

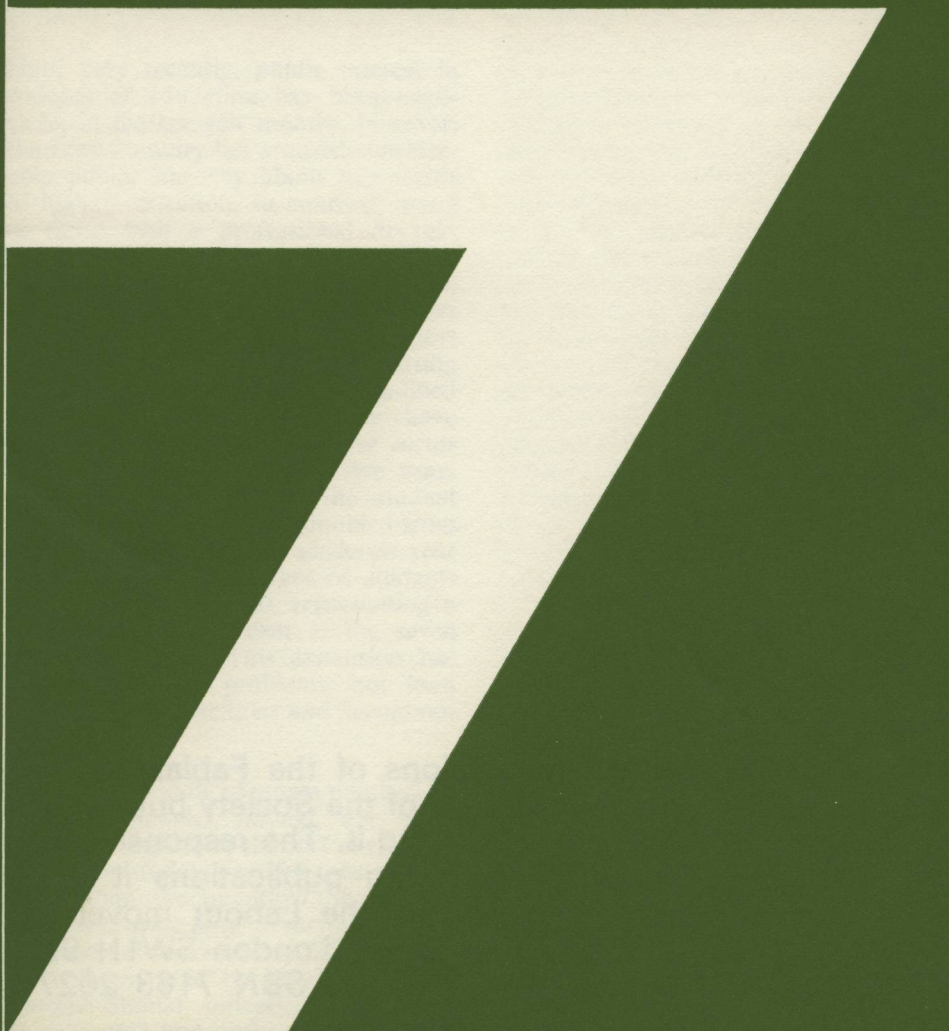
# our children's teachers

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Isla Calder

young fabian pamphlet 27 30p

## into the seventies



# young fabian pamphlet 27

## our children's teachers

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# 1. introduction

“In the light of the review currently being undertaken by the area training organisation and of the evidence published by the former select committee on education and science, to enquire into the present arrangements for the education, training and probation of teachers in England and Wales.” Such were the terms of reference given to the James Commission on Teacher Education when it was set up in December 1970.

Until very recently, public interest in colleges of education has been negligible. In the last few months, however, the James inquiry has aroused considerable public curiosity about this sector of higher education. In contrast, many of those with a professional or personal interest have been concerned for a long time about the organisation, curriculum and character of teacher training. Following the Robbins report in 1963, and because of the increasing demand for more and more qualified teachers, colleges of education have expanded faster than any other sector of higher education. In the five years between 1961 and 1966, the student population of the colleges doubled from 36,500 to 73,300. By the academic year 1967-68, the total number of students in colleges was 94,800, representing a growth of 159 per cent in the seven years from 1961. This expansion has obviously caused problems, not least concerned with facilities and accommodation.

Is the provision of adequate numbers of teachers enough? Should not more attention be given to the sort of training which the students receive, the quality rather than the quantity? Should the colleges provide large in service training programmes for teachers? What should the colleges' rôle be in education research? Should colleges of education be converted into multi-purpose liberal

arts colleges? Have the standards in the colleges reached the point when all entrants to teaching should have taken at least a pass degree in education? The present government is obviously anxious about some of the issues and in this light decided to set up an inquiry.

# 2. concept of teachers and teaching

“First the teacher must know his subject; he must know something of academic discipline, he must have some acquaintance with real scholarship, for you cannot teach any subject successfully unless you know more than you have to teach. Secondly, he must know something of children and how they develop . . . Thirdly, he must possess technical efficiency, knowledge of the methods used in teaching and skill in applying them. Fourthly, he must know something of the educational system and the part it plays in the modern world. And fifthly and lastly, he must have that indefinable but recognisable combination of characteristics known as ‘personality.’ He must have faith, enthusiasm, the power to encourage and stimulate.” Though written more than a decade ago by Sir Ronald Gould, this evaluation is still valid. Consider, however, the great number of educational innovations which have taken place in the last ten or 15 years. The newly qualified teacher of today should be competent to cope with team teaching, family grouping, comprehensive schools, programmed learning, new maths, middle schools and the teaching of English to immigrant children.

## basic course

The concept of teacher training which still predominates is that of a basic course, for which a student attends a college of education, before beginning his teaching career. The basic course entails the assimilation of a wide range of inter-related educational ideas. Students also study one, or possibly two, subjects intended to enhance personal development. The course is provided for all students, irrespective of the age group which they eventually intend to teach. The emphasis placed upon certain parts of the course is modified, according to the age range in which the student

is specialising; nursery/infant, infant/junior, junior/secondary or secondary. Having completed the course of initial training, it is entirely through the individual’s personal interest, allied to the in service education facilities provided by the local education authorities and the local higher education institutions, whether or not any further training is undertaken.

The advocates of the existing form of the basic course maintain that a syllabus possessing a common core for both prospective primary and secondary school teachers reduces the differences in the community status between these two professional groups. As W. O. Lester Smith points out in *Education* (Penguin 1969), this dichotomy arose originally through “an inheritance of two divergent traditions about the education of teachers, the public school and the older grammar school tradition, which assumed that teachers were born and not made and the elementary school tradition, which assumed that they should be trained and not educated.” This tradition is still noticeable in certain spheres of the educational world. It is only recently that the government has realised that an honours degree does not automatically presuppose an innate ability to teach. It is now widely acknowledged that familiarity with a subject is not the prime, let alone the only, attribute of a good teacher.

## entry to the teaching profession

There are two main types of teacher education available for those wishing to become teachers. University students may study for a further year after graduating and get a certificate of education; non-graduates attend a three year course in a college of education. Until 1970, graduates could teach in

both primary and secondary schools without having a post-graduate certificate of education (PGCE), which is taken either in the university's department of education or in a training college. Now, however, following a Department of Education and Science circular (18/69), no new graduate has been allowed to start teaching in primary schools since 1970 nor will they be accepted in secondary schools after 1973, unless they have obtained a certificate of education. The irony of the present situation is that a graduate may teach in a secondary school without a PGCE, but if he takes the course and fails the examination, he may not teach without special dispensation from the Secretary of State for Education and Science,

Though a large proportion of graduates enter the teaching profession, most of our new teachers have qualified after a three year college of education course. The first of these institutions (which until the Robbins report were called teacher training colleges) were set up in the nineteenth century. Prior to this, there was virtually no training at all. In the earliest part of the last century, the nearest equivalent to training was the monitorial system, whereby the master taught the older children who in turn taught the younger ones. Though highly unsatisfactory by modern standards, the system was cheap and meant that education of a sort was available to a larger number of children. In 1846, an apprenticeship scheme was introduced. Pupil teachers, who were selected at about the age of 13, were apprenticed to the schools for five years. At the end of this time they were examined by school inspectors. Eventually, training colleges were set up, where such apprentices could go to be trained and examined.

At the beginning, all the colleges were run by voluntary bodies, mainly religious ones. In 1902, the education act

empowered local authorities to provide training facilities for prospective teachers. Nowadays, local education authorities are responsible for most of the colleges; of the present 163 colleges of education in England and Wales, 113 are administered by the LEA's; the remaining 50 are run by voluntary bodies. Colleges have always been small. In 1958, 98 of the 140 existing colleges had less than 250 students. By 1962, the number of colleges with under 250 students had dropped to 46, and by 1970 to 20. There are now about 30 colleges with over 750 students each.

Perhaps the most significant changes in teacher training resulted from the report of the McNair committee, which was set up "to consider the supply, recruitment and training of teachers and youth leaders." The report, published in 1944, advocated closer links between training colleges and universities and considered that since the universities were "institutions maintaining high cultural standards, they ought to exercise a profound influence upon the education of teachers." As a result of the report, institutes of education were established and the training course was eventually extended from two to three years.

### administration and finance

Both the university departments of education and the colleges are obliged to work within a framework devised by the Secretary of State for Education and Science and his senior advisors. In December 1964, the Labour government rejected the Robbins' recommendations (numbers 35 to 40) to re-organise the administrative control of colleges of education, which would have incorporated them into the university structure with the formation of university schools of education. At a time when colleges were expanding rapidly to counteract

a serious teacher shortage, the secretary of state wished to maintain ultimate control over the size and output of colleges. It was decided, therefore, that the colleges should continue to be administered by the existing maintaining bodies. The secretary of state not only has the power to decide how many teachers will be trained each year, but also, through his control of the balance of training, for which stage of school education. Though the size of existing or projected colleges is decided by the secretary of state, the LEA's or the voluntary bodies are the administrative instruments for providing and maintaining the colleges. Each local authority contributes to a central fund, the teacher training pool, a sum which is proportional to the number of school children in its particular area. Grants are then made available to the providing bodies to meet the costs of the colleges for which they are responsible.

A strange relationship has existed for many years between the colleges and the authorities. While the LEA's kept a careful hold on the purse strings and the DES boosted the output of trained teachers, very little interest was shown in the internal structure or syllabuses of the colleges. Those in power, particularly senior administrators in the department and local authorities have been concerned with the ends rather than the means. They have failed, and are still failing, to use their power creatively. Many leading principals and lecturers in the colleges have for some time wished to have a much greater control over the internal organisation of their colleges. In fact many wish to see the colleges having a degree of autonomy similar to that of the universities. For in spite of the recommendations made in the McNair report 25 years ago, which were re-iterated by Robbins, the providing bodies and the DES are still firmly in control.

Many of those closely involved with the colleges of education have resented the petty restrictions which are sometimes externally imposed. For instance, in an article in the *Times Educational Supplement* (1/1/71), Ronald Goldman sums up the discontent: "My experience and that of many other principals has led me to believe that local authority control in spite of the Weaver report (see page 5) leads to considerable financial waste, inept administration, irrational interference by partisan interests and an attitude of mind totally alien to the basic assumption of higher education."

He tells of penny pinching in the provision of equipment, of an obsessive adherence to misconceived policies and of financial waste caused by the bickering between opposing factions. To be fair, Dr. Goldman is referring mainly to a single LEA, and the criticisms are only true of certain authorities and in varying degrees. Many colleges and universities are as inept administratively as the worst education authorities. Many authorities are very efficient and progressive and are sensitive to the needs of the colleges within their areas. Financial control does not necessarily mean oppressive interference. Nonetheless, the colleges are in a rather unfortunate position. They have the responsibility of meeting the secretary of state's requirements without the ultimate control of the means to do so.

## **institutes of education**

Though the problem as to where the control of the colleges should lie is still largely unsolved, improvements have been made in the control of the curriculum and academic standards. This progress resulted from recommendations in the McNair report (1944) which advocated closer links between colleges and universities. Towards this end,

institutes of education (also known as area training organisations) were established. These bodies are composed of the university departments of education and the local colleges of education and art colleges. There are 22 institutes of education (or schools of education) in England and Wales, and they are "responsible for supervising and co-ordinating the academic work of the colleges, mainly through boards of studies composed of lecturers from the constituent colleges and teachers from appropriate university departments. They approve syllabuses, conduct examinations and make recommendations to the minister of education for the award of qualified teacher status" (Robbins report, para. 78). Each institute is run by a governing body, which has representatives of the colleges, the voluntary bodies, the university, the DES, the LEA's and local teachers. The council is the highest authority for teacher education, subject only to ministry regulations and university statutes.

Most of the institutes have proved highly successful in the past within the limits of the objectives imposed upon them. They have created greater co-ordination between the various bodies concerned with the training of teachers. Nowadays, however, there seems to be increasing dissatisfaction amongst many of those closely involved with the institutes, because, it is felt, they are beginning to lose their sense of direction. Comparability between the different institutes is an exceptionally difficult matter, and as a result there are great diversities between them. While the governing body is the senior administrative organ of the area training organisation, it is advised on professional and academic matters by the academic board which, in turn, is advised by subject panels and other specialist groups on syllabuses and other professional aspects of the courses provided.

The diverse and complex external controls imposed upon colleges of education have tended to inhibit the internal freedom of the colleges. Ten years ago when most of the colleges were very small, the principal was almost omnipotent within the walls of the college.

### the internal structure of the colleges

This might prove very successful depending upon the character and skill of the person concerned. In such small institutions staff consultation was easy. However, with the enormous increase in student intake and the lengthening of the training course from two to three years, the sheer size of the institution and the complexity of its problems demanded changes in the procedures for the government of the colleges. The Robbins report had suggested that colleges should be incorporated into the university structures. When this recommendation was rejected, the government set up an inquiry into the internal administration of colleges. This study group in its report (the Weaver report, 1966) proposed that each college should have an academic board which would be composed of principal lecturers, department representatives and other members elected by the staff as a whole. The report also recommended that the governing bodies should be re-organised to comprise mainly of academics, with the remaining places, reserved for representatives of the local education authority. The situation was complicated further by a sudden upsurge in student demands that they should be represented on the governing bodies. Finally, in May 1968, two years after the original recommendations and following recalcitrance amongst some local authorities, a bill was passed through parliament requiring both LEA's and the voluntary bodies to introduce reforms in the internal government of colleges of education.

The implementation of these reforms has only taken place slowly. In some colleges students are still unrepresented on the governing body. Some lecturers find it hard to adapt to participating in a more democratic system after years of submission to an omnipotent principal. Likewise the more diehard and authoritarian principals find their new circumscribed rôle unpalatable.

The duties of the academic boards include the reviewing of professional and academic work, and the organisation of teaching practice and methods of teaching. They also have the right to recommend the proportion of staff to be employed in different departments. The board's influence is, however, severely limited while the DES controls the numbers of students, the proportion of men to women and the age groups for which they are to be trained.

There have been radical alterations recently in the discipline in many of the colleges and in staff/student relationships. Disciplinary committees have been set up with equal representation of staff and students, and student participation on many advisory committees has helped to counteract traditional paternalistic and authoritarian attitudes, and to create greater liaison between students and lecturers. One major change in the law, namely the lowering of the age of majority, means that principals and lecturers are no longer in *loco parentis*. Although they will surely be significant, the effects of this on college life have yet to be assessed.

### prospective teachers

In the summer of 1970, 35,250 students successfully completed a three year college of education course. How many of these will still be in the schools two years from now or ten years from now?

What motivated them to apply for the course in the first place? What qualifications were necessary for them to gain admittance?

The entrance qualification for a college of education is lower than that for a university, but most students have well above the minimum. Although the average qualifications of entrants is rising, so is the proportion of school leavers with two or more A-levels. The Robbins report projected that by 1967, 8.8 per cent of school leavers would have two or more A-levels. In fact, 10.9 per cent reached this standard, which in numerical terms meant 79,300 as opposed to the Robbins forecast of 62,900. It would have been extraordinary, therefore, if the number of those with good qualifications entering colleges of education had not risen. The number of students with two or more A-levels entering colleges of education has remained for many years at an almost constant 16 per cent of all those with these qualifications. The rapid increase in the number of school leavers with two or more A-levels is, therefore, bound to have a salutary effect upon the average entrance qualifications for colleges.

Indeed Layard and Williams (in *Patterns and policies in higher education*, Penguin 1971), have predicted that even if colleges expand very little, provided that the most qualified applicants are always selected, then the proportion of entrants with two or more A-levels will increase from 36 per cent in 1967 to 85 per cent by 1981. If this happens it will have a profound effect upon the colleges. There is a danger that with more highly qualified students, more and more emphasis will be placed upon academic prowess, which might succeed in merely turning colleges of education into narrowly vocational mono-technic universities.



In 1967, over a quarter of the entrants had no A-level qualifications at all. This is partly explained by the great influx of mature students who are mostly married women. If the percentage of well qualified entrants increases as radically as has been suggested, then one avenue for girls with no A-levels wishing to enter higher education will have been virtually cut off. Colleges stress the importance of the initial interview in the selection of students. However, the predictive assessment of potentially good teachers is almost impossible with the techniques available at the present time. There are only two main areas of research in the field. The first compares the personal characteristics and qualifications of students with the college examination results and teaching marks in an attempt to find some correlation. The second area is concerned with the reliability of the assessments of head teachers and inspectors in identifying the potentially outstanding teachers. Neither of these lines of investigation has demonstrated a correlation of any significance. The most commonly used method of initial selection of students for teacher education is based upon the personal interview.

One obvious drawback of this system is that even within a single college, the staff often have totally differing assessments of the most important qualities needed in a good teacher. This problem stems from there being no real idea of exactly what makes a good teacher. No matter how scrupulously impartial the interviewer tries to be, there is bound to be some subjective assessment.

## the social background of the students

As a relatively small number of working class children stay on at school beyond the school leaving age and acquire the necessary qualifications to enter higher

education, the colleges of education tend to be comprised of middle class students. There have been heated arguments as to the validity of such statements, but though there are students from average and below average socio-economic backgrounds, most tend to come from above average backgrounds. A recent survey carried out by Donald Lomax in a college of education found that 30 per cent of the students' fathers belonged to professional or managerial groups, 30 per cent belonged to lower professional or clerical groups, while another 30 per cent were found in supervisory or skilled manual categories. The remaining 10 per cent were either self employed or semi-skilled. In this survey, there was a marked absence of unskilled occupations. Over the years, a variety of research programmes have revealed different percentages, but all of them have shown that the home background of the country's future teachers is decidedly middle class. This middle class bias is less marked among men students, but bearing in mind the large preponderance of women, this does little to counteract the overall picture.

Teaching is predominately a female profession. This situation is created mainly by the great bias towards women teachers in primary schools, the primary sector being by far the largest in terms of teachers. The percentage of men in colleges has remained at around 28 per cent for more than a decade. Of the 163 colleges, 31 are still single sex establishments and 28 of these are for women only. 70 per cent of the entrants to three and four year courses in 1969 were under 20 years old, although on average, men tend to be slightly older. Over 75 per cent of women entering in 1969 were under 20, compared with 56 per cent of male entrants. 8 per cent of the total number of admissions were over 35 years old.

An interesting survey, involving 3000 second year students in 20 colleges, was published in April 1971 (University of London Institute of Education, *Interim report*). It demonstrated that almost 20 per cent of the students were married and of these over half had children, 40 per cent of the total had spent at least one year in another occupation before entering a college of education.

The picture that emerges of the typical student in a college of education is of an 18 or 19 year old, probably female, with a middle class background and attitudes, who is of considerably above average attainment. Over and above all this, they will have some kind of motivation which led them to choose to enter the teaching profession. In the survey mentioned above, it was found that 10 per cent of the students had decided to become teachers when in primary school, while 15 per cent decided in lower and 36 per cent in later secondary school. 20 per cent had tried something else and, finding it unsatisfactory, had chosen to enter teaching. For only 6 per cent who entered at 18, having failed presumably to get into university, was teaching originally a second choice.

The significant figure in the survey is the 36 per cent who decided to become teachers when in the later stages of their secondary school. Even though superficially teaching was their first choice for a career, in a great many cases there was probably an unfortunate type of negative motivation. The unlikelihood of getting sufficient qualifications for university is the most obvious element. Negative motivation also encourages many graduates to enter teaching, where the decisive factor may be a failure to find more lucrative work. A very startling survey was carried out in two northern colleges of

education by Alan Smithers and Sheila Carlisle and reported in *New Society* (5/3/70). One of the questions asked was "If you were quite free to choose and could obtain the qualifications necessary, what field of employment would you ideally like to enter?" Of the 264 students interviewed, 53 per cent indicated something other than teaching. Only two of these could be regraded as outright flights of fancy (one respondent had an ambition to be a wall of death rider). The large majority selected jobs beyond their educational qualifications. This survey shows that not only are there reluctant students in our colleges, but, even allowing for the overall wastage rate during the three year course, there must be a large number of initially reluctant teachers in our schools.

The Association of Education Committees has suggested in its evidence to the James commission that it is "highly desirable that there should be a clear declaration of intent that the student is embarking upon a career of teaching." This might well result in a drastic reduction in the number of applicants, for how many of the present reluctant teachers would be prepared to commit themselves to say five years in a career in which they may discover they are out of place? Though some students see a college of education as a means of gaining higher education, others think twice before embarking upon a course which will qualify them for only one career.

## Courses

Once a student has gained a place in a college of education, what type of course will he follow? In most colleges, the course comprises of four main elements:—(a) one or more main subjects; (b) theory of education; (c)

a variety of studies, often known as curriculum courses, designed to provide a student with knowledge and skills necessary for a teacher ; (d) practical teaching experience. The amount of time spent on each part of the course varies from college to college. For example, a college specialising in primary teaching will spend less time on a main subject and more on educational theory and curriculum courses. On average, 30 per cent of the time is spent on the main course, 30 per cent on curriculum courses, 15 per cent on education and 15 per cent on practical teaching.

One of the essential purposes of extending the training course from two to three years was to improve the academic standards. Obviously for a student planning to specialise in a secondary school, intensive study in his chosen field will provide him with a considerable body of knowledge and will also give him insights into the very nature of knowledge, which has considerable implications for the student's personal development, as well as for the more immediate professional demands that will be made upon him.

The Plowden report (Vol. 1 para. 972) states "We accept the general view that study forms an essential part of the education of any teacher. The practicing teacher will be learning all his life, but he may have less opportunity, once he has left college, for the systematic study of a subject for its own sake. Students need resources of knowledge and judgment upon which they can draw both as teachers and individuals." The report goes on to point out the great discrepancies in standards in main subject courses. Though institutes of education have correlated standards in their own areas, there is by no means universal standardisation. "The best (students)

already reach the level of an ordinary degree, but at the other end of the scale are students who pass at a level little beyond the advanced level in the general certificate of education examination."

The second area of study is that of educational theory. This embodies the study of a child's physical, social and intellectual development and the history and philosophy of education. This, together with curriculum courses and teaching practice, is often referred to as "professional studies," as opposed to academic studies, in that they are directly related to the job of teaching. At least that is the intention. In many colleges, educational theory is expounded in a vacuum, in the hopeful expectation that the student himself will make the correlation between what he hears in lectures and what he sees and does in school. Though curriculum courses are generally more in touch with the practical problems of teaching, a lot of common groundwork tends to be re-iterated in the different courses.

From a student's viewpoint, especially one training for primary school teaching, curriculum courses can prove invaluable by providing a framework of realistic ideas, by suggesting possible sources of information and by exploring the need for and the uses of visual aids in a given subject. Unfortunately, curriculum courses often prove to be ill defined, unimaginatively constructed and unenthusiastically taught, but above all lacking in that professional discipline so necessary in this fundamental aspect of the college of education course.

The final aspect of the college course is the practical teaching experience which each student has. This provides the opportunity for the student to discover how well his professional and academic

preparation has equipped him for the demands and challenges of the classroom. The earliest contact which the student has with children will be as an observer. He will then take small groups for limited amounts of time. By the time he reaches his final year, he should be capable of taking a whole class for prolonged lengths of time. The teaching practice situation is complicated by the number of people who are involved with a single student's practice; the class teacher, the head teacher, the college supervisor and, perhaps most important of all, the children. The success or failure of a student's contacts with children depends upon a number of factors, many of which are beyond his own control; the type of school to which he is sent, the attitudes of the head and staff, the degree of co-operation and sympathy from the class teacher, his relationship with his college supervisor and the latter's ability to relate the student's practical experience to his theoretical knowledge in a meaningful way.

Colleges are putting a great deal of emphasis on academic subjects, and so, with an average staff/student ratio of one to ten, there are bound to be subject specialist lecturers supervising teaching practices. These lecturers may have little or no experience of the type of schools to which their students are sent. The student soon learns that for one lecturer one must have the walls completely covered with bright and informative visual aids, while for another one must make sure that when she visits the classroom, she finds the children using flash cards. Thus the student may mould his teaching practice to suit the idiosyncracies of the supervisor. Though supervisors maintain that assessment is usually at the back of their minds when visiting students, it is almost impossible to con-

vince the student of that. This being the case, it seems very natural that the student should attempt to please the lecturer, and what more natural way than to emulate the lecturer's favourite educational theory or professional quirk. In this, neither the student nor the lecturer can be held responsible. The fault lies rather with the method of assessment which places unnecessary pressures upon the student.

Perhaps the most time consuming activity for the student outside the classroom, is writing his teaching practice notes. In theory, these are supposed to consist of constructive preparation and organisation notes, and useful comments on and evaluation of the success or failure of work done. In many colleges the worst conceivable sin seems to be falling behind with one's notes. The failure of many students to use the files in a fruitful way is partly the fault of the student himself, but also the fault of the college which can exaggerate the importance of such notes beyond all reason. The student in an effort to keep up with his notes tends to write first and think afterwards. In many instances the notes are an almost mindless re-iteration of the pet educational theories of the particular college.

Whilst the college lecturer can only manage to see his student teaching once a week or even only once a fortnight, the class teacher by her very presence is in a very strong position to influence the student, for good or ill. Teachers are traditionally supposed to feel threatened by students backed up by knowledgeable and often vociferous college lecturers. In reality, the teacher is probably only too anxious for the student to do well. In one week, a poor student can wreak havoc upon a class of children, that will take the class teacher a month to sort out afterwards.

This tendency is partly due to the student never being totally responsible for the children. If the children become too obstreperous the chances are that the class teacher will come in and sort the trouble out. If the student knew that no-one was coming to his aid, he would probably work out a formula for dealing with such situations very rapidly, as indeed he would have to do if this were his own class. In many classes the children sense or already know that this is a student, and in some schools student baiting is a favourite pastime among the children.

The amount of responsibility the student is given depends largely upon the teacher. Not only are the latter's actions important, so are his attitudes. Some teachers will keep popping in and out of the classroom ostensibly to collect things but really to keep an eye on the children. Others will come and openly and loudly condemn work done for the student. In contrast, teachers sensitive to the problems confronting the student will offer constructive help and criticism and, when they can find the time, will willingly discuss the student's problems with regard to individual children, organisation and discipline.

Although at the time the attitudes of teachers and children seem all important to the student, the really vital factor is how he reacts to a given set of problems and challenges. A student in a slum school will not be expected to produce the same type of results as one in suburbia. As a slight digression, it is dreadful that students are sometimes required to practice in schools whose problems are such that it is neither in the interests of the children nor the student that he should do so. Though he may find himself teaching in such a school directly after qualifying and though such experience may,

therefore, prove useful, it is also very likely that in a classroom where there are numerous children who are mal-adjusted, disturbed or educationally difficult, the inexperienced student teacher will fail to cope, to the detriment of both the children and himself. Notwithstanding the shortage of schools in an area around a college of education, such practices should be discouraged.

Of the four elements involved in the training course, then, perhaps the practical aspect is the most important, but then only if based on sound theoretical knowledge.

It may seem that a particularly gloomy picture has been painted of the courses offered in colleges of education. The intention has been to highlight the weaknesses. There are incredible diversities between the different institutes of education and even more between individual colleges. The best are superb; the worst are appalling. The good colleges succeed in spite of the system.

Since the course was extended from two years to three in an attempt to raise the academic standards, there has been a danger of regarding colleges of education simply as inferior universities. This has been heightened somewhat by the introduction of the bachelor of education degree (BED). This attempt to confer degree status upon a small section of the college student population, entails a further year's study after obtaining qualified teacher status. The idea was first proposed in the Robbins report (paragraph 341). "The provisions we have envisaged should make certain that it is regarded as a degree equivalent in standard to the BA. But it would be a degree gained in a distinctive way, and characteristically based on the study of education."

The idea of a degree for teachers was pounced upon by both colleges and teachers. Many, however, having seen the BED degree course in operation now have grave doubts as to its validity, not necessarily from an academic viewpoint, but as to its place in the teaching profession. The difficulties began when the universities refused to create a national professional qualification. As a result there is a lack of conformity both in the course and in the entrance requirements. The DES predicts that by 1974, a quarter of the college students will gain a BED degree, but in 1970, in the 21 institutes which were offering the course, only 7.7 per cent of the entire 1966 intake passed the exam; 2437 took the course and 2250 passed.

One question which seems to have been sadly neglected is—what is the purpose for teachers of a degree in education? There are the obvious answers such as the desire for graduate status, with the accompanying additional income, which is accentuated by the new salary scales recommended by the arbitration panel in July 1971. There is also the desire to improve the standing in society of teaching as a profession. Beyond that, there seem to have been few really clear cut ideas. Does the BED really give students an even greater understanding of education and children? One common complaint from those who have taken the degree course was the total absence of any contact with children. This seems absurd in the extreme. Having been told for three years about the importance of observation and practical work to create a solid framework for the theory, students are suddenly expected to understand and assimilate far more complex ideas in a childless vacuum. The existing BED is not the answer. If, as the NUT and others advocate, teaching is to become a graduate profession, then some other way must be found.

The criticisms of the academic course for both BED and teaching certificate students does not mean there is no place for academic study, but there is at present too great a dichotomy between the academic and professional parts of a student's education. It is a complete fallacy that professional studies cannot be intellectually demanding and taught at a high academic level. The low level approach tends to be more true for primary school courses, but though it is necessary to look at the world through a child's eyes, it is not essential to approach what is seen with a child's mind. If student teachers are to become self critical in attitude and are to be competent to assimilate and to adapt to innovations; if they are to develop powers of discrimination and the depth of thought necessary for making rational professional judgments, then they need a general education firmly embedded in a professional paradigm.

### contact between schools and colleges

At present any contact between schools and colleges is very sporadic. Teachers are represented on the governing bodies of the colleges. Lecturers visit schools where their students are on teaching practice. These are often the only occasions upon which lecturers and teachers come into contact. There is a one way traffic taking teachers from schools to colleges but not back again, created partly by the different salary scales in the several areas of the education service. If a lecturer returns to school teaching his salary will drop. So when a teacher goes to a college as a lecturer he tends to stay there, with an ever increasing time lag between his own personal experiences in the classroom and those of the students he is supervising. It is little wonder that so many students complain that lecturers are out of touch with the classroom.

It is extraordinary that the very people who would be in the best position to help in any given classroom—the class teacher—is rarely asked to help. He may *offer* help and advice to the student, but it is surely a rare occasion when both the teacher and the lecturer get together with the student to discuss problems found in a particular classroom. Many teachers genuinely feel that students are a nuisance, who simply have to be tolerated. Others feel diffident about offering comments and criticisms. Many more find that they have more than enough to do without supervising and guiding a student teacher, and indeed it would be an unfair burden to impose upon any teacher, no matter how willing.

Hence we have the situation where those who are in the best position to help the student are too involved with the day to day organisation and running of a class to be able to do so ; while on the other hand, we have the college lecturers who know the theory but who have probably lost touch with the classroom, and who are also so tied up with their lecturing commitments that their visits to schools are restricted. The present situation is far from satisfactory and ways must be found to extend and consolidate the links between colleges and schools, with teachers becoming more actively involved in the initial training process.

### the probationary year

Having left college every teacher must serve a probationary year before being recognised as a fully qualified teacher. For many, this may be the most difficult time of their professional life. (Over half of all newly qualified teachers go back to their home area for their first teaching post). They are liable to encounter problems never found in the area surrounding

their college. Many of them especially in the large cities, will have immigrant children in their classes. Colleges, in general, are only gradually awakening to their responsibilities in this field of education. Others, teaching juniors and secondary school children, will have backward or non-readers. Will they have been intellectually and professionally equipped to deal with these children?

It is a very exceptional teacher who can claim to have experienced no difficulties during his first year in school. The most obvious problems confronting him will be discipline and organisation. Having prepared a topic for his class, the teacher must ensure that necessary materials are readily accessible, that he introduces and extends the topic in a way that will arouse and maintain the interest of most of the class and, perhaps most fundamental of all, that he establishes some kind of discipline upon the children so that learning becomes possible. Individual learning schemes, now very much in evidence in primary schools can also add to the teacher's administrative problems. The more activities in which different children are involved at any one time, the more preparation and organisation will be necessary for the teacher.

Many of the educational innovations seem to be emanating from the schools fostered by experienced teachers, rather than from the colleges via the newly trained teachers. The schools seem to have a far greater influence on young teachers than the colleges. A probationary teacher tends to assimilate the teaching methods practiced in his first school, rather than to maintain methods advocated in his college. In many instances this results in abandoning a liberal training for a more traditional approach. This is almost certainly a question of self survival. Teaching is

the only profession in which the majority of practitioners serve a twelve year apprenticeship. Students, under pressure, often revert to the methods of teaching of which they have had lasting experience, the methods by which they themselves were taught ; or in a broader framework, "they may find that in order to keep control, they are behaving in ways which are contrary to the attitudes which they hold, and in attempting to reduce this mental conflict they find it easier to modify their attitudes than to change their behaviour" (*Teachers and teaching*, Morrison and McIntyre).

During the probationary year, the young teacher may be faced with problems which would daunt many of his more experienced colleagues ; difficult or oversized classes, inadequate space or a shortage of equipment. The assistance, if any, which he receives depends largely on chance. Other members of staff can prove invaluable, knowing the types of material available and in some cases having already taught the class in question. However, while general guidelines can be given, within the limits of the time available, the staff can really offer little help with the probationary teacher's own development within the teaching situation, since probably none of them will ever see him teach. The one member of staff to whom this does not apply is the head teacher. A new teacher's fear of failure is sometimes acute, and the degree of sensitivity in the head's relationship with him can heighten or diminish this fear.

At some stage during the probationary year, an inspector will visit the school to ascertain how the new teacher is progressing. This can be as unreliable as the assessment during the student's final teaching practice. In many cases the teacher will have been forewarned, and the HMI can hardly expect to gain

an overall picture of the probationer's teaching ability from a short period (often only 20 minutes) of observation. So, in the end, it is the head's assessment which is decisive. If the young teacher has not proved himself sufficiently proficient, his period of probation may be extended. Between the years 1966 and 1968, the Inner London Education Authority extended the probationary period of only 2 to 3 per cent of its teachers. The proportion of failures varies considerably from place to place. Many rural areas, for example, which have a tougher staffing problem have a far smaller extension rate than that of urban areas. This low failure rate, together with the existing inefficiency in selection and final examination in colleges means that even highly unsuitable people have a good chance of reaching the classroom and remaining there.

It would seem reasonable to say that the probationary aspect of the first year as a teacher does not create a problem in itself. Indeed, many students, knowing of the low failure rate among probationary teachers, seem totally unworried by this particular aspect of their first year. After all, it makes no difference whatever to the salary received, whether one is on probation or not. The question, therefore, which is prompted is ; does the probationary year have any significance in the professional development of a young teacher? If, as seems the case, it does not, should it be re-structured or even abolished altogether? The technical aspects of probation are not the main concern of a first year teacher. The major problem confronting him is his ability to provide a stimulating education for children who have been allotted to his professional and pastoral care. The responsibility for meeting these challenges is his. He also has to establish working relationships with the children,



the staff, the head and the parents. The amount of encouragement and understanding which he receives from his colleagues is liable to affect him for better or worse. "It is a small minority of teachers who fail to reach a minimum standard of proficiency in their first year. But it is doubtful if the majority of young teachers are given the conditions and guidance in their first post which will reinforce their training and lead to rising standards in the profession as a whole" (*Plowden report*, Vol. 1, para. 1000).

### wastage

Wastage from the teaching profession has always been a cause for concern. There are three types of drop outs: those who do not complete their basic training or who fail to take up their first post, those who leave after two or three years in school and wastage over the profession as a whole. The wastage in the colleges, at the time of the Robbins report, was approximately 7 per cent, compared with 14 per cent in universities, though it would seem that this figure is now higher. In view of the relatively inefficient selection methods on entry, the actual failure rate in the final examinations is astonishingly low.

For the last three academic years for which statistics are available the failure rate among women was 2.8 per cent in 1966-67, 2.2 per cent in 1967-68 and 2.6 per cent in 1968-69. In 1968, 18 per cent of the students who qualified did not take up their first teaching post; nearly half of these, mostly women, did not enter any employment at all. The remainder took up other jobs, but not in teaching. The greatest wastage over the profession as a whole occurs among the un-trained graduates, both men and women (see table I). It seems, however, that of the women under 25 who leave teaching a large proportion, possibly as many as seven out of ten, will return. The large wastage rate of women is counteracted to some extent by the colleges being heavily biased towards female entrants. In 1968-9 24,213 women successfully completed a course in a college of education. In the same academic year 22,727 women left the teaching profession, nearly half of whom were under 30. Allowing that not all successful students would have taken up their first teaching post, the figures more or less tally. The reason that there is any gain at all in the female teaching force is the number of those who return to the classroom after a few years' absence; and there are still untrained graduates entering secondary schools.

### WASTAGE FROM THE TEACHING PROFESSION

(expressed as a percentage of the numbers in the age group in service)  
1967-8, England and Wales.

TABLE I

	trained graduates per cent	untrained graduates per cent	non- graduates per cent	total per cent
under 25				
men	7.8	35.8	8.7	10.9
women	16.1	34.1	16.0	17.0
all teachers				
men	7.1	13.1	5.5	6.5
women	14.4	24.3	13.0	13.7

(*Statistics of education*, 1969, vol. iv).

# 3. predictions

In Britain today there are over 35,000 students a year qualifying as teachers after a three year college course. In many respects this course will have failed to prepare them adequately for the challenges which they will encounter throughout their teaching careers. What will be the effects of the James report upon curriculum and qualifications, and what is to be the future of colleges of education?

## future teacher requirements

In 1969, there were over seven and a half million children in our maintained schools, of whom nearly four and a half million were in primary schools. It is projected by the latest edition of *Statistics of education, volume 1* (1969) that in 1990 there will be ten and a half million children with nearly six million in primary schools. As frequently happens with official estimates this may well prove to be an underestimation (both in absolute numbers and in the balance between primary and secondary age-groups). It would be relatively easy in a static situation to make forecasts about the number of teachers needed in the next 20 years. The education system,

however, still being politically managed, is far from stable, successive governments have different priorities and overall aims. Predictions can be made with relative certainty about the effects of raising the school leaving age in 1974, because the children involved have already been born. In contrast, government policies with regard to the extent of nursery school provision and the reduction of class sizes adds a factor of uncertainty to any calculations which are made.

In 1965, the National Advisory Council on the Training and Supply of Teachers issued its ninth report, upon which subsequent government policies have largely been based. In this report, teacher/pupil ratios of 26.3 to 1 in primary schools, 16.3 to 1 in the first five years in secondary schools and 10.6 to 1 in sixth forms were applied to their predictions. The first two ratios were those considered necessary to reduce the number of classes with over 40 in primary schools and over 30 in secondary schools to 5 per cent of the whole. At this moment, these figures provide a useful basis for an estimate of the number of teachers needed in the next 20 years (see table II).

TABLE II  
AN ESTIMATE OF THE SIZE OF THE TEACHING FORCE NEEDED TO  
KEEP STAFF/PUPIL RATIOS STATIC OVER THE NEXT 20 YEARS

	primary schools	secondary schools*	total
1974 pupils	5,136,400	3,772,900	7,764,500
teachers	195,300	242,650	437,950
1980 pupils	5,319,700	4,208,800	9,528,500
teachers	202,270	282,620	484,890
1985 pupils	5,564,700	4,375,300	9,940,000
teachers	211,590	295,710	507,300
1990 pupils	5,808,900	4,718,300	10,527,200
teachers	220,867	322,550	543,417

\* the numbers of teachers shown is a composite figure allowing for the lower staff/pupil ratio in sixth forms.

It must be emphasised that these figures represent the absolute minimum requirements. Further reductions in staff/pupil ratios, additional nursery school places, an increased propensity to remain at school after the school leaving age; all these would boost these figures. In his book *Education for tomorrow*, John Vaizey makes the following predictions. In 1960 there were 340,000 teachers in England and Wales. By 1975 we may need as a minimum: to staff classes where pupils stay on after 15, 80,000 more teachers; to reduce the size of the primary classes and provide nursery schools, 125,000 more teachers; to reduce the size of secondary classes, 50,000 more teachers; to provide new places in special schools, 3,000 more. This adds up to a total of about 600,000 teachers. Vaizey points out that the cost would be at least an extra £100 million a year accumulatively.

In the light of these figures it is interesting to read the evidence given by the Association of Education Committees (AEC) to the James enquiry. In paragraph 25, it says "we assume a continued strengthening of the teaching profession at the present rate, which is of the order of 18,000 additional teachers per annum, to a limit of the order of 450,000. We believe at that point relative stability must be established, even allowing for developments in nursery provision and an increasing tendency for children to remain longer at school." What the LEA's, in their capacity as employers, may be saying is that they are not prepared to pay for any more. In effect, they may prove to be correct in their numerical estimations, but for a very different reason.

In the face of such expansion of the teaching profession, will the teachers' associations continue to advocate an even greater increase in the numbers entering the profession? Surely, the

teachers' associations will recognise that a teaching force of 500,000 will tend to devalue the currency. This is especially relevant bearing in mind teachers' concern about their professional status and with the NUT advocating an all graduate teaching force. In addition, remembering that even at the present time teachers' salaries account for about 60 per cent of the local education authority's total expenditure, an increase of nearly 200,000 in the number of teachers would preclude the majority from receiving acceptable salaries. On this basis, therefore, it seems probable that the teachers' associations would be prepared to accept a slower expansion of numbers entering the profession, linked to the provision of ancillaries and technical and administrative assistants, if it could be demonstrated that the education of the children would be enhanced by some such arrangement.

The ninth advisory report assesses all the factors which will affect the increasing number of teachers. It takes into account a higher proportion of men entering teaching (which in itself would decrease wastage rates) and higher numbers of graduates and re-entrants. In 1965, the report estimated that by 1975-6 the net annual increase (allowing for recruitment and wastage) would be 13,600 teachers. In fact, the present rate of increase is about 18,000 per annum. Both a hypothetical ceiling of 450,000 and the current rates of increase lead one to the conclusion that far from further expansion taking place in colleges of education, there will be a reduction in the size of colleges by the end of the decade. Indeed, Margaret Thatcher hinted as much herself in a speech made to the North of England education conference on 6 January, 1971 "... there is still need for further improvement in staffing standards at least to take us well clear of the impact of the raising of the school leaving age. But it is a serious

question whether in the second half of this decade it will be right to continue the output of teachers at the present rate, and thus to pre-empt a very large share of the total resources available for improving the operating standards of the schools.”

It seems highly unlikely that any cut back in recruitment will affect graduates entering teaching for three main reasons. First, the teacher associations have advocated an all graduate profession; secondly, from the mid-1970's onwards, the majority of teachers will be in secondary schools; thirdly, it seems inconceivable that graduates would be kept out of teaching in favour of college of education students. Hence, it could well be a fair estimate that by 1980 about 20,000 teachers a year will enter the profession from the universities as against only 13,000 from colleges. We must, therefore, be prepared to witness a drastic reduction in the number of students in colleges of education, which inevitably implies the closure (or re-designation to some other aspect of the education service) of many of the smaller colleges.

## ultimate aims

What sort of education do we want for our children in the next 20 years? Are we solely concerned with the ultimate rewards of good examination results leading to the acquisition of lucrative employment? Do we consider that a high standard in one or two usually inter-related subjects equips children for life? Education is obviously more than this. We now have an almost unprecedented opportunity to ensure that the children of the future have an education which will prepare them intellectually and socially to adapt to a world which will exert ever increasing pressures upon them.

This chance lies in re-modelling the education of those who will be their teachers.

## likely recommendations

Following the extensive comments in the press in the last few months, observers have managed to piece together the basic recommendations which now seem likely to appear in the James report at the beginning of 1972. It now seems certain that the commission will propose that the colleges of education should be re-structured being re-named “Liberal Arts Colleges,” and offering a two year diploma in higher education (DHE). Those wishing to enter the teaching profession, having gained a DHE, would study for a further year and then spend a school based year culminating in the award of a degree to successful students. This degree would be a Bachelor of Arts (Education) without honours. Existing links between colleges and universities would be completely severed, thereby creating a tri-partite higher education system. The University Institutes of Education (UIEs) would be replaced by 16 area boards, each responsible for about ten colleges. These boards would have representatives from the polytechnics, the universities, the LEA's and the colleges and would be controlled by a central body. If these rumours are proved in time to be correct, what the James commission is really advocating is a complete reform of higher education. Upon what evidence does it base its proposals? 14 organisations submitted evidence to the inquiry. Of these, seven want *closer* links with the universities, and only five proposed that colleges should “go it alone.” Much of the evidence favours an all graduate teaching profession, though some organisations suggest a three year degree course, and others a four year course.

# 4. proposals

The Association of Education Committees proposes "a four year sandwich course in colleges of education, of which half the time should be spent in training in schools as student teachers and half the time in colleges. This course would result in the award of an ordinary degree."

## a four year sandwich course

This of course would mean that only two intakes of students would be in the college at any one time, and would greatly reduce the number of places needed. The time spent in school, which would amount to six terms would have to be scrupulously structured. The students would have to be far more carefully supervised than is generally true at present; teachers would have to become far more personally involved in helping the student to extract the maximum benefit from any teaching situation; college lecturers would have to visit the schools far more frequently and relate the practical experience to the theoretical part of the student's training to an extent which rarely occurs at present. This would entail lowering the staff/student ratio in colleges, because on the existing basis, lecturers could not cope with any additional time spent in school. Unless such safeguards are made, there is the risk that the student would become a general dog's body in the school, without guidance in relating the day to day classroom situations to a broader theoretical base.

Given that all these serious drawbacks could be overcome, there would still be one inherent weakness in a sandwich course type of training. Many students, in the ordinary basic course, find it difficult to inter-relate academic, professional and practical training. Spending two years out of a four year course in school might exacerbate the problem

of relating the different parts of the course and could well encourage the development of a craft tradition. The less background knowledge and insight the student has, the greater will be the risk that, in any given situation, he will tend to take the easy way out. By developing a line of least resistance, he would be likely to teach in a certain way because of the short term results, irrespective of the educational or professional relevance.

## two years of higher education first

These same risks exist to a far greater degree if the rumours are right and the James inquiry advocates a two year higher education course, followed by a two year course for would be teachers. In the first year of the post-certificate course, the student would be trying to assimilate enough educational theory and technical skill to enable him to cope with the final year spent in school, under the direction, one assumes, of a teacher tutor or its equivalent. This effectively means that the initial education of teachers which now takes (and many would insist, needs) three years would be crammed into three terms. For although it would be possible to study the theory of education in the preliminary part of the higher education course, what would be lacking would be the vital professional element. To equip a student teacher in a relevant and thorough way for his job in the classroom, he should have the opportunity to discover and evaluate different philosophies of teaching, different types of visual and audio aids, different methods of preparing and organising lessons and different materials which are available to him. Over and above all this, he should develop a firm underlying understanding of the importance of psychology, sociology, and the history of education.

To suggest that such a complex course could be successfully completed in a single academic year is ludicrous.

### home based students

Another innovation suggested by the association of education committees is to re-orientate the intake into colleges towards home based rather than residential students. It seems that the LEA's regard this idea as almost the panacea for all ills. It would reduce the isolationism, and would enable students to train in an area where in all probability they will begin teaching anyway. It would also presumably reduce the cost per student of an initial course, having eliminated all but a few of the residential students. The geographical position of existing buildings used by colleges of education would cause considerable difficulties. Many of these colleges are considerable distances from large centres of population, but, as it is likely that colleges will be turned to other uses, that problem is not as serious as it would first appear.

The other risk, at the present time, with home based colleges is that by regionalising the intake, a national framework might become more nebulous, and the local education authorities, within whose boundaries the colleges fall, might feel tempted to exert increasing influence, for good or ill, on the proposed local establishments. It is to be hoped that, in proposing such an idea, they do not have such motives in mind.

### teacher tutors

A system of "teacher tutors" has been suggested by a number of bodies submitting evidence to the commission. It now seems likely that such a scheme will be incorporated into the James

report. The idea is that one or more members of staff in a school would have the responsibility for the student teachers in the school. As well as guiding and supervising the students, these people would spend some of their time lecturing in the colleges of education. Such a system would overcome many of the major problems involved in teacher training. It would allow for a cross fertilisation of ideas between colleges and school staff rooms. It would help to counteract a shortage in colleges of education of experts in certain fields like the teaching of immigrant children, family grouping and team teaching. For the student on teaching practise, it would provide on the spot guidance from people intimately acquainted with the problems of that particular school and locality. It would also create a more satisfactory method of assessment than exists at present.

A teacher tutor system would alleviate some of the excessive pressures upon college lecturers. It is not uncommon for a tutor to spend as many as 14 to 16 hours in lecturing and in taking seminars and tutorials, as compared with the average of ten hours for university lecturers. The college lecturer also has to visit students in schools and often, when travelling time is included, has a working week of 40 hours or more. Such commitments practically preclude the tutors from carrying out major research projects or from visiting their students in schools as often as they would wish. A number of isolated experiments have been initiated in the field of teacher tutors as links between both schools and colleges and between schools and university departments of education. The NUT has expressed approval of the general idea and sums up its attitude to teacher tutor schemes in this way: "they (the schemes) are designed to involve and obtain the expertise of teachers who

spend the vast majority of their time teaching in the schools and whose experience is immediate and relevant. Teacher tutors, in conjunction with their colleagues in the colleges and universities, provide a vital link in relating the theory and practice of education." Further, the NUT proposes that this additional responsibility should be suitably remunerated.

Though this scheme would help to counteract the gulf between college and school staff rooms, it does little to overcome another staffing dilemma, namely the teacher who goes to a college of education as a lecturer and hence ends his career mobility. It is the existing lack of turn over amongst college lecturers which is partially responsible for the criticism that colleges are out of touch and are stultifying places. The discrepancy in earnings between school and college teachers, which helps to create this immobility, would not be difficult to overcome. The college lecturers' equivalent to the Burnham salary scale is the Pelham scale. A clause could be introduced into the agreements reached with both bodies to safeguard the salary and status of a college lecturer going back to the school classroom. A similar safeguard already exists within the Burnham scale to cover teachers who are theoretically down graded in a major re-organisation scheme. Such an arrangement could equally successfully be applied to college lecturers.

### all graduate profession

Many of those submitting evidence to the inquiry are in favour of the eventual establishment of an all graduate teaching profession. It now seems almost inevitable that the James report will advocate a degree course for prospective teachers. The BED degree has been

criticised because it has done little to enhance the teacher's professional competence in the classroom. The degree course expected to be forthcoming from Lord James would not prove to be much better. There is much to be said for a degree course which would provide a meaningful extension to a student's professional skills and educational understanding. It seems unlikely that in the single year between the completion of the diploma of higher education and the final year to be spent in school, that a student could assimilate half of the work which is covered at present in a three year course; let alone reach a standard for which a *valid* degree could be awarded. In line with its hope of creating an all graduate profession, the NUT has proposed a total re-structuring of the college of education sector. Unlike the James inquiry, however, which seems likely to advocate the creation of a third sector in higher education, the union "believes that the existing divisions in the higher education system are no longer justifiable and that in the future a more comprehensive system of higher education will be both desirable and necessary."

In this comprehensive university, there would be a system of credits similar to that now used by the open university. The education course would take three years, culminating in a degree. Students wishing to specialise further or to gain the professional qualification necessary for those wishing to teach, would take a further year's post-graduate course. The aim of the undergraduate course would be to provide a far broader base and later specialisation than in present day universities. "The course would involve unified study, transcending traditional departmental boundaries and would allow considerable flexibility of transfer from one option to another and from one field of study to another." It is suggested that in order to gain the 20

credits necessary for graduation, the student would take one major and one minor course in two not necessarily related fields, for example education and physical sciences. In this instance, those who enter the university proposing to teach in primary schools would take education as the major and physical sciences as the minor option. For those interested in the middle school age range, a joint degree in science and education would be more appropriate. Those wishing to teach, in this case, science in secondary school would major in that subject and minor in education. The present isolationism of colleges would almost be eliminated by the absorption of prospective teachers into the wider educational arena of the comprehensive university, where they would be in contact with sociology, medical and law students. It is dubious whether the isolation could ever be completely eliminated, since students tend to be drawn towards those studying the same or similar subjects. This situation already exists to some extent in contemporary universities. If it did occur in the comprehensive university, however, the structure of the institution could no longer be blamed.

Within the framework of the NUT's aim for a totally graduate profession, these proposals seem convincing. There are, however, reservations which must be voiced, not so much about the proposed structure itself, but about the effects which it might have on peripheral factors. At present, half the women entering higher education go to colleges of education. For a substantial number of these without adequate qualifications for university entrance, it offers the only chance of higher education. By raising the entrance qualifications for prospective teachers, this opportunity would be, in the short run, almost totally eliminated. This does not mean that entrance qualifications for a comprehensive uni-

versity or for existing colleges of education should be kept low to enable these women to gain admittance. It does mean, in the eventuality of a major shake up, such as the NUT envisages taking place, that alternative provision for women who would otherwise enter colleges of education, *must* be thoroughly and constructively examined. A moderate percentage of those entering colleges of education without A-level qualifications are mature students, frequently married women. In the comprehensive university, what would the policy be with regard to those who wish to take up teaching in later life?

This dilemma will diminish as the increasing numbers of the present and future generations with two or more A-levels grow older. At this moment, and for the next decade, it poses a serious problem. Partly to counteract the teacher shortage, massive recruitment campaigns have encouraged married women to become teachers. Would such encouragement stop? If not, how could the entrance standards of the comprehensive university be adjusted to permit these women to qualify, without seriously undermining the whole entrance procedure? Many universities are now admitting a small percentage of undergraduates who have no formal qualifications. Therefore, the problem is far from insoluble but must be borne in mind.

Under the reformed structure, advocated by the NUT, no student should be expected at the age of 18 to make the sort of decision which is necessary under the present system; a decision to undertake a course which qualifies him for only one career. In the case of a student who realises, even at a late stage in the course, that teaching is not really the career which he wants to pursue, he should still be able to graduate at the end of three years,



having completed his higher education and having obtained a degree which would enable him to embark upon any one of a number of careers. The NUT stresses the need for a single teaching qualification and for a degree course which would give students the potential to teach *any* age group. At the end of the post graduate course, when the students would qualify as teachers, there would be no difference between those who become primary school teachers (who would now be in colleges of education) and those who elect to be specialist teachers in secondary schools (the majority of the graduates of today). Thus the traditional schism would be eliminated completely.

In contrast both the two and two sandwich course of the type suggested by the association of education committees and the higher education course which is expected to be recommended in the James report, would only succeed in widening the gulf between primary and secondary school teachers. The award of a degree of dubious standard by a body specially created for that purpose will do little to enhance the public esteem of those who pass it. It seems inevitable that prospective middle and secondary school teachers will be found in the universities and polytechnics, gaining degrees awarded by established and respected bodies. The re-designed colleges will, therefore, cater for those intending to teach in primary schools.

University graduates who wish to become teachers would enter the college at the start of the second half of the four year course. This group would eventually have five years of full time higher education and two degrees. There would be an incredible difference in the standards attained in these two types of teacher education, and therefore the existing schism between primary and secondary school teachers would be

widened further. This can only result in an undermining of the educational and professional standards of primary school teachers to an unwarrentable extent.

### further education as a whole

Within its terms of reference, the James committee was asked to consider in a wider context "the rôle of the maintained and voluntary colleges of education, the polytechnics and other further education institutions maintained by the local education authorities, and the universities." Even given such a wide frame of reference, it seemed at one stage highly unlikely that any recommendation would be made which advocated a total re-structuring of the whole of higher education which the suggestions of the NUT, NUS, ATCDE and others would entail. It would now appear that the James commission will advocate equally far reaching changes but with totally different results, namely the further isolation of colleges of education from the rest of higher education.

One proposal put forward in evidence, which, while not as far reaching as the formation of comprehensive universities, might to some extent decrease this present isolation, was to extend the scope of colleges of education to include those training for social work. This idea was suggested in 1963 in the Robbins report. "Plans for colleges of education should also increasingly provide for students who intend to take up careers other than teaching, and after 1980, such numbers should be substantial." There has been much discussion about the extent to which existing colleges are "mono-technic." In the sense that they are preparing students for only one occupation, they undoubtedly are. There may be a justifiable need for colleges devoted solely to the training and education of

teachers, because teaching is by far the largest of the professions. On the other hand, the isolation of student teachers from the rest of higher education, as has already been shown, is hardly conducive to a broad education. There is, therefore, much to be said in favour of increasing the limited number of courses available at present in colleges of education to cater for the training of social workers, probation officers, child care officers and the like. Many of the courses would have a common core with specialised courses in the specific option chosen by the student. The numbers involved could eventually prove to be the critical factor. Unless the non-teachers accounted for a fair sized percentage of the intake, say 10 or 15 per cent, they could be easily swallowed up and their presence have virtually no effect upon their fellow students. With the size of existing colleges, even 15 per cent of the total student body would not mean very many students. In a college of 1000 students, there would be on average 50 students taking non-teaching options in each student intake.

### liberal arts colleges

With the possible policy decision to restrict the number of places in colleges of education for the initial training of teachers, it might be feasible to increase the percentage of students pursuing social science and social administrative options. Even if such students accounted for a quarter of the intake there would still be dangers. There would be the risk that apart from the essential re-organisation of the timetable and lecture room facilities, the admission of trainee social workers and administrators would result in them being absorbed into the existing format of colleges of education, with few advantages to either side. Simply opening the doors to other professions is not enough.

If such a scheme were to be seriously considered and if the social workers and administrators were to make a positive contribution to college life, then syllabuses and curricula must be re-examined to allow for the greatest possible interchange of ideas. Peter Venables, in *Patterns and policies in higher education* (Penguin 1971) describes the possible contents of such a syllabus. "The degree course would have common core studies comprising human development—biological, physiological, norms of development; psychology and psycho-dynamics; development of skills in human relationships by group discussion methods; recognition of serious mental and emotional troubles, and of physical difficulties; and introductory social studies." He goes on to suggest the inclusion of special studies such as management, law and social history. With such a course existing colleges would be "transformed into liberal arts colleges."

While such a proposal is worthy of advocacy in its own right, it is further commended by the fact that it could be accomplished with very little additional expense.

It might seem that the expected recommendations of the James commission would lead to the establishment of liberal arts colleges such as are envisaged above. There is, however, a very different underlying philosophy. The education and training of teachers would, under the rumoured proposals, become very much of an afterthought.

The teachers of tomorrow deserve the very best education available. It would not be in their best interests to be given an extremely general two year course, which would fail to produce the imaginative, informed and professional teachers we shall need and expect in our schools in the future.

# 5. other considerations

Some of the evidence submitted to Lord James proposed that colleges of education should have their own degree awarding body. Under a royal charter, the council of national academic awards (CNAA) was empowered to award degrees to polytechnic students. Either the colleges of education could become incorporated into the same scheme or, as the James report seems likely to suggest, a separate awards system could be established. Under the existing CNAA, approved degree courses are set up and examinations are run by the colleges themselves, with the aid of external examiners who are appointed by the polytechnics and approved by the council. Were a similar degree awarding body to be created for the colleges of education, it could enable the colleges to offer a four year course, resulting in a BA, BED, or BSC, as opposed to only the BED, which they are allowed to offer today. It would probably prove to be more in the college's interest to become fully incorporated into the CNAA. Some colleges might feel that this would lower their status, after having been involved with the university sector of higher education. The other option open to the colleges would be the formation of their own awarding body. For many reasons this could prove to be a less satisfactory answer than joining with the polytechnics under the CNAA. In many respects the degrees awarded by the existing council are regarded as inferior to those awarded in traditional universities. There would be the risk that if a separate council were established for colleges of education, it would find that its degrees were less well regarded than the CNAA awards, which have been in existence for some time. A tradition still exists that "real" degrees are only obtained in "real" universities. If yet another degree awarding body were set up, it would be liable to be regarded with great suspicion and the standard of the degree which it awarded might

be questioned. Though the existing college course has many weaknesses, the fact that it culminates in a certificate awarded by a university, does provide the award with a meaningful validity.

## in service training

As an extension to considering the needs of student teachers, it is necessary to examine what facilities are available for teachers already in service. The need for an extension to existing in service training seems to be the one aspect of the current debate which evokes almost unanimous and unqualified approval. The courses of further education available to teachers vary considerably from area to area. In some local authorities the teachers are encouraged and even cajoled to attend courses. In others, while courses may be available, it is left almost entirely to the individual teacher himself to ascertain what is available and often to make the necessary arrangements to attend the course, sometimes at considerable personal expense.

There is a wide diversification in the courses, both in the subject matter and in the length. The shortest course may last an afternoon, the longest a year or even two. Apart from the LEA courses, there are those run by the universities and colleges of education. In a survey published by the DES in July 1970, it was shown that 63 per cent of primary and secondary school teachers in England and Wales attended one or more courses between 1964 and 1967; conversely one third of all teachers attended no courses at all. The majority of those who did go on a course would have attended a small number of sessions, usually run as refresher courses. The most popular course at this time was primary mathematics, where the development of new maths had left many

teachers feeling out of touch. It might be fair to assume that the one third who showed no interest in catching up with new thinking and developments, is the very group which most needs some kind of in service training. They are not aware of what they are missing.

There is a distinct difference between in service training and these refresher courses. The former implies a systematic scheme of training, or, in this instance, re-training. A refresher course simply brings a teacher up to date within a limited field. It has become manifestly absurd to expect a teacher, having completed a three years course of very basic training, to teach for 30 to 40 years with no further training whatsoever. The Gittings report of 1967 summed up what in service training should provide: (a) it should create an attitude of mind which is ready to accept continued learning and revision of skills, (b) it should extend and refresh existing skills and knowledge, (c) it should bring new ideas and techniques and materials into the schools and ensure that these are effectively tried out, (d) it should increase the supply of teachers with special additional qualifications. In spite of the obvious merits of in service training, as a sector of education it has been very poorly treated in the past; £5½ million having been spent in this area in 1969-70, compared with £100 million spent on the initial training of teachers. Of the £5½ million, over £4 million was spent on providing courses of one term's and one year's duration. Any major expansion of in service training is, therefore, going to necessitate a vastly increased budget. The NUT proposes that every teacher should undertake one year of in service training once every ten years. This would cost about £75 million a year, and would involve the secondment of approximately 30,000 teachers per annum. At present,

there is an almost untapped supply of teachers who would attend such a course. In the future, when this backlog has been removed and normal wastage rates are taken into account, it is likely that the number involved would be somewhat less. In contrast to the NUT's proposal, the AEC suggests one term every five years. This would involve fewer teachers in any given year than a one year in ten secondment, possibly as few as 15,000 to 20,000 per annum.

The crucial aspect of in service training is that in order to maximise the benefits, it really ought to be compulsory. As well as providing opportunities for furthering a teacher's knowledge in his specialist subject or for broadening his understanding of young children's conceptual growth, it should be possible for a teacher to go abroad to study, for example, language teaching in Sweden, or for a science teacher, interested in electronics, to go into a television company to work on a specialised aspect of applied electronics in the modern world. It is in the latter example, however, that one major snag is uncovered. In only a few instances will services outside teaching be recognised as being as good as teaching.

For example, a music teacher who spends a year studying music is making himself a better teacher. The moment a teacher enters a field which has no bearing on his job in the classroom, his salary and pension will be affected. It could, in an extreme case, take him up to 18 years to climb the salary scale, and could eventually result in a loss in pension of anything up to £150. This could be overcome by both the employer and the teacher contributing throughout the year that the teacher was working elsewhere. It is important that a teacher should, if he so desires, transfer to other areas of the education service.

Many of our schools are today virtually closed communities, almost completely divorced from the world beyond. A teacher in such a school may develop an unreal and one sided view of life. A year in another job could help to restore the equilibrium.

The James commission was not specifically asked to look at in service training. However, because the facilities of colleges of education have to be used, it seems highly likely that the provisions made for serving teachers will be examined and that far reaching recommendations will be made concerning the character, organisation and financing of in service education.

## early results

Even before the report of the James commission has been published, the inquiry has been effective in provoking an unprecedented amount of public debate and in obliging those submitting evidence to examine their attitudes closely so that they are able to express them in a coherent and logical manner. Any lasting effect of the commission will depend upon its interpretation of the frequently divergent evidence of the various interested bodies and upon the recommendations which are ultimately proposed.

It is assumed that the DES, the LEA and the voluntary bodies will take serious note of and constructive action following the report. The colleges have already assessed, with varying intensity, the aims, strengths and weaknesses of teacher education ; it is imperative that they now consider analytically the likely effects of the recommendations upon existing philosophies and practices before accepting, implementing or rejecting the report.

# 6. conclusions

It has become apparent that there are several modifications which *should* be made if teacher education is to have any relevance in the future. First, the colleges should be given greater autonomy, which would entail a decrease in the powers of the DES, the providing bodies and the institutes of education. For far too long, colleges have been inhibited by externally imposed policies and regulations. As the colleges are responsible for the education of teachers, then they should have the responsibility for policy making and, likewise, must be held accountable for their decisions. Second, every student teacher should receive an education which is *relevant* to his professional needs and is, at the same time, of a sufficiently high academic standard to merit a *valid* degree at the culmination of the course. Third, the teacher tutor scheme should be expanded on a nationwide scale, thereby establishing close links between schools and colleges, involving teachers in teacher education and reducing the pressures of work upon college lecturers, who should be encouraged and provided with similar educational facilities as university lecturers to initiate original educational research. Finally, there should be a vast increase in the provision of in service training. It should be compulsory for every teacher to attend a course of at *least* one term's duration at regular intervals throughout his teaching career.

In the past the expansion in the number of students, the adaptations made to cope with new challenges in education, the re-structuring of internal government in colleges and the updating of existing syllabuses have done little to counteract the inherent weaknesses in the system. Now that there is a fairly accurate prediction as to what the final recommendations of the James commission will be, there is every reason to be anxious.

If a new higher education course is in fact proposed in the James report, it would herald the birth of the long awaited government policy for higher education rather than the reform of teacher education. Genuine attempts to provide more higher education and to introduce an intermediate qualification between A-level and degree standard are laudable in themselves. There is, however, no conceivable merit in linking such provision to teacher education. Such a policy, in conjunction with the severing of all ties with the universities, can only prove detrimental to the education of student teachers and thus to the teaching profession as a whole.

If all the predictions are correct the recommendations of the James inquiry would cause teacher education in this country to regress 30 years. The result would be a re-accentuation of the gulf between secondary and primary school teachers. It would also destroy any hope of having a really professional education service, and it would deprive our younger children of well educated, perceptive and inspiring teachers. In the past too many children have been educated *in spite* of the system. In the future we should strive to enhance their education *because of* the system. Unfortunately, Lord James seems likely to make that particular challenge infinitely harder.

# fabian society the author

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Enquiries about membership should be sent to the General Secretary, Fabian Society, 11 Dartmouth Street, London, SW1H 9BN; telephone 01-930 3077.

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