

FORUM

for the discussion of new trends in education

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This Issue

**A comprehensive approach to
the Education and Training
of the 16 to 19 age range**

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The Next Forum

The 1981 Education Act, following the Warnock report, is to be implemented in January 1983. The Act stipulates that, wherever possible, handicapped children should be integrated into ordinary schools.

The next number of **Forum** will focus on this issue among others. A number of articles have been commissioned from practising teachers and heads (primary and secondary) who have already had experience of schools with special units for children with various types of handicaps.

Another set of articles concentrates on the 11 to 19 age range. Articles cover an assessment of the new 'Pre-Voc' **17 plus** examination, the issue of guidance in comprehensive schools, the effect of mass testing by local authorities and the APU on the schools, while Richard Pring, Professor of Education at Exeter University, contributes an important article on the future of comprehensive education based on his Presidential lecture to CASE earlier this year.

The 16-19 challenge

It is nearly ten years since we published the 1973 Special Number of **Forum** on 16-19. Then we said: 'Raising the minimum school leaving age to 16 opens up the real possibility of extending comprehensive educational opportunity to the 16-19 age group'. Noting that provision was chaotic nationally and often totally divisive locally, we argued 'it is time to focus on provision at this stage'. A decade later the situation remains chaotic, divisive and criminally neglectful. Successive Secretaries of State, the DES and most LEAs have defaulted and thereby betrayed millions of youngsters.

The potential benefits of comprehensive secondary re-organization and RoSLA were negated by failure to make adequate and appropriate education and training available beyond 16. Individual comprehensive schools and colleges of further education have taken initiatives, sometimes in conjunction, but have been hampered by lack of resources and a coherent system of certification. Prevarication over ending the divisiveness of GCE/CSE, over whether and how to develop the CEE and the abortive debate on alternatives to 'A' Levels were all deterrent factors — in part attributable to the unwarranted domination of the secondary curriculum by the universities, but ultimately the responsibility of the Secretary of State. Refusal to introduce maintenance grants for those continuing in full-time education was a further deterrent.

Curriculum development in schools has received considerable support from the Schools Council since 1964, although much of it was marred by adherence to the concept of academic ability bands which was divisive and assumed the majority would quit at 16. But colleges of further education were given no such support until the separate Further Education Curriculum Research and Development Unit (FEU) was set up in 1977, and initiatives were left to autonomous external bodies such as CGLI, RSA and BEC. The curricular needs of the 16-19 age group were never considered as a whole: no attempt was made to analyse their diversity in the context of social change and the economics of the labour market, while training was largely left to employers whose record has been ever shameful. HMI, recruited with blinkered experience of independent and grammar schools, gave no lead. By silent conspiracy the majority of 16-19 year olds were allowed to drop out of the system.

For too long schools and colleges have allowed themselves to be manipulated into operating a system of educational apartheid. The examination system, the twin dichotomies of academic and vocational, education and training, and self-fulfilling prophecies of success and failure have contributed to undermining coherent, comprehensive provision. As a result Britain has allowed itself to become the nation with the least educated and trained workforce and citizenry in the industrial world. Instead of tackling this dangerous state of affairs the present government has exacerbated the situation by persistently cutting expenditure on schools and colleges.

It required the catastrophic phenomenon of massive youth unemployment to compel the Thatcher régime to

inject funds via the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) into an emergency expedient ironically termed the Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP), and now to demand planning of the euphemistically termed New Training Initiative (NTI) to remove increased numbers of unemployed school leavers from the dole queues.

The social problem of unemployed, largely unqualified and unskilled youth has been allowed to grow in the context of an education service starved of funding at the dictate of monetarist commitment to cutting educational expenditure. Colleges of further education have been obliged to turn away thousands of youngsters who wanted to enrol on their courses at the same time as the MSC was expanding YOP. Such a policy is either insane or criminal.

In midsummer, with frantic plans afoot to expand YOP into NTI outside the education service, leaked secret reports revealed government plans to create 29,000 redundancies among teachers and scheming by Sir Keith Joseph and Dr Rhodes Boyson to extend the private sector at the expense of the maintained education system in the name of parental choice. That the Secretary of State does not intend the education service to try to cater for a greater proportion of the 16-19 age group than at present was made evident by his rejection of the conservative advice of the Advisory Committee on the Supply and Education of Teachers (ACSET), instead insisting on further cutting back secondary teacher training while refusing resources for any expansion of in-service re-training.

It is imperative that secondary schools and colleges of further education accept the challenge of making comprehensive provision for 16-19 year olds. Neither they nor the nation can afford to continue to neglect about half of them. An elitist Secretary of State and a bemused or hamstrung DES apparently prefer to let the education service abdicate to the MSC tyro; but the teaching profession and LEAs must insist that it is essential for the education service to fulfill its proper role in the education and training of youth.

Recognising the urgency of this challenge **Forum** presents this Special Number in which nine contributors analyse aspects of the situation confronting us. Joan Simon reports on the MSC and the NTI, Maurice Plaskow examines criteria for 'the logical development of a comprehensive education system' beyond 16, and Clyde Chitty reviews the Labour Party's discussion document. John Fairley shows how the present government has run down industrial training, a Careers Officer exposes the fallacy underlying the YOP/NTI approach, and Hilary Steedman contrasts the UK with France, West Germany and Denmark. Finally, a headmistress of a comprehensive school and two principals of tertiary colleges point the way to how the education system can take up the challenge.

Forum does not advocate a uniform structure of provision for the 16-19 age group; but it does demand open access for all to appropriate continued education or education and training post-16 within a coherent, comprehensive system that matches individual needs.

Agenda for Action

What price the New Training Initiative?

Joan Simon

This article, which is concerned to analyse and discuss the impact of The Manpower Services Commission and the New Training Initiative, is by Joan Simon, occasional special reporter for *Forum*.

It was last December, it will be recalled, that the Manpower Services Commission, established in 1974 to run 'the public employment and training services', published *A New Training Initiative. An Agenda for Action*. This put the case for superseding the Youth Opportunities Programme, a 'special employment' scheme which has removed tens of thousands from the unemployment register, in favour of providing training for all entering the labour market after leaving full-time schooling. It advocated the establishment of a high level task group to report on how this could be done, proposing implementation of a comprehensive scheme during 1983. Meanwhile the quality of training within YOP should be improved and 100,000 'new style' places provided during 1982/3. Provision for young people at work where employers offer no form of induction should also be expanded; that is, primarily, the Unified Vocational Preparation programme (UVP) initiated by the DES but funded by MSC.

As the *Agenda* followed up a consultative document of May 1981, taking account of a wide debate which evoked a large measure of agreement, it was tabled for 'immediate' action. And, as the MSC, a non-governmental agency, is accountable to the Secretary of State for Employment it was destined for the desk of Norman Tebbit, newly arrived at the DoE after James Prior was despatched to Northern Ireland. The plan was of a consensus kind since the ten man MSC Board brings together both sides of industry (three members appointed in consultation with the TUC, and three likewise from the CBI) with representatives of the local authorities (two) and education (one) under an appointed chairman. And he was the experienced Richard O'Brien, in office since 1976, whose support for the improvement of services for youth had been lucid and outspoken, in the light of an assessment of the continuing rate of unemployment directly contradicting the amateurish assertions of ministers and correspondingly to be deplored.

The open debate and reporting of MSC intentions allowed ample time for counteracting measures to be concocted at the DoE, in effect a White Paper issued in tandem with the Secretary of State for Education, though it seems doubtful the DES had much to do with it. Certainly it was produced without any consultation with MSC and then issued — by 'Mrs Thatcher's most effortlessly provocative minister', to borrow a definition from *The Guardian* — on precisely the same day as the MSC *Agenda* under virtually the same title: *A New Training Initiative — a Programme for Action* (Cmd 8455). This was introduced with a proclamation that so

warm is the administration's concern for youth, particularly the unemployed, that £1 billion has been set aside to provide training in the next few years. From the manner in which this step was reported it could hardly be gathered that, far from exercising initiative to make the most generous of gestures, Tebbit had borrowed MSC clothes and sought to cut them down with the customary concern for 'cash limits'. For it was assumed that attention would continue to concentrate on the unemployed with the introduction, and this proved the most contentious proposition, of an element of compulsion by way of withdrawing supplementary benefit were training refused. Another bone of contention was a proposed weekly allowance for trainees of no more than £15, under the level of supplementary benefit, although the MSC had recently strongly pressed for raising the YOP allowance to £28 to keep pace with inflation.

In the event both sets of propositions went to a specially appointed 'task group' of the kind advocated by MSC, with instructions that the cash limits of the White Paper were to be the ceiling for any plan. At this point the strong incentive for government action may be noted, namely that, though youth unemployment multiplied five times between 1975 and 1982, the prospects are even worse. Failing public intervention the MSC has estimated that, by September 1984, 57 per cent of 16 year olds and 48 per cent of 17 year olds on the labour market would be unemployed; that during 1983/4, as school leavers come to number half a million, 300,000 would probably find no work. Add that each additional 100,000 unemployed costs over £400 million in benefit payments and tax revenue foregone and it is apparent that, leave aside the social dangers, there is a good deal to be said for putting £1 billion on the table in advance to keep hundreds of thousands off the labour market, even for a cost conscious administration; and that this easily takes priority over developing an overall plan of training. By contrast MSC, with direct experience of running a variety of schemes for years, sees no future in keeping these in separate compartments and hopes that, under an overall plan, standards may be raised. State intervention is no longer 'at the margin' as the *Youth Task Group Report* summarises earlier submissions. 'Half our school leavers now pass through the Youth Opportunities Programme and two-thirds of these have places in employers' establishments'. What is required to promote prosperity and growth is 'intervention, innovation, investment and exploitation of new technologies'. These 'cannot be achieved with an under-qualified, under-trained or immobile workforce' but only by pro-

viding a 'broadly based training' as against the 'job-specific' form employers are prone to provide if they do enter on the task.

In February, evidently aware that the MSC was firmly on course, Tebbit slipped easily into a confrontational stance by chopping off its head; that is, sacking its popular chairman, O'Brien, who never lowered his standard however aware that his own position was in the balance, in marked contrast to some responsible for sectors of the educational field. Once more without resort to the normal consultation a successor was nominated, David Young; a former adviser to Keith Joseph at the DOI and DES but apparently without relevant qualifications beyond sound conservatism. Thereafter, while the Task Group worked on its brief, the Secretary of State continued to air his views as to the proper manner in which to deal with manpower and not least trade unions. It may be recalled that a successful raid had already taken place, within weeks of Tebbit's appointment, despite opposition from MSC and at large, when it was announced that most of the Industrial Training Boards which since 1964 had supervised the quality of training in twenty-seven areas of industry were to be swept away leaving only six in operation — a move directly contrary to efforts to improve the quality of training across the board.

Unrepentant, O'Brien signed the chairman's foreword to *MSC Corporate Plan 1982-86* published in April which showed as little respect for this action as for the government's unemployment forecasts and the White Paper proposals. Corroboration of this stance was forthcoming, before his term ended at the close of the month, when the report of the Youth Task Group which proved to be an agreed one whose opening paragraphs directly refuted the Tebbit line was published. 'This report is about providing a permanent bridge between school and work. It is not about youth unemployment . . .'. Followed by: 'Our report is about greatly increasing opportunities, widening options and realising the potential of our young people. It is not about eliminating choice or introducing compulsion'. Before this reached the MSC Board the new chairman had taken office and uncertainty once more prevailed. In the event not only was unanimous approval forthcoming but endorsement took the form of a request to the Secretary of State for a decision on future action before the end of June, incorporated in the published version in a preface signed by the chairman. Here, rather than the expected brake, was open pressure on a minister to get on with the job, to withdraw as unworkable and unworthy his own propositions even if they had the warm approval of the prime minister. For it was made clear that, were these alternatives adopted as policy, key resignations would supervene endangering the future of MSC. Trade union objections apart, the CBI affirmed that if compulsion was imposed no sponsors of schemes would come forward. The Secretary of state could only climb down — the MSC's contribution to veiling the extent of unemployment no doubt appears indispensable if Britain is to be blessed with a second term of Thatcherdom — but Tebbit took his time. Not until mid-June, as the 'Falklands crisis' drew to a close, was it reported that he was seeking cabinet agreement to forego his main demands but before the time limit expired he had capitulated and the Youth Task Group became the accepted guide to action.

Just how limited those demands were, in terms of a policy for dealing with the catastrophic case of the younger generation, is apparent. Indeed the only 'policy' appears to be the continued floating of 'special employment measures' such as YOP, and DoE schemes devoid of any element of training, 'designed to reduce levels of registered unemployment either in aggregate or among particular groups in the labour force'. Other countries have reacted likewise as unemployment has risen, according to *MSC Manpower Review* (1981), such schemes being 'favoured over the conventional macro-economic remedies of fiscal and monetary policy' which might have a more adverse effect 'on the rate of inflation and the balance of payments'. Intended as a temporary alleviation of the problems of particularly 'vulnerable' groups they have come to absorb 'an increasing proportion' of the MSC budget and 'not inconsiderable sums' from the DoE. In December 1980, over 572,000 adult workers figured as kept off the register by DoE grants rising above £400 millions. It has even paid a Youth Employment Subsidy and a Recruitment Subsidy for School Leavers to employers in respect of young people 'they would in any case have recruited'. By comparison MSC schemes at least attempted some form of training under four heads. For long-term unemployed over 18 there was the Special Temporary Employment Programme (STEP, 11,400 places, cost £21.5 millions — since evolved into the Community Enterprise Programme). Wage subsidies to employers to maintain adequate apprentice training underpin the Training for Skills Programme (TSP, 22,200 places, costs not cited). Specifically for the 16-18 age group is the permanent programme for disadvantaged young people, Community Industry (CI, 6,300 places, cost £7.5 millions); and the Youth Opportunities Programme designed to prepare unemployed 16- and 17-year olds for work by way of practical work experience or vocational training (YOP, 155,000 places, cost £87.3 millions).

Abuse and exploitation

The MSC is well aware that subsidies have been misapplied. Employers sponsoring special schemes have promoted these rather than filling normal vacancies, or used a sequence of subsidised placements of school leavers to avoid recruiting a permanent employee, and there are other pitfalls. Employers who get a 'cost advantage' from a scheme may expand output or cut prices so driving competitors to the wall who then dismiss workers — the 'displacement' factor — and so on. All this indicates how hard it is to persuade a profit-oriented industry to act in a socially responsible way. Small wonder that trade unionists on the shop floor have been acutely suspicious of the MSC and its works, even if secretaries of unions are approved by the TUC to sit on its Board. Exploitation of juvenile labour is the traditional crime of British industry, the attitude which has poisoned the whole area of vocational preparation, and it is by no means a thing of the past nor without encouragement. The Young Workers' Scheme for under 18s is one of the latest to emerge from the DoE, reputedly the brainchild of the prime minister's pet economist recruited at around £100,000 a year. 'If you pay them less than £40 a week', an advertisement advises employers, 'we'll give you £15 a week'.

With the attitude epitomised here, and industrial backwardness, a low level of training is characteristic of British industry and this has further deteriorated during the recession. Over 50 per cent of young people get no training whatever or hardly any worth the name. Girls are the worse off, given frequent entry to service industries and the distributive trades which have the lowest level of provision, let alone the problems of ethnic minorities and the disabled. In the 1960s, the *Youth Task Group Report* summarises the matter, 40 per cent of 16 year old boys left school for apprenticeships, by the 1980s the proportion has halved. Young employees in manufacture getting other forms of training, mostly job-specific, numbered 310,000 in 1968, under 90,000 in 1981. This is the record of British industry, dogged by a recession exacerbated by the policy of the present administration.

Hitherto the Training Services Division (TSD) of MSC has been responsible for apprentice support and financing UVP as well as for full-time courses under the Training Opportunities Scheme (TOPS) for older age groups. By contrast with courses classified as 'training' those coming under the Special Programmes Division (SPD) have been the 'special employment' measures and it is largely in the light of experience gained in this sector that moves have been made towards an overall plan; with the development of an outlook which, although favourable towards establishing a standard for training, owes more to familiarity with the operations of the labour market than with education or what goes on in educational institutions. It may be relevant to add that the relatively new director of MSC formerly directed the Special Services Division and so was in at the birth of YOP, Geoffrey Holland. A civil servant who has rocketed into this position at the age of 43, by way of the Ministry of Labour and DoE, he epitomises an energy and drive which markedly distinguishes the MSC element from the DES one when the two appear side by side at conferences. In effect Holland now manages an agency with a staff of over 22,000 disposing of funds exceeding £1,000 millions; that is, taking into account the MSC third sector, the Employment Services Division which is responsible for the bright new job centres now rapidly increasing in number in inverse proportion to the supply of jobs. It may be added that plans are now in hand to amalgamate the Training Services and Special Programmes Division presumably embarked upon with the New Training Initiative in view.

Poujardism

A point has here been raised, the eclipse of the DES before the advance of MSC funding and managerial enterprise, which has been variously interpreted. Its significance can best be understood, it may be suggested, in terms of the authoritarian approach of the present administration using 'cash limits' as a battering ram. By this means local government finances and powers have been undermined, the health and education services savagely cut, as policy is imposed from the centre in terms of arbitrarily arrived at totals of 'cash'. All this is characteristic of what *The Times* (with inexplicable complacency) has dubbed a 'poujadist' wing of the conservative party — a term implying, so dictionaries tell us, a 'radical' populist appeal voicing the

ambitions of the 'little man', the ideology of the shop-keeper and cash register, on the part of politicians of an anti-democratic tendency whose political ideal is reduction of taxation. In the contemporary context and idiom this points directly to reduction of public provision for the benefit of the community in favour of 'privatisation' in the interests of the individual, whatever the resulting public squalor. Hostility to public service has extended to civil servants. It is tiresome, of course, for those convinced of the rectitude of their ideas to operate through a body such as the DES, even when presided over by a Keith Joseph and a Rhodes Boyson, when this organ of central administration cannot rigorously realise 'the government policy' but must depend on the vagaries of local authorities many of them bitterly opposed to Thatcherism and its effects. Far preferable to resort to 'management techniques', to such advisers as Derek Raynor from Marks and Spencer, who have no scruples about arguing that, if the nation is to be set on its feet, children's playing fields be sold to raise cash.

The management cult

It is here that MSC fits in as an essentially managerial type organisation operating from the centre — a new kind of arm of the State as some would have it — to hand for use without resort to the normal departmental, or even parliamentary, procedures. But given the rapid rise of unemployment and the scope and powers consequently gained it has turned into something of a Frankenstein, directed by a mind of its own, professionally involved, supported by a thick web of connections. As is well known, in promoting and financing various schemes up and down the country, drawing in local authorities and voluntary organisations as sponsors as well as industrial firms, it has taken up space and personnel in FE colleges and elsewhere which became 'surplus' as ordinary education budgets were severely cut. In the process it has entered on a level of expenditure on projects, not least in terms of staff-student ratios, which causes DES officials to blink. Recipients are unlikely to mind where the money comes from, given freedom to administer courses, and the DES interest is inclined to swallow hard and observe that any money is good news. Until recently it could point to the positive contribution of encouraging research into the curriculum aspect of post-school training; that is, to the Further Education Curriculum Research and Development Unit (FEU), accommodated in the department and financed from its budget but allowed a large measure of independence in its work, which has issued a flood of reports and documents since its establishment in 1977 by the then Secretary of State. But this has recently been extracted to be set up as an independent concern to minister to the New Training Initiative.

Once more this enables a managerial approach — which the government clearly prefers to anything the civil service may offer, as a DES official observed when a reason was sought — and, in particular, the injection of a large sum of money rising to an annual £2 millions in 1984-5 which could not easily have been accorded within the DES grant given the operative policy of cutting back all departments. Nonetheless the FEU function remains the encouragement of a more co-ordinated and cohesive approach to curriculum development under the guidance of Jack Mansell, formerly of NAT-

FHE who chaired the study group responsible for *A Basis for Choice*, (FEU, June 1979) on pre-employment courses. For the most part the unit has focused on curriculum for the 16-19 age group, vocational preparation and the pre-employment needs of the 'less able' without clear vocational commitment. But the main thesis of its latest publication, *Vocational Preparation*, 1981, which marries well with MSC plans, is that this is a curricular process all young people should experience, whether in full-time education, unemployed, or employed. The curriculum elements singled out also chime in with plans on the labour market side of the fence. Thus FEU lists negotiation; basic skills, counselling, guidance and assessment; relevance and experience. The White Paper, drawing on MSC experience, presents five somewhat other elements — induction and assessment; basic skills; occupational relevance; guidance and counselling; record and review of progress. Another aspect with which FEU is particularly concerned is staff needs for training and support when entering on new ground, a development for which a supplementary sum has recently been granted which, for three years from September 1981, will cover the full costs incurred by LEA's in catering for all their staff engaged in YOP work, whether full- or part-time and whatever the institution.

LEA sponsorship

It may not be generally recognised how deeply involved some LEAs already are in sponsorship of special programmes. This became apparent at a one-day conference called by FEU on 15 March last, to follow up a report — *The Youth Opportunities Programme and the Local Authority*, May 1981 — jointly prepared by MSC and the Association of Metropolitan Authorities. Those invited were LEA co-ordinators of non-advanced further education (NAFE) and special employment measures (YOP); that is, for the most part, assistant education officers with responsibility for these aspects but also a few careers officers who, of all those concerned it may well seem, are in the hot seat. From reports made it was evident that the response from local authorities varies widely, as is usually the case. Bradford Metropolitan Council, for instance, established a Special Measures Steering Group back in 1977, following on the MSC Report *Young People and Work* which promoted YOP. A co-ordinator was appointed in 1978 and now over 800 places funded by MSC are sponsored, 593 under YOP, and 9 officers are employed solely for this work; colleges also play a major role but much more will be needed as the New Training Initiative takes off. Since there are few large firms in this area the role of the authority as sponsor will increase and many problems lie ahead. From a quite different area, Cheshire, came a report that youth unemployment only began to bite during the past eighteen months but now 5,400 out of 10,250 affected are in MSC schemes. In this instance organisation centres on FE colleges which operate cash limit budgets and control all expenditure including income from MSC. This authority set up an Administrative Overview Committee and a County Curriculum Development Group but much more attention is now needed to college machinery, staff training and curriculum. A senior officer has recently been seconded to supervise all aspects of the LEAs work with the young unemployed.

The Task Group

To turn now, with this background in mind to details of the *Youth Task Group Report*. Its terms of reference were

- to recommend the structure, scope and content of a general scheme of vocational preparation and initial training for young people and the scope within such a scheme for variations.
- to estimate the costs and recommend how these might be allocated between employers and the government, taking into account the resources the latter is making available.
- to promote a timetable for implementation of the general scheme of preparation aiming for September 1983.
- to consider and make recommendations about the nature and level of income of young people participating.

Members of the group, under the chairmanship of the MSC director, Geoffrey Holland, were: G.S.H. Bain, deputy director of education (FE), Strathclyde Regional Council (representing Scottish Local Authorities); W. Petty, County Education Officer for Kent (ACC); G. Hainsworth, Director of Education, Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council (AMA); N. White, President, Institute of Careers Officers; A. Colledge (representing professional educational interests); J. Collins, Chairperson, British Youth Council; N. Hinton, Director, National Council for Voluntary Organisations. And, the contingent from both sides of industry: P.J. Casey, Consultant, Education and Training, CBI; K. Court, Director, Personnel and Management Services, Blue Circle Group of Companies; P.J. Daly, Company Education and Training Manager, Thorn EMI Ltd.; R. Jackson, Secretary, Education Department, TUC; C.D. Grieve, General Secretary, Tobacco Workers' Union; L. Wood, General Secretary, Union of Construction, Allied Trades and Technicians.

By no means all these points are fully covered in the report but most of what the MSC put in for it got. Its *Special Programmes News*, April 1982, singled out the following as main features of the report.

- a target of 450,000 entrants to the youth training scheme in 1983-4.
- opportunities to be open to both employed and unemployed 16 year olds who have left full-time education and to 17 year old school leavers unemployed during their first year after leaving; with the aim of extending offers to others of 17 so that by 1985 both age groups are covered.
- priority to be given to the unemployed and a guarantee of an early opportunity of training to be made to all minimum age leavers unemployed during their first post-school year.
- those participating in schemes to be classed as trainees. No obligation on any employer or other sponsor to take an individual trainee into employment during or after a programme. Should this be offered the trainee would become an employee at a wage negotiable as customary.
- a standard training allowance to be paid to all trainees, at the level of the present YOP allowance in real terms; that is, immediately, at £25. (Supplementary benefit adds £16.85.)

- all participation, by trainees and sponsors, to be voluntary.
- an offer of a year of good quality vocational preparation, based on planned work experience and relevant off the job training and further education, to be associated with the new 12-month training places to be provided under YOP, together with such other elements as induction, assessment, advice and support.
- proposals for the national and local machinery required to deliver the programme and funding arrangements.

Monitoring quality

On organisational proposals there is both updating of experience and innovation. 'What has to be delivered is both quality and quantity' which 'can only be done through a devolved and decentralised programme' enabling mobilisation of 'the resources of each local community'. Looked at this way the machinery hitherto used for TSP and UVP is too centralised while Industrial Training Boards now only cover one-third of employers. The YOP mode of operation is to the point but has been 'less successful in delivering quality than quantity' and dealing with the 100,000 sponsors or more now required is 'not an efficient way to run a programme'. The new system proposed covers a) approved sponsor (with the accent on vetting), b) managing agency (to co-ordinate lesser sponsors), c) Local Board, d) National Supervisory Board, e) quality assurance. The central proposition is replacement of Special Programmes Area Boards by 50 to 60 Local boards coinciding with LEA boundaries, serviced by local offices of the newly merged Training and Special Programmes Divisions. These would assess the quality and nature of opportunities required; establish, support and supervise a network of managing agencies designing and delivering programmes and through these ensure schemes meet criteria set nationally; mobilise local support, monitor and evaluate the progress of the scheme on the ground. They should be compact enough for efficient planning and decision making with chairmen appointed by MSC. But membership should be representative on the established pattern, of employers, unions, local authorities, LEAs, voluntary and youth organisations and the careers service; and, perhaps of sponsors and trainees as well. Boards, it is held, should be in action by 1 April 1983 for a scheme scheduled to commence in September. A consultative document has since been produced by MSC which does not live up to these provisos and requires attention.

One of the tasks of Local Boards would be to monitor grants to employers for 'normal intakes of 16 and 17 year olds' — a tilt at unsatisfactory behaviour — ensuring that programmes cater for 'three additional trainees for every two recruited as part of an employer's normal intake', that no grant in respect of a trainee is made unless and until an employer has contracted to take on additional ones. As for overall provision the MSC Special Programmes Board has hitherto monitored YOP. The recommended replacement is a National Supervisory Board with a representation similar to that of Local Boards to advise on strategy and planning as well as supervising progress. This should be at work by 1 September next so that arrangements for launching the new scheme are made 'in an orderly fashion'.

As for funding, the White Paper underlined that 'in the longer term the responsibility for training must lie mainly with employers' if this is to meet 'industry's real needs', and that the injection of funds was intended to plug the gap in provision so that the country is 'ready to meet the skill needs of the economy as trading conditions improve' — and offer 'adequate opportunities' to a new generation. The task group's report insists that public intervention 'in some cases on a massive scale' will continue to be requisite in the foreseeable future and that this will 'benefit the community at large on the widest canvas'. Experience proves that employers will not, indeed cannot in many cases, make the necessary investment though they must certainly share the costs. On this matter too MSC has a study under way in close co-operation with the government. Meanwhile overall costs are briefly summarised. During 1983/4 the scheme should cater for 460,000 of whom 300,000 should be on programmes organised by public and private employers, local authorities and voluntary organisations and 160,000 entered on training, education and work experience with sponsors directly arranged by MSC. The great majority would be offered a year's training but those leaving education for employment otherwise who subsequently joined would be offered shorter courses. For such targets Exchequer costs would not exceed £950 millions, rising to £1.1 billion in 1984/5. These sums take account of apprentice support and UVP but not the Young Worker Scheme which lacks any element of training and could well be suppressed, making £60 millions available for some profitable scheme. As for the Community Enterprise Programme this is to be transferred to the Employment Services Division.

Who will be eligible?

There was a divergence of view within the task group as to the way overall coverage should be achieved. Some held that courses be extended beyond a year, until those involved attained 18 or more. Some thought a year adequate but that it should be open to take up a traineeship at any age from 16 to 18. Another proposition was that only 17 year old school leavers should be eligible to join at that age. No firm view was arrived at bar expressing the belief that by 1985 all the latter group, in addition to unemployed 17 year olds, should be provided for. There is also reference to the number remaining in full-time education — 'nearly 400,000 in schools and over 200,000 in colleges of further education'. Most of the latter and many of the former are 'already doing courses of direct vocational relevance', since those promoted by the Technician Education Council and the Business Education Council (about to merge), their Scottish equivalents and other examining bodies are increasingly the route to employment in place of traditional apprenticeship at 16. Forthcoming for both school and college is the pre-vocational programme culminating in a 17+ qualification promoted by the government. There is no MSC intention to promote 'narrow vocational education', nor any case for specific training in school. Indeed a leading argument is that there is nowadays little case for this after school so the point to emerge is that youth training must build on (not simply repeat) the pre-vocational programme in schools.

Finally, on the key question of 'quality', there are three recommendations.

1. At national level, MSC should establish 'a group of professionals with expertise in initial training, vocational preparation, standards and scheme design', to advise the National Supervisory Board on 'matters relating to criteria, standards, records and profiles; on learning processes within the scheme and on programmes of in-service training and development'; also to produce model schemes for sponsors.

2. Within the MSC staff should be specially assigned to monitor the quality of schemes generally and, more specifically, through advice and assistance to local boards and managing agencies. The record on YOP and other programmes has not been impressive. The 'practitioners' recruited to assist from industry, the education service and elsewhere need not be numerous but should be handpicked for the task and have the necessary 'status, experience and expertise' to deal with the managing agencies.

3. MSC should contract with other providers of courses 'to develop and fund a network . . . of accredited centres' for in-service training, refresher training of supervisors, line managers and instructors, further education staff and other education and youth service tutors'. Preferably based on existing organisations and institutions this should be launched as soon as possible, certainly no later than September next.

As postscript, the MSC also has in hand a report on the statutory underpinning of industrial training which has been found necessary by major European competitors. Meanwhile the recommended scheme remains voluntary and it is proposed that progress be reviewed not later than September 1985 to assess achievements and what further steps may be required.

Implications for schools

All this is little more than an outline of developments with which teachers need to keep up if the New Training Initiative is to be educationally influenced rather than left open to the operation of employers' attitudes or merely managed by those professionally interested in their manpower requirements. A few of the points that have emerged in discussions or at conferences attended may be added, more or less at random, for the subject is vast and much remains unsaid.

There is no reliable sign that unemployment will decrease in the near future. A recent OECD Report (6 July 1982) sees it rising to 3½ millions next year, despite a temporary economic upturn and fall in the rate of inflation. Should industry not respond adequately to requests for sponsorship of training, extra responsibility can only devolve on LEAs, costs will rise and the scheme is likely to be truncated. When no work is in prospect for trainees, problems could be worse than those experienced after ROSLA.

The MSC has a bad reputation in the matter of establishing representative committees and devolving authority, despite propositions of the kind. Teachers are not even mentioned as suitable for representation on Local Boards, only CEO's find mention. It is to no good purpose to appoint these, for status reasons, when most are too busy to attend meetings and insufficiently informed to contribute if they do.

The careers service is pivotal to proposals for placement in schemes but its problems and needs are barely mentioned though to meet these could involve considerable expansion. As for schools the Stoke Rochford conference (organised last February by the Careers Research and Advisory Centre (CRAC), National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling (NICEC), Schools Council and MSC) advocated a 'genuine linking mechanism' between schools and the NTI, the development of local consortia of the educational bodies concerned; also agreeing that schools could well offer year long courses to unemployed 16 year olds once adequate safeguards of standards were forthcoming.

A determined effort is necessary to streamline the vocabulary of youth training so that the labour market party is not using 'quality' where the education party uses 'curriculum' — and likewise all along the line if a new hybrid jargon is not to spread like a plague muffling realities and obscuring sensible aims. It is painful to listen to supposedly well qualified adults exchanging primitive arguments about the meaning of 'training', or 'education', or 'skill', to no good purpose for the welfare of a generation of disinherited youth.

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The Three Nations

Maurice Plaskow

A curriculum officer with the Schools Council, Maurice Plaskow was associated with the production of the *Practical Curriculum*, and is at present working with the Council's 14 to 19 Working Party looking in particular at 16 to 17 courses. His views here do not necessarily reflect those of the Council.

One of the major slogans of our time is that there is urgent need for co-ordinated, coherent planning of a progressive curriculum and training programme for 14-19 year olds. Yet each new development seems to make the picture more confused, complex and jagged.

So we have at 16+ the possibility for young people to

- i. leave school for work
- ii. leave school for unemployment
- iii. become involved in a Youth Training Scheme
- iv. go to a FE institution, tertiary or VI form college
- v. stay at school.

The differences which result from the decisions taken will relate not only to the experience on offer, but to status and therefore aspirations, and financial support. Those who choose to remain in full-time education receive no payment; the others will — but at different rates.

The DES statistics for 1980 showed that just under 30 per cent of 16-19 year olds were in full-time education or sandwich courses; nearly 8 per cent were unemployed; only 14 per cent were in employment which included some education or training; nearly 46 per cent were in jobs which provided no education or training. At that time only 3 per cent were involved in the Youth Opportunity Programme.

We get a picture of the diversity of the group. Some are pursuing A level courses. This is the academic minority whose path is best-known (and highly resistant to change). For the rest the pattern has been one of change and uncertainty. As job opportunities decline, demands for new skills are made, and the rhetoric shifts.

If paid employment is no longer an option for many, then we must provide a new initiative to help young people 'equip themselves to make their way in the "increasingly uncertain world of the 1980s"'.¹

The 1981 white paper spoke of the 'need for vocationally-orientated courses of a more general kind'.² Commenting on this the *Times Educational Supplement* suggested that the introduction of new post-16 courses 'marks the end of a world in which juvenile employment is the normal expectation of 16 year old school leavers. It heralds a new dispensation in which education, training and vocational preparation . . . become the normal experience of all older teenagers. It represents a stride forward from the raising of the school-leaving age to 16, in the direction of a youth guarantee for all, to 18'.³

But what will be the nature of that guarantee, and on what foundation will it build? In an analysis of the implications of the post-16 proposals the director of the Further Education Unit put three major problems to be

tackled before a comprehensive and fair system of vocational preparation can be introduced:

- i. a financial reward system for all those participating
- ii. the danger of restricting vocational preparation to a specific group, and
- iii. a lack of progression to more advanced education and training.⁴

A 'youth guarantee' would therefore need to satisfy a number of criteria:

- i. it must be comprehensive in application
- ii. it must have credibility with the age-group
- iii. it must be seen to offer wide opportunities which lead somewhere
- iv. it must not perpetuate a hierarchy of values i.e. those following academic courses must not be esteemed more greatly than those following vocational courses.

Indeed, one of the barriers to change has been the sharp distinction which has been made between *academic* and *vocational* courses, which has been reinforced by the use of *education* and *training* as though they are separate and unrelated activities. Part of our cultural conditioning has been that the school curriculum has in some perverse way been unrelated to the 'real world'. That connection must be strongly made, so that students, particularly in secondary schools, perceive what they are doing as useful as well as interesting and satisfying. The curriculum is a mix of skills, content and values, realised through subjects, or disciplines or areas of experience depending on one's preferred vocabulary and practice.

The white paper on the new training initiative included a commitment that 'the Government is seeking to ensure that the school curriculum develops the personal skills and qualities as well as the knowledge needed for working life'.⁵

The notion of working life needs to be expanded to take in the whole range of human activities, since personal skills and qualities, knowledge and understanding of industrial society are required by, and aren't specific to particular circumstances.

We are therefore looking to the school curriculum to provide

- a level of achievement in literacy and numeracy skills adequate to meet the demands of contemporary society
- broad vocational preparation, which would include a level of basic skills and transferable skills — skills needed to meet the demands of the rapidly changing patterns of employment
- an awareness of developments in science and technology

— political and economic literacy in order to understand the social environment and to develop a critical awareness of society

— an appreciation of and involvement in the aesthetic, cultural, recreational aspects of life.⁶

In effect this would be a 'core curriculum for a common school'.⁷

And just as the curriculum experience needs to be shared in common, so assessment procedures must provide guidance to students and information to users about achievement and potential.

It is encouraging that the proposals for the new 17+ (Certificate of pre-vocational education) suggest certification 'for all those who complete the course', and 'should record assessments of performance across the whole range of work which has been covered'. The objective would be frustrated 'if the award of certificates were deliberately limited to a percentage of the target group, because unsuccessful candidates would have nothing to show for what they had done'.⁸ Why should this be true only for CPVE?

What we are envisaging, then, is the logical development of a comprehensive education system which gives all young people 'the opportunity to acquire essential knowledge, skills and attitudes', and encourages students to 'involve themselves actively and increasingly in their preparation for life'.⁹ The aim was elegantly summarised in a very early Schools Council Working Paper¹⁰ which looked forward to raising the school leaving age — to 16:

'The problem is to give everyman some access to a complex cultural inheritance, some hold on his personal life and on his relationships with the various communities to which he belongs, some extension of his understanding of, and sensitivity towards, other human beings . . . it will involve reliable factual knowledge, where this is appropriate direct experience, imaginative experience, some appreciation of the human condition, of the rough hewn nature of many of our institutions, and some rational thought about them.'

If we do not make a determined effort to achieve this, we shall be in danger of becoming not just two nations, but at least three.

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16-19: Learning for Life

Clyde Chitty

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Much confusion surrounds the whole question of provision for the 16-19 age group. The Labour Government of 1964-70 gave priority to developing comprehensive schools to provide equality of educational opportunity for all youngsters, regardless of social background. Though many of the issues were fudged, a good deal was achieved; and by 1970, Caroline Benn and Brian Simon could publish a book with the title *Half Way There*. In 1981, 89 per cent of pupils in maintained secondary education attended comprehensive schools. Yet the widely-accepted benefits of comprehensive reorganisation have been limited, and to some extent nullified, by the inadequate provision that still exists for the 16-19 age group. No one should expect comprehensive schools to produce a classless society — that was the prime objective of some reformers in the sixties, and it was doomed to failure. Yet it is surely scandalous that by far the highest proportion of young people who continue in full- or part-time education after the age of 16 are still from middle-class backgrounds, while the vast majority of working-class youngsters who leave school at 16 receive no systematic education or training in employment. The proportion of working-class students

entering university, for example, has not significantly changed since the Second World War; and the proportion of children of manual workers among university students actually *fell* from 26 per cent in 1973 to 23 per cent in 1978. It seems clear that little attempt has been made to increase access to higher education and the professional, managerial and technical occupations for young people from working-class homes. And the plight of these youngsters who leave school at the minimum leaving age is further exacerbated by the appalling level of youth unemployment.

The inadequacies of the present system are analysed in a remarkable and challenging document recently published by the Labour Party. The purpose of *16-19: Learning for Life* is twofold: to describe what has gone wrong, and to put forward bold and imaginative proposals for change. In 1981 the Labour Party's Annual Conference passed a resolution on the needs of the 16-19 age group which called for 'a unified, universal, comprehensive and continuing system of education, training and employment (to be known as a tertiary system) in which all young people in the age group will be considered to be undertaking traineeships'. The new

document sets out to define a system of education and training which meets the objectives in that conference resolution. Hopefully, it will form the basis of a radical policy for the age group for the next Labour Government.

At present the education and training of young people in Britain can be justly described as 'very patchy and fragmented'. Provision is also deplorably low compared with that of most of our European neighbours. Some young people receive what is known as 'education'. Others receive what might be termed 'training'. These are provided in different types of institutions, and the financial support varies according to the course. Vast numbers of young people receive no education or training at all.

The most recent statistics give no cause for complacency. Some 14 per cent of young people — mainly boys — are given the opportunity to continue to develop their knowledge and skills once they have started work. Nearly 50 per cent of young people who have reached the minimum school-leaving age go into jobs where there is little or no systematically planned training or further education. The corresponding figures for France (19 per cent) and West Germany (only 6 per cent) give some idea of the under-provision for young employees in Britain.

Twenty-five years of neglect

The history of 16-19 provision in this country since the Second World War is a sad story of muddled thinking and missed opportunities. The Labour Party's new policy document outlines the main developments that have taken place in the last 25 years.

In 1959 the Crowther Report recommended that full-time education to 16 and part-time education to 18 should be provided for all. In stressing the need for compulsory day release, it stated that 'it is the widespread lack of belief in this intention which in our view has almost stopped the growth of all part-time release other than that clearly essential for technical reasons'. Yet a working party set up by the Conservative Minister of Education, Sir David Eccles, warned in its report *Better Opportunities in Technical Education* (1961) that 'the right to day release could not be granted without holding back the prospects for other urgent educational developments'. These 'urgent developments' no doubt included the rapid expansion of higher education recommended by the Robbins Report in 1963 which caught the imagination of educationists and politicians in the heady days of the sixties. Indeed, it could fairly be said of the whole period since the last war that undue attention has been paid to the needs of middle-class sixth formers in both grammar and comprehensive schools — at the expense of these outside the privileged stratum of education. The point is underlined by Rick Rogers in his recent book *Crowther to Warnock*. The Crowther Committee estimated that their recommendations would put £200-£250 million on the annual education budget. Crowther was not adopted as a coherent programme and little action was taken. Four years later, the Robbins Committee recommended a ten-year development programme costing £3,500 million. It was accepted by the 1959-64 Conservative Government within 24 hours of the Report being published.¹

The Henniker-Heaton Report *Day Release* which ap-

peared in 1964 rejected the principle of compulsory day release as laid down in the 1944 Education Act and endorsed by the Crowther Committee. It recommended that 'day release should be granted as soon as national resources permitted to all young persons under 18, *subject to the courses being appropriate to all individuals and employers*'. The effect of this caveat was that day release depended on the support and goodwill of employers who, by and large, viewed it as time-wasting and costly. The 23 industrial training boards (ITBs) set up by the 1964 Industrial Training Act have done much to organise and fund adequate training facilities in a range of key industries but have still left untouched those vast numbers of youngsters who find themselves in semi-skilled and unskilled employment.

The Conservative Government's White Paper *Education: A Framework for Expansion* (1972) made no mention of the education needs of the 16-19 age group, but a landmark in the history of post-16 provision came two years later with the setting up of the Manpower Services Commission in 1974 under the Employment and Training Act of 1973.

An MSC review of existing training provision for young people produced the Holland Report *Young People and Work* which was published in May 1977. It proposed a more coherent programme of education, training and work-experience courses for school leavers to start in September 1978 at a projected annual cost of £160 million. Out of the Holland Report came the Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP), established under the Special Programmes Division (SPD) of the Manpower Services Commission which was intended to offer all unemployed 16 to 18 year olds training or preparation for employment. The programme was to be a short-term exercise; each individual youngster was to be helped to secure a permanent job at the earliest possible moment. It planned initially to cater for 230,000 young people a year, though public expenditure cuts in June 1979 reduced this target figure to 210,000. More recently, the Conservative Government has been obliged to expand the programme in the light of the escalating rate of youth unemployment. Since this now seems destined to be a permanent feature of British society, YOP has acquired the status of a long-term measure. The Government's target for 1981 was increased to enable 440,000 young people to enter YOP; and in her emergency package of unemployment measures hastily concocted in July last year, the Prime Minister announced that the target was now as many as 550,000 young people on the programme in 1981/82 — at an extra cost of £350-£400 million. The Government has conceded that youth unemployment will be even higher in 1983 by anticipating that the programme will have to cope with as many as 600,000 young people. It is now four years since its inception and over a million youngsters have already been through the scheme, many with little hope of securing a permanent job at the end of it all.

A critique of YOP

The Labour Party document analyses the structure of YOP and then moves on to list its defects. Each YOP scheme is intended to offer the opportunity for young people to:

1. acquire knowledge and skills relevant to employ-

ment;

2. practise those skills within the content of real employment;
3. be supported and advised by a responsible adult.

YOP schemes fall into two broad categories: work preparation and work experience. The MSC itself provides very few opportunities within the programme directly. Places are provided by sponsors who may be private employers (63 per cent), local authorities and other public bodies (26 per cent) or voluntary organisations (10 per cent).

It seems clear that there has been abuse of the programme. In the first place, the majority of work experience on employer's premises (WEEP) courses are concentrated in small firms which are invariably low-paying, non-unionised workplaces where the young people concerned receive very little training. At the same time, work experience has often been responsible for job substitution: in other words, the taking on of YOP trainees has meant a cutback in the number of apprentices and full-time workers. At its 1981 Congress, the TUC called for increased trade union control over YOP schemes and for union representation for YOP trainees.

Objectives and recommendations

In May 1981, the Manpower Services Commission published a consultative document *A New Training Initiative* which stated plainly: 'Training is not given sufficient priority in Britain'. It outlined three important objectives for the 1980s and beyond: first, better arrangements for skilled training to agreed standards; second, improving the vocational education and training of all young people; third, opening up more opportunities for adults to train. 'As a country', it said, 'we must now set ourselves the aim of achieving urgent and radical changes to our training arrangements if our industry and commerce and our work force — both young and adult — are to be adequately equipped to face the future'.² The document's objectives were endorsed by the Government which promised to consider what could be done to advance them within the available resources. Yet six months later, the new Secretary of State for Employment used the powers given him by the 1981 Employment and Training Act to propose the abolition of 16 out of 23 ITBs and replace them by voluntary arrangements. The Government admitted in a Commons debate of 14 June this year that only 30 per cent as opposed to 50 per cent of the working population will now be in industries covered by statutory boards. Moreover, those surviving statutory boards will have to shoulder the burden of their own operating costs, previously met by the Government.

It is in this context that the Labour Party document puts forward its major recommendation: that all 16 and 17 year olds, whether in full-time education, at work, or unemployed, should have a right to receive systematic education and training in the form of a 'student-traineeship'. In other words, the Labour Party's aim is an open system of post-16 education and training where opportunities are accessible to all, the resources available are shared by all, and all young people are given a common status. At first sight, this may not appear to be too far removed from the second objective spelled out in *A New Training Initiative* — 'we must move towards a position where all young people under

the age of 18 have the opportunity either of continuing in full-time education or of entering training or a period of planned work experience combining work-related training and education'. Yet there is an important difference. The MSC argues that this can be achieved through collective bargaining and agreement between employers and trade unions. The Labour Party believes that there is an urgent and overwhelming case for voluntary arrangements to be supplemented by a statutory framework which can identify and effectively pursue national priorities. In the words of *16-19: Learning for Life*: 'new legislation should be introduced to give all young people, whether they have work or not, whether they are in full-time education or not, a statutory entitlement to education and training'.³

The document argues, quite rightly, that provision for the 16-19 age group must be co-ordinated within a *comprehensive* system which aims to provide a full spectrum of appropriate courses for all young people regardless of previous attainment or social background. 'We must avoid building a system where at the top are young people on full-time courses in schools preparing for higher education, under them are those skilled workers in apprenticeships released to further education colleges and at the bottom are those unskilled workers in training schemes or unemployed on YOP'.⁴ Crucial to an understanding of the Labour Party's thinking is the notion of equal status for all youngsters.

It has to be accepted that some young people will fail to see the relevance of spending further time in some sort of education institution once they have left school. Day release and block release at colleges of further education have not always proved popular with young workers who view the experience as time-wasting and counter-productive. The document argues, somewhat optimistically, that this problem can be overcome if the education they receive at college is more fully integrated with their training and experience in their place of work.

The approach is more tentative and cautious when the document moves on to consider the content and assessment of non-vocational courses. It tends to support the idea that education and training should be based on a modular system with the examinations systems being restructured accordingly. Assessment of individuals would not be based solely on the traditional end-of-course examinations but would take account of in-course assessment using objective testing, projects and so on. The document flirts with the idea of recommending profile assessments to replace existing arrangements at 16- and 18-plus, but warns these 'could not be hastily introduced in the future through the directive of a Labour Government'.

A more detailed document on the curriculum is promised for later in 1982. In the meantime, there is much here to debate and reflect upon and much to make one realise that in the area of 16-19 provision we have very little as a country to be proud of.

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Training Provision in Europe

Hilary Steedman

Hilary Steedman has been teaching and writing in the field of comparative education for ten years, first at Manchester Polytechnic (Didsbury faculty) and now in the modern languages department of Salford University and part-time in the department of education, Manchester University. She is at present establishing a Centre for the Study of Training in Europe at Salford University which aims to provide information on new developments to those engaged in developing and implementing policy in the field of training. She deals here with training provision in France, West Germany and Denmark.

This article takes as its starting point the fact that the Manpower Services Commission has chosen to situate its plans for a new system of training for young people in the context of the performance of other industrialised nations.

'Britain has one of the least-trained workforces in the industrial world . . . in recent years . . . our training performance has tended to get worse not better'.¹ Furthermore, the MSC proposals, while mainly concerned with emergency measures, make it clear that for the longer-term we must construct a nationally available system of work-related training and education as an alternative to full-time general education and which can be undertaken by all young people under 18. The intention of this article is quite simply to examine what three industrialised European nations have provided in the area of training after compulsory education and to look briefly at trends in these systems in the '80s.

The UK has the lowest proportion of 16-19 year olds in full-time education or training of any advanced European country. This is the stark truth that the Manpower Services Commission has singled out as one of the reasons for proposing to invest in the training of young people. The fatalism of the Macfarlane Report, which merely took note of the same set of figures with sighs of concern and anxious murmuring about expenditure restraint, has been replaced by a positive programme of action. Looked at more carefully, however, we can see that the MSC figures for European comparisons reveal that our system of compulsory educational provision has a capacity — unique in Europe — for *discouraging* its pupils from continuing with *any form* of education once the law has released them from this obligation.

There is, of course, a 'push and pull' process at work in the decision of young people to leave school, to the 'push' which our system of compulsory schooling gives to its 'unsuccessful' pupils must be added the 'pull' of relatively high wages (considered as a proportion of the relevant adult wage) when a job can be found, a similar wage structure for apprentices and automatic social security benefits. It is essential when interpreting the MSC figures, to understand that no other European country offers the same unique set of financial disincentives to learning as does the UK, i.e. no financial support for those in full time post-compulsory education combined with open-ended social security for those who choose to leave the educational system.² Clearly, the first condition for the success of any attempt to encourage young people to continue to acquire formal skills after 16 is the elimination of the 'push' of

discouragement and an equitable system of financial support for all young people over 16.

When we examine systems of training in France, Denmark and West Germany the most fundamental common feature is that all three countries have a strong tradition of apprenticeship training which was fundamentally restructured and enhanced during the period 1956 to 1970, just at the time when our own provision was being reduced. In France, as part of the 1959 reform of the education system, a system of technical education (*collèges d'enseignement technique*) was set up to run parallel to the traditional academic education leading to university. A set of nationally recognised and state validated vocational qualifications could be obtained, corresponding to various skill and pay levels of officially recognised in manufacturing and commerce.³ For twenty years, these colleges, now promoted to the status of *lycées d'enseignement professionnel* — vocational grammar schools — have toiled in the withering shadow of the prestigious general *lycées* attracting criticism for the narrow vocational aims of their courses and for their role in reproducing the division of labour required by employers.⁴ They are now being subjected to an equally searching but more positive reappraisal by Minister of Education Savary which recognises their role in combating youth unemployment, recommends increased resources for this sector and affirms the value of work experience.⁵ The Federal structure of West Germany makes generalisation about types and level of provision more difficult than in France but two important points can be made. Firstly, during the period 1960-1970, determined efforts were made to *increase* the percentage of the age group participating in formal apprenticeship schemes (part-time vocational education to 18 is obligatory). Thus, whereas in 1960 20 per cent of the age-group was not receiving any formal education or training after the compulsory period, that had been reduced to 10 per cent by 1970. From 1970 onwards another trend is evident whereby training is increasingly seen as a public duty for which the State must take special responsibility at critical points.⁶ Thus the traditional role of German employers in both providing training places in their places of work and providing or at least influencing the accompanying formal instruction has been gradually eroded.

In response to a short but severe recession in 1976 and a steady fall since 1970 in the number of places provided, a Federal Law was approved (APIFG 7 September 1976) obliging firms to provide a certain number of training places or to pay an indemnity to the Federal

Government. Other measures, not generally welcomed by employers, have aimed to eliminate unqualified instructors and to improve the quality of training in small firms by providing more support from local technical colleges. German commentators state that without the strengthening of traditional structures by firm government action with trade union support, youth unemployment in West Germany would now be twice as high.⁷

It is clear that during the 60s and 70s, France and West Germany chose to institutionalise and strengthen vocational education and training in two different ways, the French model was predominantly school based (although the apprenticeship system continued to exist) while the German model was based on the work place. In 1956, Denmark fundamentally restructured a well-established and widespread system of apprenticeship training. The extent of the Danish tradition of apprenticeship training can be appreciated by noting that in 1977 in the 65-69 age group 37 per cent had received specialised vocational training and that almost all subsequent generations exceed that figure.⁸ The change that was legislated in 1956 by the Danish parliament stated that the formal instruction component of apprenticeship training must be given during working hours and not, as formerly, after hours in the evenings. This fundamental change entailed a complete institutional reorganisation. Teachers who had previously worked part-time had to be trained and prepared for full-time jobs. The many small technical colleges which were necessary when students had to be taught near their place of work, were closed and replaced by a network of larger technical colleges. Some highly specialised courses of training were offered in only one or two colleges and hostels were attached so that these institutions could draw students from the whole country. Denmark's traditional apprenticeship system is marked by the leading role played by employers and unions who initiated the 1956 reforms and are represented in equal numbers on the governing bodies of technical colleges.⁹

Reappraisal and restructuring

The system established in France in the 1960s has recently been subjected to an unusual degree of public scrutiny and interest¹⁰ and the Ministry of Education is taking steps to attempt to correct some of the fundamental weaknesses of the system. The first problem is neatly captured in the wry comment of a vocational lycée teacher: 'Hopeless at maths., excellent material for vocational education' is a typical comment of the general education teachers who guide the academically weakest pupils into vocational training. In the case of some pupils, the vocational lycées are heavily handicapped by the low level of their pupils in the basic skills, even though, traditionally, the weakest attend the Apprenticeship Centres (CFA). In West Germany admission to apprenticeship is dependent on reaching basic standards in a school leaving certificate, thus excluding the unqualified 10 per cent from apprenticeship — they can, however, spend an extra year obtaining this qualification in a technical school. Denmark's compulsory school system aims at a minimum of differentiation of its pupils and academic elitism is not as openly encouraged as in French and German schools. Thus at present entry to vocational education is not conditional upon examination success although the weakest pupils

will inevitably have more difficulty in concluding apprenticeship contracts with employers. The French, German and Danish experiences underline the fact that training for a job still demands the skills that general education should aim to develop in all its pupils. Deficiencies in basic skills do not magically disappear once training is undertaken but instead become a critical handicap.

Another interesting convergence in the development of the three systems is the extent to which those systems originally based in the work place, i.e. West Germany and Denmark, are now increasingly introducing full-time and alternating courses of a year or two years duration in technical colleges as an alternative to traditional on the job training.¹¹ In Denmark especially, dissatisfaction with the apprenticeship system gradually increased again after the reform of 1956, and in 1971 the Ministry of Education intervened with proposals for a completely new form of training. These new EFG courses consist of a common first year of introduction to the chosen field of training so that choice of specialism can be considered and basic academic skills strengthened where necessary. In the second and subsequent years of training, students alternate between work and college. EFG courses have been introduced alongside the older apprenticeship system and in 1979 had approximately twice as many students as the apprentice system.¹² The French vocational lycées, on the other hand, are planning to extend the experimental work experience introduced under the previous government by Educational Minister Christian Beullac. What the French call *alternance* i.e. blocks of work experience alternating with college based study, seems to be becoming a common model in all three countries studied, while both in certain German *Länder*, notably Nord-Rhein Westfalen, and in Denmark the college-based common introductory year is rapidly gaining ground both as a means of allowing the student more time to reflect on a choice of course and as a way to remedy deficiencies in basic skills. Such a solution has not yet, however, been adopted in the French system despite reports that many students either do not know what they want to do or are being forced to train in areas that they have not chosen — and consequently dropping out of courses prematurely.

Girls in vocational training

One fact seems to emerge clearly about the fate of girls in vocational training systems — they experience much more difficulty than boys in getting a job at the end of their training. In West Germany in 1974 young unemployed under 20 were 46.1 per cent male and 53.9 per cent female. With the deepening of the economic depression the position of the girls worsened dramatically while that of the boys improved — in 1977 the corresponding figures were 39.3 male and 60.7 female. *Le Monde de l'Education* reports a similar imbalance between boys and girls five years after the end of training — 93.4 per cent of boys have a job but 10 per cent of girls are out of work and a further 13 per cent inactive. This is attributed in part at least to the girls' tendency to opt for tertiary sector training (84 per cent in this sector are girls) where jobs have been disappearing most rapidly. Even Denmark reports that 'Among the pupils leaving school the boys find it much more

The Decline of Industrial Training

John Fairley

A research fellow at Aston University, John Fairley earlier worked as a research officer in the Engineering Industry Training Board. His main interest is training/labour market policy from a local angle. Here he analyses contemporary government policy relating to industrial training.

The Conservative Government is currently turning the clock back as far as industrial training policy is concerned. This process is obscured by the large-scale social policy intervention in response to youth unemployment which the Government is prepared to underwrite through the New Training Initiative (NTI) put forward by the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) of the Department of Employment.

As far as the industrial training system is concerned, the Government's approach appears to be a simple matter of *laissez-faire*. In Britain, employers have always had responsibility for training and this much is unlikely to change. However, the Government is currently dismantling the statutory framework constructed by previous Tory administrations to make employers take that responsibility seriously. In other words, responsibility for training will remain with employers but increasingly on employers' own terms.

The Government is proposing to close most of the Industrial Training Boards (ITBs) and to transfer their manpower planning and training functions to voluntary agencies based on or closely linked to trade associations. In certain 'key sectors' — clothing construction, engineering, road transport, hotel and catering, plastics and offshore oil — ITBs will be retained but without any exchequer contribution to their operating costs.

easy to get an apprenticeship than the girls . . . The girls will generally get the shortest education and thus also often the jobs with the lowest wages'.¹³

The special needs of girls for early guidance and choice of training and measures to raise their aspirations — their school achievements are already better than those of boys — should be a first priority when establishing our own system of training.

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4. Notably in Charlot B. and Figeat M. *L'Ecole aux encheres* Petite Bibliothèque Payot, 1979 and in Baudelot C. and Establet R. *L'école capitaliste en France*, Maspéro, 1981.
5. *Le Monde de l'Education* No.83 May 1982 p.14 *Le plan du ministère*. From this point on in the article all information on training in France is based on a series of articles in *Le Monde* (4, 5 and 6 May 1982) and a special edition of

This financial point is quite significant: the MSC review of the 1973 Employment and Training Act¹ recommended that ITBs be returned to the self-financing autonomy which they enjoyed between 1964 and 1973, but argued that the Boards must also be allowed to raise high levies from their sectors where this was necessary. The Government has imposed on the retained ITBs a self-financing regime within the maximum one per cent (of payroll) levy permitted under the 1973 Act. This is bound further to reduce ITB activity and strengthen employer influence over the remaining Boards. In both the ITB and non-ITB sectors the Government is encouraging cost-conscious employers to assume greater control over training policy and activity.

At present it appears that the retained ITBs have merely been given a stay of execution until their industries design voluntary arrangements which satisfy the Department of Employment. In any case it is not easy to discern an independent role for ITBs within the new framework being established through NTI. On this point it is perhaps significant that the Youth Task Group, set up by Government and MSC to put some flesh on the skeleton of NTI, had no ITB representation and makes only a few passing references to the Boards in its report.²

The reform of industrial training which is underway

Le Monde de l'Education No.83 May 1982 'Apprendre un métier: L'enseignement technique'.

6. Max-Planck-Institut für Bildungsforschung *Bildung in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* Vol.2 W. Dietrich Winterhager *Berufsbildung und Jugendarbeitslosigkeit — Einschätzung der Situation* p.996.
7. *Ibid* p.995.
8. Central Council of Education U.90. *Danish Educational Planning and Policy in a Social Context at the End of the 20th Century* Ministry of Education 1978 Table 2.6.'
9. CEDEFOP *Descriptions of the Vocational Training Systems: Denmark* Berlin 1979 Ch.4.
10. In January 1982 the French Government approved a 'renewal' plan for technical education, and a circular of March 1982 specifies an 'upgrading' of the vocational lycees. (*Le Monde*, 4 May 1982).
11. In West Germany in 1975/6 70 per cent of 15-18 year olds following a technical training course were in part-time *Berufsschulen* i.e. in work-based training. The remaining 30 per cent were on college-based courses, although some were working at a higher level than apprenticeship training. *Bildung in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (op.cit.). Forschungsgruppe Kammerer *Berufliche Vollzeitschulen und Verringerung der Jugendarbeitslosigkeit — Basisdaten über die Berufsfachschulen* pp.1008, 1015.
12. *Description of Vocational Training Systems: Denmark* (op.cit.) p.80.
13. U.90 (op.cit.) p.60.

does not seem to be motivated by training considerations. The experience of the voluntary system, for example, is one of failure to provide an adequate supply of appropriately trained workers. Even between 1945 and 1964, when the British economy performed well, insufficient employers came forward volunteering to invest in training, and many who did didn't know what they were about. It seems unlikely that the return to voluntarism which the Tories are effecting will be successful in a time of economic recession. Similarly, it is difficult to take seriously the expressed concern of Ministers for objective standards in training. ITBs have a very good record in improving the quality of training.³ The Engineering ITB, for example, established a modern, modular, standards-based apprenticeship in 1968, and since then over 100,000 craftsmen have achieved craft certification through this system. While the Tory legislators of 1964 were concerned to help generalise 'best practice' in training, the present Government seems blind to the real achievements of the ITB system and has fostered the misleading but widely held view that all industrial training in Britain is old-fashioned, time-served, inappropriate to the needs of modern industry, and somehow inferior to what is done in nations with which Britain competes economically. Current 'best practice' is ignored and exchequer support for apprentice recruitment is likely to be phased out by the mid-1980s.

In its attack on ITBs the Government seems motivated by three main considerations. First, the continuing hostility of the 'small firms lobby' to interference by the public sector, a political viewpoint which led to the weakening of the ITB system in 1973 and which is currently extremely influential with Ministers. Second, the arguments of the 'think tank'⁴ that the concept of skill and in particular apprenticeship has more to do with trade union restrictive practices than with the needs of modern industry. The Government is well aware of the implications of training reform for industrial relations, but surprisingly the trade union movement has had little to say on this issue. Third, the Tories want to construct a comprehensive scheme of work preparation for young people which will please Britain's EEC partners and attract substantial funding from the growing European Social Fund.

The rundown of the ITB system has coincided with reduced funding for MSC's Training Services Division which is responsible for the other parts of the public training system. TOPS — the system of accelerated training for unemployed adults — is being 'rationalised' and within the reduction of opportunities there is a clear bias against particular groups, e.g. women.⁵ MSC Direct Training Services to employers were once free in the Assisted Areas of Britain. The introduction of charges in 1979 led to a rapid decline in demand from employers for these services. Alongside the reduced provision of MSC training has proceeded the rather better publicised cuts to further and higher education, including the technological universities.

It must be remembered that these policy changes take place against the background of very deep economic recession, when employment and employers' training investments have slumped. Against this background it is possible to see a chilling logic in the Government's proposals. Britain has for some time experienced a process of 'de-industrialisation' which together with recession results in a somewhat changed role for Britain in the in-

ternational economy. That role seems to involve primarily the provision of services together with the retention of certain (relatively) low technology, low productivity, low skill industries. The role which international market forces seem to be allocating Britain is unlikely to require a large highly-skilled industrial workforce. The Tory reforms seem likely to ensure that the output of the training system matches these reduced industrial needs and that the future public training system will not be well suited to assist the efforts of any Government seeking to oppose the twin forces of de-industrialisation and de-skilling.

The collapse of employers' training efforts and reduced resources for public training services have made it increasingly difficult for any but the best qualified school leavers to gain access to skill training. This elitism in the training system, though partly caused by public expenditure reductions, has been skilfully used by the Government to win support for the comprehensive youth provision which it proposes to finance through MSC under the NTI programme. The proposal to cater for all young people, starting with those who are unemployed, is genuinely popular but also serves to obscure the very important matter of the quality of provision which is to be offered.

The NTI documents issued so far, i.e., the MSC consultative document and action proposals, the Government's White Paper, and the Youth Task Group Report, have all been vague on the key questions of training standards and the relation of a new youth scheme to existing training provision. These issues have been little discussed so far as public attention has focused on the non-training issues of allowances for trainees and possible compulsion to participate.

Perhaps the biggest question mark over the ability of NTI to offer good quality training stems from the very origins of the proposed youth scheme. While industrial training has declined the growth area of civil public spending has been MSC Special Programmes (SPs) for the unemployed. The status of SPs in training terms is disputed. Within the Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP), for example, some young people do receive useful training provision, while many receive only low level training or indeed no training at all. Despite its poor record on quality, YOP is to be one of two 'models' for the development of the new youth scheme. The other is Unified Vocational Preparation (UVP), a training programme primarily aimed to give appropriate training to young people in relatively low skill employment. It is difficult to square this choice of models with the declared intention of MSC to encourage high quality provision. When, for example, the Task Group expresses the view that first year apprenticeship should come within the new youth scheme, two developments seem possible. The training content of this first year could be reduced, e.g., from the full 12 months off-the-job training given in engineering, to the lower provision characteristics of high level YOP courses. Alternatively, first year apprenticeship could continue much as before within the new scheme, but that would seem inconsistent with NTI's objective of giving all young people an equivalent standard of work preparation.

Under Task Group proposals, MSC-approved 'management agencies' will have a key role in setting and monitoring training standards. It is hoped that most of these agencies will be employers, although clearly this

will depend on the vitality of particular local economies. Whether this kind of decentralised system will be able to secure adequate and uniform training standards throughout the country remains unclear. Management agencies will have to meet certain MSC criteria to gain approval. However, so long as the scheme remains voluntary these criteria cannot be too strict as the objective will be to encourage employers to offer places when they are suffering the effects of economic recession.

MSC structures are to be revamped through the merger of Training Services and Special Programmes Divisions and the creation of new administrative local Boards covering the same areas as LEAs. Proposals suggest that it is at this administrative level that the major role will be allocated to educationalists and trade unionists. No consideration seems to have been given to providing resources so that monitoring can be made more effective than it was under YOP.

If NTI goes ahead in the form suggested by the Task Group it will affect minimum age school leavers in work as well as those who are unemployed. Those in employment may find themselves having to bear a much larger share of the cost of their 'training' than in the existing training system. Tradition in Britain is that young people in job 'specific' training (i.e., in skills appropriate only to a particular place of work) are paid wages in recognition of the fact that their skills are not transferable. Those training in 'general' or 'transferable' skills which are needed by a wide range of firms, e.g., apprentices, receive only a proportion of normal wage rates because at the end of training they will possess skills which they can take with them to other places of employment. The emphasis of NTI seems to be against both types of job-related training and in favour of providing one year of broad-based work preparation comprising elements of training, work experience and FE. Young people will gain some kind of certificate from this youth traineeship and in return will be asked to make a large contribution to the scheme by accepting only low YOP-type allowances to be paid by MSC.

The system of allowances will, whatever level they are set at, involve very high public expenditure (probably £1 bn-£1.5 bn in 1983/84) compared with the existing training system. However, the proposed youth training scheme has a number of advantages for Government which more than outweigh the cost. First, the Government will appear to be offering 'training for all' 16 year olds, as the TUC and some educationalists have long demanded, though the purpose of mass training in a period of mass unemployment has not been clarified. Second, having restored 'voluntarism' in industrial training, it is hoped that employers will be encouraged to volunteer with the removal by Government of the major training cost, namely trainee wages. Third, allowances themselves will have an educational function for the young men and women on the scheme, as the experience will give youth 'rational expectations' with regard to wage levels in future employment. Fourth, the rights of trade unions in relation to 16 year olds may be greatly restricted, and in this respect NTI links up with Government industrial relations policy. Fifth, while trade unions and educationalists will be heavily involved in running the youth scheme, their ability to influence *policy* is likely to be diminished compared with say the 1964-73 period. In particular, MSC may not be so easily influenced as were the tri-partite, decentralised and

Training or Job Substitution?

EMCO

How do the YOP schemes strike a Careers Officer? This article, by EMCO, reports the experiences and thoughts of one of these.

A few years ago, in 1980 to be precise, I remember attending a staff meeting in the Careers Office where I work and discussing the difficulty I was experiencing in placing youngsters into Work Experience openings under the Youth Opportunity Programme. It rapidly became clear that I simply had not been keeping up to date with events around me and that I was the only Careers Officer in this large office who continued to adhere to our informal agreement to give priority on such places to the disadvantaged, whether that be socially, educationally or in terms of handicaps. After all, my colleagues pointed out, where not all unemployed youth disadvantaged? Would it not make sense, they suggested, to submit the less advantaged to the project based schemes run by local authorities and voluntary bodies i.e. keep them away from employers? It was now important that employers gained a good impression of what advantages there were for them in the Youth Opportunity Programme if places were to be available for the young unemployed. To this end my colleagues were now accepting YOP work experience openings on the same basis as normal vacancies, with the employer specifying the educational qualifications and skills required. As one colleague explained, she would no more dream of submitting a youngster who could not type for a Work Experience opening in a firm's typing pool than she would for a normal vacancy. The penny dropped. I saw the light. I now understood why my placing rate had gone down so much and my clients had such little success. Training as a part of Work Experience had gone out of the window while job substitution had walked in the front door.

In the period between 1975 and 1982 youth unemployment has increased five fold. My colleagues had been trying to respond to changing circumstances which I had allowed to pass me by. In 1981 a MSC spokesman admitted that job substitution might account for as much as one in five YOP places. As the Youth Task Group Report of the MSC published in April this year points out, 'quality is more difficult to deliver than quantity' and this is certainly a true reflection

industry-accountable ITBs.

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Schools and the 16 to 18s

Valerie Glauert

Now head of Blyth Jex school, Norwich, a ten form entry co-educational comprehensive school, Valerie Glauert was a member of the School Council's Committee which produced the *Practical Curriculum*, and of the Standing Conference of the Regional Advisory Council which produced *Foundations for Working Life*. She is currently a member of the City and Guilds Council and Executive. Before coming into secondary education she had served in the Ministry of Education as an assistant principal and been head of department of professional courses in a further education college in Manchester.

Recently the Business Education Council moderator came into school to look at the progress of our nineteen strong group of young men and women in a pilot scheme studying for the Business Education Council's General Diploma. He told me that we were doing very well, but we could do with some of the apparatus of industry, for example, a word processor, more electric typewriters, and at least one room furnished more like an office than a classroom. He admitted we were lucky with our staff teaching the course: they have considerable outside contacts and business experience, they are well organised, and prepared to put in many hours of planning, assessing and consulting. Here is the crux of the matter. If schools are to be involved in the Government's plans for the New Training Initiative, and in the new pre-vocational one year course for 16 to 17 year olds, the 'Pre-voc' (and BEC General is a precursor of the courses likely to be approved by the new council) then many changes will have to be accomplished. First, more deliberate planning for the transition to the world of work and leisure has to be accepted by secondary schools as an integral part of the philosophy and principles of general education for life that it is our duty to provide; second, staff will need to

have the necessary industrial and business background, in addition to the professional expertise and vision, to teach such courses; third, there will have to be a general recognition by local authorities and the government of the staffing and resources necessary for both the in-service training of staff, and for the teaching of the courses themselves; fourth, there will have to be a generally encouraging environment, both inside and outside the schools.

The first point, deliberate planning, has already become more generally accepted in schools in the last few years than may be realised. If we have not readily accepted specifically vocational courses in our midst either in the last year of compulsory schooling or in the first year of the sixth form, it is because we believe we must take a long view and look at the likely needs of the individual and society some twenty or thirty years hence when today's school leavers are at the height of their powers. It would be easier to opt for training than education, as one of the over zealous Industrial Training Boards proposed a few years ago when the dearth of technicians and apprentices became evident. One could calculate numbers of craft rooms and teachers required, make a list of the equipment and tools required, plan to

tion of YOP to date. Careers Services account for 90 per cent of placings into YOP and most Careers Officers can recount abuses of the scheme. Indeed it might well be argued that YOP offers more opportunities to employers than to the young unemployed. One large hairdressing establishment was quick to see the advantages of suspending their normal method of recruiting apprentices which carries the risks associated with selection and subsequent employment of apparently suitable candidates. How much better to recruit only YOP trainees each summer in numbers exceeding the number of trainees required and select apprentices six months later from the group of trainees. Not only have no wages been paid by the employer but it is now also possible to select on the basis of performance. This may seem an innocuous practice but each year this employer has recruited girls as apprentices this way and they have all thought that they were guaranteed employment after six months. Another example is a health and beauty salon which leaves a 'trainee' in charge for most of the day. Or there is the farmer who has no wish to be involved in all the paper work of actually engaging a trainee and has a stream of youngsters on 'one day trials' at busy periods. However, most Careers Officers would advise that such abuses are not the rule although

they would doubt the quality and value of actual training received.

Earlier this year two new studies by MSC researchers were reported in the Employment Gazette which showed that YOP placement only marginally improved the likelihood of employment and that factors such as sex, educational qualifications and race were still principal determinants of employability while duration of unemployment appeared also to be taken into account by employers in considering candidates. One report, however, clearly saw the recession as having the most important effect on the youth employment situation reflecting the underlying market nature of unemployment. The MSC expects there to be a shortfall of 320,000 jobs for sixteen year olds in 1982 and a further 297,000 short in 1983. It is in the light of this that one must consider the first objective of the New Training Initiative as detailed in the MSC consultative document issued in May 1981.

'we must develop skill training including apprenticeship in such a way as to enable young people entering at different ages and with different educational attainments to acquire agreed standards of skill appropriate to the jobs available and to provide them with a basis for progression through further learning;'

train rigorously and to turn out every year an army of craft apprentices. But that would be irresponsible. There is no planning that could predict with accuracy the requirements of industry in that detail, and luckily the dangers of such narrow specialisation for the students themselves have been recognised by others as well as secondary teachers and their Heads. Instead, we must continue to listen, weigh up and reinterpret the philosophy of good general education, with our eyes steadily on the good of the individual and society.

Nevertheless, a steady development of careers education over the years, in schools lucky enough to be supported by their LEAs, has led to closer ties with employers. It has also harnessed staff in those schools to see to it that the careers structure of professions is well understood and pupils are counselled about the requirements they must meet, and their own fitness for entry to work. Local conferences in my area over the last few years, between Heads and employers, have revealed at least as much ignorance of schools on the part of employers as the reverse. At a recent 'At Home' in my school, more than a few personnel managers admitted that they had spoken to pupils about their own industries for many years, but they had not been invited to see round a school, nor to talk to senior staff freely. They felt now, they said, that they had unwittingly been pressing for paper qualifications in the expectation that they would necessarily guarantee important personal qualities: and also that they had been interviewing prospective employees in ignorance of their schools, if not with prejudice against them.

We, in schools, have been too inward looking in the past, but continuous criticism has roused many of us to stand up for ourselves. We ought to share experiences with local employers and we might be surprised to discover much reassurance.

A recent conference in London, 'Youth in Need', organised by the Secondary Heads Association to which Heads, representatives of the Manpower Services Commission, Further Education, Her Majesty's Inspectorate, and the Confederation of British Industry contributed, showed not only the joint concern for the lack of employment and lack of cohesive education and training for all ability groups after the age of 16, but also the extent to which schools were able and willing to become involved in tackling new courses for the young, to prepare them for work and leisure. The steady

growth of the 'new sixth' has not been just an empire building exercise; it has been born of the genuine concern of schools to prepare young people for the complexity of the world outside. The 'new sixth' has in fact been with us for some time. The old girls' grammar schools of the fifties and sixties were certainly used to nurturing the late developers as they were then termed, and enabling them to gain maturity and background as well as qualifications for entry to nursing, teaching and other professions. Ordinary Alternative courses in various subjects offered by Cambridge and Northern Boards and others, helped to provide the curriculum.

In the seventies and eighties, comprehensive schools have been devising, for those not accepted for apprenticeships and wishing to stay into the sixth form to gain maturity, their own courses out of combinations of single subjects taken in a variety of levels under the auspices of the Certificate of Extended Education, Advanced level, Ordinary Alternative level, and Ordinary level of the General Certificate of Education; Royal Society of Arts examinations and City and Guilds; combined with experience or work in the community. Where such courses have been carefully planned they have been very successful. While it has been evident that this has not been entirely satisfactory for the whole range of sixth formers, the fact remains that schools have been gaining valuable experience in the handling of young people, and have won recognition from them for their counselling, guidance and teaching.

The experience of teaching these new students in the sixth form has led to a strengthening of conviction, in many schools, that the adult approach adopted and more task oriented syllabuses set for them would yield more rewarding results for a section of the school population between the ages of fourteen and sixteen, if only the pressure from parents and employers for 'O' level or CSE examinations could be resisted. There has been much frustration at the general lack of understanding of the problems of effective teaching of this section, which is up to 40 per cent of the school population for whom the national examination system declares it does not cater, and will not cater in the future if the new 16+ examination comes into being in its present form. They constitute two-fifths of the general school population, and the pressure on them to take examinations and get some small recognition of their talents creates in them a sense of failure and rejection saved only partly

Further,

'What we propose will improve the prospects of young people to get and keep jobs . . . Our aim is to provide for what the economy needs, and what employers want — a better equipped, better qualified, better educated and better motivated workforce.'

'Prosperity and growth . . . cannot be achieved with an under-qualified, under-trained or immobile workforce. It cannot be achieved if people resist change or cannot cope with it. Increased productivity means doing new things in new ways.'

The basic belief behind MSC policy seems to be that a trained work force creates a demand for itself. This is, of course, clearly refutable in view of the vast numbers of skilled workers currently unemployed. Such a facile approach was not adopted by the OECD in its report in July this year which foresaw increased unemployment in

Britain and a drop in manufacturing investment this year with a rise in 1983 to the level attained in 1976. It saw the health of Western economies being determined to a great extent by US interest rates which will hold high to at least the end of this year. However, the voiced aimed of the MSC, to 'provide for what the economy needs, and what employers want', is not in the least incompatible with what the New Training Initiative has to offer. The MSC as part of a centralised state is preparing and providing a reserve army of labour for employers which will be sufficiently sophisticated and adaptable to satisfy capitals needs and sufficiently numerous as to accept low wages as determined by the labour market situation. Whilst it is in this light that one must view the MSC there is also a need to evaluate the contributions being made to this operation by the education system and Careers Services.

by the general recognition of teachers in the school. A recent minister of state for employment, addressing a local audience of employers and heads, and one of my own colleagues who should know better, introducing a conference on the progress towards the new 16+ examinations, referred to all these children as the 'remedials'. In fact the 40 per cent contains only about four per cent in that category. The rest contain young people with a whole range of abilities for which no official recognition is yet given. It remains to be seen if a Profile System or an assessment system can remedy that. Because the problem of motivating these pupils is not generally understood, there has been the widespread assumption that schools could not, even if given the necessary resources and training, have anything to offer these young people at 16 and 17 should they stay on at school.

Certificate of Pre-Vocational Education

A more task oriented education is certainly now being envisaged for 16 to 17 year olds in the new document just published 17+. It appears to be very like the FEU unit's *A Basis for Choice* which attempted to outline a general framework and approach. The forerunners of this framework, the City and Guilds pre-vocational courses, and the later BEC and TEC modules, have their emphasis on mastery of a common core of English and mathematics, on course assessment, on the acquiring of certain specific skills, and general knowledge of industry. To teach such a course will require new skills and knowledge from the usual secondary school teacher, so that the second change that must be accomplished must be a different attitude, a different battery of techniques, willingness to submit to new experiences and to experiment.

Those teachers coming into school from industry, in very recent years, particularly in the shortage areas of mathematics, computing, physics and design and technology are a valuable resource. They have as much to teach us about industry as we have to teach them about the craft of teaching. But schools must retain their judgement about what is taught. The Schools Council's 'Industry Project' has, for those involved in it, shown up the whole area of uncertainty about what 'industry' needs or wants; it also shows us the fundamental differences between the aims of an industrial concern and a school: one to sell a product, the other to help an individual to develop his many talents so that he may be of use in his many different roles of employee, citizen, parent, survivor! While there can be a narrowing of the gap, it cannot be closed for the health of society.

A new extension of the Industry Project 'Skills', pioneered by the Council has accepted the necessity for the wider role of the school in teaching its courses at whatever level. It seeks to encourage a new emphasis in the handling of curriculum, not only for the 40 per cent I have been mentioning, but for the whole of the school population, whether it is at 16 or 17+. It is, I suppose in some ways, a new way of defining in work jargon, what teaching well means at all levels — a mastery of technique and knowledge which can be demonstrated in action in the solution of a problem. My husband, a fluid dynamicist, always spoke with great reverence of his Cambridge professor, G.I. Taylor. His mathematics laboratory was always full of bits of wire and string and

paper and odds and ends out of which he would ingeniously construct models to test theories, about the movement of water in a state of turbulence. I only met him in his old age sailing his dinghy in the tricky currents of the Llanfair estuary, but I knew instantly why all who met him learnt so much from him. He could bring his vast knowledge to bear on a simple problem that he had isolated for solution. He would then take that solution and relate it to a series of situations, for the enlightenment for even non-mathematicians such as I. We cannot all be great teachers but we can involve our pupils more in understanding the processes of mastery so that they may be the more able to apply them in a new situation. If we call the process 'skills' or 'clusters of skills' in the new jargon it will not matter so long as pupils catch the habit of the new emphasis.

New emphasis relevant at all levels and with all ages will inevitably affect examinations. In some areas of the curriculum examinations are already changing to take account of a more dynamic learning. A recent one at the moment is 'Graded Tests' in Modern Languages. In this York scheme pupils move at their own pace from Grade 1 upwards according to their ability to master orally certain vocabulary and syntax in a practical context. A 70 per cent pass is required before the certificate is awarded. The enthusiasm of pupils learning by this method has been tremendous.

New methods and examinations need new resources which relates to the third matter I mentioned at the beginning. There ought to be a recognition of the need for In Service training for teachers of the Pre Voc courses. Some schools will be lucky and have staff with an appropriate background, the majority will not. Resources will be required too if new courses are to be effective and command respect. Apart from a grant from a trust for library books to provide background reading for staff and students, we began our Business Studies courses in my school on a shoestring last year. We received with gratitude cast off typing chairs and filing cabinets and journals from the Norwich Union and Barclays and Midland Banks. Some extra electric typewriters were given us by the evening institute who use the typing rooms every night. They and we cannot afford more. The word processor recommended by the BEC moderator is out of the question. The money raised by the parents and staff at the May Fair is earmarked and the few hundred pounds from the Local Authority given specifically for the courses will cover only textbooks, paper and other bare essentials. Perhaps we can buy a programme which we can run in our computing laboratory that we have set up ourselves? It will give some practice to our students. If the transition from schools to the world of work is to be efficient and up to date then makeshift arrangements which I have described should not be general.

The fourth matter, an encouraging environment, will be difficult to accomplish particularly if resources are inadequate. The morale of teachers in secondary schools is low for a number of reasons. There needs to be a much more generally appreciative climate stemming from Government and the LEAs to ensure success. The effect of competent teaching of 17+ courses could be considerable on the whole morale of schools and subsequently on industry and the country. It would be a mistake not to spend money and effort on adequate resources and encouragement.

The Tertiary Connection: Curriculum in action

Ian Morgan

Ian Morgan has been Vice Principal (Director of Studies) at the W.R. Tuson College (a tertiary college), Preston, since its foundation in 1973. He writes here on the curriculum at a tertiary college.

If it is thought that the egalitarian aspirations which have energised the move to comprehensive education are achieved in the image of an orchestra of people playing identical notes on identical instruments then the curriculum of a tertiary college is most certainly not comprehensive.

Although the tertiary college is not in a position to dispense with first and second violins or to have among its flautists someone able to take the bottom line at least the range of instruments is wide; the tuba is given the occasional solo passage and there is a splendid opportunity for the skills of groups of instrumentalists to contribute towards a purposeful, rich and collaborative performance.

An orchestra, particularly when it is performing symphonic music, is a useful analogy to describe how the differentiated curriculum of a musical score caters for the aptitudes and abilities of its members. It raises questions about the hierarchy of instruments, the relationship between melody and continuo, the allocation of tunes, and whether differentiation is an essential element in uncompetitive, group activity.

The differentiated curriculum in a tertiary college follows obviously from the differentiated curriculum which most schools find unavoidable for pupils after the age of 14. This differentiation stems from the recognition by the young people themselves, as well as by their parents and teachers, of individual differences in terms of aptitude and ability as decision-making approaches about what work they would like to take up in adult life. These choices set up a proliferation of curriculum pathways, based on job-selection, which, as is the nature of straight roads, are often narrow and dead-end.

It is easy to be rhetorical and wrong about the social divisiveness brought about by individual choice, particularly where choice is offered within an educational programme. John White, for example, has recently written:

‘While the great mass of the population are thought to need an education which fits them for certain kinds of jobs and gives them no deeper understanding of society as a whole than these particular roles require, those who belong to a ruling elite are held to need a more rounded education. The ideal is of a “liberal” education for these few and a “vocational” education for the rest.’¹

This profoundly distorts the true situation: a ‘liberal’ education has in fact always been the main curriculum basis of British secondary schooling and either because of the traditional academic rigour of a ‘liberal’ education, or of its unsuccessful presentation, or of its unsuccessful reception, or of its utter irrelevance half the nation’s children are said to have been alienated.

This alienation is currently being attributed to the failure of schools to be ‘vocational’, rather than, as White claims, the reverse.

It is ironic that the Romans chose the word ‘liber’ to mean both ‘free’ and ‘book’: the book remains a gateway to freedom and a barrier to it to those who cannot or will not read. Would equalisation of the curriculum issue from a banning or burning of books?

The authors of *16-19; Learning to Live*, a Labour Party discussion document, are most pertinent in their categorical: ‘It is not possible to reform the education and training for the age group (viz 16-19) in isolation from the education young people receive at school up to the age of 16’.² What happens in life post-19 is even more important, and young people are entitled to want this to include work.

Work is not only the destination of curriculum pathways; it also conditions them. Those who desire the undifferentiated curriculum should address themselves to the social issues of differentiated work. In his lecture to the Association of Colleges for Further and Higher Education in February 1982 the Secretary-General of the Arts Council refers to the working class parent who sent to school a note written on a blue sugar bag; it read ‘Don’t teach my boy poetry he’s going to be a grocer’.³

Can we expect the prospective hairdresser and the prospective dentist to share an identical curriculum? The answer is No, and the answer is Yes, for, after all, at one time the same person performed both functions. The No answer is given by the professional bodies who manage hairdressing and dentistry and establish the syllabuses needed to have been mastered for entry, and by the clients of both hairdressers and dentists, that is, society as a whole. The need for differentiated skills and knowledge bases for competent performers is obvious: the issue is, How late can this be delayed before forming a differentiated curriculum?

On the other hand hairdressers and dentists have much in common: as well as high quality of diagnosis, accuracy, manual dexterity, and artistry, and the ability for providing close personal attention required in such occupations, first and foremost they are people. ‘Men are men before they are lawyers or physicians or merchants or manufacturers’⁴ and the curriculum for work (‘vocational course’) should take its proper place in a curriculum for people.

The tertiary college, providing as it does a variety of pathways to work, is well-placed to provide bridges between routes, and although there are formidable agencies, within and without colleges, which make bridge-building difficult bridges are appearing, some of them substantial. At least in W.R. Tuson College, Preston prospective hairdressers and prospective dentists are taught their science by the same teacher.

It is not only the curriculum of 11-16 schools and sectors of schools which is largely conditioned by the outcomes of the examination system; there are far more examining bodies involved in post-16 education. If ways could be found for Examining Bodies certifying vocational courses to restrict the examined content of the syllabus to, say, 75 per cent of the 'course' the remainder could be spent in consolidating the personal education of students through shared programmes of General Studies project work, modules devoted to Social Education, discussion groups, artistic enterprises, voluntary service, hobbies, and general achievement. Until then opportunities are being missed.

Distinctive tertiary college innovation operates mainly in areas of course enrichment and course hybridisation, though whatever the organisational mode of study the quality of both personal and vocational education is closely linked to the ability of learner and teacher to collaborate in a constructive response to change.

Course combinations

An example of course innovation is the patterning of the Advanced-level GCE provision and the opportunity it gives to supplement the A-level programme with Vocational Modules, units, some substantial, offering insight into engineering, design, health, social work, secretarial studies and teaching, thus making available to students a wide access to specialist facilities and expertise not ordinarily available to the A-level student.

The patterning of Advanced-level subjects and supplementary AO and Ordinary-levels is such that combinations of orthodox and novel kinds are taken which encourage students to display their individual strengths and to develop their vocational paths. Because of the size of the enterprise it is possible to offer wide subject-choice and establish a flourishing viability in terms of student numbers. Additionally, there is choice of syllabus within major subjects.

Example of the popularity of such a flexible provision is seen in an analysis of the programmes of studies chosen by students taking A-level English as one of three A-levels. In a recent year when 72 such students in Year One were taking English as one of three A-level subjects they did so on 36 different programmes of study; in the same year a further 70 were taking English alone or as one of two A-level subjects.

This range of choice is also available to students on certain 'vocational courses' which, in traditional Colleges, may be operated as discrete and self-contained. For example, the Certificate in Pre-Social Care course basically comprises four elements of roughly equal length: (1) Placement (2) Vocational studies (3) Advanced-level Sociology (4) Free choice of A-levels or O-levels in a list of twenty or so subjects. This 'free choice' facility is also afforded to students on a Pre-Nursing Course, while students waiting to enter nursing from a two A-level base are able to share the Placement arrangements organised by the Pre-Nursing Course staff and to share 'core' teaching on health and care issues.

A hybrid course also operates in the area of a two A-level/twelve hour Secretarial Skills programme, the usual choice of A-level subjects including a Modern Language.

The opportunity to hybridise courses in science and engineering is currently being examined, now that the specialist facilities for both are on one site. If it is feasible special arrangements will be made with the Technician Education Council, local employers, and Polytechnics.

In a College with over 2,000 full-time students the impact of these initiatives appears marginal, affecting in practice no more than 10 per cent of such students; nevertheless, these developments are distinctive and will be extended.

The accreditation issue

Hybridisation raises the issues of validation of courses, transferability of equivalences, and progression to further and higher programmes. This is central to the concerns in *Education for 16-19 Year Olds*⁵ which, in calling for 'a varied, open and progressive learning system' (surely they intend 'progressional'?) define as follows: 'We say progressive because we believe there should be no educational cul-de-sac. It should be possible for each and every young person to aspire to continued study on successful completion of the current phase, whether that be general or vocational in character, full-time or part-time, undertaken end-on or in later life in a form variously described as post-experience, adult, or continuing education'. Society is a long way from pulling the cords out of cul-de-sacs.

In a recent paper (January 1982) the Further Education Curriculum and Development Unit, whose energetic initiatives in the last five years have been mainly applied to young people of low academic attainment and poor school motivation, has declared the same concern more passionately: '... we are in danger of perpetuating a form of intellectual apartheid if we allow, by neglect or design, vocational preparation to become a non-progressive mode of educational/training provision, having all the characteristics of a "tertiary modern" sector and by implication associated with low ability school leavers'.⁶

The use of 'vocational' in this way is unfortunate: it may well perpetuate a divide, when what is wanted is an integration. Until Examining Bodies are able to take formal account of 'planned experience' in their accreditation and exemption procedures then Colleges cannot go it alone, and in taking such account they will be concerned to scrutinise 'standards'. It is of significance that the City and Guilds of London Institute, itself the provider of CGLI 365 General Vocational Preparation, has yet to declare the formal accreditation of Vocational Preparation for entry to Year Two of its more traditional courses.

The W.R. Tuson College has been a pioneer in the North West of England in developing courses based on *A Basis for Choice*,⁷ but has not yet been in a position to authorise the progression of its own students from such courses to other courses demanding entrance qualifications based on academic attainment as measured in examinations. It is easier to make such progression as an adult than as a 16-19 year old.

Another hierarchy that pervades 'the hidden curriculum' in a Tertiary College is the salary structure for teachers, by which teachers may be rewarded for the category of work they do, i.e. the category of students

The Tertiary College Solution

Michael Austin

After teaching modern languages at an independent school, at Manchester Grammar School and later at Queen Mary's Sixth Form College at Basingstoke, Michael Austin was appointed Vice-Principal at Nelson and Colne College in 1976 and Principal of Accrington and Rossendale College in January 1981. Here he makes the case for the tertiary college solution to the education of 16 to 19s.

There is a regrettable British tradition in educational debate of concentrating attention, and prejudice, on types of institution rather than on discussion of what the aims of the education service should or might be. This is seen in a particularly strident manifestation when forms of post-16 provision are under review. The vocabulary of argument frequently contains phrases like 'losing a sixth form' or 'destroying a tradition of excellence' instead of any mention of improved opportunities or wider ranges of choice. Given that the sixth form, for reasons of academic tradition and, possibly, weighting of points, is the sexiest single issue in educational debate, this is perhaps not surprising, but it is unfortunate that, as a result, much potentially valuable and constructive debate is aborted at an early stage.

Those who regard the sixth form of a school as the flower of the service do a grave injustice to the 5-16 phase: while expatiating on the beauty and splendour of the bloom they implicitly cast the rest of the plant into the supporting and less glamorous role of stalk. The purpose of 5-16 education is not merely to provide sustenance for the delicate 16-19 blossoms: 5-16 education should be seen as a complete, self-sufficient process, whose products begin a wholly new phase of development thereafter, some of them in work, some in continuing education, some in a combination of the two. There is no compelling or even particularly good reason why this new phase should begin in the same institution in which the last one came to an end.

Of all the yardsticks used to gauge the effectiveness of post-16 educational arrangements the best must be the availability of a wide range of course choices, each of which is accorded equal status. The appropriate choice

of course should lead to an appropriate qualification, meaning one which is within the grasp of the student and which leads to a satisfying next stage of employment or further education/training. One of the most distressing observations on the current state of post compulsory education is that there are so many students on inappropriate courses. Frequently this means that they have enrolled for GCE courses for reasons of apparent esteem, rather than on a vocational course. That vast numbers of young people every year embark on 'O' level repeat courses is a reflection on the poor quality of much careers advice or on the stubborn determination of parents and students to pursue unobtainable grades, or on both. The high failure rate of students on such courses should be a greater deterrent than it obviously is. There are also large numbers of students on 'A' level courses who have hardly, if at all, considered alternatives.

I well remember from my years as a teacher in schools that for bright students the usual question was which 'A' levels to choose, not whether they should choose them at all. In a school with a sixth form the force of inertia is considerable, and academic tradition may have gouged a rut from which it is difficult to peer out. The importance of choosing the most appropriate course at this level was underlined by the finding in the 1979 NFER report *The Sixth Form and its Alternatives*:

'Of the students who took a full-time job, those who had undergone some form of vocational training appeared to have fewer problems in finding relevant employment than those who had taken an A-level course. People entering the job market with A-level qualifications were very disappointed at the lack of suitable vacancies, and often had to

they teach. The category of work involving vocational preparation, the new 17+ examination course, and O-level GCE is Grade 5 i.e. the bottom of the hierarchy.

What Tertiary Colleges can do, and do well, is to provide as open and broad an opportunity to develop oneself personally as is consistent with aptitude, ability, and motivation. They have the social milieu and human resources sufficient to enrich and adapt curriculum routes, both tried and untried, and they can bring parity of esteem to bear far more generously than can establishments offering less varied and flexible provision.

What they cannot do is to cast into monotone the differentiated and coloured curriculum of the orchestral score.

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take jobs which they felt were far below their capabilities. Many of them were convinced that their employment prospects were no better, and in some cases actually worse, than if they had left school at 16. A significant proportion in this category regarded their current job as temporary and hoped eventually either to obtain more demanding employment or to go back into education.

As a result of our research, we suspect that too many people are encouraged to embark on A-level work at 16 without a clear idea of what implications this course of action has for their future. It is probably not true to say that A-levels are a waste of time for those who do not intend to go on to university, polytechnic etc. There is, however, a clear need for information on the alternatives to A-level, especially the vocational courses offered by colleges of further education, to be made available to all students of 16 who are considering staying on, and for students to think very carefully about what might suit them best.'

It is difficult to see how wholly dispassionate course and careers advice can be guaranteed in a system which involves a choice of institution at 16. In such circumstances the choice of course can become confused by extraneous factors, including the different life style within two institutions (e.g. FE as contrasted with a school); peer group pressure; parental inclinations (the perceived low status of FE would play a part in this); misunderstandings by school careers staff about what unfamiliar courses involved. None of this is solved by juxtaposing a sixth form College and a College of FE. I recall students at Queen Mary's who were manifestly on the 'wrong' course when one or more of the above circumstances applied. In that a Tertiary College offers a full range of courses at 16+ it obviously comes close to resolving the problems to which I have referred, but no system can operate effectively in the absence of careful planning.

Curriculum and staffing

One of the impressive features of Tertiary Colleges is the way they have developed the possibilities available to them. Clearly, the lack of competition for 16+ students could as easily lead to complacency as to careful consideration, and the relationship with local 11-16 schools could be soured by any apparent indifference. However, it is universally the case that Tertiary Colleges have used their privileged position to develop strong links with schools. Careers advice frequently begins at 13, with consideration of any implications of fourth and fifth year option choices for subsequent College courses. Some Tertiary Colleges have established 'taster' courses to enable school pupils to visit the College to sample post-16 courses. Many Tertiary Colleges have designated a Schools Liaison Officer to anticipate and defuse problems of transition, as well as acting as a known face to new entrants to the College. Most crucially of all, Tertiary Colleges have generally given the responsibility for admission to a Vice Principal or other non-departmental person, thus ensuring an even-handed admissions policy, a dispassionate source of advice, and an embodiment of the principle that all courses have parity of esteem.

The case for Tertiary Colleges does not depend for its force only upon the likelihood of it giving all students an appropriate course. The value of a College is assessed by other criteria as well, but there are opportunities in a

Tertiary College for interesting and worthwhile subject combinations. I think that the days are well past, fortunately, when visitors to Tertiary Colleges expected to find large numbers of students engaged upon courses chosen from the whole of the College's range. It was always an aberration to anticipate combinations like some catering, plus some engineering, plus one GCE 'A' level, because such a mixture would confuse rather than enlighten, and probably lead to poor qualifications all round (although I should add that vocational preparation courses, with a built-in element of vocational sampling, are increasingly common, and not only in Tertiary Colleges). I am sure that the possibilities for the exploitation of the full range of expertise available in a Tertiary College are to be found in such areas as the General or Liberal Studies programme, and in the servicing of aspects of a course by experts from a different part of the College. A General Studies programme for, say, GCE students which includes the options of real engineering workshop experience; health studies (taught by NNEB or Pre-Nursing tutors); motor vehicle maintenance; self-catering; and grooming and hair-care, to give merely some obvious examples, in addition to the usual range of special interest options taught by enthusiasts, which give participants the chance to widen their range of significant experience. A policy of deploying a language graduate to teach French to caterers, an English specialist to cover communications in Business Studies courses, and a bona-fide Mathematician to take care of the mathematics component in Engineering, not only ensures the quality, but provides a variety of teaching which staff find stimulating and refreshing.

From a vantage point within a Tertiary College it is sometimes difficult to perceive the force of the arguments ranged against such a pattern. A Tertiary College seems such an obvious part of a wholly comprehensive system, and one which students and their parents understand so readily, that their case argues itself. Tertiary Colleges have at times suffered from false and unreasoning expectations. Their continuation of normal, high-quality provision has been perhaps taken for granted. Their advocates do not dwell as much as they might upon the most frequently adduced criteria: examination results in all areas of the curriculum are excellent (although many visitors tend to ask only about GCE statistics); the drop-out rate is hearteningly low; success in placing students in employment or higher education is considerable; the post-16 participation rate at every Tertiary College has increased since reorganisation, and in some cases very markedly so. This is all a matter of record, and comes as no surprise to those who have argued for Tertiary even before such evidence became available.

Educational and social criteria

It may seem surprising, therefore, that so many Tertiary Colleges, if not all, have been established as a matter of expediency rather than as the conclusion of an informed educational debate. It is almost as if the sound educational and social reasons for their existence had been an uncalculated bonus, not deployed in arguments about falling rolls, use of plant or class size indices. It is certainly the case that only one purpose-built Tertiary College is in existence, the rest have evolved from existing

FE Colleges and, frequently, buildings and staff transferred relatively uncritically from the schools sector.

This rather grudging conception may explain the feeling that the Tertiary College system had something to prove: any organisational pattern which gives the impression of compromise invites the observation that it is second best. If LEAs had embraced Tertiary more enthusiastically, if they had argued their case in public on the basis of educational advantage for all, if they had backed their arguments with better resources (including new and appropriate plant), and if they had thought through the implications for staff in-service training, some of the misplaced doubt and scepticism would have been avoided.

It would be absurd, of course, to pretend that Tertiary Colleges have no problems. There are practical difficulties in achieving some of the objectives (such as integration of different kinds of student for part of their programme; even the underscoring of equality of status for each course) where Colleges operate on a number of different sites. Accrington and Rossendale College, for example, has seven major sites separated by as much as eight miles. Careful timetabling and the assertion of a College as opposed to a departmental perspective can help to resolve this. More difficult are the problems which derive from the position of the College as sole provider. The absence of any alternative, perhaps competing, institution makes even more difficult the task of monitoring the College's programme of courses: disaffected students cannot vote with their feet, except out of education altogether. Ironically, the constant stream of visitors which Tertiary Colleges, with their aura of novelty, inevitably attract, provides a steady counter to

complacency. Questions about why things are ordered in a particular way compel regular reconsideration of the answers. The very fact that the College takes all post-16 students can induce a sense of apathy on the part of staff in local high schools; a knowledge that the College runs all conceivable courses can lead to a feeling that it can solve all problems. A corrective to such thinking is the subject panel, on which school and college staff meet regularly to discuss both the progress of individuals and any larger scale innovations in syllabus or curriculum. In this way, school colleagues retain a prolonged interest in their former pupils, and the likely consequences of a school altering its pattern of subject-options or switching to a different examination board can be assessed.

The comprehensive post-16 principle

Tertiary Colleges can provide for a district the best of both educational traditions, the flexibility and innovation of FE, and the academic excellence and pastoral concern of schools. Such a happy combination is not the automatic consequence of a Tertiary re-organisation, but can be achieved where there is a clear understanding by LEA, management and staff of the College of the essence of the comprehensive post-16 principle — each course and each student has equal importance, and resources and ingenuity should be directed to the establishment and assertion of that goal.

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A Special Number, *16-19*, was published in 1973 as Vol 15 No 2.

A new Mathematics Scheme

Gerry Price

Gerry Price is mathematics adviser to the Hertfordshire Education Committee. He writes here on the Hertfordshire Mathematics Achievement Scheme which has aroused a good deal of interest nationally.

In recent years there has been increasing interest in the nature of the mathematics course provided for 'non-exam' groups in the fourth and fifth years, and in ways of providing a worthwhile certificate for these pupils. The recently published Cockcroft Report highlights the fact that about 60 per cent of the ability range gain a grade 4 CSE or better in mathematics. The remainder includes a significant number who will have scored as few as five or 10 per cent of the marks in the examination. It is difficult to imagine what, if any, benefit they will have gained from their final two years of mathematics teaching. CSE courses have often been designed to be compatible with an O-level course and as such, are unlikely to suit the needs of pupils with low mathematical ability. Such considerations are leading an increasing number of teachers (and LEAs) to consider the appropriateness of a leavers certificate in mathematics; indeed, the Cockcroft Report urges an urgent feasibility study for such a scheme at national level.

The Hertfordshire Mathematics Achievement Scheme was conceived, in 1975, as a means of developing a realistic and worthwhile fourth and fifth year course in mathematics for those pupils unlikely to be entered for a public examination in mathematics. It is now used by about 100 schools in the county, including several special schools. The scheme has two main intentions:

- To administer an award scheme which records a pupil's positive achievements in mathematics, however modest, during the final years at school.
- To encourage meetings of teachers of mathematics with a view to developing teaching materials and teaching approaches.

From the outset the emphasis has been on the provision of a wide course of appropriate mathematics and on the development of skills and their application hand

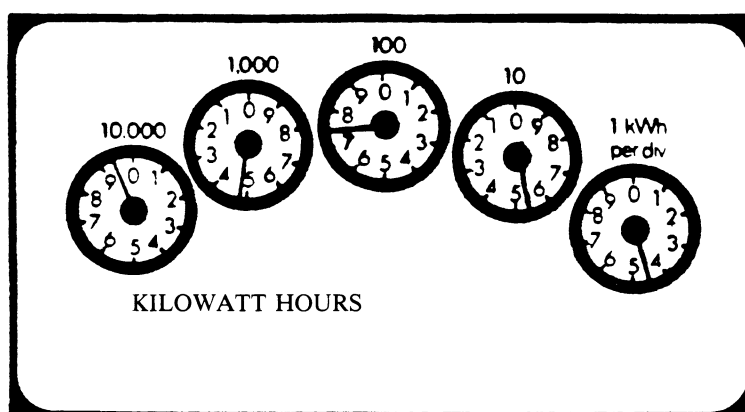
in hand. The award of a certificate is dependent on a pupil reaching a designated standard in written calculations and in a wider range of mathematics. The course is assessed by means of graded tests for Calculations and General Mathematics and topic based assignments relating mathematics to everyday life known as Work Units.

Tests in written calculations are set at three levels — Basic, Intermediate and Further. Pupils have to score 75 per cent on three different tests at any one level to achieve a pass. For each level a bank of five test papers is available. Individual pupils may sit papers when the teacher considers it to be appropriate and a period of at least two weeks has to elapse between sitting different papers at the same level. Failure is not catastrophic since 're-sits' are allowed. Thus a pupil may well take four or five (or even more) Basic Calculations tests before passing the required three. The persistence shown by many of the weakest pupils is remarkable; teachers new to the scheme often remark on the improved attitude of their classes. In many cases, it is the first time for years that the pupils have achieved such a consistently high standard. For those capable of doing so additional entries to a certificate may be made by passing the higher levels of Intermediate Calculations and Further Calculations and these are normally attained by 60 per cent and 15 per cent respectively of those receiving certificates.

In addition to Basic Calculations, a pass in General Mathematics is also required for award of a certificate. Here again, the pass mark is 75 per cent and other regulations are similar to those for Calculation papers, except that no time limit is set for completion of the papers. The test papers are unusual in style, drawing from real information presented in a form such as might be encountered in everyday life and including an element of practical testing. Examples of questions from two different papers are shown below:

What is the reading shown on this meter?

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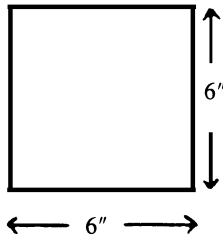
(2 marks)

YOUR TEACHER WILL SHOW YOU A SMALL AREA OF WALL.

Work out how many six inch square tiles are needed to cover this area.

..... (4 marks)

(For this question the teacher's notes suggest an area where one measurement is a multiple of 6 inches).



Thus it can be seen that, even with written test papers, the assessment is intended to support and encourage a suitable mathematics course. Written papers can only assess some aspects of a good mathematics course. For instance, they cannot assess the skills of mental computation which are an essential part of everyday life. Within the Achievement Scheme exist tests of mental arithmetic which, if a pupil is successful, may form an additional entry on his/her certificate. Tests of mental arithmetic are given orally, 24 questions being asked in 10 minutes; pupils may only write down the answers. These tests are produced as cassette tapes which the teacher may play to a class or give to an individual pupil to use with headphones.

A further important aspect of the Achievement Scheme is the Work Unit. The Work Unit is a teacher guided study of the mathematics relating to a topic of interest to the pupil and involves an extended period of study of about 15 hours lesson time. For most schools this amounts to half the time available each term. Popular topics include Money Management, Maths and Motoring, Maths and the Home. Although such an approach is not new it can present some problems. With insufficient guidance pupils can produce excellent work containing little mathematics; the range of suitable published resources is limited; and the arithmetic involved can quickly become quite complicated when dealing with real data. This latter point can be overcome by the sensible use of an electronic calculator, something which is encouraged within this aspect of the scheme. The problems posed by lack of resources and deciding the correct degree of guidance have been tackled (though not completely resolved) by various local working groups of teachers. These have produced guidance on content of Work Units and, more recently, the county has 'published' some pupil materials written by one such group.

Assessment of a Work Unit is inevitably subjective. An entry is made on the certificate where, in the judgement of the class teacher and an external assessor, the Work Unit represents good effort and achievement by the pupil. In reaching their decision they are required to take account of four criteria. These are described in measured language in the Teacher's Handbook and pupils have a Work Unit Progress Sheet which includes these criteria explained in simple terms as follows:

Presentation	Is your work as neat as you can make it?
Effort	Have you worked consistently well?
Accuracy	Is your work correct?
Variety	Is there a range of Mathematics linked to the title?

The teacher is required to initial each criterion on the Progress Sheet when a satisfactory standard has been achieved. Thus, within the extended piece of work there are known goals and pupils will usually know whether their Work Unit will be accepted as an additional entry on their certificate prior to the visit of the external assessor.

Before the start of the scheme, representatives of local employers were involved in informal consultations about content and structure and some helpful suggestions from them were incorporated into the scheme. Employers are kept informed about the scheme through direct contact with local employers' groups and via the County Careers Service. Feedback has been universally encouraging. Perhaps surprisingly, the Work Unit, with its somewhat subjective style of assessment, has been particularly well received by a number of major Hertfordshire employers. This is not to say that possession of a Hertfordshire Mathematics Achievement Certificate is a passport to a job. At a time of high youth unemployment, prospective employers are able to choose from a pool of comparatively well qualified youngsters, often to the disadvantage of the least able. The Achievement Certificate does, however, provide those interviewing school leavers with a reliable indication of mathematical achievement.

Of course, no such scheme is ever exactly right and a Steering Committee of teachers using the scheme are constantly looking at ways of improving it. However, it does seem that the Achievement Scheme provides a structure within which schools can provide for 'non-examination' pupils a mathematics programme which is sensitive to their needs and abilities.

Reviews

The Community School

The Challenge for the Comprehensive School: Culture, Curriculum and Community by David H. Hargreaves. Routledge and Kegan Paul (1982), £4.95 hardback.

The book begins by describing how children with little motivation for academic subjects are given no encouragement at all. Quite the contrary, there is a tremendous feeling of discouragement for these pupils. There are four main suppositions with which David Hargreaves initially concerns himself. Firstly, that our schools have an official curriculum and a hidden one, a view that has been explored by other educationists. Secondly that the effect of this hidden curriculum is seen as an assault on pupils' dignity. Thirdly, that working-class children, in particular, suffer from this assault; and, lastly, that whenever dignity is threatened, children will seek some form of negative display. This, it is claimed, is usually through some sort of counter-culture where young people who are oppositionals gain the courage and support that is needed to rebel.

The author then goes on to examine the decline of the community, and clearly shows how the traditional working-class system with extended families has been broken up and fragmented by the development of 'new towns' and the exploitation of properties. As a result of this, he claims, youth has formed its own sub-cultures to try and recover the feeling and solidarity of the community that existed before its decline.

In the next section, David Hargreaves looks at the 16-plus examination, which he points out, has developed without precedent over the last 20 years, but which has been over-shadowed by the more controversial topic of comprehensivisation — though in many views the two are inseparable. However, the proliferation of examinations has not given those compelled to stay on at school the necessary incentive to work. The author quite rightly points out that the grammar school curriculum continues to hold a dominant position in the comprehensive school and that only those subjects which can be effectively assessed are included in an examined curriculum. The underlying argument is that there is much need for reform in our examined curriculum.

In the section that follows, there evolves a debate between the culture of individualism and the corporate feeling of schools and all that that represents. The author states, 'secondary schools and their teachers are, I propose, deeply imbued with a culture of individualism'. This has not always been the case. In many ways it is one of a school's dilemmas. It has always been my own idealistic theory, that given a number on the school roll, then there should be an equal

number of educational systems within the school. However, he tries to balance this argument with the other extreme: that to give way to the culture of individualism will give rise to a system that will ignore the social functions and their consequences.

David Hargreaves goes on to consider the role of a community school acknowledging the vagueness of the term. He highlights a number of problems not least of which that true 'community' control would likely perpetuate the preference for a traditional curriculum.

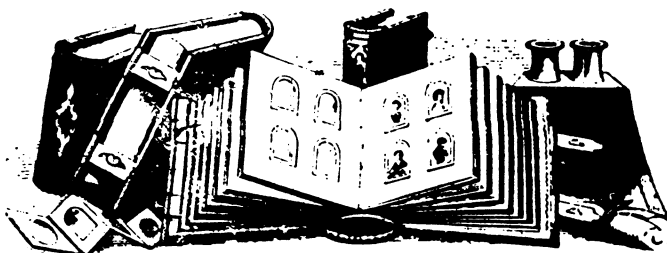
He explores a number of sensible ideas including the abolition of 16-plus examinations giving rise to a reconstruction of the curriculum. He also proposes that secondary schools should have a central 'core' curriculum for the eleven to fourteens or fifteens organised around community studies and the expressive arts. He claims that *all* children require community-related skills and knowledge if we are not to lose sight of the nation as a community. The importance that David Hargreaves places on community studies, cannot, in my opinion, be ignored. He propounds a very important concept wherein subjects more related to living, such as government and international relations, will be alongside more traditional subjects such as history.

In his proposal for a core curriculum, half of a pupil's timetable would involve traditional and new subjects, whilst the other half would be taken up with remedial options and fields of study where pupils show a special interest. His interpretation of the term 'remedial' is a broad one which I wholly support. It is concerned not only with literacy and numeracy but also with remedial work for the more able pupil. Who, for example, at the moment tries to 'improve' a child who lacks creativity or sincerity?

An examination of the culture of teaching reveals the author's view that the integration of subjects as he has suggested flourishes best where former secondary-modern teachers are most strongly represented. He also looks at the teaching job that now exists and concludes that it has become a more difficult occupation. From this he states that it is on a relatively powerless minority that he pins all his hopes.

Throughout the work David Hargreaves' central theme has been that of 'dignity'. It is the recreation of dignity in human beings which is seen as the most urgent task in our schools system. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights'. Schools must not contravene this basic right of human beings but should, indeed, foster dignity through attitudes, action and the curriculum. Who was it that said, the only difference between a rut and the grave is the depth? Before the rut becomes too deep, we should explore the profound message that Mr Hargreaves offers.

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A Right of Reply?

Mathematics Counts. The Cockcroft Report, HMSO (1982), £5.75.

'It has been said, for instance, that accuracy in the manipulation of figures does not reach the same standard which was reached twenty years ago. Some employers express surprise and concern at the inability of young persons to perform simple numerical operations involved in business.' (Board of Education Report, 1925.)

Thus are we comforted in the introduction to the Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Teaching of Mathematics in Schools, under the chairmanship of Dr W.H. Cockcroft. It seems that mathematical 'standards' have never been what they used to be.

The Cockcroft Committee was set up in 1978 to 'consider the teaching of mathematics in primary and secondary schools in England and Wales, with particular regard to the mathematics required in further and higher education, employment and adult life generally, and to make recommendations'.

The report includes lengthy sections which detail the sort of work and the kind of approach needed if our children are to emerge as numerate adults. The 'back to basics' school of thought is firmly put down. 'Mathematics teaching for pupils of all ages should include exposition, discussion, appropriate practical work, problem solving, investigation, consolidation and practice, as well as mental and oral work'. Emphasis is given to the importance of language in mathematics and a 'mathematics across and beyond the curriculum' approach. One may be forgiven for being surprised at finding little to be surprised at, but the report's tone is certainly optimistic, and supportive of teaching methods now widely in use since the Open University began courses in the teaching of mathematics.

Indeed, it is because of the Open University courses, that teachers are beginning to understand the extra demands made on them when teaching along the lines suggested by Cockcroft. Practical work in mathematics requires much planning and monitoring if it is to be useful; talking mathematical ideas through with pupils takes much time and mental energy; maths 'across and outside' the curriculum needs planning, co-operation between departments, and space on a timetable — often particularly difficult where large schools are concerned. Cockcroft believes that the role of the head of department is crucial in the implementation of the report's recommendations, and that certain of his or her duties can only be performed while teaching is in progress 'and the necessary time needs to be provided within the timetable'.

Qualification to teach mathematics is another subject to which Cockcroft gives much thought. 'There can be no doubt that the most important resource of good



mathematics teaching is an adequate supply of competent mathematics teachers'. The report goes on to detail the committee's rather arbitrary, not to say insensitive, categories of qualification to teach mathematics.

A teacher with a 'good' qualification, is a trained teacher with a degree in mathematics.

An 'acceptable' qualification varies from a B.Ed with mathematics as a subsidiary subject, to a Certificate in Education (Secondary) with mathematics as a main subject, to an untrained mathematics graduate.

A 'weak' qualification includes teachers holding a Certificate in Education (Junior or Junior/Secondary) with mathematics as a main subject.

Teachers holding a Certificate in Education with mathematics as a subsidiary subject are held to have 'nil' qualification in mathematics.

Thus, according to Cockcroft, two-fifths of secondary mathematics teaching, and three-fifths of secondary-age mathematics teaching in middle schools, is in 'unsuitable' hands.

Such comments cannot help but undermine the confidence of teachers who see the report as a vindication of their teaching methods. Colleagues who have learned from their teaching how to help children towards an appreciation and enjoyment of successful mathematics may find Cockcroft's concern with paper qualifications rather insulting. Surely this report offered an opportunity for the committee to try to discover what *does* make a successful mathematics teacher? Does the most successful mathematics teaching occur where children work along the lines recommended by Cockcroft? Are their teachers graduates? Is success in external examinations the only mark of efficient mathematics teaching?

In the Foreword to the report, Sir Keith Joseph insists that many of Cockcroft's recommendations involve no extra call on expenditure. Sir Keith, I believe, misjudges the matter. For Cockcroft ends his report by stating that if our children are to develop an understanding of mathematics and a confidence in its use 'this can only come about as the result of good mathematics teaching by teachers who have been trained for their work and who receive *continuing in-service support*'.

There is, of course, a basic fault in all government reports like this one. The committee was set up in 1978, reported in 1982, and quotes figures which are at least two years out of date.

The report is published as a fait accompli — there is no right of reply. Surely it is time that such commissions were re-organised into smaller groups to enable interim reports to be published, examined and re-drafted as necessary, so that the final report and recommendations could include material from a far wider range of contributors.

P.S. Whatever happened to the Bullock Report?

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Accountability — a vogue word

School accountability (1981): John Elliott, David Bridges, Dave Ebbutt, Rex Gibson, Jennifer Nias, Grant McIntyre. £14.95 hardback; £5.95 paperback.

Issues in Evaluation and Accountability (1981): edited by Colin Lacey and Denis Lawton. Methuen. £9.95 hardback; £4.95 paperback.

Education is peculiarly prey to fashions and fancies, and accountability was a vogue word of the late seventies. Time was when titles beginning 'Accountability and . . .' came thick and fast, in much the same way that publishers put swastikas on the front of paperbacks to arouse interest. Both these books have their origins in those heady days, but represent mature and useful contributions to what is, after all, an issue of some importance.

School Accountability has emerged from the work of the SSRC Cambridge Accountability Project, based at the Cambridge Institute of Education and resulting from a proposal first submitted to the SSRC by John Elliott in 1978. It is the result of, essentially, an interpretive evaluation of six secondary schools by a team of five researchers, probing the meaning and practice of evaluation. It stems from a great many interviews and is accompanied by a separate set of six case studies, 'each of which was drafted at least twice'. It is, therefore, if not the book of the film, certainly the book of the tape.

Those familiar with John Elliott's previous work will not be surprised to learn that the project embodies a case study approach and an 'action-research orientation', and that the project team aimed to be 'responsive to teachers' perceptions and understandings'. This is the language of mainlining case study enthusiasts, whose democratic model means the teachers' ownership of data and a concern to 'elicit teachers' interpretations of their accountability and to allow this data to influence the development of our thinking on the subject'. There are, of course, other styles of interpretive evaluation: and in interpreting the evaluation itself (these interactive exercises become quite complicated) it is helpful to know where the evaluators stand.

In any event, such approaches to the research task are poles apart from the psychometric simplicities of, say, *Fifteen Thousand Hours* (Rutter et al), and in my view all the better for it. But it is probably easier to write a team book when you have clear-cut graphs and statistics to bind the enterprise together; in the nature of things, case study is a personal business and this book is more a collection of papers trawling from a common pool of resource material than a unified work telling some sort of story. Despite the promise of Elliott's introduction, it is a series of personal arguments rather

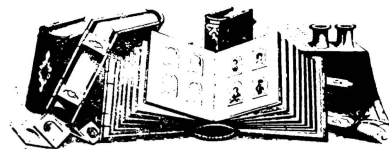
than an account of a shared discussion. This is a loss, since one is left with the feeling that the book does less than justice to the talents of its authors. The final synthesis is missing.

However, it offers much good sense, and some ideas which are valuable. I found Elliott's paper on how parents judge schools an important contribution — perhaps because it accords with my own perceptions when a headmaster. But I suspect others will agree that most parents 'do not hold schools accountable against *product criteria* like examination results but against *process criteria* which pick out their capacities for human relations'. I also enjoyed David Bridges on teachers and the 'world of work', which also challenges conventional wisdom about the seemingly endless benefits expected to result from linking school and work together: 'Our studies suggest, however, that it may be naive to assume that the gaps in attitudes and values would in practice be narrowed by closer familiarity with each other's world'.

The aim of the project is to develop 'grounded theory' from the data themselves, and sometimes this works well. Sometimes it doesn't, and you get the feeling that a few instances or remarks from the interviews are being expected to sustain a greater weight of theorising than they can bear. In places some of the writing gets pretentious (there is much talk of 'dimensions' and 'role structures'), and some of the ideas seem rum: is it really true that 'trust means predictability'? The civil service is predictable, but fails to inspire trust. Hasn't it more to do with confidence than routines? And there are some curious omissions: little is said about the work of advisers, which raises questions about their real influence. And one looks in vain for more light on the slippery concept of the 'community school': indeed, the word 'community' is not in the index. But the book is worth reading and arguing about.

Issues in Education and Accountability also started life in 1978, at a joint seminar between a Schools Council research team and the curriculum studies department at the University of London Institute of Education. One might, therefore, expect the collection of these into book form to have a dated look given the speed of developments in this field. This is partly true: in 1978 a critical examination of the Rasch model for educational assessment was a vital matter, given its adoption by the DES Assessment of Performance Unit and the support of the NFER testers. Three papers here deal exclusively with it. In 1981 the critics won, and its use as the basis of the APU item bank was dropped.

Yet there is much to be gained from a close study of how a research proposition finds favour, is attacked and ultimately drops out of sight — quite apart from the fact that, in reading the story of the Rasch model, one gains a useful insight into the assumptions of the measurement men and the connection between changes in a pupil's mind on the one hand, and evidence of those changes on the other. These papers constitute the heart of the second part of the book, which focuses on the APU and has a useful, crisp introduction



New Journals

Two new (or newish) journals should be brought to the attention of *Forum* readers. *What Next?* (sub-titled 'in education') produced its first number in autumn 1981, and intends to publish four issues a year for a subscription of £4.00 (including postage) or 65p a copy plus 20p for postage. The editorial for the first number defines its stance and scope. The journal's main aim is to provide a forum for discussion 'involving people and organisations interested in education' — in particular to get teachers and parents talking with each other on educational issues. 'We believe that such an interchange is urgently needed' the editors write, 'and we hope this opportunity will not be missed'.

Articles in the first number include one by Bernard Barker on a job exchange scheme, another on 'Incoherence in Junior School Humanities', while parents are represented in an article by Tony Pittman of the National Confederation of Parent Teacher Associations on 'Parents — A Neglected Resource in Education'. There is a section on 'Learning Situations' beamed, presumably, at teachers; a short story (to be a regular feature) and a section on resources. The journal is published by Academic and Business Monographs Ltd., 6 Brodrick Road, London SW17, to whom subscriptions should be sent. The Editorial Board consists of working teachers and the journal is entirely self-funded.

Community Education Network is the other journal brought to our attention by Harry Ree, its editor. This is an ambitiously produced monthly which looks like a newspaper in its lay-out, and is now well into its second year of existence. It is produced by the Community Education Development Centre whose address is CEDC, Briton Road, Coventry CV2 4LF. This aims to bring together all individuals and organisations interested in community education. The Centre was founded in September 1980 with funds from foundations in Holland and the United States in premises provided by the City of Coventry (a pioneer authority in this area). Its aim is to 'promote the development of community education nationwide' (in the sense of lifelong education). Its three arms are training, development and evaluation, and publications produced in co-operation with community educators everywhere. A quarterly journal is also produced, but *Network* is a lively journal, well-produced and popular; covering a wide area of interest — and particularly articles covering community developments in comprehensive schools, a special interest of *Forum's*. With Harry Ree as editor, this journal should do well. The annual subscription is £4.50 which covers postage and will bring the subscriber ten issues.

BRIAN SIMON

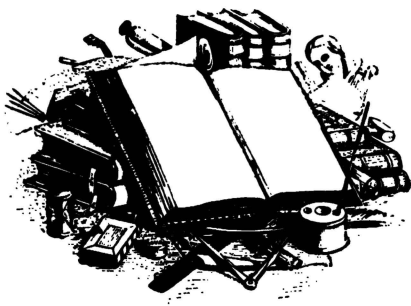
to the key issues by Denis Lawton.

The first part is introduced by Colin Lacey, and deals with aspects of evaluation. The illuminative (or interpretive) style of evaluation is criticised by Carl Parsons; Norman Williams argues for an eclectic approach; Helen Simons rejects 'product models' of school evaluation, and argues for school self-evaluation using a process model, while conceding that 'a certain amount of time is needed for schools to produce self-accounts and for teachers and outsiders to become familiar with the kind of data which is offered and the criteria by which self-accounts should be valued'. There is, therefore, an interesting connection between this collection of papers and the Cambridge Accountability Project.

The book's strengths are its skilful editing — which brings an air of unity to the proceedings — and its adversarial accounts, which allow the reader to examine conflicting value positions and conflicting interpretations. After reading it, one would know more about evaluation, and also more about the process of curriculum debate; that there are no right answers — only defensible ones.

MAURICE HOLT

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The Giftedness Machine

The Great Giftedness Machine grinds on and on. Not just in the British Gifted Association's newsletters, but now in a new International Gifted Journal, associated with the third teachers' conference on the gifted, held in July, 1982, in London.

The sponsors of both the new journal and the conference are something called the Leonardo Trust, whose leaflet claims that awareness of the 'needs' of gifted pupils is growing, but that 'unfortunately, there is a lack of appropriate materials' for them.

The conference was held, therefore, to introduce teachers 'new to gifted education' to such materials, and the journal will circulate ideas between countries. Its sponsors list in-

cludes one from Argentina, one from West Germany, several from Australia, but by far the largest number — half — from England. They are dons, teacher educators, and one up-market journalist. Clearly, the 'international' effort is a UK thrust.

At the conference most of the speakers were British (except for three Americans from three different projects): HMIs, some retired; education advisors from three shire county LEAs; teachers from a girls' public school, and university teachers who sponsor research groups on the gifted.

Their objectives were admirable: to make people aware of the needs of gifted children, to spot good practices in schools, and so on. Who could quarrel with any of it — except that different definitions of 'gifted' were being used and there appeared to be no agreement on what giftedness really is, including who takes the decision to exclude pupils from this wonderful new attention and extra expenditure because someone, somewhere decides they are not gifted?

There is also the problem, says one blurb for one lecture, of children 'with intelligence below the mean' in whom the GCE will always 'induce despair'. For them, another kind of teaching is best, which, some will maintain 'is the way to teach all children'. Quickly the blurb asks, 'Is this in the interests of the talented?'.

One has the sinking feeling that the answer is going to be no, and that one distinguished speaker after another is going to say that children with one kind of intelligence need one kind of course and one kind of examination and maybe even one kind of school, while everyone else needs something different. The fact that 11 plus selection schemes in Britain have been using the 'needs of the gifted' to justify continuing in business, makes many parents and teachers very suspicious about everything else giftedness people get up to.

While giftedness people fail to repudiate the misuse of giftedness for selection and fail to agree that ANY child could have a gift, their efforts will continue to arouse suspicion, and their work will not meet with the success that much of it may well deserve.

CAROLINE BENN



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