTIVENESS OF ADVISERS' CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT.

It is clear from this study that there is a place for advisers to occupy and functions for them to fulfil, and that these diverse functions are often performed to the satisfaction of ministers. The qualities of successful advisers have been highlighted. (The study may sometimes appear to be excessively eulogistic because of the necessary attention paid to these points.) Nevertheless, crucial questions remain about the effectiveness of the contribution of the system of special advisers to the system of government. This is much more difficult to determine, and some of the results will appear much less impressive when viewed against the escalating requirements of ministers set out in Chapter 3. These remaining

questions may be grouped in four ways:

- (i) Are advisers necessary in principle?
- (ii) Do advisers constitute a solution to the problems facing ministers?
- (iii) Have advisers caused any harm to the system of government?
- (iv) Has the system of advisers as a whole been effective?

(i) The first group of questions revolve around the issue of whether, if advisers can in practice enhance the effectiveness of some ministers, this demonstrates that they are necessary in principle. There are various ways of assessing this. Some ministers have managed perfectly satisfactorily without advisers - either entirely, or for a long period whilst a new adviser was being arranged. Several ministers who had had an adviser and found him quite useful, nevertheless, did not reappoint. They included Nicholas Edwards and Harold Lever. By contrast Peter Rees moved from being a junior Treasury minister to Minister of State at the Department of Trade, and, having worked with three advisers at the Treasury, thought the ministers at Trade might have been slightly more effective if they had had an adviser. David Ennals exclaimed, 'I'm always surprised when I hear ministers say they don't need special advisers. I think it's an essential part of the structure of government. Obviously choice of the right characters is very important.'

The assessment from Ennals's permanent secretary, Patrick Nairne, was only slightly less positive:

Are special advisers, at the end of the day, a luxury, or are they a necessity created by the growth of government, the great strains and pressures on ministers' requirements of the job? No quick answer to that. I think that any department can serve a minister effectively without special advisers ... and I don't think that special advisers are an absolute essential, but I do think they are not just a luxury. They are an additional accretion to government which has proved helpful, constructive, and in the sort of conditions we have

been talking about they have improved the quality of government, as well as providing a support to ministers. Maybe the support is more social and psychological than actually relieving them of the burden of office too much, but after all, don't we all want social, psychological support in hard times.

One of the reasons why it is difficult to move from saying that advisers are valuable, to claiming that they are essential, is that by the very nature of their flexible role, the system does not collapse if they are not there. John Hunt contrasted their role with that of a private secretary, and said that the adviser's value lay in his being a 'spare resource' with time to go off and spend time thinking about an issue or writing a speech.

Some officials suggested there was no real need for advisers, but given they existed, things were found for them to do, and these could be useful activities. Others went further and said, 'they have been used for various tasks and people are then declaring, "they are the ideal person, close to us."'

A surprising number of activities that an adviser seems the ideal person to perform, can, in practice, be carried out by others. This includes activities that involve crossing uncertain boundaries. Ian Bancroft, for example, claims not to have compromised his 'political virginity' by the liaison activities he carried out with CRD when private secretary. Similarly, questions are raised about whether it has to be a politically committed person to fill the role. It is sometimes argued that the value comes from having an extra, talented, person in the team serving the minister, and that it need not be somebody with a political background. Lynda Rouse gave some credence to this argument by describing the previously referred to early evening meetings with the minister, the private secretary, and the chief information officer. A discussion about the presentation of government policies might cover the political input, the mechanics of getting journalists to understand and say the right thing, and the question of deciding on the right policy, 'but you couldn't really say precisely who was doing what.' Furthermore, she saw the political adviser's role as being, 'another member of the private office, another private secretary.' However she thought there were some political things she did that the civil servants

could not do, and other of her activities that they would not have done.

These issues were examined at length in Chapter 7, and we saw that there could be an advantage in having one person or group to perform the various functions, and that an adviser's mode of operation would be different. These findings can now be emphasized by looking at the combination of factors that come together in the model of the place of the adviser. It is a unique combination. A minister does not enjoy the same degree of flexibility as his adviser and officials do not have the freedom to assist the minister in party political activities. Advisers can play a unique role which complements the work of others, without precisely duplicating the work of others in their own fields. This position was recognized in the Government's 1986 response to the Seventh Report from Treasury and Civil Service Committee where, with reference to advisers, junior ministers, and PPSs, the point was made that, 'the functions of the three are distinct and different' (Cmnd.9841, para 31). The Government response went on to observe, however, that the junior ministers and PPS may provide sufficient political input and some ministers have no advisers. This shows, it could be argued, that advisers have a distinct but not absolutely essential role. The distinct role means that, in the words of one official, 'the political adviser is there as an animal who bestrides officials within the department and the political views of the party.'

We have seen how advisers sometimes, by their activities, or by being the first to respond to an issue, reveal areas where services provided by officials are limited. However, it has been claimed that the civil service itself is sufficiently flexible to fill some of the gaps, and, in the long term fill them more proficiently than do advisers. In 1964 virtually all the 'irregulars' were experts, but there are now many specialists (especially economists) in the civil service, and as Henkel (1991) shows a much greater use of consultants, and most of the advisers by 1987 were playing a political more than specialist role. In several instances, advisers claim to have set up information gathering networks, or presentational arrangements, or parliamentary liaison systems that were eventually taken over by officials. For example, John Houston believed that the work he performed in liaising with MPs, and stressing within the Foreign Office

the importance of this activity, encouraged the Office to create a larger and more effective parliamentary liaison unit to cultivate MPs and explain Foreign Office opinions. The 1988 White Paper from the DTI, DTI - The Department for Enterprise, (Cm. 278) implicitly argued for more secondments on the grounds that the department's officials needed to have the experience and knowledge that the then minister, David Young, brought to the department when he was a special adviser.

The conclusion is that the value of advisers' contributions indicates that they are beneficial, if not essential. If major shifts do occur in the range of activities in which they can play a valuable role, then that is broadly in tune with the flexible model proposed for the role of advisers. As in Australia, the majority of ministers would not now like to be without them, and to the extent that effective ministers produce effective government, the contribution of advisers is helpful. The personal nature of the role means that it would not work if a minister did not want one; whilst they might not in principle, therefore, be absolutely necessary, all ministers should carefully consider whether they would not be better served by appointing at least one adviser.

(ii) The second group of questions involves the extent to which advisers constitute a solution to the problems facing ministers. It is widely felt, and this was a conclusion of Klein and Lewis, that advisers help relieve the symptoms of problems such as overload, but they do not tackle the root causes. Advisers often help ministers perform slightly more functions, or operate a little more effectively, but do not usually make ministers noticeably less overloaded. Some ministers who have made important contributions to the discussion about the role of advisers, including Barbara Castle and Douglas Hurd, believe that advisers can reduce overload. To do so, they need to be top quality, and appreciate the importance of working with the bureaucracy. Starting with a specific example Douglas Hurd went on to develop the general argument:

I am talking to the Home Affairs Committee of the Parliamentary Party this evening. That is a political occasion and I don't want a text, but I need thoughts on the sequence in which I should deal with matters and the kind of points I should make. Edward [Bickham] will do that. That will save me half an hour. As the media multiply, and this

burden of communications increases, which as I said in the [1986, RIPA] lecture is one of the main growths in pressure on government, the more you need people who are not civil servants by trade but who know the subject matter, know what the minister wants to say and can actually help to assemble it for him ... of course, if they are no good, they simply add to the load, so their quality is enormously important ... All the time you want your life simplified, not complicated; the last thing you want is to arbitrate on jurisdictional questions between members of your staff.

Hurd was aware of the danger of adding too many advisers. Some other ministers though, especially Edmund Dell, believed that every adviser generated extra overload on the minister, by, as he told the Re-skilling Government Seminar, involving them in the activities of other departments, or in issues within their own department which could satisfactorily be left to junior ministers (IOD, 1986, p.33-4).

The discussion of overload in Chapter 3 included reference to several possible sources of overload as seen within systems theory. There it was suggested that the provision of extra channel capacity could reduce the overload of demands on the system but increase the overload on the decision maker. Although advisers could be seen as operating in this way, it is important to stress that when advisers provide this extra channel capacity it is often to parts of the political system with which the minister perceives it as desirable for him to have more contact. At other times advisers may help the minister cope with the overload by providing the reassurance that somebody of a like political mind has examined the demands that finally reach the minister after they have been processed by the permanent bureaucracy.

One minor benefit to the system of government from the introduction of advisers in the UK is that it has added a degree of flexibility to the system by allowing some people to be given a title, and/or pay, and/or access to papers, to perform useful, but idiosyncratic, roles. These advisers include Robin Cooke and the successive secretaries to the Government Chief Whip.

The very nature of an adviser's position as the loyal servant of his minister weakens his ability to perform functions such as advancing cohesion in government, or strengthening the role of the party in the government, if the government moves away from the party manifesto.

Benn's Diaries show how these two points may, indeed, be in conflict.

Similarly, whilst advisers may help with effective presentation of the government case, there are zero-sum elements in the extent to which all ministers can appear to shine in the media.

The small number of advisers limits the contribution they can make in areas such as: providing a means by which future politicians can gain valuable experience of how Whitehall functions; enhancing the ability of ministers to carry out their collective role (which again has zero-sum elements); and enabling more long term strategic thinking to take place in government. This point is not necessarily an argument against advisers, but possibly part of a case for additional reforms. The various aspects of this point can be examined by analysing the contributions of the largest group of departmental special advisers - the DHSS team under Labour. The first two items on this list were to some degree achieved by this slightly bigger group of advisers (several of whom, were part time). Jack Straw thinks that having been an adviser is of advantage to a political career, and various examples have already been given of the team's effectiveness on Cabinet briefing. The greatest problems arise in relation to long term thinking. According to Barbara Castle's private secretary, Norman Warner:

If you're measuring effectiveness on the basis of ministerial success rate in getting through their policies, I think the Straw, Abel-Smith, Lynes trio scored pretty well. It's inevitable in the way we run government in this country that we don't actually have a long term strategic view very often. We're very much crisis management - short term, considerations. Now that's not the fault of the special advisers and to lay all those problems at the door of the special advisers is a nonsense because they were not set up to do that. They were set up to help the ministers achieve their political objectives, and most of those political objectives tended to be short term.

This issue is of importance in the final section on suggested reforms because an understanding of the functions of possible new advisory units is required before the proposals can be assessed.

Overall, the significance of the development of special advisers is that it represents the lowest common denominator of what could be achieved, and what was thought desirable. Devolution, for instance,

might tackle some of the root causes of overload on ministers, but it has proved to be less politically acceptable than the development of advisers. At the May 1986 Re-skilling Government Seminar John Hoskyns made similar points and many people commented that the main proposal in the prepared paper was to introduce a cabinet (IOD, 1986). Many additional reforms were supported at the seminar but, significantly, the final report from the Re-skilling Government Group (1987) consisted solely of the plan for the introduction of cabinets which is analysed in the next section. This outcome emphasizes the way advisers, or an extension of the system, are seen as the lowest common denominator.

In his study of ministerial advisers in Australia, Smith suggested that the experiences of the advisers to the Whitlam Government, 'have not resolved any of the question marks that stand also against the work of special advisers in Britain or the PMO in Canada' (p.156). However, he continued, this did not dispose of the forces in Australia or elsewhere that led to the development of advisers. In modern government, he claimed, 'two problems intertwine: the problem of enabling political parties to exercise meaningful control over the institutions of government, and the problem of appreciating and responding to changing social forces about which knowledge is scarce' (p.156). To the extent that these are seen as problems facing British governments, it is perhaps instructive that even the larger groups of advisers used in Australia were deemed to be unsuccessful in dealing with them.

(iii) The third set of questions concern whether any harm has been done to the system of government by the introduction of special advisers. Darlington (1976, Chapter 7) lists six objections that have been made against the system:

- (1) it should not exist - all advice should come from the civil service;
- (2) it involves personal patronage by ministers;
- (3) advisers have too much power and are non-accountable;
- (4) they constitute a security risk;
- (5) they should not be paid from public funds and are overpaid;
- (6) Parliament and the public know too little about the system.

Many of these points were discussed in the analyses of both the reactions of politicians and bureaucrats and the criticisms made of individual advisers' effectiveness. Darlington suggests a case could be made out against all the objections except the final one which is less relevant now than when Darlington wrote, and should be answered by this study. The remaining points can be considered in reverse order.

The level of advisers' pay has been discussed, and is not generally thought to be excessive. It is now widely accepted that they should be paid from public funds. Indeed, making them temporary civil servants perhaps helps reduce the fourth objection. The evidence indicates both that advisers do not pose any security risk, and that the suggestions they have been responsible for embarrassing leaks of Government information are generally unfounded. Some advisers have been criticized on grounds of unaccountability, but flexibility is an inherent feature of their role, and they are answerable to the minister who could terminate their employment at any time and who has to answer questions about their activities in Parliament. The idea that advisers are too powerful is supported by very few people - many more criticize their lack of impact. The second objection also arises inevitably from the nature of their role, but there have not been the criticisms of nepotism made in Britain that have been alleged against a few of the larger number of advisers appointed in Australia (see, for example, R. Smith).

The first objection is perhaps the most substantial, though also the explanation of why many advisers were originally appointed. Various specific points might flow from this line of criticism. One official, developing the argument described in Chapter 3 about the strength of generalist officials within the British civil service, argued that another layer of generalist advisers surrounding the minister would be damaging rather than helpful.

Some people now argue that Margaret Thatcher politicized the civil service and that officials are expected to provide the answers wanted and ignore their traditional duty to provide objective advice. The accuracy of this suggestion is strongly disputed, but some who make it go on to claim that advisers are exacerbating the problem because, by

providing a steer on the minister's thinking, they are, in practice, further reducing the scope for objective analysis. This is referred to by some civil servants as a process of 'dejudgementalising' the service; according to Hennessy (1989) the introduction of economic advisers in 1964 appeared to some Whitehall regulars, 'to be the thin end of a wedge of politicisation which has advanced ever since. One seasoned Treasury man, for example, traces to October 1964 a growing tendency among some career officials to trim their advice to ministerial preferences' (p.189).

This point is strongly made by a few officials, and is additional to criticism that some advisers have had their own agenda. An associated question has also been raised about the role of some advisers, especially in the Policy Unit, in acting as protagonists and brokering the proposals from policy research centres. Perhaps greater attention should be given to analysing, rather than brokering, the ideas so as to meet the criticism that in the 1980s the ways of processing the proposals coming from the think tanks were inadequate (see, for example, Donoghue, 1990).

Other specific complaints include the alleged impact certain advisers had on some appointments and the fear - more about any future expanded system than the current one - that attractive jobs might go to advisers and lessen the appeal of the civil service. This point was made in the RIPA analysis of the secondments scheme in Whitehall. Gosling and Nutting (1990, p.15-6) report an official as saying: "'Bringing in high-flyers can have a demoralizing effect on our own staff, especially where the secondee is used to do things that civil servants could do, and would benefit from doing"'.

However, only a minority of officials saw advisers, overall, as a hindrance to the system of Government.

(iv) The fourth set of questions involve the effectiveness of the system as a whole. This can be assessed in several ways. Opinions about the effectiveness of individual advisers can be collated as was done earlier. Furthermore, many respondents expressed opinions about the system as a whole and these too can be collated but again varied

widely. The view taken about special advisers at the start of a government can influence the later perception of effectiveness. For example, those who in 1974 took 'the invasion of Whitehall' (Sunday Times, 21 April 1974) view could, by 1976, claim, 'How Whitehall's Mandarins tamed Labour's 38 Special Advisers'. (Sunday Times, 19 June 1976). Some of the initial doubts expressed by Tories in 1979 were shown to be inappropriate as advisers proved their worth.

Special advisers were sometimes seen as more influential than backbenchers, PPSs, and even, in a few instances, junior ministers. Theakston (1987) too reported that, 'in interview a permanent secretary recalled a special adviser who, "cut much more ice with the secretary of state" than a parliamentary under-secretary whom he named' (p.99). In Lobbying Government, Charles Miller listed on a scale of 10-1 various categories of people thought to have influence. Special advisers were rated at 3 - the same as PPSs and higher than backbench MPs. Sedgemore (1980) claims advisers who become MPs mostly lose power and influence. Several advisers who have become MPs supported this view. Douglas French thought that backbenchers could make more noise, 'but noise doesn't automatically mean influence', and that in terms of having an impact on decisions made by ministers, such as the content of the Budget, the adviser has more influence than an ordinary backbencher. Michael Portillo commented: 'Was I more influential as a special adviser than as a backbencher? Certainly, yes, no doubt about that; more influential as a special adviser than a PPS? Yes, I think I was, because of the inside knowledge - you don't have it as a PPS.'

Various other authors on British Government, however, have been rather dismissive of the role of special advisers, for example Greenwood and Wilson (1984) suggested that most, 'hitherto seem to have been largely neutralised by the civil service' (p.85). Young and Sloman in their No. Minister programme just quoted called it suffocation.

To some extent this discrepancy might arise from different factors being taken into account. If effectiveness is taken as an aggregate of the perceptions of ministers about the effectiveness of individual advisers in carrying out what the minister wished, then a more favourable conclusion will probably be reached than if the effectiveness

of the system is judged according to its contribution to the system of government. Although this is only a partial explanation, it is an attempt to put in perspective what remains a very diverse range of opinions, even after allowance is made for the fact that people who worked with successful advisers were more likely to see the system as being effective. Further evidence to support this explanation comes from the stress many interviewees gave to the usefulness of advisers rather than to their influence. Although the Treasury and Civil Service Committee concluded in 1986 that, 'At present, Ministers make patchy and unsystematic use of special advisers' (1986, Vol.1, para 5.23), this does not necessarily mean they are not, in general, satisfactorily performing the functions the diverse ministers require from them.

Drawing on the evidence gathered in this study, and analysed in this chapter, it seems appropriate to make a generally positive assessment of the hypothesis expounded in Chapter 1. Special advisers have become sufficiently institutionalized for there to be a recognized place for them in the British system of government, and they can often play a reasonably effective role. The final part of the hypothesis is, as we have seen above, the most contentious and there are quite strong limitations on the degree of effectiveness - particularly when viewed against the needs of the system of government. By the mid 1980s there was a considerable movement in favour of extending the system so as to enhance its effectiveness. These proposals are examined in the final section.

SECTION E: PROPOSALS FOR REFORM.

Summary of Recent Proposals.

In 1986-7 various proposals for reform, and usually for further development, of the system of special advisers came from: The Treasury and Civil Service Committee (Seventh Report, Session 1985-86); the Government Response (Cmnd 9841, 1986); the Top Jobs in Whitehall report produced by an RIPA Working Group (1987); the Re-skilling Government Group (1987); the Fabian Society (Lipsey, 1987). These proposals are given in tabular form in Table 7 with the functions of each proposed unit in relation to activities in a range of fields outlined in Table 8.

TABLE 7: Summary of various proposals for Reform of Special Advisers' System.

	Treasury & Civil Service Select Committee (1986)	Government Response (1986)	Top Jobs in Whitehall - RIPA (1987)	Re-skilling Government Group (1987)	Fabians - (Lipsey, 1987)
Proposed Name	Ministers' Policy Unit		Ministers' expanded Private Office	<u>Cabinet</u>	Most ministers will want political advisers.
Features and Composition	Incorporate and re-inforce the present private office. Special Advisers (SAs); PPS; civil servants	The Government has found the present arrangement satisfactory where functions of the private office, SA, and PPS are organizationally separate.	To consolidate and then expand existing support for ministers: SAs (political background or outside experts) A number of middle ranking civil servants seconded from department.	Blend: traditional private office functions; political appointees - party and constituency work; experts - young high flyers from department and outsiders; analysts	Should be up to individual ministers to decide whether or not to set a formal <u>cabinet</u> . Many ministers will also want to bring in sympathetic outside experts to senior positions in their departments.
Numbers	Should be limited in interests efficiency and containing costs	The Government believes the number of SAs should generally not exceed 1 per department	6-8 plus clerical support.	In addition to private office staff: <u>Grade</u> 1 <u>cabinet</u> head 2 outside experts 4 outside 'politicos' 5 rough diamonds 5 & 7 1 insider	At least 1 or 2 political advisers; sympathetic outsiders; Best if every department had at least 1 outside adviser.
For Whom	Both ministerial heads of department and where appropriate junior ministers	As a general rule only Cabinet ministers (and in exceptional cases other ministers in charge of a department) should need a SA		Experiment for Secretaries of State and junior ministers	

Continued

TABLE 7 Continued.

Head of Unit	<p style="text-align: center;">It would be open to the minister to pick a career official or a senior figure to head the unit</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Would be a Grade 2.</p>				
Experiment	<p>A full experiment in more than 1 department - results reported to select committees.</p>	<p>There would be no constitutional difficulty about an experiment on the lines envisaged by the committee. The Government believes more thought should be given to the functions of a Policy Unit. No central Government initiative but not rule out further evolution.</p>	<p>Best if composition and role of such an office were not laid down centrally but left to develop in a flexible manner according to wishes of ministers.</p>	<p>Balanced experiment in 9 named departments: 4 for Secretaries of State and 5 for Ministers of State in other departments.</p>	<p>A minister can set up what is in all but name a <u>cabinet</u> whatever formal structures may say. Different formulae may suit different ministers. Need to plan in advance otherwise crucial matters swept aside & whatever set up will be retained after 1st 100 days.</p>

TABLE 8: Summary of Functions of Each of the Units in Various Proposals for Reform.

	Treasury & Civil Service Select Committee (1986)	Government Response & view of current functions of special advisers (1986)	Top Jobs in Whitehall - RIPA (1987)	Re-skilling Government Group (1987)	Fabians - (Lipsey 1987)
Functions of unit in relation to activities in the Department	Policy advice. Increase minister's influence in Department	Assisting with departmental policy development - especially political dimensions	<u>Reasons:</u> Increase political weight of the minister in the department <u>Functions:</u> Focus on political and policy issues. Political dimension to advice. Conveying a political impulse of minister to department. Contribute fresh perspectives and approaches.	Advise minister on key problems Policy analysis Long term thinking.	Policy advice. Plus many ministers will want to bring in sympathetic outside experts to senior positions within their department
Party	Keep minister in touch	Repeats Select Committee view "keep him in touch"	Maintain links	Help	Liaison
Cabinet	Strengthen minister's position	Advise	Provide briefing	Briefing	Briefing
Traditional private office	Traditional functions of the private office would be fully preserved		Servicing the minister		Traditional private office functions

Continued

TABLE 8: Continued.

Presentation	Press adviser would be in unit and could be political appointment	Civil servants in press office in same position as other civil servants	Perhaps a ministerial press adviser	Speech writing and press tele-vision liaison
Personal				Confidant Courtier Clown
Overload				
Pressure Groups	Maintain links			(Links to outside research groups)
Co-ordination	Facilitate by linking with other ministers' offices.			Provide informal network

Most of the points on the Tables are self-explanatory but it is worth stressing that the proposals generally include the suggestion that experiments be conducted.

Summary of Opinions Gathered in the Research.

A large number of opinions about reforms to the system of advisers were gathered in the interviews and they varied greatly. Some proposals for reform went further than an increase in the number of special advisers. Tony Benn backed a reform which, as he told the Treasury and Civil Service Committee (1986, Vol.2, p.136) had been suggested earlier in the century by Fred Jowett, and was repeated by the 1977 Expenditure Committee (Vol.1, para.149), that ministers should take a group of backbench MPs into a department with them to perform functions similar to those now performed by advisers. There was some support for Denis Healey's approach in the 1960s of using a few officials in a special unit to advise a minister on the questions to ask to gain greater control over his department. On reflection, Denis Healey thought something like the Programme Evaluation Group (PEG) might be worth ministers trying again, although care would be needed to ensure that first, the right, high calibre, officials were appointed, and second, it did not become a buffer between the minister and the department.

In all there was not so much support for some of the proposals outlined in the Tables as might have been assumed. Some former officials think that a number of people have the idea that because the system of special advisers has not worked then greater numbers are required. The questionnaire finding, discussed in Chapter 8, that comparatively few advisers felt their effectiveness limited by a lack of position within the administrative chain of command, suggests that there is less demand from advisers for a move into a more formal position than might have been expected. Again the comments from Norman Warner on the effective Labour team at DHSS are significant:

a proper position within the civil service chain of command would have been the kiss of death. Their effectiveness was to some extent based on a small amount of mystery about precisely how they operated and the fact that they were external ... There were enough of them for them to be mutually supportive. They were very well integrated with the private office. Both those two factors were fairly important ... If you put them in a formal relationship I would judge that they will become bureaucratized, they will not fulfill what they were meant to do.

Overall about twice as many interviewees supported retention of the system at approximately its current size as advocated an increased number of advisers and a movement into a more formal position probably entailing amalgamation with the private office. It is impossible to be precise about the phrase 'approximately at its current size'; for the Tories who served as advisers in the Treasury, that would mean three, but for others it would mean only one or two. Hostility towards the idea of a cabinet was greatest amongst ministers. Some advisers opposed this idea, as mentioned previously, because they feared it would lead to incorporation; perhaps significantly, proportionately most support for cabinets came from civil servants, and one minister, William Waldegrave, who backed the idea did so to bring special advisers under proper 'managerial discipline'.

There was some support - especially from advisers - for the introduction of more outsiders into executive positions within the civil service and for a civil servant to be allocated to support advisers, in addition to a typist.

Implications of the Assessments.

(i) The first implication of the findings is that the role of advisers may change depending upon changing needs of ministers and the services they expect and receive from civil servants. It is important to consider (especially in the light of the comments about the cyclical phases of the role of advisers and the possible development of adversarial politics) how far changes in the civil service are permanent and how far a different government would have different requirements. There is a widespread view amongst former Labour advisers and ministers that the civil service has been politicized in a Tory direction. Although this claim is widely disputed (see Section D of this chapter),

its importance lies in the impact it might have on the behaviour of future non-Tory ministers. It does seem widely accepted that officials, if not politicized, at least adopt a 'can-do' attitude. Some accept that the same officials who adopt a 'can-do' attitude towards Tory policies might also adopt a 'can-do' attitude to non-Tory policies. Others believe that permanent officials more sympathetic to Labour would have to be promoted. Throughout the period of Tory Governments since 1979 a series of Opposition figures have suggested that more special advisers would be required, sometimes adding that the task would be greater for the incoming ministers than in 1964 or 1974 (see, for example, Silkin, 1982, and 1987; John Cunningham - report in The Independent, 9 January 1989).

Not all changes in ministerial needs, or current changes and proposed reforms in the civil service, would result in a demand for a greater number of special advisers or other partisan support staff for ministers. There are, however, a number of changes that it is claimed have had, or would have, this effect. They include:

- (a) A greater positive commitment by the civil service to achieving goals set out by ministers. In Top Jobs in Whitehall, it was suggested that this had happened; others claim that this can be seen in statements made by the former Cabinet Secretary about the role of civil servants (see, for example, the memorandum submitted by the Head of the Home Civil Service (The Armstrong Memorandum) to the Treasury and Civil Service Committee, 1986, Vol.2, pp.7-9). To the extent that ministers now expect a greater degree of positive commitment from the civil service there are areas such as the presentation and promotion of policies where some civil servants may be unable or unwilling to give the support that ministers require. Certain ministers agree that the civil service should not do this. Therefore there is/could be an expanded role here for advisers and one that, in part, helps to re-establish the uncertain boundary between 'can-do' officials enthusiastic to implement the Government's policies, and the party political arena.
- (b) The greater use of short term contracts for people with specific skills has been proposed. Whilst many such people would not be special advisers, a few could be deployed in a manner similar to that used by Michael Heseltine. Advocates of greater use of outsiders on short term

contracts do not necessarily see this as an alternative to appointing advisers. Thus, for example, William Rodgers (1982, p.160) stated: 'The acceptance of the Special Adviser - one or more than one - as the rule not the exception would be consistent with a career Civil Service characterized by more adventurous recruitment, more movement in-and-out and better specialist training'.

(c) A minister who takes a greater interest in the management of, and policy formulation within, his department might wish to develop a system similar to Denis Healey's PEG; this could be an alternative to, or have implications for, the role of special advisers.

Perhaps the minister who came nearest to emulating Healey's arrangements was David Owen who, as one of the ministerial team in Defence in the 1960s, had been impressed with PEG. In his autobiography (p.263) Owen explained how he built a policy section within the private office. The special advisers were associated with this team. The increasing number of highflying officials who have left Whitehall could constitute a pool of people who could be brought back in as advisers with valuable knowledge about their department. Howard Davies has shown how this potentially delicate role can be successfully played.

(d) Notwithstanding these contentions probably the biggest change in the perceived needs of ministers related to the development of advisers is that Tory ministers have increasingly come to accept that it is useful for them to have advisers. The need is thought to be particularly related to the performance of party political and presentational tasks where it is felt inappropriate to use civil servants. It therefore seems likely that special advisers in some form are here to stay. At the end of 1992 there were about 35 advisers covering virtually all departments (Vacher's, November 1992). The debate is about possible expansion of the system, or its integration into more radical changes.

(ii) The second implication is that there should be no standard blueprint because the needs of ministers vary as does the capacity of departments to meet those needs. If ministers are forced to appoint advisers and find no use for them it will not work. Civil service cooperation with special advisers depends upon their perception of the relationship between advisers and the minister.

(iii) The present system is very flexible; different advisers have been used in very different ways and have been able to carve out valuable roles. This suggests that there might be continuing value in allowing ministers to experiment. However, given the previous point, there could be dangers in conducting experiments rigidly according to pre-conceived blueprints. In particular, the idea from the Re-skilling Government Group that their experiment should also be conducted with some junior ministers, whose Secretaries of State would continue with the ordinary current provision, would probably create unworkable strains. Already, some Secretaries of State have been reported to be uneasy if their adviser appears to be doing too much for junior ministers.

(iv) There is no reason to assume that the system has to expand. The current system could be viewed as a finished product; the vast majority of the post 1981 expansion was in terms of more departments having an adviser, rather than larger teams being formed. The suggestion that the system of special advisers might represent a lowest common denominator is very important. It is certainly not the case that just because one or two advisers in a department have proved to be of benefit, a team of six in a unit such as a cabinet would be three times more beneficial. Indeed, two to three advisers might be the optimum size - because any further increase, especially if accompanied by consequential changes in the structure of the private office, might create dysfunctional tensions. An All-rounder and a Highflier, perhaps with a short term or part time businessman or specialist, may provide the perfect complements to the private office, whereas a larger team would possibly gum it up.

Relating the Model of the Advisers' Place to the Proposed Reforms.

The points developed in the previous paragraph could be said to flow from an acknowledgement of the nature of the model of the advisers' place developed in Chapter 3. That model was conceived following an analysis of various problems that ministers might perceive themselves as facing, despite the existence of traditional sources of support, in fulfilling their many roles. Some of the reasons for wanting to appoint extra people of their own were seen to be almost contradictory. Many commentators stressed the need for ministers to have access to more long term strategic analysis, but often ministers were more acutely aware of

the need for politically knowledgeable and sensitive advice and assistance - especially during immediate crises.

The analysis in Section D of this chapter suggests that the system of special advisers (even where there were effective teams) has not fully addressed some of those problems confronting the system of government that were highlighted in Chapter 3. In particular, there is still thought to be a lack of long term, strategic analysis being conducted by people close to ministers. This has been a major theme in the criticisms made by John Hoskyns (1982, and 1983), and the Re-skilling Government Group he led. Thus one of the features of the cabinets proposed in the Group's final report (1987) was that they should include, 'analysts capable of policy research and development on long-term issues and with live links to outside research bodies' (Re-skilling Government Group, 1987, para.3).

Not all the reform proposals advocated the introduction of cabinets. Both the Treasury and Civil Service Committee (1986) and the RIPA Working Group (1987) explicitly stated they were not using the term because what they were proposing was not based on the French or continental models. The Treasury and Civil Service Committee stated that they wanted to dispose of the word cabinet partly because:

we do not wish what we are to recommend to be seen in any way as a copy or even an adaptation of any of the existing continental systems. What we are proposing is more an expanded private office than a cabinet, in which the traditional functions of the private office would be fully preserved. However, to emphasise that it is also more than the existing private office we propose to call it a Minister's Policy Unit (Vol.1, para. 5.28).

In the RIPA report the considerable differences between the French and British civil services were explored and it was argued that, 'the French experience reveals a number of actual or potential drawbacks which lead us to oppose giving an executive role to ministerial staff units' (para.5.16). The report endorsed the proposal from the Treasury and Civil Service Committee and, as noted in Table 7, advocated an expanded private office and it was claimed that, 'The new arrangement, which would be quite different from the French model, should perhaps not be called a cabinet to avoid any confusion' (para. 5.17).

However, as both proposals involve incorporating political and outside figures into a private office (which, at least in the RIPA report, could be headed by an outside political appointee) they do resemble cabinets in some ways. The Re-skilling Government report observes, 'we use the word "cabinet" to refer to the type of unit variously called, in recent debate, Executive Office, Minister's Policy Unit, expanded or enhanced Private Office' (para.3). Furthermore, the Chairman of the Sub-committee which developed the Treasury and Civil Service Committee Report, Austin Mitchell, said in 1987 about his Report, 'the proposal for ministerial 'cabinets', renamed Minister's Policy Units, was well supported by the evidence' (p.480). This suggests, in practice, it may be difficult to distinguish between the way the proposed reforms might develop, and traditional cabinets.

This current study has demonstrated that special advisers have established a place within the existing system; but several related questions raise doubts about how a cabinet would fit into the system unless other radical changes were made. Theakston (1990, p.48) recently commented: 'Appointing politically-committed outside experts in particular subjects and creating ministerial cabinets have, of course, been staple items in Labour's reform thinking for many years... The party leadership has, however, never properly faced up to difficult questions about exactly what a cabinet system should be and how it should operate.'

A succession of authors have noted that the introduction of cabinets would entail major changes in the British system of government (Rose, 1974, pp.454-5; Klein and Lewis, pp.21-2; Neville-Jones; RIPA, 1987, para.5.15 and 5.16; James, 1992, pp.218-9). Some authors criticize the idea of introducing cabinets in the UK, others are concerned that the drawbacks should at least be acknowledged in any debate. The analysis below draws upon these authors and the findings of this study. Various issues would arise with any introduction of cabinets and might, to varying degrees, also be relevant for the proposals to extend private offices:

(i) Who would head the new unit? If it was headed by a career civil servant this would place advisers under the authority of a career civil servant for the first time. If, however, a political outsider was in command this might damage links with the department. In Australia R. Smith (p.152) suggested that for the ministerial offices (which are somewhat similar to the proposals being made for the UK), 'the least tractable problem was the role of the [departmental] liaison officer.' This current study has shown how effective advisers can occasionally assist the private office and permanent secretary in providing a perfect gear box for a minister with a clear and strong political will to move his department in the direction he wishes to go.

(ii) How would the minister maintain the direct access to the senior departmental officials he currently enjoys? Neville-Jones and others refer to the dangers of a cabinet serving to wall-off ministers from the department, and the department reacting negatively to a large group of political appointees.

(iii) If the cabinets began, as in France, to direct the work of the departments what would be the role of permanent secretaries?

(iv) If, again as on the continent, the cabinets became responsible for inter-departmental liaison, would departments stop performing this valuable function?

(v) How would it be possible, within an enlarged team, to preserve the essential feature of the special adviser system i.e. that the adviser was the minister's 'own person'? A few difficulties within groups were indicated in the research and as soon as an even larger group was created then, inevitably, a hierarchy would emerge and this could mean that, on a miniature scale, all the problems of 'uncertainty absorption' began again as the head of the unit would have to filter out some of the material gathered by the team. It is difficult to imagine a minister having six 'alter egos'. As Douglas Hurd told the RIPA Conference in 1986:

If the chief constraint is a constraint on the Minister's time, it is not removed by increasing the number of voices around him. I remember a wise American journalist warning me against this belief with the illustration of the United States Senator trotting down the long corridors of Congress with his staffers running beside him desperately competing to catch a second or two of the great man's time (p.10).

Klein and Lewis also stressed that the key features of personal loyalty and trust depended on small numbers (p.23).

Given some of these questions, Hoskyns, in interview, suggested that his main concern was that a team of sufficiently senior people be appointed to conduct proper strategic thinking. It would not be absolutely necessary for such a group to go into the private office if this would be counter-productive. The problem then, however, as Dror (1987) has shown, is ensuring that notice is taken of such advice. As Lipsey (1987, pp.25-6) commented:

The problem with the Fulton-style cabinet is this. If it concentrates (as it is supposed to) on the long term, it will no longer be part of the day to day decision-taking process, and it will become detached from ministers, whose time horizon is, necessarily, often short. Thus its policy work, however good, will tend to fall on stony ground. Where Fulton-style policy units have been created they have, on the whole, proved a failure for this reason.

There is clearly much ground still to be debated and in the UK it is the long term strategic thinking that is the least tractable problem, but the presence of an effective group of about three special advisers, at least one of whom finds time for long term thinking, might be the optimum level of personal, political, support for ministers. Indeed, some of the evidence gathered in this study suggests that senior special advisers, because of their ability to contribute from both ends of political-technical spectrum described in Chapter 3, might be well placed to encourage ministers to accept the harsh implications of long term analysis. One of the most recent contributions to the debate comes from James (1992). He claims, 'special advisers have been a success ... 'cabinets' would entail major changes to parts of the machinery, which at present seem to work well and about which ministers have little complaint. The need for political advice seems to be met adequately by special advisers' (pp.218-19). Despite the ambiguities and remaining

problems this study has demonstrated there is a place within the current British system of government for advisers of the right calibre to play an effective role.

Appendix One: The Questionnaire Sent to Special Advisers.

Questionnaire for special Advisers.

- 1) Name:
- 2) Department(s) Dates Full/part time
- 3) Age at which recruited:
- 4) Were you a member of the party in power when recruited? ...
If so, what position(s) did you hold?
- 5) How were you recruited?
- 6) Starting remuneration and source:
- 7) Occupation before becoming special adviser:
- 8) Occupation after being a special adviser:
- 9) Was your experience as a special adviser of benefit in your subsequent career development?
- 10) What was your formal title?
- 11) Did you have a formal job description or terms of reference? ...
If not, were the functions that you were expected to carry out clearly stated at the time of your appointment?
- 12) How many hours a week did you work?
- 13) How close, physically, was your office to that of the minister?

14) Various reasons have been suggested for the appointment of special advisers. In the case of your appointment, what importance do you think was attached by the minister to each of the following:

	Substan- tial	Consid- erable	Moder- ate	Slight	Negligible
a) Relieve the overload of business on ministers					
b) Provide political support within the departments staffed by "neutral" civil servants, to ministers wishing to introduce changes					
c) Fill any gaps in the knowledge or experience of the civil service with experts committed to the policies of the party.					
d) Help ministers carry out a more effective collective role in cabinet.					
e) Prevent ministers drifting away from the party by liaising with the various sections of the party.					
f) Help the ministers with the presentation of their views on departmental and general issues.					
g) Provide new/alternative policy ideas.					
h) Reduce the isolation of ministers by playing an aide/confidant role.					
i) Other - please specify					

15) How frequent was your contact (either face-to-face or by telephone) with:

	Daily	Several times a week	Weekly	Less frequent	Never
a) The cabinet minister					
b) Junior minister(s)					
c) Parliamentary private secretary					
d) The private office					
e) The permanent secretary					
f) Other civil servants					
g) Advisers in the PM's policy unit					
h) Advisers to other ministers					
i) Backbench MPs					
j) Party officials					
k) Members of the CPRS					
l) Members of relevant pressure groups					
m) Academics/other specialists					
n) Government whips					
o) Journalists					
p) Others - please specify					

16) What amount of time did you spend on the following aspects of your work.

	Substa- ntial	Consid- erable	Moder- ate	Slight	Insignif- icant
a) Examining papers on departmental matters going to the minister and briefing him on them.					
b) Preparing reports on policy on departmental matters.					
c) Chasing up the progress on implementing the minister's wishes.					
d) Preparing briefs on non-departmental agenda items for cabinet or cabinet committees.					
e) Attending meetings of all the politicians within the department. Corresponding with party MPs, officials etc./ attending party meetings/ receiving party deputations on behalf of the minister.					
g) Speech writing.					
h) Discussing issues with the minister.					
i) Attending meetings, visits, receiving deputations - other than party ones - with the minister on departmental business.					
j) Attending departmental meetings and receiving deputations - other than party ones - on behalf of the minister.					
k) Advising the minister on (and involvement with) the presentation of departmental policy and the minister's general views.					
l) Other - please specify.					

17) To what extent was your contribution effective in the following aspects of your job:

	Substan- tially	Consider- ably	Modera- tely	Slightly	Insignif- icantly
a) Examining papers on departmental matters going to ministers and briefing ministers on them.					
b) Preparing reports on policy on departmental matters.					
c) Chasing up the progress on implementing the minister's wishes.					
d) Preparing briefs on non-departmental agenda items for cabinet and cabinet committees.					
e) Attending meetings of all the politicians within the department.					
f) Corresponding with party MPs, officials etc. /attending party meetings/ receiving party deputations on behalf of the minister.					
g) Speech writing.					
h) Discussing issues with the minister.					
i) Attending meetings, visits, receiving deputations - other than party ones - with the minister on departmental business					
j) Attending departmental meetings and receiving deputations - other than party ones - on behalf of the minister.					
k) Advising the minister on (and involvement with) the presentation of departmental policy and the minister's general views.					
l) Other - please specify.					

18) To what extent was your effectiveness limited by the following:

	Substan tially	Consider ably	Moderat ely	Slightly	Insig nific antly
a) Inadequate access to the minister.					
b) Inadequate access to official information.					
c) Inadequate active support from the private office.					
d) Inadequate active support from the rest of the civil service.					
e) Inadequate experience of the way the department(s) operated.					
f) The lack of a proper position within the administrative chain of command.					
g) Difficult relations with junior ministers in the department.					
h) Inadequate knowledge of the policy issues.					
i) Inadequate time to carry out all the tasks.					
j) Absence of research staff.					
k) Other - please specify					

19) To which types of information were you not allowed access?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abel-Smith, B., (1980), 'Don't Have a go at Romantic Fiction if you Know Nothing About Sex', Times Higher Education Supplement, 27 June.

Aberbach, J., Putnam, R., and Rockman, B., (1981), Bureaucrats and Politicians in Western Democracies, Harvard University Press, Boston.

Aberbach, J., and Rockman, B., (1988), 'Image IV Revisited: Executive and Political Roles', Governance, Vol.1, No.1, pp 1-25.

Adamson, C., (1968), 'The Role of the Industrial Adviser', Public Administration, Vol. 46, No.2, pp 185-90.

Allen, Sir D., (1967), 'The Department of Economic Affairs', Political Quarterly, Vol. 38, No.4, pp 351-9.

Allen, Sir D., (1977), 'Ministers and their Mandarins', Government and Opposition, Vol. 12, pp 135-49.

Allen, Sir D., (1978), The Stockton Lecture, 19 January.

Armitage Report, (1978), Committee on Political Activities of Civil Servants, Cmnd 7057, HMSO, London.

Armstrong, Lord, (1988), The Civil Service We Deserve, The Phillips and Drew Lecture at the LSE, 10 November, Published in 1989 by Public Finance Foundation, London.

Barnett, J., (1982), Inside the Treasury, Andre Deutsch, London.

Banting, K., (1979), Poverty, Policy and Politics, Macmillan, London.

Beer, S., (1966), Decision and Control, John Wiley, London.

Beloff, M., (1976), Sex Discrimination: The New Law, Butterworth, London.

Benn, T., (1973), 'A Little Light in Dark Corners', The Times, 11 July.

Benn, T., (1980), 'Manifestos and Mandarins', in Policy and Practice: The Experience of Government, RIPA, London.

Benn, T., (1989), Against the Tide: Diaries 1973-76, Hutchinson, London.

Benn, T., (1990), Conflicts of Interest: Diaries 1977-80, Hutchinson, London.

Birch, A., (1964), Representative and Responsible Government, George Allen and Unwin, London.

Blackstone, T., (1979), Ministers, Advisers and Civil Servants, The Gaitskell Memorial Lecture.

- Blackstone, T., (1980) 'The Voices that Drown in the Think-Tank', Times Higher Education Supplement, 15 August.
- Blackstone, T., and Plowden, W., (1988), Inside The Think Tank: Advising the Cabinet 1971-1983, William Heinemann, London.
- Blondel, J., (1985), Government Ministers in the Contemporary World, Sage, London.
- Borins, S., (1988), 'Public Choice: "Yes Minister" Made it Popular, But Does Winning the Nobel Prize Make it True?', Canadian Public Administration, Vol. 31, No.1, pp 12-26.
- Bourgault, J., and Dion, S., (1990), 'Canadian Senior Civil Servants and the Transitions of Government; the Whitehall Model seen from Ottawa', International Review of Administrative Sciences, Vol. 56, No.1, pp 149-69.
- Boyle, Sir E., (1965), 'Who Are the Policy Makers? Minister or Civil Servant? I. Minister', Public Administration, Vol. 43, No.3, pp 251-9.
- Boyson, Sir R., (1990) Step up, or Down a Side Alley, Review of Edwards, T., et.al., The State and Private Education, Times Higher Education Supplement, 18 May.
- Brittan, S., (1964), The Treasury Under the Tories 1951-64, Penguin, Harmondsworth.
- Brittan, S., (1969), 'The Irregulars', in Rose, R., (ed.), Policy Making in Britain, Macmillan, London.
- Brittan, S., (1971), Steering the Economy (Revised Edition), Penguin, Harmondsworth.
- Brown, D., (1986), Civil Servants and Politicians in Canada, Presentation to the University of Strathclyde Politics Department, Glasgow, 7 November.
- Brown, G., (1971) In My Way, Victor Gollancz, London.
- Brown, R.G.S., and Steel, D.R., (1979), The Administrative Process in Britain (Second Edition), Methuen, London.
- Bruce-Gardyne, J., (1986), Ministers and Mandarins, Sigwick and Jackson, London.
- Bruce-Gardyne, J., and Lawson, N., (1976) The Power Game, Macmillan, London.
- Bulmer, M., (1987), 'Governments and Social Science: Patterns of Mutual Influence', in Bulmer, M., (ed.), Social Science Research and Government, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Bulmer, M., (1988), 'Social Science Expertise and Executive Bureaucratic Politics in Britain', Governance, Vol. 1, No.1, pp 26-49.

- Burch, M., (1983), 'Mrs Thatcher's Approach to Leadership in Government: 1979-1983', Parliamentary Affairs, Vol. 36, No.4, pp 398-416.
- Burch, M., (1988), 'The British Cabinet: A Residual Executive', Parliamentary Affairs, Vol. 41, No.1, pp 34-48.
- Burton, I., and Drewry, G., (1988), 'Public Legislation: A Survey of the Sessions 1983/4 and 1984/5', Parliamentary Affairs, Vol. 41, No.1, pp 92-120.
- Butler, C., (1986), 'Special Advisers - A Semi-Secret Circle', Planet, No. 55, pp 13-20.
- Butt, R., (1987), 'The Head of the Matter', The Times, 15 October.
- Callaghan, Lord, (1987), Time and Chance, William Collins, London.
- Callendar, C., (1979), The Role of Women in the Development of the Sex Discrimination Act, 1975, Unpublished Thesis, University of Bristol.
- Campbell, C., (1983), Governments Under Stress: Political Executives and Key Bureaucrats in Washington, London and Ottawa, University of Toronto Press, Toronto.
- Campbell, C., (1987), 'The Political Roles of Senior Government Officials in Advanced Democracies', British Journal of Political Science, Vol. 18, No.2, pp 243-72.
- Campbell, C., and Peters, G., (1988), 'The Politics/Administration Dichotomy: Death or Merely Change?', Governance, Vol. 1, No.1., pp 79-99.
- Campbell, J., (1983), Roy Jenkins: A Biography, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London.
- Cardona, G., (1981), 'One Step Ahead of 'Yes Minister'', The Times, 11 November.
- Carlton, A., (1986), 'The Lessons Labour Can Learn from 'Yes Minister'', Tribune, 19 December.
- Carlton, A., (1988), 'Not Quite Like That', New Socialist, June/July.
- Carlton, A., (1989), 'Where There's a Will', Farming News, 27 January.
- Castle, B., (1973), Mandarin Power, Speech given at Sunningdale, Sunday Times, 10 June.
- Castle, B., (1980), The Castle Diaries. 1974-76, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London.
- Castle, B., (1984), The Castle Diaries. 1964-70, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London.
- Chester, Sir N. (1982), 'The Role of Economic Advisers in Government', in Thirlwall, A., (ed), Keynes as a Policy Adviser, Macmillan, London.

Civil Service Commission, (1979), Annual Report, 1978, Civil Service Commission, Basingstoke.

Cm. 278, (1988), DTI-the Department for Enterprise, HMSO, London.

Cmnd 4506, (1970), The Reorganisation of Central Government, Prime Minister and Minister for the Civil Service, HMSO, London.

Cmnd 5710, (1974), The Regeneration of British Industry, Department of Industry, HMSO, London.

Cmnd 5724, (1974), Equality for Women, Home Office, HMSO, London.

Cmnd 6677, (1976), Report of the Committee of Privy Counsellors on Cabinet Document Security, HMSO, London.

Cmnd 9841, (1986), Government Response to the Seventh Report From the Treasury and Civil Service Committee, HC92, 1985-86, HMSO, London.

Coleman, D., (1991), 'Policy Research - Who Needs It?', Governance, Vol.4, No.4, pp 420-55.

Contemporary Record Symposium, (1990), 'Conservative Party Policy Making, 1965-70', Contemporary Record, Vol. 4, No. 1, pp36-8, No.2, pp34-6.

Crosland, S., (1982), Tony Crosland, Jonathan Cape, London.

Crossman, R., (1972), Inside View, Jonathan Cape, London.

Crossman, R., (1975), The Diaries of a Cabinet Minister, Vol.1., Hamish Hamilton and Jonathan Cape, London.

Crossman, R., (1976), The Diaries of a Cabinet Minister, Vol.2, Hamish Hamilton and Jonathan Cape, London.

Crossman, R., (1977), The Diaries of a Cabinet Minister, Vol.3, Hamish Hamilton and Jonathan Cape, London.

Darlington, R., (1976), Political Advisers in Whitehall, Unpublished report.

Darlington, R., (1978), 'Why There Should be More Special Advisers in Whitehall', The Times, 18 July.

Dell, E., (1979), 'Some Reflections of Cabinet Government by a Former Practitioner', Lecture given at the LSE, 10 May.

Denzin, N., (1978), The Research Act. (Second Edition), McGraw-Hill, New York.

Department of Education and Science, (1979), Progress in Education: A Report on Recent Initiatives, DES, London.

Derlien, H., (1988), 'Repercussions of Government Change on the Career Civil Service in West Germany: The Cases of 1969 and 1972', Governance, Vol.1, No.1, pp 50-78.

- Dexter, L., (1970), Elite and Specialized Interviewing, Northwestern University Press, Evanston.
- Donoughue, Lord, (1987), Prime Minister, Jonathan Cape, London.
- Donoughue, Lord, (1990), Contributions to A Week in Politics: Late Sitting, Channel Four, 8 December.
- Drewry, G., (ed.) (1985), The New Select Committees, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Drewry, G., and Butcher, A., (1988), The Civil Service Today, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.
- Dror, Y., (1987), 'Conclusions', in Plowden, W., (ed.), Advising the Rulers, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.
- Dutheillet de Lamothe, A., (1965), 'Ministerial Cabinets in France', Public Administration, Vol.43, No.4, pp365-81.
- Easton, D., (1965), A Systems Analysis of Political Life, John Wiley, New York.
- Economist, (1989), 'Of Policy and Pedigree', 6 May, pp 27-30.
- Edwards, T., Fulbrook, M., and Whitty, G., (1984), 'The State and the Independent Sector: Policies, ideologies and theories', in Barton, L., and Walker, S., (eds.), Social Crisis and Educational Research, Croom Helm, London.
- Edwards, T., Fitz, J., and Whitty, G., (1989), The State and Private Education: An Evaluation of the Assisted Places Scheme, The Falmer Press, London.
- Egremont, Lord, (1968), Wyndham and Children First, Macmillan, London.
- Expenditure Committee, (1977), Eleventh Report: The Civil Service, HC535, (1976-77), HMSO, London.
- Fabian Society, (1964), The Administrators, Fabian Tract 355, London.
- Finer, S., (1975), Adversary Politics and Electoral Reform, Anthony Wigram, London.
- Fowler, N., (1991), Ministers Decide: A Personal Memoir of the Thatcher Years, Chapmans, London.
- Forward, R., (1977), 'Ministerial Staff under Whitlam and Fraser', Australian Journal of Public Administration, Vol. 36, pp 159-67.
- Fraher, T., (1981), Special Advisers and the Central Policy Review Staff. Two Additional Sources of Ministerial Advice: Expectations and Realisations, Occasional Papers from the Department of Political Studies, Sheffield City Polytechnic, Sheffield.
- Fry, G., (1986). "The British Career Civil Service Under Challenge", Political Studies, Vol. 34, No.4, pp533-55.

Fry, G., (1990), 'Is the Civil Service Too Powerful: The Case Against', Contemporary Record, Vol. 4, No.2, pp 10-12.

Fryer, J., (1989), Profile of Sir Jeffrey Sterling, Broadcast on BBC - The Money Programme, 26 November.

Fulton Report, (1968), The Civil Service, Report of a Committee Under the Chairmanship of Lord Fulton, Cmnd 3638, HMSO, London.

Gosling, R., and Nutley, S., (1990), Bridging the Gap: Secondments Between Government and Business, RIPA, London.

Gray, A., and Jenkins, W., (1985), Administrative Politics in British Government, Wheatsheaf, Brighton.

Greenwood, J., and Wilson, D., (1984), Public Administration in Britain, George Allen and Unwin, London.

Haines, J., (1977), The Politics of Power, Jonathan Cape, London.

Halcrow, M., (1989), Keith Joseph: A Single Mind, Macmillan, London.

Hall, P. Land, H., Parker, R., and Webb, A., (1975), Change, Choice and Conflict in Social Policy, Heinemann Educational Books, London.

Ham, A., (1976), 'Somme Mentality at the Treasury', Interviewed by Michael Walsh, Tribune, 30 July.

Ham, A., (1981), Treasury Rules: Recurrent Themes in British Economic Policy, Quartet Books, London.

Handy, C., (1979), Gods of Management: How They Work, and Why They Will Fail, (Second Edition), Pan Books, London.

Hatfield, M., (1978), The House the Left Built, Gollancz, London.

Headey, B., (1974), British Cabinet Ministers, George Allen and Unwin, London.

Healey, D., (1989), The Time of My Life, Michael Joseph, London.

Heclo, H., (1977), A Government of Strangers: Executive Politics in Washington, The Brookings Institution, Washington D.C.

Heclo, H., and Wildavsky, A., (1981), The Private Government of Public Money, (Second Edition), Macmillan, London.

Henderson, N., (1984), The Private Office, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London.

Henkel, M., (1991) Government. Evaluation and Change, Jessica Kingley Publishers, London.

Hennessy, P., (1986), Cabinet, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.

Hennessy, P., (1989), Whitehall, Secker and Warburg, London.

Hennessy, P., and Hague, Sir D., (1985), How Adolf Hitler Reformed Whitehall, Strathclyde Papers on Government and Politics Number 41, University of Strathclyde.

Heseltine, M., (1987) Where There's a Will, Hutchinson, London.

Holmes, M., (1987), 'Thatcherism, Scope and Limits', Contemporary Record, Vol.1, No.3, pp5-7.

Hood, C., (1983), The Tools of Government, Macmillan, London.

Hoskyns, Sir J., (1982), Westminster and Whitehall: An Outsider's View, Paper presented at the Institute of Fiscal Studies, 12 October.

Howell, D., (1968), Whose Government Works?, Conservative Political Centre.

Huddleston, M., (1988-89), 'Is the SES a Higher Civil Service?', Policy Studies Journal, Vol. 17, No.2, pp 406-19.

Hudson, M., (1976), 'Political Secretaries', The Political Quarterly, Vol.47, No.3, pp297-306.

Hunt, N., (1964), Whitehall and Beyond - Jo Grimond. Enoch Powell. Harold Wilson: three Conversations with Norman Hunt, BBC, London.

Hunt, Lord, (1987), 'The United Kingdom', in Plowden, W., (ed.) Advising the Rulers, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.

Hurd, D., (1979), An End to Promises, William Collins, London.

Hurd, D., (1986), Lecture to the Conference of the Royal Institute of Public Administration, Durham, 19 September.

Institute of Directors, (1986), Re-skilling Government Seminar, Transcript of a Seminar held at IOD, 12 May 1976, IOD, London.

Institute of Directors, (1986a), Re-skilling Government: The Boundaries of the Reform Process. Paper prepared for the second conference on Re-skilling Government, 8 September.

James, S., (1992), British Cabinet Government, Routledge, London.

Jenkins, R., (1971) 'On Being a Minister', The Sunday Times, 17 January.

Jenkins, R., (1991), A Life at the Centre. Macmillan, London.

Johnstone, D., (1975), A Tax Shall Be Charged, Civil Service Studies One, Civil Service Department, HMSO, London.

Jones, G., (1976), 'The Prime Ministers' Secretaries', in Griffith, J., (ed.) From Policy to Administration: Essays in Honour of William H. Robson, George Allen and Unwin, London.

Jones, G., (1978), 'The Prime Ministers' Men', The Whitley Bulletin, April 1978, No.4, pp 66-8.

- Jones, G., (1987), 'The United Kingdom', in Plowden, W., (ed.) Advising the Rulers, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.
- Jordan, G., (1990), 'Policy Community Realism versus "New" Institutional Ambiguity', Political Studies, Vol. 38, No.3, pp470-84.
- Jordan, A.G., and Richardson, J.J., (1987) British Politics and the Policy Process, Allen and Unwin, London.
- Kavanagh, D., (1992), 'Changes in the Political Class and its Culture', Parliamentary Affairs, Vol. 45, No.1, pp18-32.
- Kavanagh, D., (1987), Thatcherism and British Politics: The End of Consensus?, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- King, A., (1975), 'Overload: Problems of Governing in the 1970's', Political Studies, Vol. 23, Nos. 2-3, pp 284-96.
- Klein, R., and Lewis, J., (1977), 'Advice and Dissent in British Government: The Case of the Special Advisers', Policy and Politics, Vol. 6, No.1, pp 1-25.
- Knight, C., (1990), The Making of Tory Education Policy in Post-War Britain 1950-1986, The Falmer Press, London.
- Kogan, D., and Kogan, M., (1982), The Battle for the Labour Party, Fontana, London.
- Kogan, M., (1974), 'Social Policy and Public Organisational Values', Journal of Social Policy, Vol. 3, No.2, pp 97-111.
- Kogan, M., (1975), Educational Policy Making: A Study of Interest Groups and Parliament, George Allen and Unwin, London.
- Kogan, M., (1987), 'The DES and Whitehall', Higher Education Quarterly, Vol. 41, No. 3, pp. 225-40.
- Kogan, M., (with Boyle, Sir E. and Crosland, A.), (1971), The Politics of Education, Penguin, Harmondsworth.
- Kogan, M., and Henkel, M., (1983), Government and Research: The Rothschild Experiment in a Government Department, Heinemann Educational Books, London.
- Kogan, M., and Van Der Eyken, W., (1973), County Hall: The Role of the Chief Education Officer, Penguin, Harmondsworth.
- Labour Party, (1972), Labour's Programme for Britain. 1972., Labour Party, London.
- Labour Party, (1973), Labour's Programme for Britain. 1973, Labour Party, London.
- Lane, L., (1987), 'Public Service in Crisis and Transition', The Bureaucrat, Vol. 16, No.3, pp 5-10.

- Lipsey, D., (1980), 'Who's in Charge in Whitehall?', New Society, 24 April.
- Lipsey, D., (1982), Towards Ministerial effectiveness, Paper presented to the RIPA Conference, 10-11 September.
- Lipsey, D., (ed.), (1982a), Making Government Work, Fabian Tract 480, London.
- Lipsey, D., (1987), 'Coming in: Labour and the Civil Service', in Pimlott, B., (ed.), Labour's First Hundred Days, The Fabian Society, London.
- Lynes, T., (1972), The Penguin Guide to Supplementary Benefits, Penguin, Harmondsworth, London.
- Lynn, J., and Jay, A., (eds), 1984, The Complete Yes Minister: The Diaries of a Cabinet Minister by the Right Hon. James Hacker M.P., BBC, London.
- Lynn, J., and Jay, A., (eds) 1986, Yes Prime Minister: The Diaries of the Right Hon. James Hacker. Vol.1, BBC, London.
- Lynn, J., and Jay, A., (eds), 1987, Yes Prime Minister: The Diaries of the Right Hon. James Hacker. Vol.2, BBC, London.
- MacDonald, F., (1980), 'The Minister and the Mandarins', Policy Options, Vol. 1, No.3, pp29-31.
- MacDougall, Sir Donald, (1987), Don and Mandarin, John Murray, London.
- Macmillan, Sir Harold, (1969), Tides of Fortune, Macmillan, London.
- March, J., and Simon, H., (1958), Organizations, Wiley, New York.
- Meehans, E., (1985), Woman's Rights at Work: Campaigns and Policy in Britain and the United States, Macmillan, London.
- Meltsner, A., (1986), Policy Analysts in the Bureaucracy. (Second Edition), University of California Press, Berkley.
- Meltsner, A., (1988), review of Walter, J., The Ministers' Minds: Personal Advisers in National Government, Journal of Public Policy, Vol. 8, Part 2, pp 227-8.
- Metcalf, L., and Richards, S., (1984), 'The Impact of the Efficiency Strategy: Political Clout or Cultural Change', Public Administration, Vol. 62, No.4, pp 439-54.
- Miller, C., (1987) Lobbying Government, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.
- Mitchell, A., (1987), 'Inside the Commons Treasury Committee, The Report on the Civil Service', Parliamentary Affairs, Vol. 40, No.4, pp. 468-80.
- Mitchell, J., (1978), 'Special Advisers: A Personal View', Public Administration, Vol. 56, No.1, pp 87-98.

- Moyser, G., and Wagstaffe, M., (eds), (1987), Research Methods for Elite Studies, Allen and Unwin, London.
- Neild, R., (1986), 'Kaldor of Kings', Guardian, 2 October.
- Neville-Jones, P., (1983), 'The Continental Cabinet System: The Effects of Transposing it to the United Kingdom', Political Quarterly, Vol. 54, No.3, pp 232-42.
- Niskanen, W., (1971), Bureaucracy and Representative Government, Aldive, Chicago.
- Norton, P., (1981), The Commons in Perspective, Martin Robertson, Oxford.
- Orwell, G., (1962), The Road to Wigan Pier, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth.
- Opie, R., (1968), 'The Making of Economic Policy', in Thomas, H., (ed.), Crisis in the Civil Service, Anthony Blond, London.
- Owen, D., (1991), Time to Declare, Michael Joseph, London.
- Parmoor, Lord, (1936), A Retrospect, William Heinemann, London.
- Pannick, D., (1985), Sex Discrimination Law, Clarendon Press, Oxford.
- Peele, G., (ed), Newsletter of the Study Group on the Structure and Organization of Government, Vol.1, No.1.
- Peston, M., (1980), 'A Professional on a Political Tightrope', Times Higher Education Supplement, 11 July.
- Pimlott, B., (ed), (1987), 'Labour's First Hundred Days, The Fabian Society, London.
- Pimlott, B., (1985), Hugh Dalton, Jonathan Cape, London.
- Playfair, Sir E., (1965), 'Who Are the Policy Makers? Minister or Civil Servant? II. Civil Servant', Public Administration, Vol. 43, No.3, pp260-8.
- Pliatzky, Sir L., (1981), Getting and Spending: Public Expenditure. Employment and Inflation, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.
- Pliatzky, Sir L., (1989), The Treasury Under the Tories, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.
- Plowden, W., (1985), 'What Prospects for the Civil Service', Royal Society of Arts Journal, Vol.cxxxiii, No.5348, July, pp526-43 (A Paper Given to the Society on 6 February 1985).
- Pollitt, C., (1980), 'Rationalizing the Machinery of Government: The Conservatives, 1970-74', Political Studies, Vol.28, No.1, pp 84-98.
- Pollitt, C., (1984), Manipulating the Machine: Changing the Pattern of Ministerial Departments 1960-83, George Allen and Unwin, London.

- Pridham, G., (1987), 'Interviewing party political elites in Italy', in Moyser, G., and Wagstaffe, M., (eds.), Research Methods for Elite Studies, Allen and Unwin, London.
- Prior, J., (1986), A Balance of Power, Hamish Hamilton, London.
- Rendel, M., (1978), 'Legislating for Equal Pay and Opportunity for Women in Britain', Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society, Vol.4, No.3, pp897-908.
- Re-skilling Government Group, (1987), Re-skilling Government: Proposals for the Experimental Introduction of Departmental Cabinets, Re-skilling Government Group, London.
- Richardson, J., J., and Jordon, A., G., (1979), Governing Under Pressure, Martin Robertson, Oxford.
- Ridley, F., (1983), 'The British Civil Service and Politics: Principles in Question and Traditions in Flux', Parliamentary Affairs, Vol. 36, No.1, pp 28-48.
- Rhodes, R., (1991), 'Theory and Methods in British Public Administration: the View From Political Science', Political Studies, Vol. 39, No.3, pp533-54.
- Rodgers, W., (1980), 'Westminster and Whitehall: Adapting to Change', in Policy and Practice: The Experience of Government, RIPA, London.
- Rodgers, W., (1982), The Politics of Change, Secker and Warburg, London.
- Roll, Lord, (1985), Crowded Hours, Faber, London.
- Rose, R., (ed), (1969), Policy Making in Britain, Macmillan, London.
- Rose, R., (1974), The Problem of Party Government, Macmillan, London.
- Rose, R., (1986), A House Divided: Political Administration in Britain Today, University of Strathclyde Studies in Public Policy Number 158, Glasgow.
- Rose, R., (1987), Ministers and Ministries: A Functional Analysis, Clarendon Press, Oxford.
- Rothschild, Lord, (1977), Meditations of a Broomstick, Collins, London.
- Royal Commission on Australian Government Administration, (1976), The Coombes Commission, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra.
- Royal Institute of Public Administration Working Group, (1977), Top Jobs in Whitehall, RIPA, London.
- Salter, B., and Tapper, T., (1981), Education, Politics and the State: The Theory and Practice of Educational Change, Grant McIntyre, London.
- Salter, B., and Tapper, T., (1985), Power and Policy in Education: the Case of Independent Schooling, The Falmer Press, London.

Schmidt, R.; Tanner, L., and Turek-Brezina, J., (1987), 'Next Generation of Leaders Unhappy too', The Bureaucrat, Fall, pp 11-15.

'Scrutator', (1987), 'The Men with the Ears of Ministers', Business Magazine, September, p 22.

Searls, E., (1987), 'French Ministerial Cabinets', Appendix in, RIPA Working Group, Top Jobs in Whitehall, RIPA, London.

Sedgemore, B., (1980), The Secret Constitution: An Analysis of the Political Establishment, Hodder and Stroughton, London.

Seldon, A., (1986), The Riddle of the Voucher: An Inquiry in to the Obstacles to Introducing Choice and Competition in State Schools, Hobart Paperback 21, Institute of Economic Affairs, London.

Select Committee on the Anti-Discrimination (No.2) Bill, (1973), Special Report, HC333, (1972-73) HMSO, London.

Shepherd, R., (1983), 'Ministers and Special Advisers: Tilting the balance Away from Cabinet', Public Money, December 1983, pp 33-5.

Shepherd, R., (1986), Politics and the Civil Service: Is the Age of Neutrality Over?, Lecture at the Conference of the Royal Institute of Public Administration, Durham, 20 September.

Shore, P., (1986), Entitled to Know, Macgibbon and Kee.

Silkin, J., (1982), Silkin Warns Thatcher on Top Jobs Fiddle, Press Release, 1 November.

Silkin, J., (1987), Changing Battlefields: The Challenge to the Labour Party, Hamish Hamilton, London.

Simmonds, M., (1988), A Change of Government, Adam Smith Institute, London.

Simon, H., (1976), Administrative Behavior (Third edition), The Free Press, New York.

Smith, B., (1988), Bureaucracy and Political Power, Wheatsheaf, Brighton.

Smith, J., (1991), Speech to the Royal Institute of Public Administration, 8 May.

Smith, M., (1989), 'Changing Agendas and Policy Communities: Agricultural Issues in the 1930s and the 1980s', Public Administration, Vol. 67, No.2, pp 149-65.

Smith, M., (1990), The Politics of Agricultural Support in Britain, Dartmouth, Aldershot.

Smith, R., (1977), 'Ministerial Advisers: The Experience of the Whitlam Government', Australian Journal of Public Administration, Vol. 36, pp 133-58.

- Straw, J., (1978), Power in Government - A Chinese Puzzle, University of Leeds Convocation, 1 July.
- Sundquist, J., (1978), 'Research Brokerage: The Weak Link'. in Lynn, L., Jr., (ed.) Knowledge and Policy: the Uncertain Connection, National Academy of Sciences, Washington D.C.
- Thain, C., (1985), 'The Education of the Treasury: The Medium Term Financial Strategy, 1980-84', Public Administration, Vol. 63, No.3, pp 261-85.
- Theakston, K., (1986), 'Politicising the Higher Civil Service', Teaching Public Administration, Vol. VI, No.1.
- Theakston, K., (1987), Junior Ministers, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.
- Theakston, K., (1988), 'Saboteurs or Scapegoats: The Civil Service and Labour Governments', Contemporary Record, Vol. 2, No.2, pp11-14.
- Theakston, K., (1990) 'Labour, Thatcher, and the Future of the Civil Service', Public Policy and Administration, Vol. 5, No.1, pp 44-57.
- Thirwall, A., (1987), Nicholas Kaldor. Grand Masters in Economics, Wheatsheaf, Brighton.
- Thomas, I., (1987), 'Giving Direction to the Welsh Office', in Rose, R., Ministers and Ministries: A Functional Analysis, Clarendon Press, Oxford.
- Treasury and Civil Service Committee, (1986), Seventh Report: Civil Servants and Ministers: Duties and Responsibilities, HC92, (1985-86), HMSO, London.
- Treasury and Civil Service Committee, (1990), Fifth Report: The Civil Service Pay and Conditions of Service Code, HC260, (1989-90), HMSO, London.
- Turner, J., (1980), Lloyd George's Secretariat, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Uhr, J., (1987), 'Rethinking the Senior Executive Service: Executive Development as Political Education', Australian Journal of Public Administration, Vol. 46, No.1, pp 20-36.
- Vacher's, (1987), Vacher's Parliamentary Companion, No. 1045, February, Vachers Publications, Berkhamsted.
- Vacher's, (1992), Vacher's Parliamentary Companion, No.1068, November, Vachers Publications, Berkhamsted.
- Walter, J., (1986), The Ministers' Minders: Personal Advisers in National Government, Oxford University Press, Melbourne.
- Weber, M., (1978) Economy and Society, edited by Roth, G., and Wittich, C., University of California Press, Berkley.

Westerlund, L., (1990), Political Secretaries in Finnish Departments: The Informal Coordination Mechanism of the Cabinet. (English Summary in De Politiska Sekreterarna i Finland), Abo Academy Press, Abo.

Whitney, R., (1978), 'A Case for Leaving Special Advisers as They Are', The Times, 3 August.

Wickham-Jones, M., (1990), 'Is the Civil Service Too Powerful - The Case For', Contemporary Record, Vol. 4, No.2, pp 9-10.

Wilenski, P., (1986), Public Power and Public Administration, Hale and Iremonger/RAIPA.

Willetts, D., (1987), 'The Role of the Prime Minister's Policy Unit', Public Administration, Vol. 65, No.4, pp 443-54.

Williams, M., (1975), Inside Number 10, (Revised Edition), New English Library, London.

Williams, P., (1980), 'Interviewing Politicians: The Life of Hugh Gaitskell', Political Quarterly, Vol.51, No.3, pp 303-16.

Williams, S., (1980), 'The Decision Makers', in Policy and Practice: The Experience of Government, RIPA, London.

Williams, W., (1988), Washington, Westminster and Whitehall, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Wilson, Sir H., (1976), The Governance of Britain, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, and Michael Joseph, London.

Wood, D., (1974), 'The Ministers' Men Invade Whitehall', The Times, 10 June.

Young, H., (1974), 'The Invasion of Whitehall', The Sunday Times, 21 April.

Young, H., (1976), 'How Whitehall's Mandarins tamed Labour's 38 Special Advisers', The Sunday Times, 19 September.

Young, H., (1990), One of Us (Revised edition), Pan Books, London.

Young, H., and Sloman, A., (1982), No. Minister: An Inquiry in to the Civil Service, BBC, London.

Young, H., and Sloman, A., (1984), But. Chancellor: An Inquiry into the Treasury, BBC, London.

Young, K., and Mills, L., (1980), Public Policy Research: A Review of Qualitative Methods, SSRC, London.

Young, Lord, (1990), The Enterprise Years: A Businessman in the Cabinet, Headline, London.