

INSTITUTE OF CURRENT WORLD AFFAIRS

IJS-12 THE SCHOOLS COUNCIL II:
TEACHERS' CENTERS

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London, N.W.6.
England

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U S A.

Dear Mr. Nolte:

If one asks the staff of the Schools Council: What are the most important media of contact with the schools? The answer invariably cites "teachers' centers" quite prominently in the list. Teachers' centers are cast in a central role in the process of curriculum reform in England. So I decided to see for myself what these institutions are, compared with the ideal of what they ought to be.

The ideal varies from center to center and pundit to pundit. But implicit in the various Schools Council documents on the subject and in conversations with Schools Council staff is a common core of ideas about the ideal. Teachers' centers should be places where teachers are involved in their own curriculum development and where they can find out about curriculum resources, local and national. Also, these centers are thought to be places where teachers can meet each other informally and compare notes about problems.

1. HISTORY AND ORGANIZATION

The first teachers' centers were founded in the early and mid-'60s. These institutions tended to be special interest curriculum centers associated with people doing special subject area curriculum developments, often funded by the Nuffield Foundation. And some centers were social clubs.

Throughout the early and mid'60s there was no more than a handful of teachers' centers. But by 1969 there were 270 institutions which called themselves teachers' centers. This growth can be directly ascribed to the encouragement of the Schools Council. The spurt of development followed the publication by the Council of a document explaining teachers' centers and their role in curriculum development.*

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*(See "Teachers' Groups and Centres, Working Paper 10," 1967, HMSO, London.)

Today there are about 500 teachers' centers.

The centers are organized and funded by the local educational authorities in England and Wales. The field staff of the Schools Council provides moral support and counseling to the Wardens of the centers and is quite active in encouraging local authorities to establish new centers. However, the specific character of the centers seems to vary according to the human (or to be specific, teacher) ecology of the area, the attitude of the local authority, and the financial support which the authority gives. There is no external funding of teachers' centers.

The eleven members of the field staff of the Schools Council devote about half their time to Teachers' centers. In addition to personal contact with wardens in their own centers, field officers maintain regular contact with local or regional groups of wardens who may meet, for example, termly or monthly. Such groups of wardens have grown significantly in the last eighteen months.

There does not appear to be a coordinated program for explicitly using the teachers' centers for informing the schools about the details of particular Schools Council research projects. The dissemination of news about particular projects on a regular basis is done mainly through a "Project Profile and Index", which lists and briefly describes Schools Council materials and research in progress. There is no systematic effort by the field staff to communicate information about particular projects to the teachers through teachers' centers. Dissemination takes place in a much more informal and haphazard manner. And it seems to rely more on the initiative of particular Schools Council project teams than on the continuing efforts of the field staff.

II. PROFILES OF PARTICULAR TEACHERS' CENTERS

There appear to be about as many different types of teachers' centers as there are centers. Therefore, the best way to introduce the idea of centers to you and to communicate the differences among them is to report on each of the centers which I have personally visited. Although the list of the visits was organized for me by the staff of the Schools Council, not by me independently, I believe the list to have been fairly representative, for my reading about other centers indicates that my sample provided a cross-section.

I specifically asked for diversity of surrounding population as well as differences in approach to the operation of the centers. And my sample indicates that this request was met. I visited Calcot, near Reading, which serves suburban and rural areas; Ealing, suburban

and urban neighbourhoods of mixed racial population; Letchworth, small town and rural; and Newham, urban and racially mixed. The class characteristics varied from purely working class in Newham to mainly upper-middle in parts of Letchworth. So a variety of populations was served by the list of centers.

A. CALCOT TEACHERS' CENTER, NEAR READING

The Calcot Teachers' Center is a make-shift arrangement of two rooms and part of a hallway off an infant school in Calcot. There are also two adjoining workrooms, one of which used to be a loo.

The center is run by Mr. J.C. Robinson, who is also the primary advisor for the Berkshire Education Authority. Mr. Robinson, an older man who used to teach in a teacher training college in Australia, devotes only one-third of his time to the running of the teachers' center. The rest of his time is spent in his job as primary school supervisor.

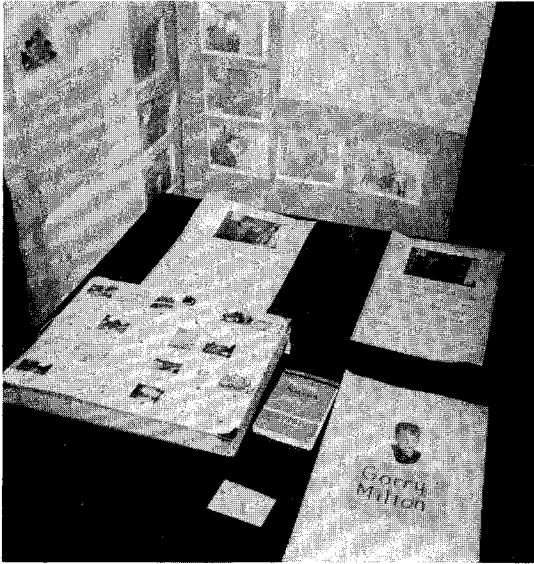
The part-time nature of the Robinson appointment accounts for the weakness of the Center. Although the Center was founded almost four years ago as a place for trainee teachers to meet and talk about problems, it is still only partially utilized.

The day I visited the Center the warden had convened a meeting of teachers from surrounding primary schools, as well as a few secondary school teachers. This meeting was supposed to be a combined planning session and enthusiasm generating exercise.

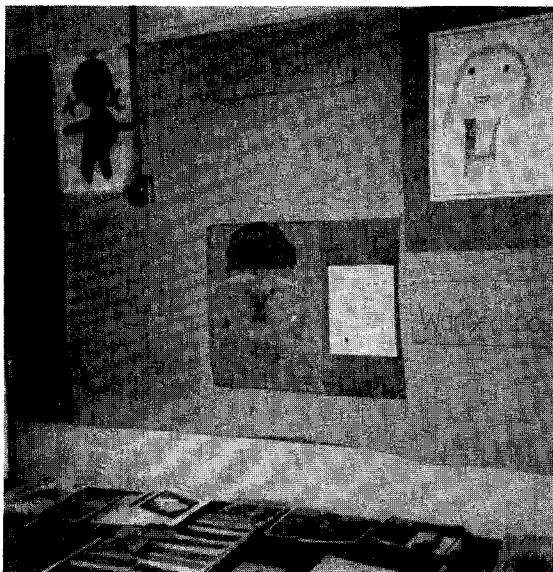
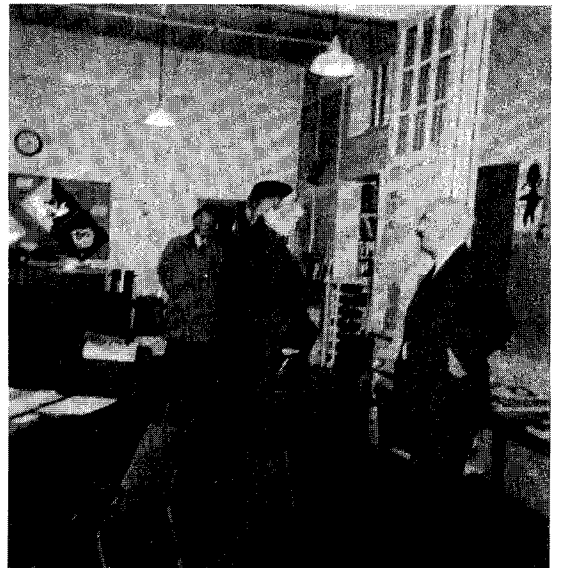
I went to the meeting with a member of the Schools Council field staff, Mr. Rex Hepburn. Mr. Hepburn had been a headmaster of a comprehensive school before becoming a member of the field staff. He presented a short talk which shared with those in attendance the experiences of other and more successful centers. His presentation was quiet and supportive; and seemed to be well received.

The assembled teachers were quite enthusiastic about the idea of a teachers' center, but they obviously felt that in the past this particular center had not been very successful. Out of the discussion there emerged a shared interest in convening a series of discussions between primary and secondary teachers about their common problems. A unanimous complaint of everyone present was that there was absolutely no communication between the two levels of state education. And it seems that the only on-going curriculum development groups at the center had consisted mainly of primary school teachers.

This emphasis on the problems of primary schools may reflect the background of the warden. But it seems to be a common problem of teachers' centers that they have focused on primary schools at the expense of secondary schools and the relationship between them.



Pictures from the
Calcot Teachers'
Centre near Reading.



The overall discussion offered a great deal of encouragement about the future development of the Calcot Teachers' Center. But it astounded me to observe that this sort of meeting was happening in the fall of 1971, after four years of operation. Had this been the first meeting of a brand new center, just attempting to get off the ground, it would have been understandable. Yet if this meeting was the best that could be done after four years, it is clear that the center lacks effective leadership and support. Also from the discussion it is apparent that the Berkshire authorities are considered by the teachers to be quite retrogressive in attitude and parsimonious in financial support for educational reform; and the part-time character of the warden's appointment attests to this fact. For this center to succeed it will need much support from the Schools Council and other sources.

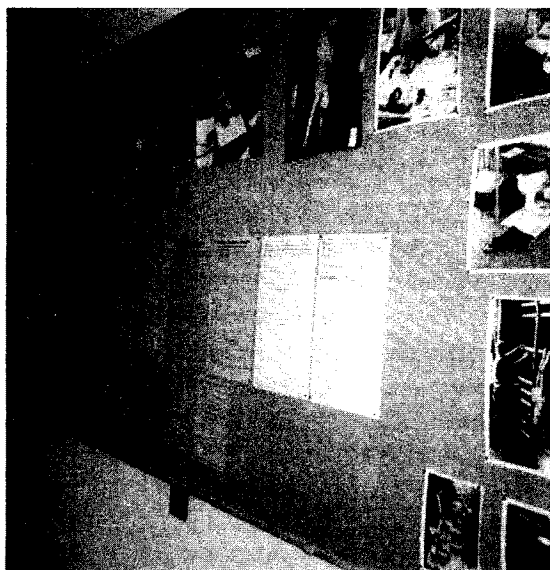
B. THE EALING TEACHERS' CENTER

The Ealing Teachers' Center is located in a lovely sports complex, which was formerly the games area for the J.L. Lyons Tea Company (of Lyon's Corner House and Wimpy Hamburger infame, for the Anglophilic reader). The facilities became too expensive for Lyons, so they sold them to the Borough of Ealing, which transformed them into a community center. The Ealing Education Authority rented space in the complex for the Teachers' Center.

The facilities devoted to the center are quite impressive: there is a lounge with a bar, which is open nightly (the warden holds the license), a series of meeting rooms, work rooms, a secretary's office (with secretary included) and the warden's office. Also, the center has access to a large hall, a cafeteria, and the sports facilities.

The sumptuous physical facilities are the result of the coincidence of the acquisition of the Lyons plant by Ealing and the reason for founding a teachers' center by the Ealing Education Authority. This center was founded about two and one-half years ago as a social center for teachers in the Ealing system. Many of the teachers are young and single and live in bed-sitters (one room apartments), so there is little opportunity for social life. The Education Committee of the Borough Council wanted to provide a social club; so they rented part of the community center.

The warden of the Ealing Center is a young man, Mr. V.H. Hickling, who was a former deputy head primary teacher. His first task was organizing the social club and converting the Lyons' facilities to his purposes. He now has a thriving social club with over 500 members.



What is going on at
the North London
Teachers' Center
in Ealing.

The sumptuous facilities
at Ealing: what's good
enough for Lyons Tea is
good enough for Ealing
Teachers.



In addition to the social activities of the center, the warden organizes a series of in-service training courses during every academic term. In Ealing, unlike most local educational authorities, the teachers' center is the sole source of in-service training courses. Usually the authorities themselves, or in conjunction with a college of education or a university, provide these courses. But Hickling's center has become the agency for this service in Ealing. In the past term, his courses have run the gamut from mathematics for primary teachers to a course on race relations. (Ealing has many immigrant children.) Ealing also has some small curriculum development groups, but most of the work done is in the traditional form of lecture courses.

However, Ealing does have one important innovation, which is associated with the teachers' center. The authority has organized a team of young teachers, each of whom is available to go into a school for four to six weeks to free a teacher in a particular school to come to the teachers' center to undertake curriculum development. In addition, these visiting teachers are encouraged to innovate in the schools they visit. During the past year there were five participating teachers on the relief team; next year there will be twenty.

Also, Hickling has organized a system of teachers' center representatives in every school in the borough. These representatives act as information sources for their schools about what is going on at the center. However, in the past, according to Hickling, these representatives have been used only to publicize social activities. In our conversation it became apparent that these school representatives could become important links in the whole process of curriculum reform, if Hickling started involving them in substantive educational activities. He said that he would think about an improved system for utilizing these representatives in the future.

The major complaint which Hickling had about the operation of his center was the lack of adequate staff resources. He said that he did not have the time to do half what he wanted to do. But he expects this situation to improve dramatically in 1972, because he will add a full-time deputy warden, another full-time secretary, and additional part-time wardens and secretaries. With the additional staff he expects to establish major curriculum development programs. Because of the success of the social club side of the center activities, he has a ready-made audience. It will be interesting to see whether he can take advantage of his many physical and social benefits.

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C. THE NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE TEACHERS' CENTER

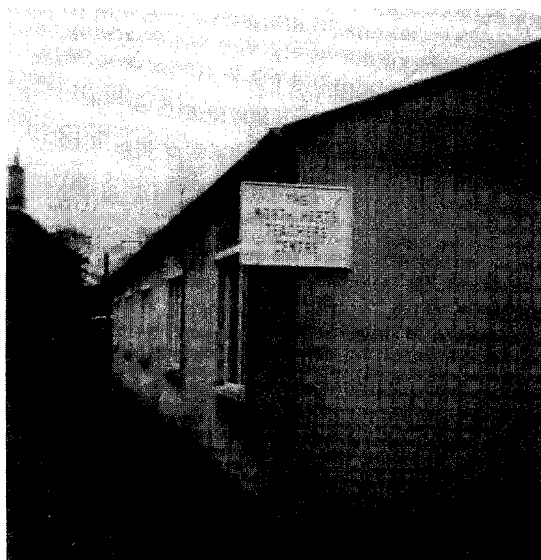
The North Hertfordshire Teachers' Center provides an interesting contrast with the centers described above. Many of the differences can be ascribed to the personality and philosophy of the warden, Mr. John Jones. Placing a Welshman in charge of a teachers' center situated in Ebenezer Howard's first garden city, Letchworth, in the center of a rural area and bedroom community is bound to lead to a distinctive approach to educational and organizational problems.

Mr. Jones is evangelical in his zeal for the Schools Council line about the teacher as a professional. He deduces from this first principle a strong commitment to voluntary participation in the activities of the center and to activities which focus on the needs of the particular teachers who use the center. Initially, when he started the center three years ago, he offered a number of in-service training courses. But he decided that these did not require enough out of the teachers, so he has concentrated on a number of smaller curriculum development groups. Jones only invites experts from outside of the teaching profession when the professionals themselves ask for such assistance. He has developed an ethos of "the center for the teachers and by the teachers," not "for and by the university psychologist or educationist to earn a lecturing fee."

Jones will not say how many teachers participate in the activities of the center, because he believes that such statistics do not adequately communicate the quality of the participation. He says that when he was offering in-service training courses, attendance was often measured in the hundreds.

Presently Jones has one curriculum development project examining the curriculum of infants' schools. Another is examining mathematics in primary schools. And a third is exploring the role of movement in physical education. All of these projects emphasize the problems of pre-secondary education. This emphasis in part reflects dynamics common to other centers, but is accountable in this case by the large number of schools served (approximately seventy) with the relatively small number of teachers (two to three hundred). Many of the schools are rural and have only one or two teachers. So the teachers' center provides the only opportunity for communication among these small groups of primary teachers.

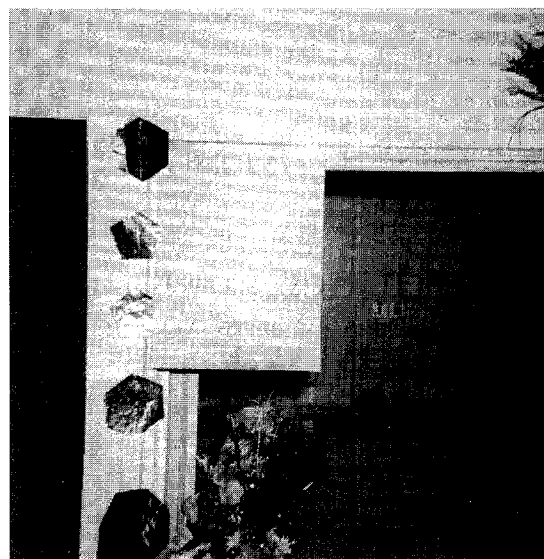
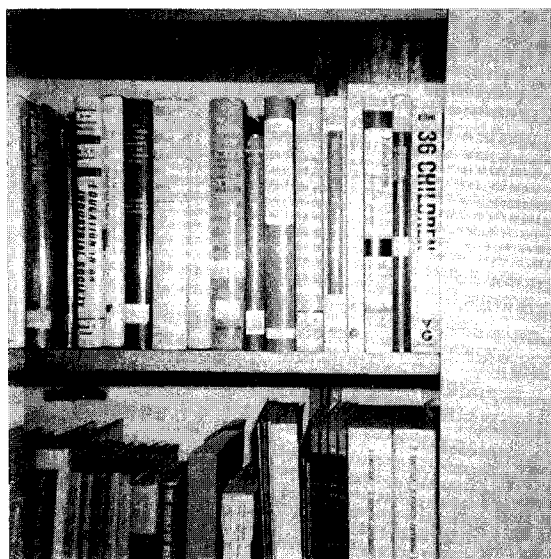
Although the physical location of the center presently serves mainly primary teachers, Jones himself obviously has a much wider role. He, to use his own word, "services" all of the secondary schools in his area. What this means is that he actively visits not only primary schools but also secondary schools on a regular basis. One of his major tasks in these visits is to share with the



Views from North
Hertfordshire.



What happens when
you let the Welsh
loose in England!



secondary school teachers information about the results of Schools Council research, which are relevant to their particular problems. Jones' success in servicing his secondary constituency cannot be evaluated on the information at hand; but I can attest to the fact that when we visited a comprehensive secondary school in the area for lunch, he was greeted with enthusiasm by the headmaster (which may be accounted for by the fact that he was Welsh too!) and the staff (which is not subject to a national origins explanation). Jones takes the teachers' center into the secondary schools.

In spite of a simple and small physical plant and limited staff -- one secretary -- it is obvious even to the casual visitor that this teachers' center in Letchworth is offering a meaningful educational service. And the philosophy of the teacher as a professional is being given a clear test.

D. NEWHAM TEACHERS' CENTER

The impact of the principle of the teacher as professional on the actual activities of the teachers' center is also noticeable in Newham, a working-class borough of London. In an old Victorian school building surrounded by prim but small attached houses, one finds a teachers' center which is among the oldest in the country.

Newham was originally founded as part of the Nuffield Foundation's mathematics for primary schools program eight years ago. Then about four years ago it was reorganized as a general purpose teachers' center with an emphasis on the problems involved in raising the school leaving age. It is important to note that its conversion to a general purpose center coincided with an emphasis on a problem of major interest to secondary schools. For this reason, among others, Newham has not had the problem of being seen as a center only for primary school teachers.

The commitment to the vision of teacher as professional has led the center's director, Mr. Ernest Millington, to eschew in-service training courses. Millington sees the role of a teachers' center in the middle of a metropolitan area to be one of involving the teacher in solving his own problems. The many universities and polytechnics in the area can offer in-service training courses. He has devised two strategies for implementing this policy.

First, Millington has played the role of community organizer within the local educational authority, in that he has helped all of the teachers in the subject groups to organize associations: e.g., there is a physics masters association, a maths masters association, a careers advisory officers association, etc. Each of these groups is encouraged to meet regularly and to undertake substantive

curriculum projects through the center.

Second, the warden has organised major and long term, theme-oriented development projects which cut across disciplines and age-groups. For example, one year he had a series of discussions about problems of race relations. Initially he had about fifty teachers representing most of the schools in the district. After a series of discussions, the teachers organized a number of authority-wide conferences for students and teachers. In these conferences curriculum materials which the teachers had been developing were tried on a large population of students -- over 1000, out of a potential student population of 30,000. Because of the success of the materials and the reputation which was spread by word from the test population, teachers and students throughout the district started using the materials as the basis of conversations about race relations.

Another innovative, interdisciplinary and inter-age project initiated by the teachers' center dealt with the problems of changing from a selective secondary school system to one with comprehensive secondary schools (like American high schools). Out of discussions between primary and secondary school teachers at the center there evolved a strategy whereby one teacher involved in the last year of primary school would go with his class of students from the primary school to the secondary school for the first year there. This teacher could then provide continuity for the students and information about the learning habits and problems of the students to the secondary teachers. This strategy has been adopted by the district. This particular curriculum innovation grew out of the very sort of discussion between different sectors of education, which the teachers in Calcot so much desire.

Once again the personality and philosophy of the warden of the center is important to its success. The warden, Mr. Millington, is a former British Air Force pilot, who did not enter the teaching profession until after he was 40. He has taught subjects ranging from remedial reading to Greek. He has a B.A. in English and Sociology (earned at night) and is presently working for an M.Phil. on a part time basis at the University of London Institute of Education. He continues to teach on an ad hoc but regular schedule, usually trying out curriculum materials developed at his center. In his "spare time", Millington is an active member of the Parliamentary Society for World Citizenship and is preparing a research proposal for developing a "world studies curriculum" for schools.

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III. COMPARISONS AND CONTRASTS

Some lessons emerge from the preceding profiles.

First, the importance of a full time warden. And, though it may be trivial to state, one should note the significance of the personal characteristics of the warden. The differences in attitude and approach of the wardens, more than any other influence, determined the distinctiveness of the various teachers' centers.

A second lesson, not apparent from the facts of the narratives but implicit in them, is the importance of strong support from the chief education officer of the local authority. Ealing, North Hertfordshire, and Newham have the strong support of the chief education officers; Calcot does not. Ealing, North Hertfordshire, and Newham are adding staff or getting other sorts of support -- such as substitute teachers for those participating in center activities; Calcot must beg and borrow to get its limited budget out of a primary supervisor's budget, not even as a line item in and of itself. The variation among authorities becomes critical because of the lack of external, national funding for teachers' centers.

Individual centers teach us particular lessons. Ealing demonstrates the potential of social activities within a center. Newham shows how important it is to involve the center in a wide range of educational activities in an area and to indulge in the educational equivalent of community organizing. North Hertfordshire indicates the possible return from considering the teachers' center to be a service out in the schools, not just in a particular location. And Calcot shows that even with a minimal investment of money and time, some positive results are possible, because teachers want the resources which a teachers' center can provide.

The most important common lesson which all of the centers have to teach is that the teachers' centers can be important change agents in local educational authorities. The centers and their wardens not only deal with traditional curriculum problems, but they also initiate new approaches to a broad range of educational issues. The provision of in-service training for the district and the team of relief teachers in Ealing and the idea about sending primary teachers along with their charges to secondary schools in Newham indicate the way in which teachers' centers have become agencies for change within their authorities.

Another point which ought to be kept in mind is that the role of the Teachers' center and its warden cannot be divorced from the nature of the system which it serves; especially the kinds of supporting

services offered -- such as local authority advisors to teachers and teacher training by local colleges of education and universities. Strategies which might be successful in London, might fail dismally in rural Wales.

The question which these lessons leave with the student of teachers' centers is: how can the centers be encouraged to exploit their role as change agents more successfully? And this is a question for the Schools Council too.

IV. THE SCHOOLS COUNCIL AND TEACHERS' CENTERS

When one asks the warden of a teachers' center about the Schools Council, he is likely to get a generally positive reply but with major reservations. The most enthusiastic comment is about the field staff, who are consistently praised as outstanding people. Secondly, positive remarks are made about the content of much of the work of Schools Council research teams, although here there are exceptions. However, instead of giving a detailed report of the encouraging commentary on the Schools Council, it is more important to consider carefully the reservations which the wardens expressed about the Schools Council activities. These reservations can best be analyzed in two categories: those dealing with the research teams and their results; and those reflecting on the overall organization and approach of the Schools Council.

Reservations about the project teams and their results focus on the composition of the teams and the character of the materials produced. Two wardens said that they thought the teams which undertook curriculum development drew too heavily on university researchers for direction and not enough on practicing teachers. They made this point in regard to direction, not in terms of testing materials, where the involvement of practicing teachers is already quite substantial.

The comments on the curriculum materials themselves were mixed. All of the wardens thought that the finished materials tended to be too expensive for extensive use in the classroom. This impression is probably based on the few projects, whose materials are very expensive - the Humanities Project was often mentioned here. But the actual quality of the materials was thought to be quite high.

There was disagreement between the views of two wardens about a particular project, which is worth some attention, because it highlights the difficulty of curriculum development on a national scale. The disagreement was about the Humanities Project, which recommends a new teaching method, based upon the teacher as neutral chairman, as well as provides new classroom materials on controversial subjects

such as race relations and education itself. Mr. Jones was quite enthusiastic about the materials and the method. While Mr. Millington had a number of reservations: he was especially sceptical about the efficacy of the teaching method. Indeed, Millington said that the method would not in fact work; and he related this point to his criticism of the composition of research teams, because he said that a practicing teacher in charge of the project would have known that the method would not work.

In the context of this newsletter I cannot adjudicate between the two positions taken in regard to the Humanities Project. I only wish to point out the disagreement, which indicates that Schools Council research results are not taken as the gospel handed down from the mountain but are subjected to vigorous scrutiny at the teachers' centers. The centers provide the teachers with a critical perspective through which to view the materials provided by the Schools Council; a very healthy situation.

The second sort of negative comment about the Schools Council pertains to its techniques for providing information about its research and its programs for supporting teachers' centers. These comments usually take the form of: "They are doing a good job with the resources at hand, but they must do more." This sort of comment is usually made in a discussion of the field staff, who seem to be held in high regard to the man and woman. But only eleven men and women cannot service all five hundred teachers' centers in the manner the wardens would like. The bemoaning of "not enough of a good thing" is also heard in regard to the Schools Council's coordinating activities among the centers. The occasions provided by the Schools Council for wardens to get together to discuss their common problems seem to be the most regular opportunities which wardens have. They only wish that the opportunities were given more often.

However, the criticism of the process of communication is more profound than just "not enough." The wardens were especially critical of the written materials issued by the Schools Council -- particularly the monthly journal, Dialogue. One warden said that the money spent on distributing so many free copies of a journal of questionable value was a waste. Yet most wardens welcomed the distribution of a guide to Schools Council research, which is to be regularly updated, and thought that more regular and extensive information of this sort would be helpful.

Mr. Jones of North Hertfordshire made a point which represents the views of every person I have talked to about the Schools Council: "The Schools Council does not put enough effort into diffusion. It relies too much on writing and books as techniques of diffusing research results. Books are the least satisfactory means of communicating curriculum ideas to busy teachers." Jones believes

that the field staff must be enlarged and used as an integral part of the process of diffusion.

All of the wardens value the Schools Council as a source of research results and information to be used in curriculum development at the local level. But they believe that the Council has not done enough to support this very process of local curriculum development, which it says ought to be the result of its activities.

These wardens say that the philosophy of the Schools Council demands greater support of local activity, even if such support means a cut in the actual research which is being done at the national level. I asked one warden, Mr. Millington, what he could do with an extra £3000 per year (which would be his share of the £1,500,000 Schools Council budget, if one assumes 500 teachers' centers sharing the money). He said that he could hire one more professional member of staff and a supporting technician or secretary and thereby increase the activities of his center by more than one hundred per cent. Of course, this is just a hypothetical situation: these wardens were not asking that the Schools Council commit suicide and divide up its estate. But they were asking for more support for curriculum development at the local level: support from the local authorities in the form of more money and released time for teachers (really a question of more money too!); support from the Schools Council, especially from an enlarged field staff and also curriculum materials designed to be used as the basis for curriculum development at the local centers.

Finally, the wardens ask for a much stronger voice in the policy decisions of the Schools Council, which they believe would make the research done by the Council more responsive to the needs of the classroom teacher. Even though the Council is made up of teachers, there is a definite feeling among the wardens that the actual research and money allocations do not recognize the needs and wishes of the classroom teacher. And the wardens believe that they better know these needs than those presently making the decisions. Whether or not this particular belief is well founded, one must hold to be an open question.

That the teachers' centers deserve and need more support -- both in terms of money and services -- seems quite clear to me. How these are to be provided is a most important question facing the Schools Council, the Government, and the local educational authorities.

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CONCLUSIONS

The encouragement of the development of teachers' centers throughout England and Wales stands as the greatest testament to the accomplishments of the Schools Council during its years of operation. However, their current spotty performance and underutilization of their potential is also a testament to the inadequate continuing support provided by the Schools Council and the governments, local and national, as well as to their youth, since many centers are less than three years old.

The central principle of the Schools Council and the guiding tenet of the teachers' centers is the professional role of the teacher. This principle is accompanied by a vision of the curriculum development operation as a continuing process. Yet this process of development involving professionals demands continuing expert support at the national level and a great deal of time, personnel, and money at all points in the system. Support which is not at hand.

The most important contribution which the Schools Council can make in this process is in its role as source of curriculum development materials. But it must be an active source distributing its materials through teachers' centers into schools. The teachers' centers should be considered to be local utilities where teachers can plug into the latest knowledge about particular curriculum problems which they face. And also there should be curriculum laboratories where the informational tools are available for the teachers to design their own curriculum materials. Both of these activities require an active partnership between the wardens and the Schools Council on a continuing basis.

The Schools Council should provide detailed information about research and materials through a filtration system, where the first level of filtering is provided by the field staff of the Council. These men have a great deal of knowledge about the latest work of the development teams at the Schools Council and some idea about the needs of the various localities. Many individual projects have their own field officers. But these field officers are preoccupied with the problems of schools participating in the actual research and have little time for general liaison with teachers' centers.

To filter the information flowing out of the Council's teams in manageable doses into the teachers' centers requires a staff large enough to visit each center on a regular basis. Even with circuit riders such as the Schools Council now has -- that is men who cover a number of different areas -- it would require at least double the existing number, and probably three times as many, to service the

existing centers in an effective manner. It is in regard to the field staff that the judgment -- "they are doing a good job but we need more of them" -- is quite correct.

And an enlarged field staff would need to adopt a much more activist attitude in regard to communicating the ideas of the various research teams. The wardens would welcome a systematic and continuing exposition of Schools Council developments by the field staff. Of course the field staff would never be in a position to provide actual specialized knowledge about the problems investigated by the research teams. But it would be in a position to diagnose the problems put by the teachers in the centers and the wardens and to arrange for a member of an appropriate research team to visit the center to deal with a problem beyond the field staff member's competence. Also, a larger field staff would be in a better position to advise research teams on the best methods for communicating their results to teachers; not a role of the present field staff. A problem about which the teams seem to need some advice.

If the field staff should provide the first level of filtration for Schools Council curriculum developments, then the wardens of teachers' centers should provide the second. They are the people who actually deal with the curriculum problems of particular teachers on a day to day basis. But in addition to providing research information to teachers, the wardens play a more important role: that of midwife to professional teachers doing their own curriculum development. And this is the most important role for the teachers' centers, a role which they are now only occasionally playing. All wardens want to see their centers as buzzing centers of actual curriculum development. But most wardens have neither the time nor the plant to deal with more than a handful of teachers at a time.

Staff time is the most scarce resource. A marginal Pound invested in additional staff for teachers' centers would probably buy more curriculum innovation than any other use of the money. Most existing centers are presently underutilized for actual curriculum development because of a lack of professional and support staff for the wardens.

But additional money for teachers' centers will not be enough by itself. The centers must thrust their activities out of the limits of their own physical facilities into each and every school. Local school representatives of teachers' centers, such as Ealing has for social purposes, could be important sources for curriculum changes in each school. The philosophy of "servicing" the schools in the center's catchment area, such as was adopted by North Hertfordshire, would take the spirit of the centers into the schools. And the organization of the teachers around curriculum problems, as has been done in Newham, could create complementary agencies for continuing change.

This part of the system of curriculum change which begins with the teacher, moves through the Schools Council, and then returns to the teacher can be made to work in its most effective manner only when all components of the system do not hesitate to participate forcefully in the activities of the whole. The hesitancy of the Schools Council to communicate its views about particular reform issues has in fact meant that most teachers have not found out about many of the projects and curriculum materials available. The apprehension of wardens about offending headmasters by going into schools and actually inviting particular teachers into the activities of the center has meant that most teachers have not come into the center, thanks to natural human inertia. And the lethargy of the teachers in not utilizing the opportunities which have existed and in not demanding more curriculum development resources, which the real professional needs, has made it possible for both the researchers and the local educational authorities to ignore their professional requirements.

Only when each sector of the system stops hesitating and starts energetically operating will the fantastic potentialities of the system for curriculum reform be realized.

Two practical policy steps would move the system toward more effective operation. If the Schools Council would allocate more of its scarce resources to its field staff (say double the staff in the next fiscal year), the remaining research money would provide results which would be more effectively utilized in the field. And if the national government would invest an amount equal to the current budget of the Schools Council (total, not just the 50% national contribution) in the existing teachers' centers and an equivalent amount in the creation of new centers, both during the next fiscal year, then, when added to the existing budget of the Schools Council, increased by an inflation factor, Great Britain would have one of the most effective infrastructures for continuing reform of its educational system existing in any country of the world.

After reading an earlier draft of this newsletter, Gordon Hamflett, the staff member in charge of the Schools Council field officers, asked me: "Are you quite clear that, rightly or wrongly (rightly, I think), the Schools Council is not a central, national agency for reviewing and coordinating and then promulgating policies for the curriculum? Schools Council has not a view of what work in the Humanities should be." My response is: yes, I, and I hope my readers, understand that the Schools Council does not promulgate curriculum policy for Great Britain. But I do believe that Schools Council, its staff and development teams do have views about "what work in the Humanities should be." Or least they ought to after investing as much money as they have in curriculum development.

And if they have such a view, they should vigorously promote it. Promote it, not promulgate it. To ask for vigorous communication of curriculum development materials and research to teachers is not to ask the Schools Council to become something it is not. And to assert that the Schools Council "is not a central national agency for reviewing and coordinating and then promulgating" is not to answer my criticism of the lack of effective dissemination policy.

None of the policy actions I suggest will guarantee reform. But the capability of coping with continuing change will have been more effectively built into the educational system. If the local authorities and the national government can find the political will to solve the social parameters of the educational problems, then the educational systems themselves will have the means of finding the technical educational solutions.

Already the system for curriculum change, which includes the Schools Council, the National Foundation for Educational Research, (which does "pure" educational research), local authority advisors, Her Majesty's Inspectors, and teachers centers, offers a model for other countries. And with a relatively small additional investment of money and imagination, this model could become a truly outstanding example. At present we in the rest of the world must learn as much from Britain's mistakes as from her accomplishments. Not a bad record, nevertheless.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Irving J. Spitzberg, Jr.", written in a cursive, flowing style.

Irving J. Spitzberg, Jr.

Received in New York on January 25, 1972

Schools Council Committees and Working Parties

Schools Council Committees and Working Parties

Chairmen of the Major Committees of the Council

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Dame Muriel Stewart, DBE, MA, formerly Headmistress of the County Secondary School for Girls, Shiremoor, Northumberland.

Programme Committee
Dame Muriel Stewart, DBE, MA.

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Steering Committee B
S.W.Exworthy, JP, MA, formerly Headmaster, Christ the King Secondary School, Southport, Lancs.

Steering Committee C
W.J.Langford, CBE, formerly Headmaster of Battersea Grammar School.

Committee for Wales
Professor W.J.G.Beynon, CBE, PhD, DSc, FIP, Department of Physics, University College of Wales, Aberystwyth.

Finance and Staff Committee
Dame Muriel Stewart, DBE, MA.

First Examinations Committee
Miss S. D.Wood, BSc, Secretary, Association of Assistant Mistresses.

Second Examinations Committee
A.H.Jennings, MA, Headmaster, Ecclesfield Comprehensive School, Sheffield.

CSE Sub-Committee
O.Barnett, BEM, JP, MA, formerly Headmaster, Forest Fields Grammar School, Nottingham.

GCE 'O' level Sub-Committee
J.W.Ashley Smith, MA, BSc, MEd, PhD, Headmaster, Billingham Campus, Bede Hall.

Publications Committee
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CAST

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English

J.Dixon, BA, Lecturer, Bretton Hall College of Education, Wakefield.

Geography

W.R.A.Ellis, BA, Lecturer, University of Sheffield, Institute of Education.

History

J.W.Hunt, MA, formerly Head of History Department, City of London School.

Home Economics

Miss B.Finch, Headmistress, Eastwood High School for Girls, Southend-on-Sea.

Mathematics

Professor W.H.Cockcroft, MA, D.Phil, Head of Pure Mathematics Department, University of Hull.

Modern Languages

Professor E.W.Hawkins, MA, Head of the Language Teaching Centre, University of York.

Music

A.Percival, BMus, Principal, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London.

Physical Education

Miss M.B.Duggan, Deputy Principal, Dartford College of Physical Education, Kent.

Religious Education

Professor M.V.C.Jeffreys, CBE, MA, formerly Director of the University of Birmingham, Institute of Education.

Science

E.J.Machin, MA, Inspector, City of Birmingham Education Department.

Social Sciences

Professor D.C.Marsh, MCom, Head of Department of Applied Social Sciences, Nottingham University.

General Studies

D.J.W.Williams, MA, Headmaster, Trinity School, Carlisle.

Welsh Studies

Professor T.J.Morgan, MA, DLitt, Department of Welsh Language and Literature, University College of Swansea.

Welsh Language

Professor T.J.Morgan, MA, DLitt, Department of Welsh Language and Literature, University College of Swansea.

Schools Council Committees and Working Parties

Chairmen of Working Parties

| | |
|---|---|
| Working Party on Health Education | I.Evans, Headmaster, Hangleton Junior School, Daleview, Hove, BM38, LS. Sussex. |
| Working Party on Special Education | Mary Wilson, BA, PhD, LRAM, Staff Inspector of Special Education, ILEA. |
| Working Party on the Whole Curriculum for 13–16 year old pupils | L.J.Drew, MA, MEd, Director of Education, Swansea. |
| Working Party on a Single System of examining at 16+ | Miss S.D.Wood, BSc, Secretary, Association of Assistant Mistresses. |
| Working Party on Gifted Children | G.C.Robb, MA, Educational Psychologist, Essex LEA. |
| Joint Working Party on Museums | Mrs M.Long, Lecturer, Shenstone New College, Worcs. |
| Joint Working Party with SCUE on V1th Form Curriculum and Examinations | C.C.Butler, BSc, PhD, FRS, Director of Nuffield Foundation. |
| Second V1th Form Working Party | E.W.H.Briault, MA, PhD, FRGS, Deputy Education Officer, ILEA. |
| Joint Schools Council GCE Examining Board Working Party on Comparability | A.H.Jennings, MA, Headmaster, Ecclesfield. Comprehensive School, Sheffield. |

List of Chairmen of Working Parties (Wales)

| | |
|---|--|
| Working Party on the Bilingual Primary School | William Thomas, CB, PhD, DSc, LID, Chief Inspector for Wales (Retired). |
| Second Working Party on Decimalization and Metrication | I.Bryn Williams, BSc, PhD, Headmaster, Ysgol-y-Berwyn Comprehensive School, Bala, Merioneth. |
| Working Party on Sixth Form Private Study | D.J.W.Williams, MA, Trinity School, Carlisle, Cumberland. |

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Listed below are all the research and development projects in which the Council was participating during the period 1 April 1970 and 31 March 1971.

The list includes projects wholly or partly financed by the Nuffield Foundation and other organizations with which the Council is associated in some way.

The material which projects have published or expect to publish are indicated by the following symbols: R – Report T – Teacher material P – Pupil material X – Tests F – Film.

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APPENDIX III

TIMES EDUCATIONAL SUPPLEMENT

21 January 1972
Race pack

turned down

The programme committee of the Schools Council has finally decided not to approve publication of the race pack prepared by the Humanities Curriculum Project team.

This decision, which has been in the balance for some time, implies that the "neutral chairman" approach, which the humanities project calls for, is not considered appropriate for teaching race relations.

The committee considered that "the promotion of racial tolerance and understanding in schools was a matter of such importance that the council had a responsibility to provide teachers with materials and approaches which would offer them positive help in this difficult task".

Mr Fred Jarvis, deputy general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said on Wednesday that his union welcomed this decision, and pointed out that NUT representatives on the committee had played a big part in securing it.

"It is important to stress that far from running away from the subject of race—as one press report has suggested—the programme committee is anxious that the Schools Council should do more in this field", he said. "The programme committee was not convinced that the Humanities Curriculum Project, with its concept of the teacher's role as that of a 'neutral chairman', was the most suitable curriculum vehicle for educating pupils on the subject of race."

The council has decided to promote "further development work of a constructive kind as soon as it could be formulated" and adds that in doing so it would "hope to draw upon the work and experience already gained by the Humanities Curriculum Project".

Mr John Lockwood, who has taught in the pilot project on the race pack at Moseley School, in Birmingham, said he was surprised at the decision. "The race pack is very little different from any other pack," he said. "The neutral chairman approach had not led him into any difficulties with his multi-racial group of 15 and 16-year olds."

But he felt some people might have looked at the pack in isolation, and not in the context of the whole Stenhouse project. Neither he nor his pupils had "come cold" to the race pack: they had already used the method on other subject areas.