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A MERGER BETWEEN THE NEW UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER AND ULSTER POLYTECHNIC: POSSIBILITIES AND CONSTRAINTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION PLANNERS

By

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ABSTRACT

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AND ULSTER POLYTECHNIC:
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As a result of public investigations into the needs of higher education in Northern Ireland, the government ordered The New University of Ulster (NUU) and Ulster Polytechnic (UP) to formally amalgamate by September 1984. NUU was seen by some as an ailing rural institution that had failed to respond to the economic and social needs of the Province. UP was a Belfast-based institution, funded according to a different system to universities, with an apparently more relevant and successful record.

To bring about such a controversial and unique merger, a steering committee was established whose membership excluded officers of the two institutions, the latter being accorded observer status only. Public submissions were sought by the committee as to what the new institution should try to achieve and how it should be structured.

When the researcher arrived at NUU (February 1983), the former Rector of UP had been appointed Vice Chancellor

were made soon afterwards.

For nine months, the researcher used three procedures to analyse the merger: document analysis (merger submissions and minutes, press clippings), questionnaire and participant observation. The concern throughout the research was to discover what was involved in a merger; which perceived goals had the greatest bearing on ultimate outcomes; what was the relationship between the autonomy and accountability of a university; and what place human development had in the structures of merger planning.

If governments spend public money seeking ideas about the goals and structures of higher education, then they could devise more effective ways of processing and implementing such submissions. Most decisions at Ulster were taken by a small elite. The major assumption of government, that a university could make a significant impact on economic conditions, was never challenged by those responsible for the merger.

Gaps in planning include: poor communication processes; preoccupation with the mechanics of merger at the expense of ideological and human dimensions; limited use of higher education models; failure to provide proper educational rationale.

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I

THE PROBLEM

When a university is forced to undergo radical change, a unique opportunity presents itself to examine the social functions of higher education. In one sense what happens in a university, the knowledge and human potential that are generated, reflects in microcosm the cultural norms of the privileged sector (e.g., rewards, competition, individualism). The "equal opportunity" movement has done little to increase and diversify access to higher education.

The examination of organizational and curricular planning in higher education offers an understanding of what policy makers and educational leaders regard as of fundamental value in their society. For those who attach more importance to relevance and efficiency, the modern university needs stronger management and greater accountability. For those who value truth for its own sake and desire to transform culture, a university must resist the temptation to simply offer courses geared to consumer needs.

Assumptions about the social impact of higher education demand careful scrutiny. If it could possibly be shown that universities on the whole have a negligible effect, say, on unemployment, then educational planners would need to modify objectives for higher education. The development of a more utilitarian or market-oriented system of higher education could well be based on a wrong assumption. The relationship between the kind of higher education a society needs and what governments or foundations are prepared to

finance, is a crucial issue in the discussion. If the primary function of any university is the servicing of the professions, then a critical role becomes peripheral, and a conservative role, central to its purposes. Academic freedom, particularly as it relates to research, surrenders its place of traditional priority, to more pragmatic concerns (e.g., heavier teaching loads and committee work).

The literature review reflects some of the tension at a theoretical level, between collective and personal needs in educational planning. Some educators (e.g., Newman and Buber) come down on the side of intellectual and personal development, while others (e.g., Dewey and Habermas) give higher priority to collective needs. The sociological literature (e.g., Shils and Bourdieu) analyses the structural constraints on education. Organization and communication theory are discussed in the context of the demands on modern universities for more efficient management and greater responsiveness to market forces.

A fundamental tension in the research is between the human and corporate dimensions of higher education. The extent to which a university can accommodate the needs of its individual members will depend on the constraints on planning.

Purpose Of The Research

The purpose of the research was to determine, through a study of the merger between The New University of Ulster (NUU) and The Ulster Polytechnic(UP), some of the effects

of structural change on thinking about higher education. The researcher considered the extent to which economic and political decisions divert universities from traditional educational ideals (e.g., the pursuit of truth, critical inquiry).

The immediate focus of interest was on localized considerations of the needs of higher education in Northern Ireland. The study arose as much out of a concern to describe the various processes and effects of a merger as out of an interest in the possible roles and functions of higher education. Ideals for the new institution were compared with the constraints of financial and staffing resources, as well as with geographic and social conditions in the Province. It was against the larger educational ideals that the prospects of the new institution were measured. When a government intervened in higher education as it did in Ulster, the researcher was interested to identify possible benefits and problems as far as the overall quality of higher education was concerned.

What happened to traditional attitudes to the goals and functions of higher education, especially when job security or professional status was threatened? Another point of inquiry was the extent to which a particular style of educational leadership and authority structure fostered or negated the liberal and critical functions of higher education. What were some of the potential hazards of amalgamating two clearly distinct types of educational

institutions, such as a small struggling university and a large, thrusting polytechnic? Therefore, communication patterns, institutional morale and inter-institutional rivalries were studied and a comparison made of how the two institutions perceived their role in society.

Context Of The Problem

The background to the merger was provided by a study of crucial government reports into higher education in Northern Ireland. British higher education was also analysed briefly.

The Lockwood Report (Appendix C)

Following the Robbins report (Appendix C) into higher education in the U.K. a major review of higher education in Northern Ireland was undertaken in 1964/5 by the Lockwood Committee (Belfast, 1965). The report reflected the expectation that significant economic and demographic growth lay ahead for the Province. As a result, a period of considerable expansion in higher education facilities in Northern Ireland was recommended, both to cater for the growth but also to provide for the predicted increase in the number of school leavers expected to enrol in higher education institutions.

One of the major recommendations of the Lockwood Committee was that there should be a university at Coleraine. The projected enrolment figures for the Coleraine institution were of some 5000-6000 full time equivalent students (FTE's) by 1980. Most of the major Lockwood recommendations

were accepted by the government, and the NUU was established in 1968 at Coleraine, a decision which angered community leaders at Londonderry (Derry) who felt that the headquarters should have been in the largest city outside of Belfast. The Ulster College, or Polytechnic as it is now known (UP) was formed by the amalgamation of various Colleges of Domestic Science, Art, Commerce, Catering, Music and Drama. Another recommendation to develop Agriculture within the new university was rejected on the basis that adequate facilities existed at Queen's University, Belfast (QUB). In addition, the proposal to close Magee University College, Derry was rejected. From 1968, two universities existed in the Province, a Polytechnic, a government (i.e., Protestant) teacher training institution (Stranmillis College) and two private (Roman Catholic) teacher training colleges (St. Joseph's and St. Mary's).

One of the major assumptions of the Lockwood report was that of every student leaving Northern Ireland for British universities or colleges, there would be a corresponding traffic of British students seeking places in Northern Ireland institutions. What the Lockwood Committee failed to foresee was the onset of social conflict ("the troubles") from the inception of the new institution in 1968. There were devastating repercussions for student enrolments from Britain, with those leaving the Province far outweighing those entering.

The Chilver Report (Appendix C)

In December 1978, the (then Labor) British government set up another Review Group to examine higher education in Northern Ireland into the 1980's and 1990's. The Review Group, under the chairmanship of Sir Henry Chilver (Cranfield Institute of Technology), was given the task of considering

> the present provision of higher education in Northern Ireland, to review both the general and the particular needs of the Northern Ireland community in the 1980's and 1990's for higher education (including advanced further education) and to make recommendations. (Chilver, 1982, viii)

Higher and further education were interpreted as being concerned with courses at universities, colleges of education, polytechnics and colleges of further education, which concentrated on degree and graduate programs, but embracing certificate and diploma courses at the same time.

With the economic constraints and the demographic predictions of the 1980's and 1990's, the Chilver group pointed out that student numbers in the Province would not increase substantially over that period from present levels of 13,500 students. In fact, by the 1990's such numbers were expected to drop, reaching their lowest levels in the mid-90's, before recovering by the end of the century. Chilver concluded that QUB should develop largely along its present lines though with some areas of change required: the more traditional role should be supplemented by innovative programs and a creative expansion at the

academic level.

The Chilver Committee concluded that since the number of FTE's at NUU had never exceeded 1900, the university had achieved only partial success in relation to the original plan for growth under Lockwood. Further, there was no need for two universities in Northern Ireland which both catered for traditional full time degree courses. The bias of more qualified school leavers towards the more established QUB also existed. The Chilver group was faced with a choice between several options as to the future role of NUU, which are summarised as follows:

> i) to continue its present approach and scope, accepting the implication of declining enrolments and increasing cost units;
> ii) to continue its present policies and to transfer courses to NUU from other institutions;
> iii) to merge NUU with one of the Belfast institutions;
> iv) to close NUU;
> v) to develop a new policy for NUU which will make a fundamental change and develop a new style of institution. (Chilver, 8.52)

The first option was seen as too costly. The second provided no guarantee that students would actually transfer courses to NUU, even after decisions about which courses to transfer had been made intelligently.

Merger. The problem of NUU's geographical isolation may have been resolved by a merger. Yet one of the main reasons for rejecting this option was the doubt that

> significant economies of scale could be achieved, for even with a fully integrated administration it would entail a large degree of duplication of facilities. The alternative to duplicate staffing would be extensive staff travel, which is neither efficient nor economic. (Chilver 8.57)

Furthermore, there was a real fear that in a split site relationship and with the inevitably smaller student numbers at Coleraine, the dominant ethos and interests of the Belfast campus would overpower NUU:

> Quite apart from purely technical difficulties, such as the reconciliation of the University's chartered status with any formal amalgamation, we do not believe that a merger would bring real advantages to NUU. Nor would it necessarily bring advantages to its future partner: the genuine administrative problems in effecting a merger and in running a merged institution should not be under-rated, and it would be unfortunate if the result of a merger were to disrupt the functioning of a Belfast institution. (Chilver 8.58)

Closure. A last resort was the possibility of closure. Arguments in support of closure were given as the continuing problem of numbers; the unattractiveness of NUU to well qualified post secondary students, who normally went to prestigious British universities or to QUB; the perceived failure of NUU to forge strong links with commerce and industry; the feasibility of relocating NUU students throughout existing higher education institutions; and the "desirability of concentrating resources on a limited number of strong institutions" (Chilver, 8.61).

Reasons against closure were given as the cultural, geographical and social imbalance in the Province which would result from concentrating all higher education provision near or in Belfast; the flexibility offered by having three major institutions; the importance of having a teacher education base in the north west; the financial strain of initially compensating retrenched staff and of

relocating displaced students; and the fact that a heavy investment in a very young institution would be lost. The importance of access of opportunity in areas remote from Belfast seemed to the Review Group at least, to be a powerful reason for keeping NUU open.

Fundamental change. The option finally chosen by the Chilver Committee was for a fundamental change in NUU's role. Needless to say, the university's viability into the 1980's and 1990's depended on "its ability to attract students, to identify newly emerging needs and to respond quickly and flexibly to them" (Chilver, 8.68). In the future, NUU should offer "opportunities in higher education different from those available elsewhere in Northern Ireland" (Chilver, 8.70). There should be an increasing concern with mature students, a greater emphasis on activities relevant to the needs of the Northern Ireland community, and the development of distance learning. NUU should move away from the QUB concentration on full time degree programs for the traditional school leaver and move towards courses which do not terminate with the award of a degree, thus catering for part time students, mature students and distance learners.

NUU should remain an important center for teacher training, whereas the physical and biological sciences should no longer be sustained. The Committee recommended the development of Diploma of Higher Education programs for mature students which were externally validated and

could lead to acceptable employment or to further study. There was also a need for post experience short courses especially in vocational and technical subjects.

In its general conclusion, the Review Group conceded that in purely financial terms it was likely that a concentration of provision on two institutions would be more economic, but that financial savings would be offset by the more serious social and educational loss to the Province from a closure of NUU. A strong warning was sounded to the NUU leaders who would have to display "the appropriate qualities of innovation and leadership" (Chilver, 8.88). The report concluded:

> We wish to emphasise that we see no prospect of NUU becoming a strong and cost-effective institution within the limitations of the traditional university model; and that if NUU does not achieve the new role which we recommend for it then consideration would have to be given - by the proposed co-ordinating body - to closure or the withdrawal of public funding from the University. (Chilver, 8.90)

The Government White Paper (Appendix C)

In its response to the Chilver recommendations, the British Government chose the more radical proposal of merging NUU with UP, thus rejecting the Review Group's notion of fundamental change at NUU. In proposing merger, the government felt that a consolidation of Northern Ireland's higher education system could best be achieved by pooling the resources of the two institutions which have complementary characteristics.

The new institution would be

> expected to maintain the practical and vocational emphasis of the Polytechnic, and to incorporate into this the strongest academic aspects of NUU. This combination would produce a strong and efficient institution with a distinctive role which would complement the traditional academic emphasis of Queen's University, Belfast". (White Paper 1.9)

Clearly, the government was not prepared to tolerate the rather optimistic sentiments of the Chilver Committee that any downturn in student numbers owing to demographic trends might be offset by an increase in mature students. NUU could not survive even with fundamental structural changes. In choosing merger with UP, as opposed to QUB, the government paid special tribute to UP's energy and innovation especially with regard to its practical and vocational courses which were seen as particularly strong. Given NUU's academic standing and the UP's innovative and thrusting style, the government felt that the concept of a merger thus provided an opportunity for these distinctive strengths to be combined.

Furthermore, if the Province were to have only two major higher education institutions, they should each have a clear and distinctive role. QUB should continue its role as a traditional university center of scholarship with perhaps a greater vocational emphasis in the future; whereas the new institution should incorporate as a valuable counterpoint the particular "applied and technological emphasis of the Polytechnic" (White Paper 4.3).

The government wanted to avoid the possibility of

one institution taking over the other. What was required rather, was a new institution that would "subsume and replace both the existing institutions while shedding weaknesses" (White Paper 4.4). Furthermore, the government envisaged a strong role for the new institution in the field of teacher education with its center at Coleraine. There should be fuller use of facilities at Magee College (Derry) with the "provision of courses and activities which relate directly to the immediate requirements" (White Paper 4.8) of the area.

The government recognised that such a merger would create a precedent in the U.K. higher education system, by breaking the binary division between university and polytechnic administration and governance. The absence of the normal dual system would have certain advantages, particularly in the area of over- all coordination:

> Two universities, each of which relates to UGC and DENI in the same way, lend themselves to simpler and more effective co-ordination arrangements than would be necessary in a more disparate system . . . At the same time, the new arrangements will help to derive the maximum advantage from the compact scale of the Northern Ireland higher education system, and thus ensure that we make the best possible use of the available resources and achieve optimum value for money. (White Paper 4.12)

The government recognised that efforts would need to be made to ensure that students engaged already in courses, as well as all staff, at either institution were not disadvantaged by proposed changes. However, there would be a reduction in the number of posts and an effort to "remove

some diseconomies" (White Paper 4.15). With such problems to be resolved and the major task of planning ahead, the government decided to set up a Steering Group "to plan the overall policy and provision of the new institution" (White Paper 4.16) with representations from the two existing institutions, the University Grants Committee (UGC) and the Department of Education in Northern Ireland (DENI) and other external bodies. At the same time, a separate coordinating body would be formed, whose task would be to monitor and fund all higher education provision in Northern Ireland.

Higher Education In The U.K.

British universities are managed by committees, as opposed to the governing body (Board of Trustees) to which the officers of the university are responsible in U.S. universities. Responsibility or control is divided between a council and a senate, and in some universities (e.g., NUU), a court as well. Under the senate and council, the structure is divided among fifty to sixty committees, segregated horizontally and vertically, with authority seldom discrete or fixed. Short-tenure membership is another conservative factor in university management (THES, March 25/ April 1, 1983).

In addition to the ceremonial officers whose powers are usually held in reserve (visitor, chancellor) the statutory officers divide into those with specific responsibilities (e.g., deans, librarian, treasurer) and those

with general responsibilities (e.g., chairman of council, vice chancellor, pro vice chancellors). The officer's structure is characterised by a mixture of lay members and academic staff holding weakly defined offices, part time and short term in a complex pattern of ambiguous chains of responsibilities to other officers and committees. The loose and multi formed nature of the university has resulted from the basic purposes, activities and history of the university: a point that becomes essential for understanding the limits of management in a university.

With regard to the training of the main institutional office holders in a British university, professional university administrators may have had the benefit of training programs for perhaps twenty years. But vice chancellors, pro vice chancellors, deans, heads of departments, chairmen of key committees have been neglected almost totally, as far as preparation for such roles are concerned. Such people are simply elected by peers, senate or council on the basis of academic and possibly administrative competence.

Polytechnics. As a response to the Robbins report, the first eight polytechnics were established in 1969. By 1973 30 were in operation in urban and industrial areas of England and Wales. Following the cutbacks in teacher training, many polytechnics merged in the late 70's with colleges of education, bringing an influx of 2000 extra staff into the colleges and an upsurge in the arts and humanities courses.

Today, polytechnics dominate non university higher education, with 127,000 FTE's. More than 90% of them are on courses related to industry, commerce and the professions; and about half were in the labor market before becoming students. Post graduate courses tend to be industrially oriented and mostly part time. Research is on a limited scale compared to the universities and largely externally funded. Many polytechnic staff are recruited directly from industry and commerce (THES Sept. 18 1981).

According to the statistical supplement to the Universities Central Council on Admissions (UCCA), in its 1979-80 report, fewer than 5% of 1980's university entrants came from families of unskilled or semi skilled manual workers, although they account for almost one third of the population; 70% came from professional and managerial families who make up one fifth of the population; the remaining places went to school leavers with skilled worker parents.(The Times, September 4 1981).

University Grants Committee

By far the most influential body in the U.K. system of higher education is the University Grants Committee (UGC), which serves as a liaison between government and the universities. It has only one full time member (the Chairman) who is a civil servant directly responsible to the Secretary of State (for Education). Most of the other members, usually about 20, are full time academics, many of whom are professors. A full time secretariat services the

committee, usually seconded from the Department of Education and Science (DES).

The terms of reference of the UGC are:

> to inquire into the financial needs of university education in Great Britain; to advise the government as to the application of any grants made by Parliament towards meeting them. To collect, examine and make available information on matters relating to university education in Great Britain. To assist, in consultation with universities and other bodies concerned, the preparation and execution of such plans for the development of the universities as may from time to time be required in order that they are fully adequate to national needs. (THES, June 26 1981)

As well as the main committee, there are ten subject sub committees (mathematical sciences, dental and medical, business and management, biological sciences, agriculture, veterinary science, arts, social studies, technology, physical science). These sub committees attempt to visit each university department in its field every three or four years. They thus provide one of the few external means of assessing university work apart from external examiners. The latter are appointed by each university department and review a selection of individual exam papers every year, thus providing a more standardised quality throughout the U.K.

Each year, the UGC advises government on how much should be spent on recurrent capital and equipment grants. Normally, this is a long drawn-out negotiation, with the Treasury trying to limit expenditure. Government has never been bound to heed UGC advice. The UGC decides its allocations according to student numbers, taking into account

student mix; but it doesn't work to a direct formula, using its own value judgments and may decide that department X in university Y is more deserving of financial support than a similar department elsewhere. It constantly makes its own assessment of quality. Universities receive a block grant, though some of this will be ear marked for special purposes. Since 1972, the UGC has been advising universities on student target numbers. Universities are free to ignore the advice, though financial penalty very often has greater persuasive force than instruction or advice.

The House Of Commons Report (HCR)

The nine man committee, under the chairmanship of Labor MP, Mr. Christopher Price, spent five days in Northern Ireland, in October 1982. They met informally the various interested parties in higher and further education institutions throughout the Province. The report was presented under the title, Further and Higher Education in Northern Ireland (London, 1983).

The Committee noted the creation of an entirely new type of university encompassing both sides of the binary line, and teaching both degree and sub-degree courses and the prospect of an entirely new working relationship developing between the planners of public sector higher education and the UGC. It felt, furthermore that such plans, apart from being crucial to the future well being of the Province, would "provide Great Britain with many invaluable

lessons on the future direction its further and higher education might take (HCR 1.4).

The Committee noted that up to 1973 the Northern Ireland economy was developing and expanding with marked deterioration and civil unrest from 1973 onwards. Unemployment was high, and the number of students enrolling on full time higher education courses outside Northern Ireland considerably outweighed the numbers coming in. Births started declining after 1964 so that by the mid-1970's it was clear that this was a factor which would powerfully influence the future organisation of education. The government predicted that between 1976 and 1983 there would be a 25 per cent reduction in the size of the 18 year old age group, with a negative impact on future enrolments (HCR 4.8).

The Committee saw the government response to the Chilver report as a logical development of the government's overall policy towards Northern Ireland. The priorities of government, according to the Minister concerned for education in the Province (Nicholas Scott, MP), were that of "security and law and order provision"; and that of "improving the trading base of the economy" (HCR 4.10). All decisions affecting education would therefore be taken in the light of its potential contribution to the stability and social and economic welfare of the Province. At the same time the government would be working within their own financial constraints.

There were several areas of concern which the Committee

underlined with regard to the new institution. Great care would be required to avoid academic drift (the tendency of institutions offering non degree courses to replace such courses over time with degree work). The Vice Chancellor of QUB explained to the Committee:

> I think all the pressures in the mixed institution will be for academic opportunities with more and more degree work and less sub-degree work, thereby constraining the infrastructure and moving from a complementary system to a system of duplication which the government has pledged to abolish. (HCR 4.14)

The Committee therefore recommended that the proposed institution regularly review the non degree work to ensure that it "effectively meets the role envisaged for it by the government" (HCR 4.16).

The Commons group expressed some concern about the openness of the UGC in its procedures for advising the Department of Education in Northern Ireland (DENI) with regard to the funding of the new institution. UGC would do well to publish the advice it gives DENI and also the "criteria on which its decisions are made" (HCR 4.17).

Another possible problem the new institution might encounter was felt to be in the area of the transfer of staff from the two present institutions on to a standardised superannuation scheme. The majority of those working at NUU were on the University Superannuation Scheme (USS), whereas most UP staff were on the Teachers' fund (TSS). If everyone on the TSS wanted to transfer in the new institution to the USS, an estimate was made of some $22.5 million to transfer

them, with a minimum estimate of $9 million. The question of Central Treasury allocation of funds to facilitate such a transfer had not as far as the Committee knew, been resolved. The respective unions would naturally be giving these matters high priority (HCR 4.20). There were two different unions at UP, the Association of Polytechnic Teachers (APT), and the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education (NATFHE). There was one main academic union throughout the U.K. university system, the Association of University Teachers (AUT).

An associated problem for the new institution would be that of pay differentials. University lecturers were paid according to different criteria from their polytechnic colleagues, with research work playing a more determinative role at universities. A university lecturer was contracted to spend a certain proportion of time doing research and scholarly work. The Vice Chancellor Designate of the Proposed University of Ulster, in giving evidence to the parliamentary committee said that "all staff (including those formerly employed by the Polytechnic) would move on to the same university pay scale" (HCR 4.21). One estimate of such a salary transfer was $405,000. The Committee expressed concern that the funding exercise be done more rigorously by the government and recommended that "the Minister should clarify the nature of the extra costs of pay differentials and superannuation, and make the information available as soon as possible" (HCR 4.22).

Another problem that the group foresaw (and one which the Chilver report had underlined as a reason against merger) was that of a split site campus. There was a natural tendency for the larger and stronger UP to dominate the smaller and weaker university at Coleraine, almost in the same way that NUU, as the senior partner had left the smaller Magee University College to its own devices, with serious social repercussions. To avoid such difficulties and to maintain a balance in terms of resource development on all four campuses in the new institution, the Committee urged a regular "review of the status of each of the sites (HCR 4.23). The two main sites were at Jordanstown (UP) and Coleraine (NUU); the two peripheral campuses were at Belfast (Creative Art & Design Center) and Derry (Magee University College).

The Committee affirmed its belief that educational opportunities should be diverse and extend throughout the north west of the Province especially, where "service to the community in a regional role was to be the institution's priority" (HCR 4.24). There was a fear that if care was not taken, the traditional ethos of the university might gradually weaken such an emphasis.

The final evaluation of the new institution maintained that

> it is essential that the members of staff and students at the Proposed University should adopt a positive attitude towards the work it is being designed to carry out. They should not see it merely as an experiment in crossing the binary

> line, or as a compromise to an awkward financial problem. There is an urgent need in the Province which the courses offered could help to meet. . . . It must be the responsibility of those concerned with the Proposed University therefore to see it positively as a potential contributor to the social, intellectual and economic needs of Northern Ireland, and to act accordingly. (HCR 4.26)

An additional warning, from the Northern Ireland Economic Council, was noted by the Committee. The submission felt that the UGC was "not well equipped to advise on areas such as non-degree work" (HCR 5.7), a major thrust of the new institution. Furthermore, it felt DENI lacked the expertise and information needed for effective control of the higher education system. There was, in other words, a "lack of faith in the ability of the two bodies chosen by the government to oversee the co-ordination and planning of higher education in the Province" (HCR 5.18).

Research Questions

Throughout the research there were four central issues around which certain questions arose.

Merger Planning

The first question was, "What is involved in the planning of a merger?" The focus of each procedure was on the various levels of planning that were necessary to bring the two institutions together. Planning within government departments and committees involved responding to reports, public evidence, press speculation and correspondence. What was the significance of such processes in terms of the dynamics of change in a democracy? Who were the people who had

impact on merger outcomes (e.g., the Minister, DENI, Chairman of Steering Group)? Was the particular method of bringing about a merger the most effective option available? How might some of the constraints on merger planning affect ultimate outcomes? What were the most important levels of planning within the two institutions? Were there significant gaps in planning (e.g., communication, faculty development)? What ultimate effect did finances have on merger plans? What light did the relevant literature shed on merger processes?

Perceived Goals

All change involves compromise. One of the considerations in the research was the effect of conflicting aims at key levels on merger negotiations (e.g., unions, Steering Group, Minister, NUU vs. UP). Whose ideas changed the most and why? What impact, if any, did public submissions have on thinking about merger goals? To what extent might conflicting perceptions of goals create major problems in the new institution? Were existing structures of communication adequate in coping with such perceptual differences? What might be learnt from the relevant literature? Does the new institution have a responsibility to develop curricular structures which address problems of social and religious conflict? If so, what form might they take?

Autonomy vs. Accountability

Why was the relationship between NUU and government an essentially adversarial one? Where does responsibility for

higher education lie? What lessons might be learnt from the merger about developing more effective structures of communication between a university and the public? How might universities be encouraged to both preserve academic freedom and institutional autonomy and also respond to consumer demands? Is one particular management system more likely to effect a balance on this point, than another? What does the literature reveal?

Human Development

If institutional change is to work, then people must grow, both in themselves and together. What evidence was there of a "coming together" of people at the various levels of the merger? Were formal mechanisms (e.g., Committees, bulletins) adequate in facilitating mutuality and consensus? What did the merger reveal about the priority of human development in higher education (e.g., sense of community, pastoral care of students)? Why was staff development and in-service-education given such low priority during merger discussions? What does this suggest about possible problems in the new institution? What insights can be gained on staff development from the literature?

Limits Of The Study

The research was essentially descriptive and used three distinct procedures to analyse and explain the processes involved in the merger. While the main thrust of the research was on the dynamics of educational and organizational change, the larger concern was the broader issues

of educational administration, philosophy and sociology in higher education.

Geographical Constraints

An immediate limitation of the research, and yet, at the same time, a possible strength, lay in the geographical location of the researcher as an ethnographer, in one department of the university at Coleraine. The perspective of the study was inevitably colored by university perceptions. In addition, by being centered at Coleraine rather than at Londonderry, the study did not pretend to accurately reflect the "Derry perspective". However, the researcher spent a considerable amount of time attempting to redress such an imbalance, by visiting Magee University College several times, talking at length with key faculty members and administrators there, both face-to-face and on the telephone.

Time Constraints

The overall research involved a period of nine months. During this period, merger processes had already been under way for several months. The chief academic and administrative officer (Vice Chancellor Designate of the Proposed University of Ulster) had taken up his responsibilities, thus vacating his Rectorship of UP. A growing body of literature, representing submissions to Steering Group, academic and constitutional committee documents, government papers, minutes of meetings, and press clippings, was rapidly building up. The actual merger date was set for September, 1984. Limited financial resources made the ideal situation

of at least staying on till the launching of the new institution impossible. Just the same, the crucial decisions, such as the designation of first and second tier officers, the formulation of the Charter and Statutes and the determination of faculty boundaries, were taken during the researcher's time in the Province. Furthermore, the constitutional problems concerning the petitioning by the NUU Court to the government for a new Charter, were resolved towards the end of the researcher's stay. Longitudinal studies, assessing short and long term outcomes of the new institution, would have provided scope for a more sophisticated study of the merger.

Observer Effect

One of the more perplexing problems of qualitative research was its subjectivity: the capacity of the researcher for self-critical consciousness. At the outset of investigations, there was a certain scepticism and bemusement towards the research among NUU staff, which gave way fairly quickly to acceptance and interest. It became almost impossible to tell the extent to which the particular personality dimensions of the researcher governed the kinds of relationships, both formal and informal, that evolved. It would never ultimately be known whether people became key informants because of a prior interest (e.g., opposition to the merger) or purely through accident. One of the "accidents" of the research was the fact that the researcher happened to catch a bus to NUU each day with, as it turned

out, one of the leading figures in the merger deliberations and decision making structures. The question was whether the formal and informal communication networks utilised by the researcher gave access to more general patterns of thought throughout the university. A further problem was that members of the particular department in which the researcher was accommodated and accorded guest status were collectively apprehensive about the merger. It became even more necessary to balance such a potential bias with a more objective quantitative analysis of attitudes to the merger.

Access To Formal Decision Making Processes

From the outset, formal overtures were made by the researcher to the appropriate NUU and merger authorities, with a view to gaining observer status at meetings of the Steering Group, NUU Senate and Council, and other merger bodies. Such access would have provided formal clues as to the authority relations, power networks and educational philosophy of decision makers, as they met in committee to plan the new institution. The rejection of such requests highlighted both the closed nature of formal decision making structures in a particular university, but, more importantly, the vulnerability felt by planners of the new institution. Despite such setbacks, the researcher was given total access to printed papers, minutes and public submissions regarding higher education in the Province and the merger itself. Through informal networks developed over the initial months, it became possible to attend several crucial merger

meetings which involved staff from the four campuses, and which gave some insight into the personal, social, educational and institutional dynamics of the merger.

Value Of The Research

The merger between NUU and UP was the first of its kind in the U.K. higher education system. Among other things, it was being interpreted as the first breakdown of the "binary division" between the university and polytechnic systems of educational administration. For that reason alone, the research was significant and valuable, providing some clues for higher education authorities throughout the U.K. as to possible directions for the future. In fact, it did not take long for the researcher to become aware that many such authorities in Britain were watching developments at Coleraine, in terms of future directions for the total U.K. system. Given the economic constraints over the next decade, some would expect similar types of mergers to take place. As a historical record of the first merger in the British system of higher education, the study gained even greater significance, because it documented government thinking about the prospects of higher education towards the end of the century. As such, the study served as an indicator of government perceptions of the goals and functions of higher education.

From an ethnographic perspective, the study provided, through interviews with the newly designated academic managers of the Proposed University of Ulster, a significant

measure of the possibilities of and constraints on the new institution, as it set about its task of fulfilling objectives.

The study as a whole might well provide educational planners and sociologists alike with commentary on the complexity of such a merger, involving a fundamental change of professional and institutional priorities for both staff and students. The bureaucratic, academic and personal traditions, loyalties and conflicts that inevitably surface when two institutions of higher education merge, pose critical problems which call for wise management and leadership. Notwithstanding, the outcome of such a process will naturally be uncertain. The level of conflict that remains unresolved within the new institution at the actual time of merger, may set the boundaries of overall effectiveness.

The research raises several issues of importance to existing theories in the fields of educational philosophy, sociology and administration and, to a lesser extent, of organizational communication. The traditional notion of a university as a conservative institution is tested. The relationship between authority structures and institutional goals is brought nicely into focus by the merger of two such different institutions of higher education.

With regard to curriculum issues, there is a serious attempt, at all three procedural levels, to raise the question of the social function of education, and of the relationship between theory and practice. As far as the Charters

and Statutes provide some clue as to what kind of curricular processes might emerge, the new Charter represents a breakthrough and could well pave the way in U.K. institutions of higher education to a much closer curricular link between intellectual and social processes. The interviews provide an opportunity for exploring, with key academics and administrators, the likelihood of courses in the new institution demanding a greater level of social engagement and responsible praxis among staff and students. "Praxis" for the purpose of the research, is taken to mean a form of knowing that involves, at one and the same time, the critical reflection on action.

At the anthropological level, the research provides a useful analysis of the effects of major structural change on individual behavior and perceptual patterns. Observations are made of communication patterns (formal and informal), power relations and decision making structures in a university.

Definitions And Terminology

The word "merger" throughout the research, refers to the formal amalgamation of two separate institutions into one organizational system. The term "NUU" refers to The New University of Ulster, established by Royal Charter in 1968, at Coleraine and Londonderry. "UP" refers to The Ulster Polytechnic which was based at Jordanstown and Belfast. "Possibilities" and "constraints" refer to the perceptions of the potential of the new institution as revealed through

documents, questionnaire and interviews.

"Higher education" refers to formal postsecondary schooling, with a particular focus on universities, colleges and polytechnics. A "university", according to the OED is the

> whole body of teachers and scholars engaged, at a particular place, in giving and receiving instruction in the higher branches of learning; such persons associated together as a corporate body, with a definite organization and acknowledged powers and privileges (especially that of conferring degrees), and forming an institution for the promotion of education in the higher or more important branches of learning.

Likewise, the word "polytechnic" comes from the original Greek adjective meaning "skilled in many arts". A polytechnic is an "educational institution for giving instruction in various technical subjects" (OED).

Several abbreviations occur throughout the research. "UGC" refers to the University Grants Committee which coordinates all university education on behalf of the British Government. Its major brief concerns funding. "NAB" refers to the equivalent body controlling public sector higher education, namely the National Advisory Board. "DES" refers to the Department of Education and Science in London, a government organization which coordinates all education in Great Britain. "DENI" refers to the Northern Ireland version of the parent organization, namely the Department of Education in Northern Ireland.

"ICE" refers to the Institute of Continuing Education at Magee University College, Londonderry. "Chilver" refers

to the recommendations of the Higher Education Review Group, reporting on the needs of Northern Ireland, in 1982. "Lockwood" was the earlier report of a similar commission (1965), based on work done by the "Robbins" report of 1963. The "binary division" (or "divide") refers to the dualistic funding system in the U.K. whereby universities are accountable to the UGC but polytechnics and colleges answer to local government authorities. "Sandwich" programs in polytechnics offer students scope for both academic and employment experiences consecutively. "Academic drift" refers to the tendency of postsecondary institutions to cast off lower level course work in preference for degree and graduate programs. The Steering Group (SG) was the government appointed body, under Sir Peter Swinnerton-Dyer's Chairmanship, whose task was to bring about an effective merger.

Overview Of Procedures

There were five essential features of qualitative research which had a decisive bearing on the choice of methodologies for the current research. The natural context (in this case, the university) served as the direct source of data and the researcher as the key instrument; it was descriptive; it emphasized process, rather than product; it lent itself to an inductive method of data analysis; and it was concerned fundamentally with meaning (i.e., participant perspectives). The ultimate concern of the qualitative research was to discern how members of a particular social group understand their world and shape their reality

(Bogdan and Biklen, 1982, pp 27 ff.).

The phenomenological thrust of the research was designed to understand the more subjective aspects of people's behavior, and served as a mode of entry into the conceptual world of the members of the two institutions, with a view to understanding what they thought was happening and why. Before making any judgments about the appropriateness of decisions taken, of structures planned or of any educational rationale, the more fundamental task was to understand how people participating in the merger perceived events as they impacted upon them. It was important to discover attitudes to higher education at a wide level of community interest (e.g., members of local authorities, trade unions, chambers of commerce, and clergy). The content analysis of submissions to the Steering Group took priority in the initial stage of investigations, for it provided major notions of what key people, in the Province and throughout the U.K., thought about the central needs of higher education in Northern Ireland.

It was possible to interview a small number of public figures concerned with the merger, though the most crucial means of testing public opinion, was in terms of document analysis. A study was made of material dealing with organizational and faculty structures, the function of research, continuing education, the role of deans and academic managers, the aims as found in the Charter, and with a range of other academic and administrative matters. Relevant

press articles on the merger or on higher education in the U.K. were examined. Such material was monitored formally by the Administration at NUU.

While it was not possible to gain access to the central committees of Steering Group, Senate and Council, and thus observe the social dynamics and power relations in a formal context at the highest level, nevertheless a collective and consensual synthesis of committee work was reflected in the minutes and papers flowing out of such meetings, thus pointing to the possibilities and constraints of the newly emerging institution.

The principal research procedure was that of ethnography, involving dozens of interviews, and hundreds of informal discussions and conversations within the two institutions, both face to face and on the telephone. Conversations were held with leaders of academic unions (e.g., AUT, APT), members of different faculties including lecturers, heads of departments, professors and deans. Several visits to Jordanstown and Derry were arranged for such purposes. Where it was impossible to meet a key informant face to face, a telephone interview was arranged. Such procedures applied beyond the two institutions to community leaders, media personnel, civil servants and government leaders.

Towards the end of the time in Northern Ireland, a formalised set of interviews with the designated heads of various academic or administrative functions in the new

institution, was conducted. Such a process aimed at comparing perspectives within management on the following areas of concern: the goals of the proposed university (institutional, campus and faculty), authority relations and structures, academic drift, public image (e.g., the capacity to attract high quality students and staff), research and scholarship, funding, the role of continuing education, possible problems in the early years, lessons learned through the merger experience, and social impact of the new institution. Wherever possible, interviews were recorded, and the transcripts used for analysis.

The decision to develop and administer a questionnaire, to a random sample, on each of the four campuses, of students, academics and administrators, was based on the desire of the researcher to discover possible differences of perception within and between campuses and institutions. The questionnaire focused on two main issues: the perceived roles and functions of a university, and the attitudes to the merger (e.g., its goals and structures). Through such a survey, it became possible to make some inferences from the sample about the total population, as far as support in principle for possible priorities and problems with regard to the merger.

Alongside the threefold methodology just outlined, there was a serious effort to review part of the literature dealing with philosophical, sociological and administrative aspects of higher education, and with mergers both in

business and in higher education.

Summary

Given the distinctive British framework for the study, the research aimed to interpret the key processes of the merger between the New University of Ulster and Ulster Polytechnic. The merger decision was taken at government level, in response to a major report on higher education in Northern Ireland, which, while showing that NUU had failed to measure up to expected performance - in terms of student numbers, academic programs and overall leadership - nevertheless recommended major changes, rather than closure or merger with one of the Belfast institutions.

The study was primarily a descriptive analysis of the organizational, philosophical and educational factors involved in such a merger. The ultimate goal of the research was to determine the extent to which a university can respond, on the one hand, to political and economic pressures and yet, on the other, fulfil some of the more traditional ideals of a university education.

II

PRECEDENTS IN THE LITERATURE

In order to set the research in its proper theoretical context, the major philosophical ideas about higher education are reviewed historically; trends in the literature concerning the sociology of higher education are analysed; and the key educational issues in the research are addressed.

Philosophical Ideas

Ecclesiastes says "there is nothing new under the sun". Some of the most current thought today about the aims of higher education, can be traced back as far as the very dawn of human civilization (Domonkos, 1977). Some would locate the proper beginnings of the philosophy of higher education in the sacred texts of ancient Indian culture which see the aims of education as helping people to find nirvana or everlasting peace (Chaplin 1977).

Individualism Versus Collectivism

Two distinct views of the aims of education have competed for supremacy in educational thought and practice over the past two and a half thousand years.

Lao-tsu. The first major educational theory has its roots in the individualism of Lao-tsu the founder of Taoism, who emphasized internal growth, learning for the sake of understanding, and the cultivation of inner harmony. The focus within this system is on spontaneity and simplicity, where people pursue a union with nature rather than an

ideal role in society.

Confucius. The second tradition finds its earliest expression in Confucius who stressed the socialization of the individual and the acquisition of knowledge for the sake of harmony in society. The ideal man, according to this position, was the cultivated man who combined wisdom with courtesy. Education aimed at propriety and the adoption of prescribed roles in society. It is through Plato, Socrates' interpreter and spokesman, that these two distinct educational traditions are combined.

Plato. According to Plato, education should aim at the cultivation of those virtues that help the individual achieve inner harmony and allow the state to benefit from the harmony of satisfied citizens fulfilling their proper roles. Plato considered higher education as the cultivation of the individual for the sake of the ideal society (the just state) as well as for the inner happiness and harmony of the individual. He foresaw an elite group of intellectual leaders, trained in mathematics, dialectics and metaphysics, as the ones best qualified to rule the society.

Given his tripartite concept of human nature (rational, sensual and emotional), he urged the development of a rational moral personality as the ultimate path to happiness. For him, the cardinal virtues to be pursued by all were wisdom, courage, temperance and justice. One of the main educational tasks, therefore, was to provide a rigorous

training of the mind in dialectic which, in turn would lead to a proper understanding of such virtues and of what is true and good.

Aristotle. Plato's greatest disciple was Aristotle. The goal of life, for him, was the development of virtue or moral goodness and human excellence: the active exercise of "the soul's faculties in conformity with excellence or virtue" (Aristotle, 1945 p. 33). Such an aim can best be achieved by training children to like the beautiful, noble and good and to hate their opposite. Learning to live in harmony with the rational principle becomes the means of education and the good life. For both Plato and Aristotle, one of the main tasks of education is the production of a good citizen. Where the two differ, however, is that Aristotle saw the ultimate and overriding aim of education as preparing the individual for the active enjoyment of leisure (Aristotle, 1932, pp. 609-617).

For Aristotle, the activity best suited to leisure is "theoria", the disinterested search for truth, not for utilitarian motives but for the sake of the activity itself. He said that a person is truly free only when he is not earning a living, but is creatively using his leisure. The concept of higher education as a means of learning to use leisure time creatively is just beginning to enter the mainstream of educational thought, particularly in the field of adult and continuing education (Cross, 1981).

Montaigne. The French man of letters, Montaigne believed that education should teach the art of living, and that the measure of education is the behavior of those who receive it: the educated person "will not so much say his lesson as do it. He will repeat it in his action" (Montaigne, 1957, p. 124). For Montaigne, neither the school room nor the library was the best source of instruction, but rather, the world. Observation, travel and moral example were the best teachers. The process of education should cultivate the whole person, thus avoiding the division of mind from body. Though not averse to book learning, Montaigne believed that without the blending of experiences in the real world, reading produced a shallow, limited mind. He preached the cultivation of knowledge for the sake of the complete man. Education should not fill the memory but fashion the judgment, thus forming a morally independent person who loves virtue and hates vice, not from fear, but for themselves.

Francis Bacon. The trend toward vocational education in university work was criticized by Bacon. He called for a thorough training in the arts and sciences and saw the utility of knowledge as fundamental: "Knowledge and human power are synonymous since the ignorance of the cause frustrates the effect" (Bacon, 1889, p. 192). Bacon was interested in the pursuit of knowledge to attain mastery over nature in order to improve social conditions. He condemned "a kind of adoration of the mind . . . by means

whereof men have withdrawn themselves too much from the contemplation of nature, and the observations of experience, and have tumbled up and down in their own reason and conceits" (Kerr, 1963, p. 2). Here we see the beginnings of a philosophy of higher education that seeks to control rather than understand, to produce practical results rather than theoretical structures.

Comenius. Education for all regardless of birth and wealth, was Comenius' belief:

> Not only the children of the rich and powerful but all children ought to be educated in the same way whether they are nobles or commoners, rich or poor, boys or girls, or whether they come from cities, towns or villages. (Comenius 1896, p. 218)

Roman virtue, Christian piety and Bacon's utilitarian notion of knowledge are all combined in Comenius' belief in the brotherhood of man. With regard to university learning, however, Comenius felt that "only select intellects, the flower of mankind" (Comenius, 1896, p. 432) should have the benefit of it. He felt that a thorough knowledge of the arts and sciences is not possible in a lifetime. He developed the concept that higher education should train students to cope with any circumstance intelligently and creatively:

> It is the principles, the causes and the purposes of all the main facts about the world that we wish everyone to learn. (Comenius, 1896, p. 222)

Comenius provided the seventeenth century with a philosophy of education that combined religious piety and morality with the advancement of learning, beginning with the

premise that "the ultimate end of man is eternal happiness with God" (Keatinge. 1931, pp. 23-25). For him, the whole excellence of man was found in erudition, virtue and religion, which alone provide the basis for the present and future life. He aimed ultimately to reform society through education, feeling that if people could be trained to see the underlying harmony of the universe, they could then overcome the apparent disharmonies.

John Locke. Another thinker whose educational ideas were close to those of Comenius was John Locke. Like Comenius, he set, as one of the main aims of higher education, the development of the mental faculties, and stressed the importance of wide experience before forming philosophical or religious judgments.

Both Locke and Comenius opposed specialization, seeing the primary function of higher education as preparing students "to open and dispose their minds as may best make them capable of any (subject) when they shall apply themselves to it" (Locke, 1890, p. 44). Locke placed significant emphasis on the individualism of the child and the unique qualities, motivations and interests he brought to the classroom. Locke stressed the need to adapt teaching methods and philosophy alike to the individual student. Empiricist that he was, he asserted that human knowledge rested, firstly, on the experience of the external world acquired through the senses; and secondly, on the inner world of physical events achieved through introspection

and reflection. Empirical knowledge, he maintained, never provided certainty, only probability.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau. For Rousseau, (who would certainly have been familiar with Locke's ideas) the goal of education was the growth and development of the individual. He emphasized the natural self-development of the individual as well as the need to tailor educational content and methods to the gradual changes in the growing person. In his Emile, Rousseau presents a blueprint for uprooting contemporary schooling and constructing a new society by means of a new kind of education. He challenged the assumption that children should be put in the care of professionals and fed a body of knowledge and social norms, moulded into the adults of the future. Emile would have a natural education in which the classroom was the real world and experience the teacher (Barrow, 1978, p. 4f).

Pestalozzi. Heavily influenced by Rousseau's work, J.H. Pestalozzi sought in education a remedy for society's ills, balancing the needs of the individual against the needs of society. He developed a program for equality of educational opportunity for all children, yet which allowed for individual differences. He preferred individual development to the acquisition of skills:

> It is all very well and good for (children) to learn something, but the really important thing is for them to be something - for them to become what they are meant to be. (Pestalozzi, 1892, p. 152)

He saw learning as a lifelong process, and higher education

as an extension of the ideals of individual nurture, begun in childhood. Education, for Pestalozzi, should develop the innate capacities for human thought. The child's faculties should be developed by moving from observation to analysis.

Herbart. At a more philosophical level, Herbert offered an educational theory that blended metaphysics with educational objectives similar to Plato. For him, "the whole purpose of education" was summed up in the word "virtue" (Herbart, 1901, p. 7). "Man's worth does not . . . lie in his knowing, but in his willing" (Herbart, 1901, p. 40). Herbart felt that information gained through learning processes could only be retained and integrated into the personality, when a learner was voluntarily involved in the educational process.

In his own university teaching at Königsberg, he developed a dualistic curriculum, with the study of maths and science intended to develop observational skills, on the one hand; and with the classics, designed to cultivate human sensitivity, on the other. Such an education should, he said, develop the "many-sided nature of the individual" (Herbart, 1901, pp. 76-92) whose interests are empirical, esthetic, speculative, sympathetic, religious and social.

Newman. The most influential thinker of the nineteenth century about university education was Cardinal J.H. Newman, the great classical humanist. In his view, the university is, above all, an institution created for the

purpose of teaching and of cultivating the mind. Its function is not research, for that can be done elsewhere, but the transmission of knowledge, "which is desirable though nothing come of it, as being of itself a treasure, and a sufficient remuneration of years of labour" (Newman, 1947, p. 128). He argued that by bringing together a group of intelligent, sympathetic and intellectually curious people, they are bound to learn something from each other. He therefore viewed a university as an "Alma Mater" knowing her children one by one, not a foundry or a mint, or a treadmill (Newman, 1960, p. 109).

In his lectures arguing against the exclusion of the "science" of religion from university study, he continued:

> . . . are we to limit our ideas of University knowledge by the evidence of our senses? then we exclude ethics; by intuition? we exclude metaphysics; by abstract reasoning? we exclude physics. (Newman, 1960, p. 19)

Speaking about the main purpose of a university in terms of the way it treats its students, Newman says,

> An assemblage of learned men, zealous for their own sciences, and rivals of each other, are brought, by familiar intercourse and for the sake of intellectual peace, to adjust together the claims and relations of their respective subjects of investigation. They learn to respect, to consult, to aid each other. (Newman, 1960, p. 76)

Although a student only pursues a "few sciences out of the multitude", he nevertheless profits by an intellectual tradition which is,

> independent of particular teachers, which guides him in his choice of subjects, and duly interprets for him those which he chooses. He apprehends

> the great outlines of knowledge, the principles on which it rests. Hence it is that his education is formed which lasts through life, of which the attributes are, freedom, equitableness, calmness, moderation and wisdom, . . . or a philosophical habit. (Newman, 1960, p. 76f)

Arguing along Aristotelian lines, Newman saw knowledge as an end in itself, offering its own reward. He distinguished between education and instruction, which was used with regard to manual exercises, the fine arts, trades and business:

> . . . for these are methods, which have little or no effect upon the mind itself, are contained in rules committed to memory, to tradition or to use, and bear upon an end external to themselves. But education is a higher word; it implies an action upon our mental nature, and the formation of a character. (Newman, 1960, p. 85f)

Newman made a clear distinction between knowledge and virtue. Philosophy certainly trained the mind, but gave no control over the emotions:

> Liberal Education makes not the Christian, not the Catholic, but the gentleman. It is well to be a gentleman . . . to have a cultivated intellect, a delicate taste, a candid, equitable, dispassionate mind, a noble and courteous bearing in the conduct of life; - these are the . . . objects of a University. (Newman, 1960, p. 91)

Though he rejected the utilitarian (Baconian) idea of knowledge, Newman conceded that the training of the mind best enabled a person to discharge his duties to society:

> If then a practical end must be assigned to a University course, . . . it is that of training good members of society . . .; it aims at raising the intellectual tone of society, . . . at facilitating the exercise of political power and refining the intercourse of private life. (Newman, 1960, p. 134f)

Whitehead. The British mathematician, scholar and philosopher, A.N. Whitehead was one of the most astute observers of the university since Newman. Concurring with the nineteenth century ideal of the cultivation of the mind, he nevertheless protested against the teaching of dead knowledge: of ideas "merely received into the mind without being utilized or tested, or thrown into fresh combinations" (Whitehead, 1947, p. 1). Instead, he argued that the essence of university education must be activity of thought, that facts must be studied with a view to understanding their relation to one another. The aims of education, for Whitehead, should be expert knowledge and the acquisition of culture. Such a view of the mind as an active, functioning instrument rather than as a passive receptacle for information, stood at the core of his educational thought. Education became the art of the utilization of knowledge. He outlined a methodology of higher education which took into account the active stages of mental development which a good teacher should respect. He saw three developmental stages in the mental life: romance, precision and generalization. He felt that if the curriculum were adapted to these phases of growth, the pupil would learn more effectively. He believed in the need for an educated mind that became increasingly conversant with its cultural and historical roots, on the one hand, but rigorously trained in scientific methodology, on the other: "the race which does not value trained

intelligence is doomed" (Whitehead, 1942, p. 22). He stressed getting a living understanding of a few interrelated abstract ideas by using them in a variety of ways so as to develop an intimate sense of their power.

Dewey. Probably the most formative and influential educational theorist of the twentieth century has been John Dewey. The underlying tenets of his philosophy of education were that the educational process must begin with and build up on the interests of the child; that it must provide opportunity for the interplay of thinking and doing in the classroom experience; that the school should be organized as a "miniature community"; that the teacher should be a guide and a coworker with the pupils, rather than a taskmaster assigning set lessons; and that the goal of education is the growth of the child in all aspects of its being.

Dewey created a model of the educated person as the reflective man who was critical of the authority of custom and tradition as the determinant of belief and action, and who preferred the method of science, of "organized intelligence" as the best way to solve problems. Subject matter, therefore, should consist of activities that enabled the child to reflect upon his social experiences. When subject matter preceded or was unrelated to the child's experiences, it was largely meaningless; it gained meaning when it became the medium for continued reflection upon, and reconstruction of, experience

(Dewey, 1964, p. 434).

> In just the degree in which connections are established between what happens to a person and what he does in response, and between what he does to his environment and what it does in response to him, his acts and the things about him acquire meaning. He learns to understand both himself and the world of men and things. Purposive education or schooling should present such an environment that this interaction will effect acquisition of those meanings which are so important that they become, in turn, instruments of further learnings. (Dewey, 1966, p. 274)

Arguing for responsibility in education, Dewey says that what is needed is a disposition to "consider in advance the probable consequences of any projected step and deliberately to accept them". He continues:

> It would be much better to have fewer facts and truths in instruction if a smaller number of situations could be intellectually worked out to the point where conviction meant something real - some identification of the self with the type of conduct demanded by facts and foresight of results. The most permanent bad results of undue complication of school subjects are . . . the failure to make clear what is involved in really knowing and believing a thing. (Dewey, 1966, p. 178f)

Dewey's distinction between education and schooling is somewhat blurred; nevertheless, he sees education as the fundamental method of social progress and reform. Through education, a social consensus can be attained:

> . . . - the teacher is engaged, not simply in the training of individuals, but in the formation of the proper social life.
> - every teacher should realize the dignity of his calling; that he is a social servant set apart for the maintenance of proper social order and the securing of the right social growth. (1967, p438f)

Dewey asserts that one of the problems in educational

thinking or practice, and this applies as much to university education as to earlier forms of teaching, is the false dichotomy between information and understanding. Some, he says, argue that scholarship must be primary, while others see the power to think as more central to the educational task:

> The real desideratum is getting command of scholarship - or skill - under conditions that at the same time exercise thought . . . Information is knowledge that is merely acquired and stored up; wisdom is knowledge operating in the direction of powers to the better living of life. (Dewey, 1967, p. 237)

Piaget and James. Although their primary discipline was psychology, the ramifications of the research of Jean Piaget and William James on educational philosophy, with regard to both child and adult learning, demand serious, if brief, attention in the review of the general literature dealing with the aims of education. For James, the purpose of education was to organize a child's powers of conduct so as to fit him to his social and physical environment. Interests must be awakened and broadened as the natural starting points of instruction. Piaget's philosophical and psychological study of the cognitive development of children, with its stages of cognitive growth, has had a major impact on both learning theory and educational philosophy, particular in the area of moral development education and adult education (e.g., Lickona, 1976, pp. 31-53; Munsey, 1980, pp. 15-98; Wilcox, 1979, pp. 183-202; also Cross, 1981; Knowles, 1980).

Rogers and Maslow. It was through the humanistic school of psychology, under the leadership of Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow that an essentially client-centered therapy was translated into such educational goals as "nondirective learning", "self-actualization" and "self-awareness":

> If the creation of an atmosphere of acceptance, understanding and respect is the most effective basis for facilitating the learning which is called therapy, then might it not be the basis for the learning which is called education? If the outcome of this approach to therapy is a person who is not only better informed in regard to himself but who is better able to guide himself intelligently in new situations, might a similar outcome be hoped for in education? It is questions of this sort which plague the counsellor who is also a teacher. (Srinivasan, 1977, p. 8)

The underlying principle of such an approach is that the teacher should foster the learner's capacity for self-actualization. For this to happen, the teacher must have faith that, given appropriate conditions, learners will want to grow, to engage in self-directed inquiry, to aim at mastery and express themselves creatively.

The teacher's role, then, is to create a conducive atmosphere and structure for self-directed learning to take place. He helps group members to clarify individual goals, maintains an accepting attitude and is, above all else, genuine in his relationship with the group. Similarly, Maslow emphasized the expansion of self, including the release of the tendency for good; a greater understanding of people, of the world and of self; increase in

self-acceptance; use and enjoyment of talents; awareness of inner growth; increase in autonomy; and thus greater power to shape and alter the environment (Srinivasan, 1977 p. 9f).

Skinner. Both the developmentalist school of psychology and the existentialist school of philosophy, came into being largely in reaction to the more alarming and dehumanizing elements thought to exist in the mechanistic worldview of logical positivism. B.F. Skinner was the behaviorist who advocated the shifting of responsibility for conduct and achievement from the individual to the environment. Behavior can, he said, be influenced by means of controlling the stimuli that determine behavior. He rejected the humanistic philosophy of education outright, and spoke in terms of specific behavioral objectives for any learning situation.

Rejecting the "mentalism" which seeks to explain human behavior in terms of values, purposes, ideas or theories which act as underlying causes of behavior, Skinner argued that it was impossible to "infer the philosophy from the behavior" (Skinner, 1971, p. 28). In terms of effecting change through the teaching process, Skinner says,

> We reinforce behavior in particular ways; we do not give a person a purpose or an intention. We change behavior toward something, not an attitude toward it. We sample and change verbal behavior, not opinions. (Skinner, 1971, p. 89f)

Marx. The social-reconstructionist theory of education

found its chief spokesman in Karl Marx, who asserted that what was needed for man's growth towards maturity was genuine community: the voluntary coming together of autonomous and socially responsible people. The educated person, according to Marx, was not the irresponsible individualist nor the coerced collectivist but the accountable communal man, who gained freedom not by avoiding social obligations, but through social relationships. Individual freedom required social authority.

Marx emphasized the reality of human agency and transforming praxis. He commended the idealist tradition for recognizing the role of humans in the construction of knowledge and history, but criticized it as being essentially contemplative and inert. He attempted to "balance the real, material limitations on human freedom with his championing of self-transforming, revolutionary praxis", thus avoiding the fatalism of the determinists and the idealism of the rationalists (Matthews, 1980, p. 82). Truth is always practical and never a matter of theory.

For transformation of people and of consciousness to take place, a simultaneous transformation of their material circumstances must occur: to try to change hearts and minds without changing the structures that prevent humanizing thoughts, for Marx, is futile. Education systems, therefore, become places where battles are waged for the minds of each generation: between capital and labor. Schools do, and always will systematically reflect the

interests of capital, with the primary function of creating suitable labor power. "If this clashes with the pursuit of truth, so much the worse for truth" (Matthews, 1980, p. 86). Marx's historical materialism saw practice or conscious human activity as mediating between matter and mind, between subject and object, thus alerting both society and nature. Consciousness emerges out of and is shaped by practice, being assessed in and through practice.

The Marxist thesis is that schooling is concerned primarily with the production of labor power in any social formation, thus legitimizing existing systems of privilege, power and resources. The dominant ideology is expressed and reflected in schools at three levels: students are kept ignorant of vast areas of knowledge; only partial connections are formed and only partial analyses made; students are domesticated by being conditioned to respect authority figures, accept contingencies as necessary and learn to justify social inequities.

As far as the structures of hegemony are concerned in schooling, the control of learning is in the hands of educators, not learners; the learning process is fragmented socially (e.g., streaming) and technically (e.g., subjects); motivations and rewards for learning are extrinsic to the learning process (e.g., grades); rewards are unequal; competition, rather than cooperation, prevails; and conformity to rules is highly valued (Matthews, 1980, pp. 185-193).

Gramsci. According to Gramsci, hegemony is the central system of meanings and values, which are not merely abstract but are organized and lived (Gramsci, 1971). Thus, class domination, within a Marxian analysis, is exercised through a seemingly popular consensus that is perpetuated through the ideological and structural penetration of the media, the law, cultural traditions and education.

Habermas. Still within a neo-Marxian framework, one of the members of the Frankfurt or critical social theory school, Jurgen Habermas outlined his philosophy of higher education under four central aims (Habermas, 1971):

Universities must transmit and produce technically exploitable knowledge. In other words, they should meet an industrial society's need for qualified new generations, and at the same time, be concerned with the expanded reproduction of education itself. The production of knowledge includes both the information flowing from research into channels of industrial utilization, armament and social welfare, and advisory knowledge that enters into the strategies of administration, government and other decision making powers (e.g., private enterprise).

Universities must ensure that graduates are equipped with a minimum of qualifications in the area of extra-functional abilities: attributes and attitudes relevant to the pursuit of a profession, but not contained as such in professional knowledge and skills. Universities must transmit, interpret and develop the cultural tradition of

society. There should be a focus on the formation of a political consciousness among students.

Buber. The existentialist approach to education developed as a reaction to the scientific way of viewing man as an object to be categorized and manipulated. Martin Buber developed a model of the educated person as one whose life was shaped by existential decision making. Such a person did not determine choices in advance of existential situations, but used principles and traditions only as checks or reminders, not as infallible guides. Each person was unique and responsible.

Dialogue was therefore the pivotal point of Buber's educational philosophy: the educated person was one who could listen and talk. Since genuine dialogue depended on authenticity ("being" rather than "seeming") one needed the courage to be oneself in relationships. Learning, for Buber should always be linked to life and to consequent action - never to knowledge for its own sake. The educated person had both his cognitive faculties trained and his inmost spirit infused by what he had learned.

Buber felt strongly that it is the teacher rather than the educational process that is important in education. "The heart of education is discourse: the dialogue of query and reply in which both sides ask and both sides answer; the dialogue of the joint study by teacher and pupil of man, nature, art and society; the dialogue of true friendship, in which the intervals of silence are no less dialogic

than spoken discourse" (Cohen, 1979, p. 759). Education for character best takes place, according to Buber, in the context, not of the collective, for that destroys personality; but of the community (Buber, 1947, p. 131).

Freedom and responsibility go hand in hand. The important pedagogic conclusion from this is that a person learns to be responsible only by living in an atmosphere of freedom in which he is required to take action on his own responsibility. Buber sees the pursuit of truth as a fundamental right of every individual; in contrast, the collective emphasis of modern times, according to Buber, proclaims the principle of response to group interest as of overriding importance.

Peters and Hirst. Another major twentieth century school of thought with regard to the philosophy of education, is that of the British educators, R.S. Peters and Paul Hirst. In his inaugural lecture "Education as Initiation", Peters argued that education is a family of morally legitimate procedures which aim to develop intrinsically worthwhile states of mind with wide-ranging cognitive content (Peters, 1963). The mind was developed through initiation into public traditions incorporating impersonal standards and which, if mastered, give a distinctive quality to life (Dearden, 1972, p. 58). The fundamental position of the London school is that education should be primarily concerned with developing rationality/knowledge/intellect, not for the sake of any extrinsic purpose,

but for its own sake (Nordenbo, 1979, p. 451).

The Social Function And Impact Of Higher Education

From the selective philosophical review above, the researcher cannot separate discussion about the philosophy of education from its history. Likewise, it is difficult to think about higher education without first clarifying more general goals of education as they apply to primary and secondary levels of schooling; though great care must be exercised in maintaining the distinction between schooling and education. It has already been noted in the earlier discussions that there have been, over time, two broad views of education: the one, focusing on individual development, with its rationalist, existentialist and transcendentalist expressions; and the other, emphasizing the role and demands of society vis a vis the individual, with its various expressions in pragmatism, utilitarianism and social reconstruction.

Education and social order. Educationists have for centuries studied the relationships between education and society. Plato, father of the philosophy of education, had profound insights into the social function of education. However, since Herbart, the main trend of educational theory has been individualistic, taking the development of an individual as the aim of education.

The evolutionary theory of Darwin had its effects on academic life: education was clearly related to social progress and the social function of education was

emphasized by early sociologists such as Comte, Spencer and Durkheim. The latter was the founder of the scientific discipline of sociology of education, identifying education as "methodological socialization of the younger generation" (Durkheim, 1956, pp. 49, 119). He explained the function of the school in training youth in civil morality (Shimbori, 1979, p. 396). American sociologists studied education in order to resolve social problems such as crime, divorce, unemployment, racism, poverty, prostitution, alcoholism and delinquency. Educational sociology, within the American expression, held that the aims and contents of education could be determined by objective surveys and an analysis of social needs and activities. After the war, education expanded dramatically and became recognized as a vital means of economic development and national cohesion.

Educational sociology. As theories and findings in the fields of sociology, social psychology, cultural anthropology, research methods in statistics and social surveys have improved, education as a social phenomenon has been subject to increasingly sophisticated analysis. Together with educational psychology, educational sociology now plays the major role in informing educational practice (Shimbori, 1979 p.401).

Within the overall discipline, three major approaches can be detected: the cultural-anthropological school, which focused on relationships between social class and

education, via problems like educational opportunity, social mobility, child-rearing and "culture and personality" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, pp. 11-26). The second approach was that of social psychology which tended to analyze the school class and school as social systems, by examining the structures of human relations, role systems, school cultures, group norms and communication processes, using techniques such as experiments, controlled observation, micro-sociological analysis and statistical questionnaires. The historical-instructional school was mainly interested in the social functions of education.

Durkheim, for example, explored the way educational thought and practice were determined by the broader social order. In his theory of bureaucracy, Weber analyzed the selective and differentiating functions of education. Mannheim, who urged planned democracy as a short-term means of integrating capitalism and socialism gave the key integrative function to intellectuals. Veblen argued that the business principle of capitalism ruled education. There has been a growing interest in the interrelationships between education and economics, politics and mass culture, with a focus on such areas as elite training, youth culture, higher education, adult education and educational management from a macro-sociological level.

The educational explosion of the 50's led to the disenchantment of the 60's, with the rise of student unrest. The post-industrial society, according to Bell (1973) is

organized around knowledge. Instead of the industrial worker we see the dominance of the professional and technical class in the labor force (Bell, 1973, p. 125). A post-industrial society is based, not on raw muscle power, but on information. The central person is the professional, who is equipped by his education and training, to provide the necessary skills. The most striking aspect of the new labor force is the level of formal educational attainment (Bell, 1973, p. 143). The university increasingly becomes the primary institution of the post-industrial society.

As more and more people in affluent societies become anxious for higher education, and as research and development in higher institutions is given government priority, the over-educated society comes into being. Hence the questions of quality versus quantity, and equality versus quality, gain increasing attention among academics (e.g., Coleman, 1966; Freeman, 1975).

The "new" sociology of education developed in the 70's as a more pessimistic reaction to the "old" sociology which held high hopes for education's ability to rescue modern society. Heavily influenced by the Frankfurt School (e.g., Adorno, Marcuse, Fromm and Habermas), the radical sociologists were critical of both functionalism and Marxism. The former school was seen to fail to deal adequately with conflict and change, and was thus accused of maintaining the status quo of society. Through functionalism, education could not promote social change or innovation.

Sociology of knowledge. An increasing interest in the sociology of knowledge developed, both in Europe (Mannheim, 1955 and Young, 1971) and America (Mills, 1964 and Merton, 1957). There was a concern to study the social organization of knowledge: why and how certain types of knowledge came to dominate education. Marx had at a much earlier date analyzed the ways in which systems of ideas appeared to depend on the social positions of their proponents. Trying to relate the thought of individuals to their social roles and class positions, he said,

> The mode of production in material life determines the general character processes of life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but on the contrary their social existence determines their consciousness. (1859/1913, pp. 11-12)

Four basic intellectual traditions have been identified, all of which, in one way or another, express themselves in much of the educational thinking and curricular processes at the three key levels of education today. Scientism denies the validity of tradition, arguing that everything be tested against absolute "facts", and being highly critical of the arbitrary or irrational. Romanticism, while valuing impulse and passion, originality and genius, shares an affinity with scientism, in its aversion to stereotyped and traditional-bound behavior patterns. An ordered society lives uncomfortably with intellectuals who, at least in this romantic expression, are seen as anti-authoritarian.

The tradition of revolution, while similar to the two former traditions, traces its roots to the apocalyptic-millenarian traditions of Judaeo-Christianity, with their

belief that a corrupt world will be replaced one day by a more righteous one. The most powerful secular expression of this tradition is Marxism, though the revolutionary tradition as a whole can be categorised by a sharp distinction between good and evil, a refusal to compromise with injustice, and a rigid adherance to doctrinaire politics or idealist ethics (Cohn, 1970).

The populistic tradition arose out of a belief in the creativity and superior moral worth of ordinary people: the non-academic uneducated masses. A more reactionary tradition that should also be mentioned is the anti-intellectual tradition of order, which saw excessive intellectual analysis as socially disruptive, and was antagonistic especially to intellectuals who were critical of civil authority.

There are five main functions of intellectuals: the creation and diffusion of high culture, the provision of national and cross-national models, the development of common cultures, the influencing of social change, and the playing of political roles.

Niebuhr. In his discussion of the attitudes of priviledged classes, Rienhold Niebuhr comments that they have a habit of denying the oppressed classes "every opportunity for the cultivation of innate capacities and then to accuse them of lacking what they have been denied the right to acquire" (Niebuhr, 1960, p. 118). He continues:

Dominant classes are always slowest to yield power

> because it is the source of privilege . . . While education is potential power, because it enables the disinherited to protect their own interests by organised and effective methods, the dominant classes have suppressed their fears of this effect of education by the thought that education could be used as a means for inculcating submissiveness. (Niebuhr, 1960, p. 121f)

Bourdieu. The relationship between the higher education system and social class structure is explored by Bourdieu. He argues that education serves to maintain rather than reduce social inequality. For him, higher education validates privilege, allocates status and instils respect for the status quo. While serving the traditional function of transmitting general cultural knowledge over time, educational institutions contribute to the reproduction of social class structure by reinforcing cultural and status cleavages among classes (Swartz, 1977, p. 546). It was Lenin who foresaw the pivotal role of the organized elite in the process of social transformation; moving beyond Marx, he saw the elite, rather than the vulgar mass, as the vanguard and instrument of change (Wolin, 1960, p. 421).

According to Bourdieu, dominant groups have bestowed the task of assigning and distributing elite status to an expanding and meritocratic system of higher education. Ruling class interests can thus be protected without violating the principles of democratic ideology, thereby obscuring and yet validating the "reproduction of social hierarchies by transmuting them into academic hierarchies" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 153). One of the distinct advantages for the educational advancement of the upper classes, according to Bourdieu, is the amount of cultural capital and ethos a

family transmits to its children:

> The latter is a system of implicit and deeply interiorized values which . . . helps to define attitudes towards the cultural capital and educational institutions. The cultural heritage, which differs from both points of view according to social class, is the cause of the initial inequality of children when faced with examinations . . . , and hence of unequal achievement. (Dale, 1976, p. 110)

Three major themes occur in Bourdieu's work: academic performance is linked to cultural background (e.g., parent's educational history rather than occupational status); schooling makes a difference, by providing the basis for a limited and controlled social mobility; there is a strong correlation between social class background and school performance at primary and secondary levels, with a weakening of such a trend at university level.

The school plays an important role in determining an individual's academic expectations. "A working class ethos leading to self-elimination, for example, derives from an assessment that schools offer little chance of success for those without much cultural capital" (Swartz, 1977, p. 548). The very physical organization of the university (lecture theaters, great halls, lecterns) testify to the dominance of the spoken word. The formal lecture legitimizes the role of the professor as mediator of truth. Classroom knowledge is not the product of dialogue between teacher and student but the imposition of traditional symbolic meanings by the lecturer. Essays present advantages to those richest in cultural capital, by measuring linguistic facility and not just subject mastery.

Recent developments. An interesting development within the middle class is the increasing orientation of curriculum and instruction towards vocational preparation and away from the traditional humanities programs (Swartz, 1977, p. 552). A recent study of the relationship between higher education and the world of work (Sanyal, 1982) makes various assertations. Work and education are connected, so that the planning for higher education should integrate informal and nonformal with formal programs. Training programs should take into account the objective need for skills, values and ethics as well as manpower forecasts.

The objective of higher education should be the development of educable rather than just educated persons. Experience from industry should be taken into account by planners of higher education, with a view to bringing institutions of education and institutions of employment more closely together. Until society is ready to recognise as "employment" any useful role, higher education planning should emphasize graduate employability (Sanyal, 1982, p. 256. See also Silberman, 1978, p. 168ff).

Another field of study has been in relation to the role of women in higher eudcation. For a recent review of the literature, see Randour, et al 1982, p. 190 and p. 201f. Despite gains made by U.S. women, in terms of numbers enrolled vis a vis men, entry into medical and legal fields of study and the unprecedented numbers earning doctorates, "most women still earn their degrees in lower-paying,

lower-status, female-intensive fields" (Randour, 1982, p. 199). Furthermore, there is an inverse relationship between the level of degree and the percentage of women gaining degrees in that area. The most sizeable gains, made by women are at the lowest levels of higher education (e.g., community college):

> There are more women in two-year colleges, more women in less well-funded public institutions, more women enrolled part-time, and more women achieving lower degree levels. We conclude that some women in higher education have achieved parity with men, but caution that most have not.(Randour, 1982, p. 199)

Sociologists of higher education tend to approach their subject from one of two possible perspectives: at the macrosociological level, the focus has been on the relationship between the system of higher education and the wider social structure; at the microsociological level, there has been a concentration on the social relations within the higher education process (Lewis, 1976). Another approach has been to study the structure and function of institutions of higher learning as organizations with an emphasis on distribution of power and status (e.g., Engel and Achola, 1983) as well as on value systems and on the social milieu of undergraduates. Max Weber was the first sociologist to apply sociology to the field of higher education (Shils, 1974), with discussions ranging from academic freedom to the autonomy of a university.

Veblen argued that the proper function of a university was the pursuit of idle curiosity in a world dominated by market forces. He was alarmed at the encroachment of the

new industrialism on the life and ethos of higher education institutions (Veblen, 1957). The primary social function of the university, according to "Parsonian functionalism" (Grant, 1974, p. 314), is to guard the intellectual culture and the interests that support it. Thus, scholarly research and graduate faculties represent the core of the academic system. The university is a stratified collegial association where faculty members function autonomously within their own areas of competence and interest, and where tenure and academic freedom sustain the system (Grant, 1974, p. 315). The increasingly dominant view of the social function of the university today is expressed by Bledstein:

> The American university has served as a primary service organization, a professional service institution which has made possible the functions of many derivative institutions serving the middle class. The university has exerted a formative influence upon society as the matrix within which the culture of professionalism matured; as the center to which practitioners trace the theoretical basis of knowledge upon which they establish authority. (Bledstein, 1976, pp. 289ff)

Arguing within a dependency theory framework, Altbach (1981) suggests that universities in the third world find themselves at a disadvantage in the international knowledge network whose inequalities have strong institutional support. The distinction is made between educational institutions at the intellectual centers, that give direction, provide models, produce research for the entire academic system, and between universities at the periphery which tend merely to "copy developments from abroad, produce little that is original, and are generally not at the frontiers of knowledge"

(Altbach, 1981, p. 602).

Central institutions tend to be research-oriented, prestigious and part of the international knowledge system (large libraries, well-equipped laboratories, plentiful resources for research and graduate study): producers rather than consumers. Peripheral universities, on the other hand, act as "distributors of knowledge with a large concentration on teaching as opposed to research. They tend, says Altbach, to be dependent for innovation and direction, on the center universities. Their facilities are less adequate, their academics less well qualified and less well paid.

A further point that may have some bearing on the empirical findings of the present research, concerns Altbach's contention that centers and peripheries exist within national university systems, whereby a handful of universities set the academic tone for the rest. Speaking about the American system of higher education, he says,

> A small number of recognized central universities in the United States dominate the large majority of universities. Relatively few institutions present alternative models or go in radically different directions . . . Further, the central universities receive an overwhelming proportion of research funds, have research-oriented faculty. (Altbach, 1981, p. 603)

Altbach continues by stating that the impact of Oxford and Cambridge in Britain is immense.

Altbach calls for a clear appraisal of the position of a national academic system in its international and regional context. Some universities can realistically try to build up excellence in some areas while others may be

best suited for knowledge transmission. Planners, at both government and academic levels, should become more aware of the dependency relationship and decide whether to develop new and more independent models. Self-reliance lies at the heart of the struggle towards independence and can be fostered by the "building of academic and intellectual infrastructures, such as libraries, journals, publishing houses, laboratories" (Altbach, 1981, p. 617f). Altbach continues,

> The research function of universities is very important. Even if it is possible to sponsor research in only a few areas, perhaps related to local economic or agricultural conditions and in fields that will foster a national culture, such developments will be useful. (Altbach, 1981, p. 618)

The Discussion Of Related Educational Themes

The section following reviews the literature in such areas as the organization, governance and financing of higher education, with particular emphasis on the U.K. system; adult and nonformal education, with a focus on extension education, staff development and educational innovation; educational research with a comparison of quantitative and qualitative methods as well as an examination of the function and provision of research in education; and finally, the question of mergers in higher education.

The Organization Of Higher Education

Theories in educational administration must be seen in the context of the social sciences and science itself, with all the limitations inherent in such disciplines (Willower, 1980, p. 2). Some of the more recent ideas being advanced in the social sciences, organization theory and educational

administration reject traditional theory development and, to some extent, scientific method itself. Marxist thought has reminded us of the significance of social context and of the non-linear nature of history and of change. "The use of theories in educational administration more or less follows the fashions in the social sciences, especially sociology and social psychology and in the developing area of organizational analysis" (Willower, 1980, p. 3). For example, role theory is no longer popular; leadership theories have generated few ideas that are new; bureaucratic theory, especially in its structural-functional and social systems expressions has been applied with some difficulty to formal educational systems.

Some work has been done, within an open system and social system theory, in examining school organization in terms of structural features, such as norms, socialization processes, status systems, seeing educator and student groups in an organizational context but also in the environmental context (Waller, 1932). Various kinds of exchange theories (Homans, 1961; Blau, 1964) conflict theories (Collins, 1975), contingency theories (Hanson and Brown, 1977), the loose-coupling metaphor (Weick, 1976) and the garbage can model (Cohen, March and Olsen, 1972) have been applied in more recent organizational analysis. The function of theory is primarily that of explanation, and all such theories or models have to be judged according to this criteria above all others.

The governance and control of higher education covers four main areas: academic decision making, charters and statutes, governance and administration and university legislation. Traditionally, universities have seen themselves as largely autonomous institutions; yet with the rise of industrialism and the new demands of a post-industrial society, "the great historic universities must now depend financially primarily on the more lucrative but once wholly secondary functions of professional training and government-contract work" (Martin, 1977, p. 303).

As a result, modern institutions of higher education are increasingly being influenced at the policy making and curricular planning levels by the demands of the wider community. The issue of the role of the state in determining the balance between social expenditures and other expenditures in national, economic and social developments remains central to the "economics of education" (Lyons, 1979, p. 415).

In the British system, administrators are being forced to play a greater role at the decision making level within universities, in order to bring about economies. A consumer-oriented approach seems to be on the increase, whereby subjects of low popularity are withdrawn in favour of the more attractive ones. There is a real danger that subjects "fundamental to university study will simply disappear" (Shatlock, 1975, p. 68f) because they have temporarily lost the interest of 18 year olds. Equally, we face a situation where subjects of "temporary appeal but unproven academic

worth are artificially expanded" (Shatlock, 1975, p. 68f). The central power structure of the university reflects both its internal and external tensions. The central bureaucracy has two main functions: to maintain stability between rival internal factions (e.g., high level versus lower level academics, professional administrators versus academics); and to act both as an agent of the external society and yet as the apologist of the university to it (Edwards, 1975, p. 78).

The credibility of the structures of authority within the university depends ultimately on the self image of the university in its relation to the state and society. The relatively anarchic university which has no common inner concept of the relationship of learning/research to social needs is probably most vulnerable to the imposition of centralized control, particularly in times of general economic and political crisis. "In so far as the state mediates the needs of society to the university, the university cannot avoid engaging in a dialogue and sometimes a confrontation with the state about the true nature of those needs" (Edwards, 1975, p.79).

In his analysis of the British university as an organization, Rea outlines the five major organs of government (1972, p. 191). In most of the universities, the Court is the supreme governing body. With regard to academic affairs, its powers are merely formal, with meetings only once or twice a year, and its membership, usually of several hundreds, weighed

in favor of lay representatives. The most important function of the Court is the provision of a public forum for measuring and monitoring the efficiency and effectiveness of the institutions. The official head of a university is the Chancellor, who is elected for life, and whose functions are "ceremonial and advisory rather than administrative or executive" (Rea, 1972, p. 195).

The second major organ of government is the Council which acts as the normal governing and executive body, with oversight of the management and administration of finances, property and everyday affairs of the university. It can be given authority to create or abolish faculties, schools, boards of studies or departments. It determines the method of appointment, conditions of appointment, service and remuneration of all staff and makes provision for schemes of insurance, superannuation, pensions and retirement benefits for all salaried staff. Council usually has between 30 to 50 members, comprising academics, elected community officials and lay members nominated by Court. Once again, lay members tend to outnumber academics, and professors outnumber non-professorial colleagues. The Vice Chancellor is the chief academic and administrative officer.

At the third level, the Senate has authority over the academic work of the university. The Vice Chancellor is normally Chairman of Senate. As the chief academic body, the Senate "approves or coordinates the work of the Faculties, Schools or Boards of Studies . . . and is responsible for

the teaching and discipline of students" (Rea, 1972, p. 199) and for the appointment to Chairs and other academic posts. Senate is made up exclusively of professors, some non-professorial staff and often the Registrar (chief administrative officer) and librarian.

The basic decisions that are made within Faculties (with their Schools and Boards of Studies) have to do with the general scope of the curriculum, its duration and subjects. There will also be a concern with budgeting for teaching, research, plant and equipment. Faculties report via Deans to Senate, and are concerned with the affairs of a group of related fields of study. Generally speaking Deans are appointed by the Senate on the recommendation of the Faculty or its Board. Traditionally, they are appointed from the ranks of professors within the Faculty. The office of Dean, normally defined and elaborated in the Ordinances, is not a full time post: there is a clear expectation, within the U.K. system, that Deans will maintain academic interests.

The rationale seems to be that such a system ensures that, on the one hand, fresh ideas are injected over a period into the affairs of each Faculty, and yet, on the other, the needs of the Dean's own Department are not neglected for too long. The Dean fills the role of academic middle management and is expected to be the Faculty champion and spokesman vis a vis administration, and at the same time, the interpreter of line management thinking

vis a vis his peers within Faculty. Such a system has one obvious weakness, namely, that a particular professor may become Dean, regardless of his skills of administration and leadership.

The final level of management is that of the Department. In the majority of British institutions, the Department is the normal and primary unit of organization, determining which courses will be provided and the number and sequence of courses required by the student in order to graduate. The Head of Department is appointed normally by the Senate, and acts as a link between the department and the university. He has a decisive role in planning, staffing, departmental budgeting, research and liaison with external agencies. Heads of Department are normally professors who are appointed, once again like Deans, with scholarship rather than administration as the major criterion (Rea, 1972, p. 212).

Another key organizational unit in the university system is the committee system. The general pattern is for there to be a Standing Committee which is the key non-financial Senate Subcommittee; a Finance Committee (of the Senate), a Buildings Committee, Library Committee, Board of Curators (advising Senate on the appointment of professors and lecturers) and a Development Committee (which makes recommendations and submissions to the University Grants Committee for ongoing funding).

The administrative staff is the appointed executive

instrument of the governing bodies listed above. In many universities, the Registrar (or Secretary) is the chief administrative officer. Administration in a university is carried out at many levels and senior academic staff often bear a particularly heavy administrative load. In polytechnics the problem can be even greater. The principal functions of a university administrator are to record and transmit decisions accurately and intelligibly. He is also to conserve the traditions and norms which are reflected in statutes and ordinances, to facilitate and expediate decisions and to plan on the basis of accurate information available.

No organization can realistically claim total independence from its external environment. According to Pfeffer and Salancik, the key to organizational survival is the ability to acquire and maintain resources. To simply survive, organizations must transact with other elements in their environment, through federations, associations, customer-supplier relationships, competitive relationships and a social-legal apparatus defining and controlling the nature and limits of these relationships (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978 p. 2). It is important to distinguish between effectiveness and efficiency: the former is an external standard of how well an organization such as a university is meeting the demands of the various groups concerned with its activities. The latter refers to an internal standard of performance measured by the ratio of resources utilized to output produced.

One function of management, therefore, is to guide and control the process of manipulating the environment and another is the recognition of the social context and constraints within which the organization must operate. A third function is the choice of organizational adjustments to the social realities. The role of the administrator would be as advocator who actively manipulates the possibilities and constraints in which the university is located. He would also act as processor, interpreting and monitoring the various demands on the institution, and exploring new coalition possibilities that would strengthen the organization, while at the same time, searching for new markets and resources.

Blau outlines several characteristics of academic institutions: they have no power to alter the conditions in which they are embedded (e.g., their geography, climate, clientele); economic and human resources cannot be greatly changed, and these have a determinative impact on structure; the extent to which graduate training is prominent; the administrative structure which creates the framework for academic work to take place (e.g. division of labor, hierarchical levels, span of presidents or vice chancellors control); and recruitment of faculty and students depends on both formal structure and on resources (Blau, 1973, p. 97).

An interesting issue for educational administrators, whether in tertiary institutions or in government, is the

ultimate tension between quality and quantity. For Blau, the basic question is whether a society's viability depends most of all on the adequate training of large masses, or rather, on the great contributions only the best minds can make. The answer is clearly both, yet the problem for educational administrators is to find the right balance (Blau, 1973, p. 156).

In their perceptive analysis of the role of Boards of Trustees in academic decision making, Engel and Achola underline the tension, in a democracy, between processes that involve decision making of a participatory nature, in which educational leaders are responsive to the interests of the public, and the increasing tendency for complex decisions to be taken by a small elite (Engel and Achola, 1983, p. 56). Knowledge is tending more and more to become the property of fewer and fewer, in fields such as technology and bureaucracy especially.

Bachrach notes the reaction to the increased visibility and power of elites in the form of demands for democratization of decision making processes "at all levels of organized activity: within the political parties, in the local community, at work, at study, and at worship" (Bachrach, 1971, p. 2). Martin Trow cites the case of elitist decision making in the U.K. higher education scene, in terms of "the small number of leading civil servants, government ministers, university vice-chancellors, and members of the University Grants Committee who shaped the face of the British

university system for many years in small committee rooms or around tables at the Athenaeum Club (Trow, 1973, p. 12).

Engel and Achola trace elitism in postsecondary institutions to three sources: "knowledge-based authority of the academic faculty and the invocation of the principle of academic freedom to protect . . . ; administration's practice of controlling important information about the institution . . . ; too much specialization in governing boards themselves" (Engel and Achola, 1983, p. 57).

Burns (1966, p. 8) and Rauh (1969, pp. 35-38) argue for stronger control of governing boards (in the U.S. college or university) on the grounds that unlike the faculty, trustees are in a position to better understand institutional needs, have greater awareness of public sentiments about the institution and its program, and are generally individuals with more diverse abilities. Such a position is consistent with the democratic notion that while universities are not governed directly by the people, the boards serve to ensure that the common good is achieved by the institution.

The knowledge-based authority advocates are generally members of academe or of academic unions. They would argue that boards (or councils and courts, in the U.K. system) do not generally have sufficient knowledge of the complexities of university decision making, and should have less authority than faculty for such areas as: educational policies, membership of the faculty, administrative

appointments, budgeting and agencies for faculty participation. Epstein (1974, p. 94) and Mason (1972, pp. 94-95) argue, for instance, that at best, the trustee (or equivalent) is a "generalist who must delegate decision-making authority over academic matters to the expert faculty" (Engel and Achola, 1983, p. 60).

Another alternative to these opposing views of decision making is that of shared authority where, despite delegation, trustees or members of council and court must retain consultative, supervisory and veto power over faculty academic positions. Such a pattern acts to safeguard against "unrestrained autonomy over curricula which can arise from faculty elitism" (Engel and Achola, 1983, p. 61). The sharing of authority by all relevant constitutencies within a university provides a collaborative framework, in which mutual accountability and trust minimizes the tensions that may otherwise divide the institutions.

The public expects faculty to demonstrate competence in their particular fields and to develop curricular programs that are effective. On the other hand, faculty are largely held accountable by peer evaluation. Trustees or members of court and council bear legal responsibility for the organization, and may thus be held accountable for the institution's failures in financial or academic management.

Organizational Communication

Another area of research is in the field of organizational analysis and communication networks within institutions. An organization has been defined as a system that emerges as a result of members forming a union to achieve mutually preferred objectives. Members make consensual decisions regarding the internal division of responsibilities and exchange of resources to obtain the maximum benefit for the system as a whole (Aldrich and Whetten, 1981, p. 401). Such a position, however, fails to account for aspects of organizational behavior, such as coercion, bargaining, conflict of interests and subversion of system goals by members.

Gouldner (1967, p. 163) highlights the tension between the need for integration within the system as a whole and the need for autonomy at the individual level. One of the richer areas for future research is in the inter organizational patterns of communication within the system of higher education, such as linkages with public and private sector institutions (e.g. welfare agencies, commerce and industry).

The classical paradoxes of stability versus flexibility and effectiveness versus efficiency are particularly relevant at the network level, "since it is often difficult for organizational administrators to see the value of committing more resources to inter organizational coordination to accomplish an abstract objective like increasing network

stability (Aldrich and Whetten, 1981, p. 403). Yet such a strategy would appear to be imperative for the modern university, as financial constraints force it to develop stabilising economic and social linkages with non-governmental organizations in the wider external environment.

Katz and Kahn (1978, pp. 428-473) describe how human organizations are informational as well as energic systems and how every organization has to absorb and utilize information. Communication, the exchange of information and the transmission of meanings, is the essence of any social system or organization. Applying such a principle to the organization of higher education, and more specifically to the management of a university, Katz and Kahn say:

> The product exported carries meaning as it meets needs, wants, and its use is further influenced by the advertising or public relations material about it. The amount of support that an organization receives from its social environment is also affected by the information that elite groups and wider publics have acquired about its goals, activities and accomplishments. (Katz and Kahn, 1978, p. 428)

The position people occupy in organizations determines their perceptions and interpretations of incoming information. The structure and functions of a given subsystem (e.g., university department) will be reflected in the way of thinking and frame of reference of the role incumbents (e.g., deans) of that sector of organizational space. The smaller the number of communication links in a group, the greater the efficiency of the group in task performance.

Communication flow. In their discussion of direction of communication flow, Katz and Kahn suggest three main

patterns (1978, pp. 440-448). Communication down the line from superior to subordinate is of five types: job instructions, job rationale, procedural and practical information, feedback and indoctrination of goals. Such a pattern is typical of industrial and military organizations and hospitals. Some types of lateral communication are critical for effective system functioning. Communication among peers, as well as providing task coordination, also provides emotional and social support to any individual members of an organization. "If there are no problems of task coordination left to a group of peers, the content of their communication can take forms that are irrelevant to or destructive of organizational functioning" (Katz and Kahn, 1978, p. 445). One of the most positive functions of horizontal communication is that it provides a check on the power of elites:

> The more authoritarian and hierarchical the system, the more information is a secret property of select groups, and the more it can be utilized to control and punish people at lower levels. In such a system there is little horizontal communication across levels of equal rank. (Katz and Kahn, 1978, p. 446)

Communication upward can be reduced to what people say about themselves (their performance or problems); about others (their problems); about organizational practices and policies; and about what needs to be done (and how to do it). The major structural and, to a lesser extent, psychological problem with this form of organizational communication, is that executives (presidents of universities, deans of faculties) are expected to direct, coordinate and control

those below them: they are less disposed to listening than to telling. Furthermore, subordinates expect to listen to superiors rather than to be listened to; information fed up the line is more often than not used for purposes of manipulation by management.

Another pattern of communication, and one which tends to be particularly activated by crisis, is that of informal communication. Some of the advantages of the "grapevine" over formal patterns are that it is more spontaneous and gratifying; it can prove more informative (especially where censorship or secrecy pertains); and sometimes it can be more rapid than official channels (Katz and Kahn, 1978, p. 449).

Operation feedback. As far as evaluation structures within an organization are concerned, operation feedback provides a basis for regulation and control in an organization and is connected to the authority structure of the overall system (Katz and Kahn, 1978, p. 456). For efficiency to be achieved through such control devices, four basic elements are crucial: there must be standards or specified objectives; monitoring devices must be utilised to measure current performance of individuals, group or system; there must be comparing devices which check performance against stated objectives; and action devices must be available to bring deviations from standards into line.

One of the clear implications of organization theory, as it relates to higher education, is that there is a need,

perhaps within the purview of the department of educational management, for systemic research which aims to study environmental trends, long term university functions and structures, the interrelationahips of the subsystems within the total system, and the impact of the institution on its environment. The need for evaluation research is particularly important for public agencies, like universities, that have such little feedback from the market place. (For a recent review of the literature dealing with the structure of organizational communication, see Monge, Edwards and Kirste pp. 311-331 in Ruben (ed) 1978; see also Farace, Taylor and Stewart, 1978 pp. 271-292.)

Participative decision making. A study in participative decision making by Locke and Schweiger comes to the conclusion that:

> If participation is to be used as a tool for the furtherance of man's happiness and well-being, then it must be in a context which recognizes not only individual differences in knowledge and ability, but the primacy of reason over feelings in organizational decision-making. (Locke and Schweiger, 1979, p. 328)

According to Farace et al (1978, p. 271) the primary function of communication is the reduction of uncertainty. It is directed towards controlling the behavior of the receiver. Furthermore, the purpose of organization is the reduction of variability in human behavior. Organizational processes aim to control and coordinate both people and resources through the mechanism of communication. Communication is effective "when the outcome of a message event can be accurately predicted. To the extent prediction is

incorrect, then the communication involved is ineffective" (Farace, Taylor and Stewart, 1978, p. 273f).

Research In Education

For many years in the past, educational research has been almost totally preoccupied with educational psychology and testing (Nisbet, 1980, p. 2). In recent years however, there has been a remarkable expansion and diversification in fields such as the history and philosophy of education and comparative education. The largest single growth area has been that of research in curriculum development. Psychological studies, which for years dominated educational research have given way to sociological analyses in the wake of anti-scientific and anti-measurement sentiments among educators and social scientists alike.

Styles of research. Over the past fifteen years, a range of research styles has evolved, which has greatly enriched the quality of educational research. Nisbet lists five styles: the experimental method which arose out of the belief that educational problems could and should be solved by objective empirical evidence, and that precision in research can develop a structure of knowledge that might generate new hypotheses and new experiments, until the whole field was uncovered. If only a good experiment could be designed "with effective controls, precise evaluative measurement and appropriate sensitive statistical analysis, it should be possible to establish objectively the one best method, the ideal curriculum, the optimum period of instruction, the correct use of aids to learning" (Nisbet,

1980, p. 4).

A second style of educational research has been that of exploratory survey, which has led to the proliferation of educational reports. One of the major weaknesses of such a method is the lack of theoretical foundation. Another style involves curriculum development, which draws on theory and survey, using experimental work and field trials in an attempt to bridge the gap between theory and practice. A fourth research style is action research which arose as a protest against the scientific detachment of most psychological and psychometric studies.

The final research style is that of open-ended inquiry, which, like the previous style, is rooted in an anthropological model that aims to "go and live there and see what it is like" (Nisbet, 1980, p. 3). The case study and participant observation enable the researcher to get inside the skin of any situation, rather than analysing it in a detached manner. "Grounded theory" is built up from observation, not imposed a priori. At worst, this model can produce boring and interminable transcripts of interviews without any significant theoretical reflection. At best, it is a sophisticated mode of research which may require the use of statistical analysis and elaborate procedures.

Case studies. With regard to case studies, several problems of method and technique have been noted: should the observer become involved in the situation being studied? is it possible/right to offer informants confidentiality?

how should the researcher gain access to data? what procedures should be used to obtain release for final publication? (Walker, 1980, p. 32).

Case study has its protagonists as well as its antagonists. On the one hand, it is said to give insight into specific instances, events or situations. Part of its appeal is that it offers some escape from the language of theory, though it may contribute to theory, by revealing how theoretical abstractions relate to common sense perceptions of ordinary life. On the other hand, case studies are criticised for having limited validity and reliability, and for failing to adopt strict methods of sampling and control. (For a useful tabular comparison of quantitative and qualitative research, see Bogdan and Biklen, 1982, pp. 45-48.)

The fundamental and distinctive characteristic of case study research is its democratic mode: the observer has to negotiate his interpretations with people involved in the study; he is not free to impose them on the data. In other words, in comparison to experimental research, the focus is not on research, so much as practitioner concerns, descriptions and problems (Walker, 1980, p. 37).

Some of the key areas of concern as to the nature of case study research and of the role of the researcher are:

> To whose needs and interests does the research respond?
> Who owns the data (researcher, subject, sponsor)?
> Who has access to the data (who is excluded)?
> What is the status of the researcher's interpretations (who decides who is telling the truth)?

> What obligations does the researcher owe to his subjects, his sponsors, his fellow professionals, others?
> Who is the research for? (Walker, 1980, p. 39f)

Another question of critical importance for case study research is that of interviewing strategies and skills. The main skills required for interviewing are psychological mobility and emotional intelligence. In an interview, the interviewee will often react to or against what is perceived as the observer's frame of reference and definition of the situation. Sometimes, he will tell the interviewer what he wants to know or argue with the interviewer's perception of reality. There is a real danger of the interviewer's controlling or dominating what is said. Emotional intelligence refers to the need for empathy on the part of the interviewer. One of the main problems with the interview is that it releases more of the truth than the case study worker can handle; the researcher must respect and recognize that these people "own the facts of their lives" (Walker, 1980, p. 58).

Among quantitative researchers in education, there are several characteristics of a sound theory. It must be able to explain the observed facts relating to a particular problem; it must be able to be explained in the simplest form possible ("parsimony"). The theory must be consistent with observed facts and with the already established body of knowledge.

A theory must also provide the means for its verification, by permitting deductions to be made in the form of

hypotheses that state the consequences that one can expect to observe if the theory is true. The utility of any theory depends on how efficiently it leads to predictions concerning observable consequences. Finally, it should stimulate new discoveries and indicate further areas in need of investigation (Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh, 1979, p. 17). For the different types of educational research, see Borg and Gall, 1979, pp. 27-38. For an ethnographic rationale and research process see: Bruyn (1966); Filstead (1970); Glaser & Strauss (1967); McCall & Simmons (1969); Naroll & Cohen (1970); Schatzman & Strauss (1974).

Qualitative researchers generally hold a looser definition of theory. Bogdan & Biklen, for example, see theory like a paradigm, as a "loose collection of logically held-together assumptions, concepts, or propositions that orient thinking and research". A "theoretical perspective" is thus a "way of looking at the world, the assumption people have about what is important, and what makes the world work" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p. 30).

The five features of qualitative research are noted by the same authors. It has the natural setting as the direct source of data and the researcher as the key instrument; it is descriptive (words or pictures rather than numbers); it is concerned with process, not merely with product; it analyzes data inductively ("grounded theory", emerging from the bottom up); what is of primary concern with qualitative research is its meaning or orientation towards participant

perspectives (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, pp. 27-30).

Participant observation. Wilson has shown that a basic idea behind participant observation is that "there is no one right method: the method should match the study". He continues:

> The qualitative research enterprise depends on the ability of the researcher to make himself a sensitive research instrument by transcending his own perspective and becoming acquainted with the perspectives of those he is studying.(Wilson, 1977, p. 261)

In an attempt to provide some kind of scientific method of measuring the extent of an ethnographer's success or failure in the above task, Wilson devised two sets of questions. The first set analyzes the researcher's ability to "move beyond his own perspectives" and highlights the researcher's original viewpoints:

What was the researcher's role in the situation (teacher, researcher, administrator)? What was her training and background? What was his previous field experience? What theoretical orientations did she hold about key issues? What were his personal feelings about the topic? What was the purpose of the field study? Who supported the study? Why was the particular setting chosen? To what extent did the researcher become a participant?

Wilson's second set of questions dealt with the researcher's effectiveness in coming to grips with participant perspectives: How long was the researcher in the setting? How regularly was she there? Where did she spend most of

her time? How well did he understand the language of the participants? How was he perceived by various groups of participants? Which members of the community were his informants? Was there systematic variance in her understanding of the perspectives of various groups? What were the differences in information gathered by various methods? What were the levels of confidence the researcher placed in various conclusions? What was some of the negative evidence (Wilson, 1977, p. 261f)?

Educational Administration

As far as the development of theory and research are concerned in the field of educational administration, the social-psychological theory of Getzels & Guba, so prominent in the 1950's & 1960's, was primarily concerned with the internal relations of the school as a social system. It became increasingly evident, as time passed, that schools were not closed social systems, and so such theoretical models as scientific management, bureaucracy and social process theory were seen as of decreasing utility for educational administration research and practice (Hoy, 1982, p. 2). As a result, open-system strategies of theory development tended to replace closed-system ones with contingency theory providing a more popular tool for analysis of organizations. It is generally accepted, for example, that "regularities in organizations depend upon contingency factors such as power, size, technology, culture, and environment (Meyer, 1978: Mintzberg, 1979).

If theory in educational administration is to be more useful, Hoy says it will have to "become more refined and situationally oriented". He continues,

> Educational organizations have much in common with other formal organizations, but they are strikingly different. They have hierarchical structure, informal organization, decision-making structure, rules and regulations, division of labor, and line and staff: but in addition they are characterised by ambiguous goals, unclear technologies, uncoordinated activities, and loosely connected structural elements. (Hoy, 1982, p. 3)

Organizational research. There have been at least four major developments in organizational research methods since the 1960's.

The use of the organization rather than the individual as the unit of analysis, though, such a trend is not reflected in educational administration research. There has been an upsurge, except in school organizations, in comparative quantitative studies. The application of multivariate statistics has increased, though, once again, not in schools research. Longitudinal studies, extending over months or years, have examined changes in organizations, with the exception of schools (Hoy, 1982, p. 3f). The questionnaire survey is the most popular research instrument among researchers who study educational administration.

Most research in the field of educational administration is done by students, usually for Ph.D. dissertations. Because such research is required for degrees and promotion, most of it is atheoretical (Haller, 1979, p. 60). "Systematic

and cumulative knowledge building are conspicuously absent" (Hoy, 1982, p. 4). Replication of studies is unusual, so that research in educational administration has not kept pace with developments in its parent disciplines. "Few of the professors of educational administration are devoted to systematic production of knowledge through research, and those professors are spread thinly across at least a half-dozen sub-fields" (Hoy, 1982, p. 4f).

A thorough review of research in educational administration by Immegart (1977, p. 316f) concludes that research over the twenty years from 1954-1974 has increased in quality and quantity. However, the bulk of the research tended to follow pressing issues, social concerns and popular concepts or practices, without regard to theoretical issues underlying such areas. Methodological sophistication was noted, but largely in terms of techniques rather than of the validity of the findings (Greenfield, 1979, p. 226).

Responding to Greenfield's pessimism, and translating insights from the U.S. context to the U.K. one, Jennings sounds a note of caution:

> Caution will be required to avoid the divisiveness which may arise as polytechnics begin to differentiate their research role from that of universities, or when grant-getting pushes the field toward action research as compared with more theoretical work. Perhaps the basic critical factor is . . . to maintain that exchange of views and ideas which will go a long way to prevent a dysfunctional compartmentalization of teachers, scholars and researchers in educational administration in the U.K. (Jennings, 1979, p. 270)

Adult And Nonformal Education

> You cannot teach a man anything; you can only help him to find it within himself. (Galileo)

There are seven basic characteristics of lifelong education: it views life as a whole; provides a new organizing principle for all education (from pre-primary to post-collegiate); aims to maintain and improve the quality of life; has a universal character; includes all modes of learning (formal, nonformal and informal); is flexible and diverse in content, learning tools, techniques, accreditation forms and time and place of learning; and carries out corrective functions to remedy the shortcomings of existing educational systems. The center of gravity of education, through lifelong learning, is shifted from the institution to the person, from producer to consumer, from supply to demand, from role-centered training to person-centered human development.

Some of the major issues confronting adult education are the composition of the clientele (underprivileged or affluent?), the relationship between adult education and the formal system of education (especially in terms of its funding base), the scope of the learning opportunities to be offered (vocational as well as non-vocational-liberal) (Lowe, 1975, p. 125f).

Three or four decades ago, adult education, in North America, the U.K. and parts of Western Europe, was seen largely as an elitist exercise for a select minority intent

on furthering already substantial formal education. By the mid-1970's, adult education had developed a broader base in contexts such as employment, health, home and family, recreation, culture, community and retirement.

Universities and adult education. Traditionally, adult education programs in developing countries have been heavily influenced by major industrial countries. A change is taking place, however, and the view most generally held is that adult education must serve the particular needs of a country or region, must utilize indigenous cultural strengths, and must not be limited by educational practices and traditions designed to serve other cultures. Even so, the American practice of universities' developing programs of graduate instruction in adult and continuing education is now being copied by many developing nations (Kidd, 1973). Increasingly, the needs of adult education are beginning to be perceived as a responsibility of the university.

In most developing countries, there is an awareness that major economic and social change cannot take place apart from some measures of adult education including education for civic and political consciousness, health and nutrition and vocational training. It is no longer possible to simply multiply traditional forms of schooling. Furthermore, the education of women is receiving increasing recognition. Universities in developing countries are recognizing their responsibility for the preparation of adult

educators, for the continuing education of managers and for research about adult education.

Linkages between universities and society. One study that has explored the linkages between a community of learners and a community of scholars (Pagano, 1977) shows how a new university (Florida International) developed a learning environment and educational process as a response to the characteristics of the learning community. The university's primary clientele was not the traditionally prepared 18-20 year old student, but rather the adult graduates of the local community college system (Pagano, 1977, p. 207).

Students had a multiplicity of roles: wage earner, spouse, parent, consumer, voter, community leader and tax payer. The university, rather than expecting students to abdicate non-student roles, sought to make its 'traditional' courses accessible through new methods of delivery. The majority of Florida International University's students work full-time or part-time, are married with family responsibilities, and 60 per cent attend classes after 5.00 p.m. and on weekends. The average age of the student population is 28 years. Students receive a "traditional education on a non-traditional schedule" (Pagano, 1977, p. 209).

Within such a framework radical changes have taken place in the roles of students, faculty members, administrators and deans. The student, for example, becomes "active initiator of educational experiences, rather than

passive recipient" (Pagano, 1977, p. 212). The primary role of the faculty adviser is to assist and support the student in utilizing her own resources as well as those of the university in attaining specific learning objectives. The adviser's first task is to assess the learning outcomes of prior experience (e.g., professional or normative social roles). The student and the adviser then design and negotiate a learning contract, based on what the student knows and wants to achieve, and incorporating independent study with some classroom work (see also Cagan, 1978).

In 1974, the Karmel Commission on Open Tertiary Education in Australia, called on Universities and Colleges of Advanced Education to develop a "comprehensive national network of off-campus opportunity" (Guiton, 1977, p. 180). One of the effects of the establishment of the British Open University on the conservative Australian academic world is to have legitimized independent study.

Extension education and the media. A similar development, involving extension education via mass media at the tertiary level in the United States, is discussed by Chamberlain (1977, pp. 191-203). Such courses use one of the mass media (television, newspapers, radio or magazines) as the essential means of instruction, but supplement the learning thus derived with additional readings and other studies. There are several contact sessions with an instructor to enable students, who otherwise study independently, to meet and exchange ideas. Such a concept uses one of the media

designed to reach mass audiences to enable independent learning at times and places most convenient to the adult audience which they are designed to serve (Chamberlain, 1977, p. 191).

Not only is the goal of cost-effectiveness achieved by such a system, but there is greater emphasis on individualized and quality learning, with convenience of access an additional strength (Chamberlain, 1977, p. 192). Discussion groups among senior citizens, labor unions, church memberships and community groups use both the T.V. and newspaper courses as stimulators for their discussions. Special publications are often prepared for such audiences.

Likewise, secondary schools are encouraged to study such courses, and study guides are created for such purposes. Interestingly, the primary clientele for such a program is not the 18-22 age group, but the "adult whose general interest in the subject matter invites his or her participation. This adult general audience is the same audience which reads newspapers and watches public television" (Chamberlain, 1977, p. 196). Chamberlain notes that a major milestone in higher education has gone, almost unnoticed: for the first time in history "the numbers of part-time students exceeded the enrollment of full-time students in colleges and universities in the U.S. (Chamberlain, 1977, p. 197).

A typical course from television is developed around a TV series (e.g., The Ascent of Man, Civilization). A

course anthology has been produced with supplementary reading, and often with different interpretations of media material. As well, a study guide that summarizes the learning and establishes objectives for each assignment, has been produced. A final publication is offered for administrators of colleges and universities which elect to offer the course (Chamberlain, 1977, p. 200f). For a similar account of open assessment in higher education through the New York Regents External degree, see Nolan, 1977, 231-248.

Professional development. Another major area within the field of adult and continuing education is that of professional development. One recent survey (Cryer, 1981) shed light on the question of who the people are who provide training and development for teachers in institutions of higher education: their departmental attachment, their timetabled involvement and the facilities that they offer. Within British universities, such in-service education programs for faculty tend to be on an ad hoc basis (Cryer, 1981, p. 425); whereas polytechnics have more rigorous standards imposed on them historically by their national accreditation board, the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA).

Some of the factors that CNAA is obliged by its Royal Charter to take into account for approving a course, relate to teaching: the standard of work in the subject at the particular polytechnic; the facilities the institution offers; the curriculum and syllabus, and teacher qualifications.

Polytechnics as a result tend to have a "more professional approach to staff development" than universities (Cryer, 1981, p. 434). The reason given as that historically, polytechnics were under threat of penalty from CNAA if course and staff standards did not satisfy national requirements (Cryer, 1981, p. 435), whereas universities had no external mechanism to force institutions to train faculty members.

An American study (Centra, 1978) shows how there has been an upsurge in professional development practices in higher education since the 1970's. Two main reasons were given for such a trend: there has been a "decrease in faculty mobility due to a declining rate of growth in post-secondary education and . . . a general disenchantment expressed by students, parents, and legislators - with the quality of college instruction" (Centra, 1978, p. 188).

Characteristics of in-service education. A national survey of colleges and universities revealed four distinct types of development practices: High faculty involvement, in which, for example, experienced teachers work with inexperienced ones. Workshops on institutional purposes or on academic advisement were often used by smaller colleges, which have started to examine their goals more seriously. Such institutions emphasized close personal relationships and generally provided counseling and other personal development practices for faculty.

Instructional assistance practices were designed to help improve teaching skills or strategies, and were often

associated with providing assistance in: teaching and evaluating student performance; applying instructional technology to teaching; and using audio-visual aids.

Traditional practices included visiting scholars programs, annual awards in teaching, sabbatical leaves, grants for instructional improvement or travel, and temporary teaching-load reductions. Such practices were most common in universities. Emphasis on assessment, in which formal ratings by students, by collegues and by administrators took place on a regular basis (Centra, 1978, pp. 196-199).

Over 40 per cent of the institutions (two-thirds of the universities) had some kind of professional development unit. Some units included several specialists in such areas as instructional development, evaluation, technology and the media. The alarming result of the survey, however, was that in most cases, the better quality teachers who wanted to improve skills, tended to be far more involved in such programs than those who needed such training most of all (Centra, 1978, p. 200).

The major difficulty, with regard to staff development in higher education, is resolving the above problem and helping weaker instructors to identify their need for professional development, and then, to take action. Cannon (1983) analyses such a problem in terms of the complex interplay between such forces as the university as an open-systems organization, the characteristics of academic staff

and the change process in universities. He shows, for example, that there is a "strong relationship between field of teaching and attitudes to teaching and learning" (Cannon, 1983, p. 24), whereby,

> humanities and social science staff tended to have more desire to share in educational decision-making with students and to favour more individually tailored teaching and learning arrangements. Science and engineering staff tended to be more formal and were characterized by their use of more structured lecture-type teaching. (Cannon, 1983, p. 25)

Educational change. Schein has shown that "if change is to be accepted and to become part of the regular system, the parties to be changed must be involved early in the diagnostic and change-planning process (Schein, 1972, p. 93). One of the major weaknesses in bringing about change and development in the teaching role is that the "change targets" - the university teachers - are infrequently involved or even consulted (Cannon, 1983, p. 27). The problem is complex and attempts to solve it are only recent. There is still a weak theoretical basis for action in the field of staff development; furthermore the resource base for change is limited (e.g., more in-class teaching loads). The question that Cannon asks is whether more emphasis should be placed on developing the organization and improving the institutional environment for teaching and learning (Cannon, 1983, p. 32).

Mergers In Higher Education

It may be useful, at the outset, to draw together

some of the key lessons about mergers that the business sector has learned over time, then to see how best to apply some of the corporate principles to mergers in higher education.

Corporate Mergers. Allan (1974) lists four main sources of error in "acquisition programs": Improper motivation, where companies are mainly interested in publicity or in the promotion of an aggressive image. Others might be concerned more with sheer size, or see merger as a means of solving internal problems. Inexperience was another problem, especially if a company had only made a limited number of acquisitions.

Lack of pre-planning. This involved ignorance of customs, personal animosities, outmoded but entrenched practices; acquisition programs that were too ambitious, and where span of control and integration were problematic for management; inaccurate forecasting and market estimation; improper "fit" with the acquiring company (e.g. production techniques may be too diverse to allow integration).

Failure in communication. Workers may fear the loss of their jobs or that the plant will be shifted to another location. Often opposition to integration occurs simply because one department wasn't consulted or given recognition in the process of acquisition. Salary administration is an especially sensitive area:

> The acquisition process should be regarded not as an end in itself but only as a means. The purpose of the acquisition program is to aid in achieving the objectives that have been

> developed for the acquiring company, and acquisition is therefore part of the overall corporate planning process. (Allan, 1974, p. 108)

Corporate growth often generates organizational problems. As an organization gets bigger, it changes qualitatively as well. Its structures change, with the "most critical changes occurring in the size of the managerial bloc, in the degree of separation or 'self-containedness' of departments, and in the distribution of authority and control" (Whisler, 1974, p. 200f).

When expansion is accomplished by merger, two autonomous organizations must have their old boundaries and unity broken up in order to create a new unity. Such a process carries with it psychological problems of identity and of personnel logistics (Whisler, 1974, p. 201). If benefits to be gained from a merger are to be maximized, a high degree of centralized control will be necessary in the new institution. Two kinds of control must be imposed: "control over certain aspects of the personnel functions and an effective system of responsibility accounting" (Malott, 1974, p. 225).

Efficiency of mergers. A recent study of mergers and economic performance casts doubt on the view that "merger is in fact a necessary or sufficient condition for efficiency gain" (Cowling, 1980, p. 370). In many of the case studies (in a British corporate context), efficiency was not improved, but rather declined. Where efficiency gains

have occurred, superior management has gained control over more resources.

There is evidence that mergers have led to less product variety, labor displacement, no increase in the rate of technological progressiveness, and no apparent improvement in international competitiveness or export performance (Cowling, 1980, p. 370f). Arguing for much more caution in terms of public policy, Cowling suggests that the onus of proof should be on the merging firms "to demonstrate social benefit" of merger; otherwise, there should be an "outright ban" on future mergers, since there is little to be gained by increases in size but potentially much to be lost" (Cowling, 1980, p. 372).

Arguing along much the same lines, Meeks suggests a "more stringent policy towards merger might be to channel the evident growth aspirations of those currently growing by acquisition into the major alternative form of growth, new investment in fixed assets" (Meeks, 1977, p. 67). Evidence suggests that mergers have often caused assimilation problems which must have absorbed some of the energies of company directors, energies which, had many of these takeovers been inhibited, could have been diverted to deal with "alternative forms of growth which carry possibilities of more socially desirable consequences (increased labour productivity, challenge to existing market conditions, new products, embodiment of technical progress, etc.)" (Meeks, 1977, p. 67).

Psychology of mergers. In a psychological study of merger failures, Harry Levinson (1972) likens a merger to the formation of a new family. "From the dominant organization's point of view, it is much like adopting a foster child. From the other point of view, it is akin to getting a new stepfather". He continues,

> If the parent is concerned with how to make his child good, he will concentrate on goodness at the expense of the child's development. If he is concerned with rearing the most mature, most capable, most flexible child, then he must be concerned with facilitation of growth, not with control.(Levinson, 1972, p. 67)

Levinson comments that even as long as twenty years after a merger, he has observed organizations in which there was still residual anger at being taken over, where idealized views of the junior company tended to dominate perceptions of the new organization. Apart from the usual reasons for merger failures (e.g., financial, managerial problems), Levinson suggests psychological factors as a major cause, with resultant disillusionment on the part of the junior organization and disappointment, loss of personnel and decline in profitability for the dominant organization. He suggests, as a way of coping with such problems, that senior executives of the dominant company should:

> Assess the psychological relationships and attitudes of the people in the junior organization, and note how they may differ from those in the senior organization. Out of open, honest, discussion of these motivations, assumptions, and differences, create a harmonious atmosphere in which problem-solving mechanisms are set up so

> that the anguish of the junior organization can be heard and acted on, and operating modes can be evolved rather than imposed. (Levinson, 1972, p. 76)

Mergers in higher education. A study by Searcy (1982) showed how, in one case, the major reasons for merger were financial and that the success of the merger depended largely on the efforts of a few key leaders and active participants. The two particular colleges were supported financially by two different religious organizations prior to merger, a fact which could have jeopardized the merger, had it not been for the severity of the financial constraints. A literature search suggested that similar institutions are more likely to merge than dissimilar ones; whereas the particular study suggested otherwise, and that moreover, dissimilar organizations are more likely to effect a smoother merger process.

Another study examined the merger of a predominantly black institution into the state university system of Arkansas, in terms of changes in certain human, academic, fiscal and physical resources (Neal, 1978). Several changes took place as a result of the merger: student numbers rose, though the quality of students remained stable; a number of curricular changes occurred, salaries increased substantially and funding improved considerably; the quality of the faculty improved, as a result of better compensation and faculty selection procedures.

The major educational issues of a Wisconsin merger

study were: Would the merger cause a deterioration in the quality of public higher education in the state? Would there be a harmful effect on the prestigious University of Wisconsin, Madison? Would the autonomy of the individual institutions be maintained after merger?

The financial issues were: Would the merger save money? Should the two state university systems have different levels of funding. The legal issues were: Would the merger violate the state constitution? The political issues were: Would the merger create a system so large it would be able to exert political pressure, especially in terms of financial appropriations? (Carothers, 1975).

Richardson (1976) tried to determine the extent to which a particular merger would achieve its goals of economic efficiency, constitutional biraciality and expansion of educational opportunity. He found that only minimal economic benefits would accrue, because of the continued operation and maintenance of both campuses; that some educational benefits would occur, but that several would have occurred without a merger taking place; that the merged institution might look more biracially constituted on paper, but that actualities were quite different. A more realistic solution to the economic, educational and racial problems of higher education, in the particular context, according to the author, may well have been a well-planned program of interinstitutional cooperation, and not merger.

Dulzer (1979) found that the merger process was a

complicated and trying one, often involving degrees of unpleasantness and dismay which demanded time, energy, sensitivity and competence in the areas of communications, law and educational administration. Mergers abounded in unforeseen contingencies which had negative and positive repercussions. The reactions of key actors in the process indicated that distrust, uncertainty and ambiguity occurred frequently. Consequently an effective system which translated, modified or embellished communications at every level of the organization, was necessary to reduce or eliminate misunderstandings.

Another study (Lane, 1972) was based on the assumption that the interaction of individuals within and outside the merging colleges would produce an atmosphere frought with uncertainty and change. Historical and interview data were examined to discover which persons, attitudes, communication processes, power distributions and decision making patterns, contributed most positively or negatively to the merger.

Some of the conclusions were: that the Merger Committee contributed most to the progress of the merger, whereas the inability of Trustees to communicate effectively contributed most to the regress of the merger. While campus heads played an important part in the merger, they should not be principle negotiators, but rather, should spend most of their time absorbing, stabilizing and interpreting

the effects of the merger within their on-going institutions. For lack of information, some Trustees did not adjust to the momentum of the merger, thus increasing institutional uncertainty; in contrast to the major participants who were generally favorable.

The merger occasioned a diffusion of power among lower participants and consequently, for a time, changed decision making structures. A number of unanticipated educational innovations took place during the course of the merger. The faculty would be encouraged to participate more vigorously in the merger if greater financial benefits were realizable.

Summary

It is impossible to do justice to the rich diversity of interlocking ideas about the aims and social functions of higher education, as they have emerged in a vast literature that has evolved over centuries. One can, at best it seems, catalogue without systematically exploring, some of the more fundamental and formative educational thoughts that have, for good or ill, left their imprint on both educational theory and practice today. At times it has been difficult to isolate boundaries between the various levels of formal education. Ideas about schooling, for example, have a direct relevance to some of the more formal aspects of higher education. Moreover, there is an inevitable overlap between the philosophy and sociology of education, when both disciplines offer explanations and interpretations,

within particular theoretical or ideological frameworks, of the social dimensions of education. There cannot be a discussion about the roles and functions of higher education, without focusing on a particular model (e.g., British or American), which, in turn, means that some examination of particular systems must take place. Organization and communication theory can help clarify ways in which policy makers and educational administrators might translate particular goals for higher education into actual curricular structures, as well as alerting them to some of the internal and external constraints on the planning process. One of the major tasks of the research is to isolate some of the more strategic aspects of the literature review, and see what bearing they have in particular on the merger. Planners and decision makers may well need to find ways of establishing clearer theoretical models for some of the important practical decisions being taken.

III

PROCEDURES

The aim of the research was to identify through the merger process, some of the possibilities and constraints for planners of higher education. The research was of a descriptive nature. Such a decision was taken after consultation with Mr. Arthur Williamson who invited the researcher to Northern Ireland. The researcher felt that too many threats to the research might be posed by the adoption of an experimental, evaluative or action research design, especially in the socio-political environment of 'The Troubles', which imposed its own set of constraints on research.

Chronology Of The Research

The wisest procedure was to gain 'guest researcher' status within a department of NUU. From this base, opportunities were found to meet and interview people at Coleraine who had some interest in the merger. The intention was to use the foundation blocks of initial Coleraine interviews, to build the larger framework of the study.

Commencing The Field Work

The practical domestic problems of finding a house suitable for the researcher and his family and of settling into a new social and geographical context were speedily resolved. The research began on 17 February, 1983 and lasted nine months. In the initial stages, the researcher relied on the perceptions and resources of Mr. Williamson

who provided lists of people to meet and press clippings related to the merger, as well as introducing the researcher to faculty colleagues.

For the next month, much of the time was spent meeting with NUU staff members and attending meetings of the AUT and non-professorial staff. The first session with the Acting Vice Chancellor, Professor Newbould, enabled the researcher to give a clear outline of what his intentions at NUU were, and to solicit support for the research from the academic and administrative communities. A similar interview was arranged with the Registrar, Mr. W.T. Ewing. A day was spent at Derry making initial contacts with Magee College staff. Interviews were conducted with Coleraine community leaders. On the first visit to the Jordanstown campus, the researcher spent time with several academic and administrative staff. He also met with the newly appointed Vice Chancellor Designate, Mr. Derek Birley. The lunch hour was spent with the secretary of APT, Mrs. Heather Eggins, the only woman from either institution to take an active role in merger negotiations.

The researcher made formal application to the NUU Senate and the Steering Group committee, requesting permission to attend merger meetings and to have access to documents concerning the merger. Attendance at meetings was denied but the documents were made available. The secretary of the Steering Group, Mr. Peter Holmes, agreed to be interviewed.

Setting Up Interviews

By the end of the second month, the necessity of talking to certain politicians and members of educational committees in England, became apparent. Mr. Robert Rhodes-James, MP, Sir Henry Chilver, Mr. Christopher Price, MP, Sir Norman Lindop and Mr. James Doherty were interviewed by telephone.

The researcher gained permission to attend an NUU Students' Council meeting where the merger was discussed. During a business visit to Coleraine, the Acting Rector of UP, Dr. Oliver White was interviewed. Subsequent interviews were arranged with informants who proved useful. The researcher tried unsuccessfully to arrange a telephone interview with the Vice Chancellor of QUB, Dr. Peter Froggatt. Two journalists whose papers seemed to give up to date commentary on the merger were contacted.

As a measure of the researcher's acceptance among staff at the two institutions, opportunities arose to attend departmental, faculty and inter-institutional meetings related to the merger. Often such meetings were attended fortuitously, with the researcher hearing about them and asking permission to attend. Permission was often refused, but the researcher felt he had sufficient exposure to such meetings to gain a valid picture of the personality and structural dynamics associated with the merger.

Processing Merger Documents

DENI officer, Mr. Wallace Thompson, mailed merger documents to the researcher, making it possible for the document analysis to commence. Press clippings which had been collected by NUU administration were analysed.

After three and a half months of research, two methods had evolved: document analysis and ethnography. As the researcher was spending most of his time at Coleraine, a decision had to be taken about making the study as representative as possible of the attitudes on all four campuses.

Administering The Questionnaire

An initial questionnaire (Appendix A) was drafted and shown to several academics at NUU, whose suggestions were incorporated into various revisions. Dr. John Hickey, Mr. Jo McCormack, Mr. John Darby, Mr. Arthur Williamson and Dr. Gordon Rae were consulted. A random sample of final year students, graduate students, academics and senior administrators on all four campuses was chosen to respond. The aim of the questionnaire was to elicit opinions about both the philosophical question of what a university is for, and about the actual merger itself (e.g., reasons, outcomes). With a limited budget, care had to be taken to administer such a questionnaire economically. The researcher sought the permission of UP and NUU administrators to use existing facilities and resources (e.g., lists of final year students) to administer the survey.

Draft copies of the survey were sent to the heads of

the two institutions, with a note asking for ways of improving the questionnaire. The NUU authorities agreed to the use of their internal administrative system, although some real misgivings were expressed about including a question on religion. The researcher was given access (under supervision) to student files and reprographic and administrative materials. The random sample was one third of each of the three groups (administrators, students, academics). Randomization was based on computer listings, in the case of NUU students, and on staff directories from the NUU and UP Calendars for 1983/4.

The senior administration at UP refused access to administrative facilities and student files. The Acting Rector returned the draft questionnaire with crosses beside items he took exception to. He was unhappy about religion being included as a variable. In addition, he disagreed with several other questions. There was no way of gaining a random sample of UP students other than through the services of their administration. Such a decision could well have placed the entire survey, as far as students were concerned, in jeopardy. The researcher raised the problem with a key informant at the UP, who suggested trying Students' Union files instead. The researcher had addressed 132 sticky labels from a random sample supplied by one administrator linked to the Students' Union. When a more senior administrator found out, he asked the researcher to leave.

He showed the researcher a Memo addressed to Merger Boards at UP and signed by the Acting Rector. It advised staff against completing the questionnaire on the grounds of both the substance and the timing of the survey.

The researcher, who had already randomized lists of academics and administrators at UP, used NUU mailing systems with return-addressed envelopes, to convey the questionnaire to them. The same procedure was used with the 132 student names, with one difference. Students had just started final examinations on all four campuses, so stamped-addressed envelopes were included in student mailings. Questionnaires were sent to students' homes. They had to be completed and returned by 7 July, 1983, thus leaving three weeks for completion.

Conducting The Final Interviews

While the surveys were being returned and processed by Mrs. B. Cole-Baker, a final set of interviews was begun. Seventeen academics and administrators had been designated to senior positions in the new institution. They had applied for internally advertised positions, and been interviewed by a Steering Group sub-committee. The positions were: Vice Chancellor, Pro Vice Chancellors (3), Provosts (4), Deans (5), Directors (2), Secretary, Finance Officer and Academic Registrar. A letter was sent out to each of the above designated officers, requesting an interview covering a schedule of ten topics:

goals of the new institution (and of each faculty

and campus), organizational structure, academic drift, public image, research, funding, continuing education, possible problems in early years, lessons learned through merger experience, social impact of new institution.

Only the Acting Rector of UP refused an interview. Each interview was recorded and then transcribed for analysis.

Concluding The Research

Apart from conducting the statistical analysis of the data from the survey, the final two months involved collecting and ordering the information that had been accumulating. Time for reflection was at a premium, and life for the researcher was complicated by the arrival on 24 September of an additional member of the family. With various staff moves in the Department of Social Administration, the researcher also found his office accommodation having to change three times in the same period.

Now that the major appointments to senior positions in the new institution had been made, the mechanics of the actual merger were beginning to proceed. A Proto Senate and Proto Council were elected on 17 October. The deans began meeting with their faculty boards to clarify policies and programs. The researcher had to restrict himself to extensive writing at this point in time. However, through informal networks, he was able to monitor some of the more controversial decisions. One such decision was to shift the headquarters of the Department of Social Work from Coleraine to Jordanstown. Through intensive lobbying by the Coleraine department, the dean reversed the decision.

Design And Instrumentation

The survey was marked "Confidential" and no personal identification was required of respondents. A cover note, signed by the researcher, explained the purpose of the questionnaire and gave instructions as to the return date and address. Respondents were told that the survey involved a "random sample of students, administrators and academics on the four campuses involved in the merger".

The Religion variable was included as an optional response item, thus complying with objections from both institutions, yet taking account of strong advice from social scientists. The order for each sub-item within the Religion variable was prescribed by conventional practice in all census records and other survey research.

The variables which the researcher felt in advance to be the more crucial ones were Status and Campus, with Faculty possibly of similar importance. As far as the other variables were concerned, various statistical measurements (e.g., chi square) clarified relationships between the variables. The researcher was interested in whether attitudes changed significantly according to the length of time as a student or academic. Did a particular mode of study (e.g., sandwich) predispose a student to expect certain distinctive benefits from his or her education? To what extent did socio-economic background color students' expectations and perceptions? Were there significant differences of perception between Certificate or Extra mural, Degree

or Post graduate, Single or Married, and Employed or Unemployed students?

The researcher felt that peoples' perceptions of the goals and functions of a university, might play a significant part in conditioning attitudes towards the merger, in later questionnaire items. If there were a distinctive university ethos and a polytechnic ethos, such a phenomenon might be reflected by a higher rating at UP than at NUU for the vocational item. The inclusion of an item relating to the critical function of a university, was more a reflection of researcher idealism, than of an actual spirit of dissent on the campuses. A further expected outcome was for NUU students and staff to give higher priority to the quest for truth than peers at UP. The researcher was interested to see whether academics (especially the older ones) gave higher priority to holistic development or to cultural transmission through higher education, than younger staff or students.

Section B needed to include a sufficient number of diverse ideas about the particular topic, but also to restrict the options to a manageable minimum. It was impossible to reduce options below six for each heading, without jeopardizing comprehensiveness. Some respondents were critical of the lack of comprehensiveness (see below).

The problem of developing discrete items which could easily be ranked, would have been resolved if the researcher had had adequate time to conduct a pilot study. As it was, students and some staff were just beginning to leave for

summer vacations. It seemed preferable to consult NUU educational researchers and social scientists in the designing of the instrument and reach respondents before they dispersed for summer, even at the expense of a finely tuned and pilot-tested survey.

The quantitative research was designed purely as corroborative evidence to undergird the descriptive study as a whole. Every item in Section C was a reflection of a particular opinion which the researcher became familiar with over several months of ethnographic work. One error was to include an ambiguous item (Section C, item o.).

The majority of the opposition to the questionnaire came from UP which had more to lose than NUU if merger negotiations broke down. There was a real concern at UP that if the results of the survey were leaked to the press, the merger might well be jeopardized. The researcher was asked to give verbal assurances to NUU administrators that survey results would not be passed on to the media.

Validity, Reliability And Generalizability

If research into the merger had commenced at the beginning of 1984, instead of 1983, the mechanics of the merger would have been at a very different stage. The psychology and momentum may well have been less negative. There would probably have been a greater preoccupation with organizational details and departmental decision making than with more problematical issues. The document analysis provided record of the more foundational aspects of the merger.

With regard to validity, the researcher deliberately diversified his methodology to ensure that weaknesses in one particular procedure might be counterbalanced by the utilization of another. As far as the problems of observer effect and history were concerned, there was a certain degree of genial bemusement among some academics at Coleraine during the first few weeks of the research. People were fascinated that "they were being studied". Others may have been somewhat more sceptical. However, such reactions quickly disappeared as the research became known. Some of the suspicion at the senior UP management level may have been linked to the researcher's apparently close association with NUU ("them"). Observer effect is a necessary part of any field work and cannot be avoided. The researcher tried to be aware of its dangers.

The fact that the researcher was granted guest status and accepted as a colleague within a particular department, made the transition into the research a lot easier. To what extent people gave answers which they thought were expected or appropriate, will never be known. The researcher became more aware of his own ideological biases as the research proceeded, particularly in the style of questions that were asked. Another researcher, with a different set of interests, may have reached a more positive conclusion. However, at the time of the research, much anger and pessimism were being expressed at Coleraine. The situation in Derry was different, as academics there felt at long last that the

Magee campus could be freed from Coleraine control and start to develop properly. The overwhelming feeling at the time was one of anxiety about the future in the new institution.

Over the nine months, the researcher became aware of a gradual change in most peoples' perspectives. As the reality of the merger dawned, most people made adjustments for largely pragmatic reasons. Some remained adamantly opposed to the merger, but they were a small minority. Although the changes were not liked, people realised the necessity of becoming reconciled to them.

The questionnaire gave clear indication of the difference in attitudes towards the goals, functions and structures of the proposed university among academics, administrators and students to the extent that the sample was truly random. A greater degree of caution would be required on the question of generalizability. The bulk of the questions focused on a parochial issue, and have a distinctive Northern Ireland flavor. Some of the questions about structures and management reflect life situations of a particular institution.

An initial focus of the questionnaire was on the perceived aims of a university. Differences of perception at this level, between members of a university and members of a polytechnic, between students and academics, or between members of an Arts Faculty and members of a Science or Business Studies Faculty, might well be more generalizable to other U.K. institutions of higher education. Questions

about academic drift, public accountability, linkages with commerce and industry, the management of higher education, funding and research are all questions of national interest. Many institutions throughout the U.K. system would be watching developments in Ulster with some interest, especially if they felt that similar mergers might take place under government duress.

The main problem with the questionnaire was its representativeness of opinion among UP students. The percentage of UP students who received a questionnaire and responded was 49.2, though the proportion of student respondents from UP relative to the total number of student respondents was 31% (NUU students, 48%). Only 48.1% of NUU students receiving a questionnaire responded. Most UP student respondents were in Science and Technology, with a minimal number of Arts and Education students. Hence, a majority of UP students may well have been male and possibly more disposed towards the vocational function of higher education. The fact that they were located in either a faculty that may have been relocated (i.e., Science) or one that would remain at its present headquarters (i.e., Technology) may well have created a more representative set of attitudes, either for or against the merger. Science students might have felt more opposed to the merger than Technology students, thus producing a more reresentative spread of opinions within a limited or otherwise biased sample. If it were shown that males responded similarly, throughout the entire survey,

to females, then the fact that there was a majority of male UP respondents, posed no problem of bias.

As far as sampling senior administrators was concerned, the decision was made that officers above a certain grade, would have greater responsibility for servicing merger committees and would therefore have more developed opinions about the merger. The problem of logistics was to correlate status and salary scales between two different administrative systems. The researcher consulted the key administrators in both institutions and chose a random sample based on a division from salary differentials, rather than from the title of a particular office. One UP officer was concerned to avoid any misunderstandings with a trade union, by appearing to discriminate between administrative ranks, some who would and others who would not receive a questionnaire. A further problem lay in the fact that not all senior administrative officers were listed in the UP calendar, from which random lists were drawn up. The decision by the head of UP not to provide access to lists and resources, proved a significant barrier to administering the survey at Jordanstown.

Ironically, the same problem did not occur at the Belfast campus of UP. A senior administrator had given the researcher consent to administer the survey to a random sample of students, faculty and administrators. When he received the Memo warning staff not to give the researcher any assistance, he decided to honor the original decision.

The Memo ("Research Worker, Neville Carr") said that "both the timing and nature of this questionnaire were inappropriate" and that "the Polytechnic should not co-operate in this exercise". UP staff who had already received a questionnaire "may respond as they wish", though the research "does not have the backing of the Establishment Committee or the Acting Rector". It was signed "O.M. White, Acting Rector". In replying to the researcher's request for comments on the survey, Mr. Birley said "I am afraid that I should have to express some scepticism about such a survey at this stage of the exercise . . . So if I were commissioning such a survey for utilitarian purposes I should want to make some fairly radical suggestions . . . Meanwhile I take it that you have as I suggested, consulted Dr. White about the question of the possible extension of your survey to polytechnic students and staff".

Population

The researcher decided to exclude from the survey, such groups as secretaries and maintenance personnel. Obviously, such people had some interest in the merger, especially if retrenchments or relocations occurred. However, they were seen by the researcher as servicing the primary clientele of NUU and UP, namely, students, administrators and faculty.

The choice to exclude students in earlier years of study and to aim at final year and graduate students, was based on the desire to discover the most considered student opinion. Lists were drawn up on the basis of representative

samples from each academic program and a proper randomization between sexes as well. The same procedure was used for randomizing the sample of staff. Care was taken to ensure representation at different levels (e.g., professor, lecturer) across all departments and faculties listed.

An administrative officer at Magee University College, Mr. D.D. Denton, served as returning officer for surveys at Derry. Returned questionnaires were then placed in the internal mailing system and sent over to the Coleraine campus.

The researcher had no way of knowing how many students, faculty or administrators to sample across the religious divide, since formal administrative mechanisms avoided asking for any response to the religious question. The researcher was told by a few senior administrators in both institutions that it could be quite embarrassing if figures became public. One or both institutions could become labelled as Protestant or Catholic. Ignorance was preferred to political embarrassment. The possibility of an optional Religion item biasing the sample did exist, though only if a large proportion ignored the item.

Summary

There has been an attempt, in the previous material, to give the main biographical and procedural details of the research. Three procedures were adopted over a nine month stay in the Province: document analysis, ethnography and quantitative research. The reason for adopting three methods

was two fold: on the one hand, there was the necessity of gleaning a comprehensive and representative range of ideas, attitudes and perceptions; on the other, the researcher was aware of the limiting potential of both purely qualitative research and of his using Coleraine almost exclusively as a base.

Reference has been made to some of the flaws in the questionnaire. It remains to be seen whether such weaknesses jeopardized the main purpose of the survey, namely to test the observations of the researcher at Coleraine, on a broader platform.

The last two months were spent writing the data up and in extensive reading in connection with the literature review. Several consultations with NUU mathematician (Dr. Norma Reid) and technicians (Mr. Colin Todd and Mrs. Betty Cole-Baker) were held to clarify the analysis of the data. Further consultations and finalization of the study took place on return to the U.S. The only complication to the entire study, was the loss of the researcher's bibliography, apparently in the process of moving from Coleraine to Michigan. Reconstruction took an additional week.

IV

CONTENT ANALYSIS

Several key documents reveal what purposes a university can reasonably be expected to serve, in the light of conflicting demands on its priorities (e.g., education vs. training). One implicit assumption is that if a university can develop closer links with commerce and industry, it will make an impact on economic growth and social stability. Another is that stronger management of universities leads to more effective education. Several documents reflect the psychological effects and personality dimensions of a merger. Others bear testimony to the structural problems inherent in a merger. The extent to which merger planning is governed by educational ideals as opposed to pragmatic concerns (e.g., political pressure) is also an issue. A question arising from the documents is the implications of government intrusion on the traditional autonomy of a university.

The Documents

The Steering Group file contained different types of documents: 111 Evidence papers(E), 216 Steering Group papers (SG), 24 Constitutional Structures papers (CS), 31 Academic Consultative Group papers (ACG) and 64 Minutes of meetings (M). In addition, there was evidence taken by two government bodies: the House of Commons Education, Science and Arts Committee, and the Northern Ireland Assembly Education Committee. Several national and local newspapers published editorials or news bulletins about the merger, which were analysed. Finally, various faculties or departments circul-

ated proposals for the academic and administrative structures of the new institution, some of which were the product of inter-institutional consultation.

Submissions To Steering Group

Two kinds of E papers existed: those raising objections and possible problems and those expressing specific interests in the outcome of the merger. The topics of the latter were: Magee University College, Adult and Continuing Education and overall provision of higher education at Derry; Cooperative Studies; West European Studies (including French, Spanish and Irish); Library facilities; Conflict Studies; Teacher Education and the role of Religious Education; Computing Sciences and Microprocessor Applications; Hotel and Catering Management; Energy Studies; Community and Social Work. A miscellaneous assortment of papers covered topics like the future role of History, Mathematics and Nursing Studies.

Objections to the merger. Sixteen submissions discussed general aspects of the merger. The majority expressed different levels of opposition towards or pessimism about the merger.

A local headmaster said that the decision to effect a merger must be based either on financial or political, rather than educational arguments. On educational grounds, the merger could prove disadvantageous. He felt that NUU and UP had been established for totally different purposes in educational terms: the former to serve as a contrast to QUB by initiating new courses and concepts, but the latter,

to underpin the Northern Ireland university scene without intruding into the domain of undergraduate or graduate teaching. Neither institution took the planned direction of Lockwood, though UP was felt to have diverged from the original path more seriously than NUU. The submission expressed a real fear that the underpinning (i.e., technical) courses offered by UP will become of less consequence, to the detriment of Northern Ireland society. There will be a massive over-provision of university places and an equally massive inadequacy of places for the kind of student whose employment would enhance the economic prosperity of the Province, it was felt.

The main concern of the School Board was that there might be a devaluing of standards which could result in even higher numbers of young people leaving for universities in Great Britain and not coming back. The submission concluded with a rebuke for the DENI for not consulting schools as those who feed the higher system, before embarking on a course with potentially perilous consequences for the Province as a whole (E76).

Another submission (E44) felt that UP had overstepped the parameters set for its development in the 1960's by the Lockwood Committee. Instead of becoming effective in training up to middle management in industry and commerce, it had encroached too far into degree level studies. The author, a former member of the Lockwood Committee,

continued:

> Far from getting back to the original concept it is almost certain that an ambitious and thrusting Vice-Chancellor will want to have as few non-degree courses as possible. Comparisons with Queen's on degree results well be inevitable.
>
> This will leave a vacuum in the education system between the Universities and the small technical colleges, a gap which the Ulster College was to fill and which Northern Ireland badly needs in present economic conditions. (E44)

According to the same author, UP had an entirely different management structure to the conventional university set up. He suggested that a rationalisation of higher education in the Province and a proper coordination of courses might take place more effectively by merging all three institutions (i.e., NUU, UP and QUB).

Another objection to the merger was that NUU's life had been very short relative to other U.K. institutions, allowing it inadequate time to prove itself, especially bearing in mind the social unrest in Northern Ireland. For the government to create such an institution, and then to alter its status within such a short time was taken as an unprecedented and unwise decision (E44). Submission E45 saw the development of any corporate identity in an institution operating in a split site with its two main centers 60 miles apart, as a problem.

Professor Malcolm Skilbeck, of the London Institute of Education (and former Professor of Education at NUU) made a constructive analysis of the merger yet still raised doubts about its validity (E108). Of the assumpt-

ions underlying the merger proposal, he said the Lockwood Committee was unduly utopian in its expectations, paying insufficient attention to the cultural, political and economic environment and overestimating the new institution's capacity to attract senior staff who shared founding ideals at NUU. The Institute of Continuing Education (ICE) at Magee College was founded with great hopes and enthusiasm, but with insufficient regard to the reality of its geo-political environment, he felt. Skilbeck saw ICE as being unable to recruit staff that would be needed to achieve what was hoped for. Since ICE had never come up to expectations, much disillusionment and demoralization resulted, he said.

The mergers with which Skilbeck was familiar have produced

> enormous staff difficulties, doubtful economies, disfunctional administration, and serious disruptions to or set backs in teaching and research. Some very odd institutions on multiple sites have emerged. (E108)

He therefore urged senior academic and administrative staff to apply themselves to the tasks of reconstruction, for it was important not to take organizational and educational roles for granted. Likewise, the actual splitting and regrouping of staff into geographically separate units could not be assumed to be anything less than a "critically important exercise" (E108).

Arguing against DENI's distinction between academic and vocational education, where the former is seen as the domain of a university and the latter, of a polytechnic, Skilbeck specified three distinct functions that were appropriate

to a university in Northern Ireland. They were research and scholarship, teaching at all levels from sub-degree to doctoral and community service development. Selectivity would be necessary for such developments which took into account the competence and potential of staff, available plant and resources, defined needs of the society, the desirability of taking risks and growing and the capacity of the new institution to engender and financially sustain future growth.

In his discussion of the rationale for merger, Skilbeck suggested that a serious critique of the potential and the functioning of the present two institutions should be fundamental to a rethink of the purpose before the merger took place. The new institution must seek new models both inside the U.K. system and beyond. Close attention should be paid to those countries (e.g., U.S.) where mature students had formed the nucleus of genuinely innovative institutions (E108).

Skilbeck challenged the idea of complementarity vis a vis QUB. Instead he argued that the same level of scholarship, research, professional training and community service that was provided at QUB, be offered in the new institution but in areas or topics not offered by it. Sub-degree courses in fields not previously thought of as legitimate university territory should be included in the new institution without dominating.

It would be possible over time, for a four year commun-

ity college type of university to become the foundation of a comprehensive university. Such a plan would consolidate the major strengths of the polytechnic with its orientation towards community service. Students graduating could then take higher degrees at QUB or graduate programs of the four year college. Expansion could be well planned and gradual, with all of the necessary functions of a full university, including research, existing on a "modest scale in several subjects and areas of study" (E108, p.6).

Skilbeck urged that thought be given to the development of an integrated curriculum which attempted to "redefine the purposes of higher education and to develop a significant dimension for inter-relating all studies" (E108, p.7). One of the ways in which such a goal might be attained was for the new institution to enlist staff who might develop a series of general education programs for all students and thus bring about cooperation between the staff of the present institutions and at the same time redefine in practical terms the "distinctively different qualities of the new institution" (E108, p.7).

Paper E98 expressed concern that the merger was being "pushed forward as it is by way of an experiment in order that institutions in Great Britain may observe the outcome and the problems generated". If such were the case, the writer felt it unfair and improper that such an experiment be undertaken in a part of the U.K. where there was an even greater need to conserve resources. A further problem

lay in the failure to adequately shift the center of gravity of higher education away from Belfast by not removing the School of Agriculture to Coleraine (i.e., from QUB). The paper felt that care should be taken to preserve local autonomy on each of the campuses . . . and to avoid the possible 'takeover' of Coleraine by the Polytechnic" (E98).

Submission E84 expressed real concern at the possibility "that potential employers, believing Chilver's reported evidence that Coleraine's academic standards are lower than elsewhere, might tend to discriminate against applicants with Coleraine degrees", thereby jeopardizing promising careers for some years. There was a certain anxiety lest the merger "devalues degrees awarded previously" (E84).

An argument was made in E13 for the merged institution to concentrate on the natural and applied sciences, and on the application of biological principles to the development of more sources of food and energy. In addition, the "new institution should make a great effort to record our rural life, traditions and speech before they disappear" (E13).

A graduate of NUU suggested (E6) that courses in the new institution should be of a more technical and professional nature. He suggested that the city of Derry be involved more extensively, and that the name of the institution should not be the "pretentious mouthful" that the previous name had been.

A Mathematics lecturer at QUB urged "greater co-

operation between Queen's and the new institution" (E3). He also called for strengthening of the relationship between universities and the community, through the development of part time courses, extra mural studies and other existing structures.

A senior academic on the NUU Chemistry faculty called for an interdisciplinary approach to the sciences, with academic planning that allowed maximum breadth of degree and non-degree work, flexibility in entrance qualifications and the ability of transfer from non-degree to degree courses. The paper concluded that the new institution ought to:

> provide a major contribution to the required educational resources and extend the technical and scientific base in Ulster. An improvement [sic] needed if the economic decline of the Province is to be halted if not reversed by new investment and new industry in both the short and long term. (E18)

Addressing the complex question of deciding the geographical distribution of responsibilities in the new university, an NUU Social Scientist argued for a "division by matching suitability of the sites to the various student 'populations'" (E71). Such a model would ensure the

> continuance of what is acknowledged to be of excellence at NUU. Coleraine is the obvious candidate for catering for the bulk of full-time degree work, which it should do virtually exclusively and without duplication on the other sites. (E71)

As a result Magee and Coleraine would increase their student populations, while Jordanstown would be

left with fewer students - not to an extent that would

> leave it non-viable, but one that would simply stop it from being excessively overcrowded as at present it is. (E71, p.5)

Such a model would make economic use of all sites. The "ethos of relevance must be followed only so far as the search for truth is not compromised" (E71, p.7). The institution must respond to the needs of Northern Ireland as well as to those in the Irish, U.K. and world context. Despite suggestions made, the writer felt that changes could be implemented without the difficulties inherent in merging places so far apart by using a single coordinating body (E71, p.8).

Adult and continuing education. Nine submissions were concerned with the role of Magee University College and the Institute of Continuing Education (ICE) in the provision of higher education in Derry. The Director of ICE argued that expansion at Magee was necessary. The reasons he gave were that regional needs in the north west could be met; that the new institution could take full advantage of the large urban center in Derry; that the various campuses might be more equal in size; and that government intentions for the north west might be fulfilled. He recommended the expansion of Magee into an adult education college on the basis of the ICE and of a Diploma in Higher Education (E17). In a further submission (E96), he suggested that it was impossible to separate the future of ICE from the future of Magee, as the only hope for a successful future for both entities, lay in the two becoming synonymous. Magee should not try to expand

into a full undergraduate college since the presence of a large number of 18-21 year old students would to a very large extent "destroy the atmosphere created over the last ten years of using Magee as an adult education and mature student college" (E96).

A member of the Workers' Education Association suggested that "the Northern Ireland community very much needs a strong and integrated adult and higher education Provision" (E2). The central need in the Province, he said, was for a "sustained effort to create an effective higher and lifelong education provision which is centred round a study of the historical, social and cultural conditions" (E2). There was need for a "strong emphasis on academic teaching and research, and a placing in world-context of the regional issues raised" (E2).

The writer envisaged such a process taking place in a unified university-wide context, consisting of undergraduate work, lifelong education and extra mural activities. The role that Magee might play would be more as a resource base and facilitating agent for the total institution (E2).

A member of ICE argued that Magee should be a "community" university which served the needs of Derry's "large disadvantaged working class population" (E34). The writer felt that the community education program for adults should be paramount, with the expansion of informal activities, the development of out centers and greater access to

university resources.

He reminded the Steering Group of the "political context" of the NUU-Magee relationship and therefore, of the proposed merger: "As we know, NUU was sited at Coleraine instead of Derry for sectarian reasons. The Institute was a sop to Derry opinion"(E34). Some people at Coleraine have regarded ICE unfavorably and have tried (often successfully) to stunt its development. There was fear of Derry competing for courses and students, besides a prejudice against the city itself. In addition, people who were "standards conscious" were unsympathetic to the quality of work at Magee. As a result, "Magee must never again be placed under Coleraine control" (E34, p.2). The writer emphasized that Magee must have equal status with Jordanstown, Belfast and Coleraine, in terms of decision making and autonomy.

Submission E7 felt that Magee should become the location for some of the "substantive function" of the proposed university. Because of its geographical location, Magee would be the most attractive campus to cross-border students.

Unlike the situation in Northern Ireland, where the growth of demand for undergraduate places at university was likely to decline in the future, the pressure on higher education in the Republic was growing. The paper recommended the transfer of Nursing Studies from Coleraine to Derry and the acquisition of the old Foyle College building, to enable expansion of academic provision to take place (E7).

Energy studies and agriculture. Fifteen submissions

were related to the continuation of the efforts of the NUU Energy Group in the new institution, to develop programs of research and teaching in industry-related fields. The Low Energy Design Association felt that

> Northern Ireland has a uniquely strong reason amongst its European colleagues to research methods of energy conservation and alternative energy sources, bearing in mind that we have no indigenous fuel resources here, and energy costs are probably the highest in Europe. E21

Since the North West of the Province was in the forefront for low energy design and implementation, there was continuing need for a team such as the NUU energy Study Group to monitor such developments. The facilities were in Coleraine and the computer link up with Magee would help monitor the Derry projects (E19).

E38 raised the controversial issue of agricultural training and research which has been under the close control of the Ministry of Agriculture. Degree level teaching was done by lecturers in Agriculture departments (i.e., of the Ministry) at QUB whose loyalty and time was divided between the university and the Ministry. Lockwood saw this system as unsatisfactory because of the low prestige of the departments concerned, limited research output and poor recruitment of good students. Lockwood proposed that "agriculture should be included in the New University [NUU], a rural and central location in a mainly rural province". However, severe pressure from the Department of Agriculture

prevented implementation of this proposal which, from

> the New University's point of view, was to be its one major professional field and perhaps to lead ultimately to the formation of a veterinary college. (E38)

The paper urged the Steering Group to look again at the relations between agricultural research, training and tertiary education so that the interests of the Province were placed before all other considerations (E38).

West European Studies. Eleven submissions were related directly to West European Studies and another three to the related fields of French, Spanish and Irish Studies. Dr. Evans, of the University of Leeds, stressed the "importance of the provision of degree courses in which the study of languages is combined with a study of the contemporary politics and society of the countries" (E40). He felt that their separation was unsatisfactory. One area of growth might be in the provision of language courses more directly geared to an industrial and commercial register, with an introduction to technical translating and interpreting techniques. Such a prospect would offer a clear alternative to the traditional 'language and literature' courses provided at QUB.

A strength of the NUU approach to language was that it sent its students out for a full year abroad in the country concerned and expected at the end, a dissertation in the native language on some topic "relating to the socio-political domains in that country" (E49). A University of Bradford submission argued that European Studies confronted

contemporary political, economic and social realities in a way that the study of literature did not. They also "open doors to certain careers more immediately than does the study of literature" (E37).

One of the primary concerns of Irish Studies at NUU has been to foster "greater understanding within the divided Ulster Community, through the education of its citizens both within the university and beyond" (E74). The students' horizons were broadened by examining the origins of the two main areas of cultural conflict in Ireland today.

Cooperative Studies. Twenty submissions dealt with the place of Cooperative Studies in the new institution. In recent years, local communities have made efforts

> in the most depressed parts of the British Isles to initiate economic and social enterprises by forming development cooperatives. (E43)

There has been an increased interest in industrial and service cooperatives by trade unions and local authorities. A large part of the Province has been classified as a less favored area for European Economic Community agricultural purposes. Many private agencies and Local Cooperative Development Agencies have evolved in an attempt to give information and assistance to self-help groups (E43, p.2). Higher education institutions, however, have been "slow to respond to this general increase in demand for information, education and training for Co-operative, mutual aid and self-help organisation" (E43, p.2).

When the time came for the various interests and institutions in the Province to work together towards a program for economic and social recovery, the new institution could support such initiatives. A part time Certificate in Cooperative Studies had already been approved at NUU. Such a course was provided for people such as voluntary workers, social workers and other community leaders who traditionally have taken an initiating role (E43).

Community and Social Work Education. The Forum for Community Work Education suggested that the new institution should have a variety of courses on community work, giving particular consideration to "an apprentice type community work course" (E68). With over 800 community groups in the Province, there was felt to be a greater need for professionals who were trained and skilled in the business of promoting participation and local initiatives. The Center for Neighborhood Development sought a positive role for the new institution "in offering educational and training programmes which would help to meet the needs of the wide range of community employment schemes throughout the province" (E78). The new institution might include courses in: alternatives to unemployment; specific problem areas in business; low cost consultancy, research and feasibility studies; a new enterprise program for cooperatives; and investigating community services that could be organized on a cooperative basis (E78, p.2).

Inter-institutional rivalries. The submission from

the Professional Board of Social Work at UP showed the kind of tensions which occur at a time of merger. It referred to recent NUU submissions on the future structure and content of social work education in the new institution:

> Regretfully we must begin by emphasising that, while we made various attempts to negotiate constructively, these efforts were undermined by the above-mentioned submissions which were prepared without any consultation with our own staff. While we understand to an extent the feelings of anxiety and insecurity which motivated these ill-considered actions, we assert that our own submission represents a rather more cogent, logical and constructive way forward in relation to Social Work education. (E111, p.1)

The role of the Dean of the Faculty of Social and Health Sciences should be: to facilitate line-management communication; to offer leadership; to coordinate forward planning; to promote the research interests and personal development of all staff; to act as an ex officio member of all course committees in an honorary and advisory capacity; and to "execute ceremonial and public relations duties to disseminate the overall philosophy and objectives of the university" (E111).

E10 and E33 discuss the place of Computing Science and Data Processing Studies. The argument for the production of computer software as "an important economic activity" was put forward in E33 and the expanding demand for "computer literate" professionals was emphasized.

The library. The philosophy and aims of any university are reflected in the work of the library. It provides the means by which the student can study for himself the "theories and ideas in addition to those proposed by the

teacher" (E72). The paper then argued that the university's research program should be reflected in the standard of the library's bibliographical and other resources. Although the library exists primarily for the academic community, it should have a wider and equally important function in the local community. Expenditure on the library for staff and purchasing amounts on average to 4½% of the university's total spending across the U.K.:

> The Library Association is deeply concerned at the immediate and longer-term effects of this drastic impoverishment of university libraries, which has resulted from the attack on university financing. (E72, p.9)

Teacher Education. Two submissions dealt with Teacher Education. The Board of Governors at Stranmillis (a government = protestant training institution) recommended that teacher education provision currently located in NUU be "discontinued" (E62). The reason was the already flooded market in particular areas of teacher training, and because "the academic qualifications of teacher training students on entry have been consistently higher in Stranmillis than in NUU" (E62, p.2).

Religious Studies. The Board of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland "noted with satisfaction that the teacher-training curriculum at the NUU has a Religious Education constituent" (E75) and that such a situation would continue in the merged institution. The Board of the Methodist Church in Ireland wanted to stress:

that the positive and forward looking provisions

> agreed in the Charter of the NUU with regard to the possibility of a Faculty of Theology and the service of Chaplains should be preserved in the new institution. (E95)

Taking up the same theme, one writer suggested that proper provision be made for courses in Religious Studies in the new university:

> It has always struck me as doubly unfortunate that within existing institutions of higher education in Northern Ireland there are no specific courses geared to giving students a chance to pursue the systematic non-partisan study of religions. (E11)

The author said that unless undergraduates receive a proper training in this area then there was a risk that those who go on to teacher training colleges and subsequently to teach in schools, will simply perpetuate a traditional neglect or even bigotry regarding religion and fail to deal with one of the "blind spots in the Ulster psyche" (E11, p.3).

On a different note the same author concluded:

> I would much appreciate an acknowledgement of this communication as some slight token reassurance that it has not simply vanished down one of the unnumerable [sic] bureaucratic interstices which the scale of paperwork involved in this project must inevitably open up. (E11, p.4)

A submission from the Church of Ireland General Synod Board of Education argued that Stranmillis College should continue its role as the main center for the education of teachers who are "acceptable to parents" (E57) and who will be responsible for the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community and for continuing the "ethos, identity and role of the controlled [i.e., protestant] schools" (E57). The Board favored the continuation

of a largely segregated pattern of school education on the grounds of the Chilver interim report on "The Future Structure of Teacher Education in Northern Ireland" which states that "children should be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents" (Chilver, 6.16).

Conflict Studies. The Center for Conflict Studies stated the case for its continuity in the new institution: "We believe that conflict studies are a special need in Northern Ireland, and a proper research emphasis for the new institution" (E35). The Center consists of 25 scholars from four of the university's schools who take part in regular meetings and seminars. One of the main aims of the Center was the "establishment and maintenance in the University Library of a collection of materials relating to the Irish conflict" (E35/1). Disappointment was expressed in another submission that "during the past 13 years in Northern Ireland so little attention has been given at an academic level to studies of the nature and resolution of conflict" (E56), with the notable exception of the Center at NUU.

Miscellaneous papers. Twelve submissions with topics ranging from Japanese to Nursing Studies were presented. The submission dealing with Japanese Studies seeks to "harness the opportunity provided by the merger . . . and respond to the need for information on Japan" (E94). The reasoning was that the authorities in Northern Ireland are keen to attract Japanese investment and such study

would be proof of local interest. Furthermore, the "study of a society as radically different in values and experience as Japan is from the United Kingdom . . . can give students broader and deeper perspectives" (E94, p.2).

Research in Nursing Studies at Coleraine has taken place in cancer prevention, human genetics, pathology and tissue culture. The Medical Laboratory Sciences were involved in "testing new industrial products for their carcenogenic potential" (E101, p.3). The submission felt such work should continue.

In the light of the "extremely difficult employment situation facing graduates in Northern Ireland" (E69), another submission called for a reappraisal of the normal Careers Service function of the new institution, with a special effort required to establish and maintain links with a whole new range of employers (E69, p.2).

Steering Group Papers

The 216 SG documents covered the life of the government-appointed committee, whose task, under its Chairman, Sir Peter Swinnerton Dyer, was to effect the merger. The material was diverse in its contents, ranging from memos to communications between the Minister and the SG Chairman. Draft charters and statutes were examined, along with letters and recommendations from various national or academic unions, churches, students and civic groups. Press releases, covering the period of review (June, 1982 to the beginning of the 1983/4 academic year) were also included. At its

busiest time, the Steering Group met every two to three weeks, alternating between Jordanstown and Coleraine, though several meetings were held in England. All the merger documents were public material.

Status of careers and degrees. The SG reflected the thinking of the DENI by issuing a draft statement (SG3) reassuring staff and students of the two institutions about the status of their careers and degrees in the new institution. The issue was a source of intense concern for all parties in the merger process. The statement gave assurances that the new institution would "offer employment, without drop in pay, to all those who on the changeover day were employed by either of the existing institutions" (SG3) with the exception of those on fixed-term contracts which expired on the merger date. In addition, there would be only minimal changes to jobs except for a few people, especially near the top. Some academics might not wish to remain, and early retirement benefits would apply to them. The amended version (SG11) adds the statement that the tenure position of academics "will not be worse than at present". The statement added: "I should emphasize that this agreement is dependent on the merger going through, and it has no implication for what might happen if the merger does not take place" (SG11).

The other concern lay at the undergraduate level: what would be the status of degrees undertaken in either of the old institutions, when the new institution came

into effect? The government assured people that

> courses with students on them will not be cut short prematurely . . . merger should take place in a way that ensures that the degrees of the existing institutions are not in any respect devalued. (SG11)

Trade union involvement. A letter from the Irish Congress of Trade Unions raised the question of trade union involvement in merger negotiations, stating that the unions represented in UP and NUU have formed into a trade union group which will be the central body for consultation between the employees and the SG. There was concern that there would be no trade union representation on SG (SG5).

Draft objectives. Early thinking about educational purposes among policymakers, was reflected in the initial Draft Objectives paper and could be compared with later thinking as it evolved:

> to advance learning, knowledge and culture and promote liberal, scientific, technological, professional, industrial and commercial education, with particular reference to the needs of Northern Ireland, by providing
> a) full-time courses of study leading to Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates and other external qualifications including appropriate arrangements for training and experience in industrial, commercial and professional situations;
> b) part-time and short courses, leading to awards and qualifications or otherwise, for such students or organisations as may benefit from them;
> c) research, consultancy and related activities; and
> d) cultural and recreational facilities for the student body and for the community. (SG6)

The first of several revisions of the Draft, added a clause referring to the provision of "facilities/opportunities for adults - singly or in groups, on or off the campuses, to participate in educational programmes" (SG9). Under the

original clause c), priority was given to "research training, where appropriate, leading to Research Degrees" (SG9). Here then, is an early picture of what planners hoped might be achieved by the new institution: the promotion of knowledge, in its various forms and via a diversity of educational methods, that addressed the needs of the Province.

The Draft Public Notice calling for written evidence from interested parties (SG10) sought public opinion on these topics: the nature and scope of the new institution, its range of courses and activities, particular emphases, types and forms of study to offer and special Northern Ireland needs it should aim to meet (closing date 15 October, 1982).

Financial guidelines. A paper prepared by DENI provided some insight into government thinking (SG15). For 1982/83 the sum total of the NUU and Polytechnic grants would be US$33 million, whereas the 1984/85 grant would be lowered by between 3% and 10% of the present figures (28 June, 1982). The rationale for such projections was a comparison with other U.K. institutions: "present Great Britain policy on funding of higher education . . . will be maintained, and reflected in Northern Ireland" (SG15). DENI expected the new institution to take full advantage of any large achievable economies, particularly in the light of the anticipated diseconomies of split site campuses. In a cover note, Nicholas Scott, the Minister responsible for education in Northern Ireland, told

Swinnerton-Dyer that "statements on possible future funding must be surrounded by many uncertainties" (SG15). Talk of early retirement as facilitating the new institution only heightened anxiety (SG16).

The Vice Chancellor's development plan. A paper by the then Rector of UP entitled "A University with a Difference" (SG20), bore close examination, because of the impact it has already had on merger planning. It was written as:

> an outline management structure to show senior members of staff in the existing institutions how the new one would operate and to help them to decide what kind of role, if any they would like to play in it. (SG20)

The paper argued for a polytechnic management structure on the grounds that UP had been successful and economical. Moreover, it was "over three times the size of NUU and was capable, on its own, of expanding to meet any foreseeable new commitments" (SG20).

Three specific challenges demand organizational responses: the bringing together of staffs with two different traditions; the development of four campuses many miles apart; and the need to ensure that the distinctive ethos envisaged was not submerged by the weight of convention. Through the "matrix pattern", staff would have opportunity for roles in management, academic leadership, course development, teaching or research. Campuses would serve as bases for educational development and as social and pastoral units, as colleges. Positions and units of organization would, through the notion of continuing education, preserve the university's distinct-

ive ethos in the minds of its members. Committees were seen as "essential vehicles for deciding policy in academic institutions. Time spent on getting right their powers and duties, membership and inter-relationship was time well-spent" (SG20, p.3).

Additional features of management should be noted:

> built-in procedures for review and change; delegation of functions; reflection of managerial responsibility in committee membership within the context of collective decision-making; disciplined, thorough system of course planning, validation, and monitoring; counterpoised structures for (i) administrative and resource planning and (ii) academic planning. (SG20)

It would seem that of the various Inter-Faculty Committees (SG20, p.6-8), the Development Committee would have the most strategic role of all. Each year, such a committee "should evaluate and revise the forecasts submitted by faculties in the light of performance, changing needs and available resources" (SG20, p.10).

The hierarchy of committees, with the Development Committee at the top, could be seen in this conclusion:

> If the Development Committee are satisified that there is a need for the courses and that resources, if available, can properly be allocated to it, approval in principle should be given and the proposal passed to the Academic Programmes and Review Committee. (SG20, p.10)

The greater power of such a committee was evidenced by its composition, relative to other committees: vice chancellor and pro vice chancellor; deans; chairmen of senate committees; librarian; finance officer; elected staff members of faculty boards and the senate; representative student

members; and co-opted members. The Academic Programs and Review Committee, by way of contrast, could only function within a framework "approved by the Development Committee" (SG20, p.7). Its membership was more light weight: one pro vice chancellor (in charge of academic planning); two senior members from each faculty (not necessarily a dean); one elected staff member from each faculty; representative student members; and the head of the Educational Technology Unit.

The faculties, together with the central administrative departments, the library and the research committee would be the main cost centers. The faculties would initiate and develop academic programs for their areas of study cutting across campus boundaries, with "headquarters on one campus and branches on one or more of the others" (SG20, P11). The principals of the colleges (i.e., campuses) would control local administration, pastoral care of students, and educational and social development of their campus.

The fundamental philosophy of the new institution would be based on the notion of continuing education in its widest sense of taking education to the people through relevant and flexible programs:

> Continuing Education could make an important direct contribution to the work of the university through administration of the various agencies . . . designed to strengthen links with the community, including industry, and to provide useful services. (SG20, p.19)

The headquarters for continuing education should be where

the university headquarters would be located. In terms of faculty headquarters, the paper suggested a Jordanstown base for Technology, Business and Management, and Social and Health Sciences, whereas a Coleraine base for Arts, Science and Education. Heads of schools and senior officers should be appointed, not elected, for terms of five and seven years respectively (SG20).

Institutional management. A paper from the Association of Polytechnic Teachers (APT) recommended that staff of the new institution should be allowed to remain with the Teachers Superannuation Scheme (SG25/1). The APT called for parity of treatment (SG25/2) for UP staff in the new institution, especially with regard to work load and contact hours as well as research funding. It called for open and democratic leadership by academic staff "on whose expertise rests the responsibility for academic standards and the proper use of academic freedom' (SG25/3). On the basis of the APT's experiences within UP management structures, the paper made several suggestions to the SG: the vice chancellor should be a person of the highest academic caliber with wide administrative experience and a full understanding of UP philosophy. He should be given a short term contract. Pro vice chancellors and deans should be elected by the senate and faculties respectively (SG25/3). Such positions should be tenable for three years and renewable for a further three years. These elected posts should carry an honorarium which is subject to annual review. The senate should be the

"substantive decision-making body . . . Proliferation of sub-committees should be minimised. Patronage by top management must be avoided and bureaucracy minimised" (SG25/3, p.2).

Funding and coordination of higher education. A report of the Trans-Binary Working Group was written in July, 1982, and submitted to the SG (SG26). It showed that the average cost per full time equivalent student throughout British universities was $920 per annum. Such a figure varied from $560 for Social Studies to $2310 for Veterinary Science. Universities with facilities for medicine, dentistry or veterinary science had an average unit cost of $948. Universities without medicine had unit costs of $874.

As far as institutional unit costs, all university faculties in the U.K. spent $4774 per unit per annum on average (cf. medicine: $8496); while all faculties in the public sector spent $3763). Laboratory-based subjects in the university sector spend $5721 per unit, while their public sector equivalents spend $4248. There were 248,000 first degree and equivalent students in universities (129,000 in the public sector. There were 63,000 Social Science students at universities (U), (29,000 public sector - PS) 33,000 Engineering U students versus 27,000 PS; 7,000 Business Management Studies U versus 27,000 PS; 62,000 Arts U versus 38,000 PS; 29,000 Physical Sciences U versus 10,000 PS; and 11,000 Education U versus 46,000 PS. There were 8,000 unemployed graduates from U (31 December, 1980)

and 9,000 PS. Thirty percent of post graduate students at U were women (34% PS). Thirty-eight percent of first degree students at U were women (46% PS). A total of $293 million was spent by government on university awards ($276 million in the public sector).

The report noted that the "current economic climate is encouraging universities to develop more and more activities that are not funded via the UGC recurrent grant" (SG26, p.21). There was a need therefore for developing a more rationalised scheme for costing institutions across the binary line, including a more sophisticated system for measuring the capacity of departments, a factor which has a "critical bearing upon levels of unit costs" (SG26, p22) and for gathering information.

Legal aspects of the merger. A letter from Dr. John Baker, an academic lawyer, concerning the legal position of NUU in the light of the mandatory merger, suggested that the process of dissolving a Charter voluntarily was "not without complications, particularly with respect to continuing the rights and duties of the old corporation". The crown, which granted the Charter would have to accept the surrender, which would be formally enrolled in Chancery. If such a step were taken "the corporation . . . has effectively committed suicide", Baker concluded. He suggested it would be safest to procure an act of parliament if possible. The letter was dated 18 July, 1982.

The Registrar of NUU took up the matter of legislative

action in a letter to DENI (SG32/1, 16 July 1982). After expressing the view of the university that a merger was "not necessarily the best, or by any means the only, way forward either for satisfying the needs of this University or of Northern Ireland as a whole" (SG32/1), Mr. Ewing called for clear financial assurances to be given which protect jobs beyond the commencement of the merged institution. He said,

> The University views with concern the possible replacement of its prerogative Charter with a Charter authorized by legislation. The University must reserve the right, if necessary, to oppose such legislation. (SG32/1)

Sir Peter Swinnerton-Dyer, seeking the advice of the Clerk of the Privy Council, Sir Neville Leigh, asserted "that neither of the two institutions concerned has yet come to a firm conclusion as to whether it wishes to co-operate with the government in implementing this policy" (SG33/1, 23 July 1982). Sir Peter referred to an additional complication, namely, that NUU "already has a Royal Charter and the creation of the new institution would involve the disappearance of the New University" (SG33/1). He pointed out that:

> as members of a charted institution, it is unlawful for them to do anything which might tend to bring about the disappearance of the institution. Even if they concluded that the merger is desirable, there may . . . be substantial technical difficulties in bringing it about. (SG33/1)

Sir Peter claimed that the academic lawyers he consulted were by no means convinced that the advice which NUU had received was correct in law. He requested information about possible "precedents for the merger of a Chartered

Corporation into another body, and if so how it was done" (SG33/1). He suggested that both he and Sir John Megaw (the NUU visitor who is a kind of statutory legal consultant for individual universities throughout the U.K.) might visit Sir Neville to take up the issues raised in the letter, and concluded that no such problems existed in respect of the UP which was created by a Statutory Instrument. Sir Neville's reply (SG33/2, 28 July 1982) referred to many precedents for the merger of a Chartered Corporation into another body and suggested that unless there is some special point of Irish law that he was not familiar with, "the University's solicitors may not be entirely correct in what they say" (SG33/2).

Polytechnic ethos. A letter to the Minister from the UP Academic Board wanted assurances " that the effect of the merger was not to turn a successful polytechnic into an unsuccessful university" (SG34, 2 August 1982) and expressed great concern about the way in which the proposed merger was proceeding. The way forward was on the belief that it would be wrong to proceed on the basis of a merger worked out by the existing institutions as equal partners rather than by the "designated senior staff of the new institution" (SG34, p.3). The real danger was that the merger might adversely affect the work of UP whose ethos might be diluted and its achievements and potential undermined. The letter wondered whether government aspirations could not be met in some other way than by the proposed merger.

A unitary structure. A paper concerned with Management Structures in the new institution was based on the assumption that the "new institution is, by Government decision already taken to be a unitary (as opposed to federal) university" (SG35). It recommended that governance of the new institution should be in the hands of a "mixed lay/ internal academic Council in which all final management authority . . . should rest" (SG35, p.2). The students' viewpoint should also be made known to senate, though not necessarily through student representation. There was recognition that, in the field of nontraditional university work, there would be a need for "powerful protection against the almost overwhelming pressure of academic institutions and their staff in favour of full-time degree level work" (SG35, p.3). The paper suggested that higher degree work and research should be based at Coleraine and that staff be called upon to teach courses at all levels and modes of instruction, including evening work, with some inter-campus travel obligations.

Choice of Vice Chancellor. A letter from the Inter-Union Consultative Committee suggested that the new institution be "headed by a figure who is not identified with either of the existing institutions" (SG36, 9 August 1982), and that advertising, open competition and wide consultation take place in the selection process. In a similar note, the AUT said "it would be wrong and damaging to allow

considerations of the timetable for the establishment of the new institution to override the fundamental principle of obtaining the best person" (SG38).

Opposition from QUB. Swinnerton-Dyer referred to the forthright condemnation by QUB both of the "concept of a merger . . . and of the way in which the Steering Group has set about its task" (SG41, 11 August 1982). For the Vice Chancellor of QUB to serve as a member of the SG would diminish the credibility of it and make an already complicated task even harder. Dr. Froggatt was nominated by NUU "because they believed that it would be wrong in law for them to nominate a member of NUU itself" (SG41).

Nicholas Scott's letter to Sir Robert Kidd, the Chairman of NUU Council was worth noting. In the light of Dr. Froggatt's compromised position, Scott said, "I must therefore ask you to arrange for NUU to reconsider its position and to suggest an alternative nomination, preferably of a member of the academic staff" (SG42, 16 August 1982).

Conflict within Steering Group. With regard to the appointment of a Vice Chancellor Designate, Sir Peter wrote to the Minister about the polarization at SG level, over whether internal or external methods of appointment should be adopted. "Where we differ, and are about equally divided, is on whether the advantages of principle which we see in open competition would be offset by practical disadvantages" (SG46, 31 August 1982). The Chairman called

for ministerial guidance and direction on the matter. He suggested the Minister would certainly (in the case of internal appointment) "wish to interview to have more detailed information on the way in which either of the existing heads of the two institutions would approach the new and different job" (SG46).

The Minister's reply (SG50) referred to the disadvantages of external appointment:

> An appointment from outside the existing institutions would not make it easy to achieve continuity of leadership in the difficult transitional period . . . , it could have an adverse effect on staff morale . . . , and it could be a considerable time before an outside candidate could relinquish existing commitments. (SG52, p.3)

He expressed concern that SG should proceed as rapidly as possible towards the establishment of the new institution.

The AUT made it clear to Sir Peter that, by overuling the SG on the method of appointment of the vice chancellor the "minister is acting against normal practice" (SG56). It felt that the success and standing of the new institution depended on its obtaining the best possible candidate for this difficult and challenging job. The person must have high academic standing as well as the experience and capacity to resolve the problems of overcoming the binary divide, the paper said. It expressed concern that the interests of the two existing institutions be harmonized so that peer confidence and cooperation be gained.

Government pressure. With regard to the pressure from the Minister to proceed with speed to designate a vice

chancellor, Sir Robert Kidd, writing to Sir Peter, expressed his concern that "the work on structures should be progressed much further before anyone is designated Vice-Chancellor. The individual chosen should suit the preferred structure - not the other way round" (SG61, 20 September 1982).

The SG Chairman replied that "it is only when he has been designated that he can begin to distance himself from his present institution and acquire the balanced view which he will need . . . if he is to succeed in his new office" (SG61/2 6 October 1982). Sir Peter hoped that whichever institution he came from, it would give him leave of absence as quickly as possible. As far as the interviews of the two heads of the merging institutions with the SG, the uncertainty of the outcome was reflected in Sir Peter's words:

> we are committed morally . . . to offering each of them a suitable position in the new institution - and that without diminution of stipend. Clearly this would be a much greater constraint on the management structure if neither of them were offered the Vice-Chancellorship. We hope to interview each of them on Thursday, 21 October, spending the morning with one and the afternoon with the other, - but . . . there has not yet been time for either of them to say . . . whether they wish to be considered. (SG61/2 p.2)

NUU Senate opposition. A "Strictly Confidential" memo to all academics, from the Registrar of NUU (SG66, 7 October 1982) noted that Senate was

> not opposed in principle to a merger . . . but it is entirely opposed to the way in which this objective is being pursued by the Steering Group and to the intervention of the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State . . . of the work of the Group. (SG66)

As a result, the Senate recommended that the University not cooperate with the SG until it considered:

> (i) the precise educational objectives . . .
> (ii) the organisational and academic structures . . .
> (iii) the proper appointment of a Vice-Chancellor designate i.e. in accordance with normal university practice.

The Senate recommended that Dr. Cockcroft, the NUU Vice Chancellor should not attend the SG or its panel for the selection procedure.

Transfer credit. One interesting expansion of an earlier Draft Objectives statement, contained a reference to transfer credit in the new institution (SG69), whereby examinations passed and periods of study or research spent by students at other universities or places of learning be recognized as "equivalent" to formalized requirements for degrees in the new institution.

Sir Robert Kidd. The Chairman of Council of NUU, Sir Robert Kidd explained to the SG that if the University could be persuaded that a merger was in the best interests of both NUU and the Province, then they were prepared to try to persuade Council to bring the necessary resolutions before Court to enable the Charter to be amended or replaced. If NUU's Court, by a 75% majority at two meetings a month apart, passed such resolutions then the way would be clear for NUU to join in the merger (SG 70/1 14 October 1982). With reference to the designation of Vice Chancellor, Kidd said,

> The two existing institutions have very different aims and very different forms of government. A man who runs one could not necessarily run the other. (SG70/1, p.1)

As a result, Council indicated to the Vice Chancellor that it preferred him not to accept SG's invitation to designation interviews. SG's reply was that "we would not feel prevented from proceeding in this way either because only one of the two chose to meet us or because one or other institution was unrepresented (SG70/2).

Mr. Nicholas Scott, MP. The Minister's response clarified government thinking about the merger. Kidd's statement, said Scott, revealed a fundamental misunderstanding of the situation:

> You remain uncertain as to the feasibility and desirability of merger; (that) you regard the proposed merger as only a suggestion which is still to be explored. (SG70/3)

Nothing would deflect the Minister from the view that:

> if it is not clear at an early stage that the Steering Group's work will be brought to a successful conclusion there would be no justification for continued funding of new intakes to NUU. The University is of course an independent body, and is entitled to form its own views on these matters, but should do so in full knowledge of the consequences . . . I am concerned that your consideration of your obligations under your Charter should be informed by a realistic appraisal of the practical consequences for NUU of failure to achieve a successful merger. (SG70/3, p.2)

As far as the question of designation was concerned, Scott continued,

> I do not think it is at all reasonable for the University to claim the right to determine unilaterally when and how this designation should be taken forward, and I hope that even if you do not recognise the force of the contrary arguments you will accept that your view is a minority one and will not seek to impose it. (SG70/3, p.2)

Finally, the Minister warned:

> I cannot allow the work of the Steering Group to be

> vitiated, and the future of the new institution imperilled, simply in order to meet your University's reservations which neither I nor the Steering Group share. I would therefore urge you to reconsider your position. (SG70/3, p.3)

UP Students' Union. A report prepared for the SG viewed with considerable suspicion the government proposal to amalgamate the two institutions as a cost cutting exercise. There was concern about the lack of democratic accountability if the UGC would have jurisdiction over funding of the new institution (SG75, 15 October 1982). It drew attention to certain existing limitations at the UP, which should be remedied in the new institution: a lack of expansion of technical training education and of higher national diploma courses; a lack of availability of post graduate research courses; and inadequate furnishing of the Foundation Art School. Ending on a note of pessimism the report was not convinced that the merger would be the educational success it was intended to be, but would lead to the deterioration of NUU and therefore of the education system as a whole (SG75).

Haste of the merger. The Interim Report of the House of Commons Education, Science and Arts Committee into the immediate implications of the merger (SG84, 28 October 1982) referred to criticism by witnesses of "the composition of the Steering Group, the pace of the merger and the degree of consultation entered into" (p.2). It urged the Minister to monitor progress and show flexibility if September 1984 should be an unduly ambitious target date.

UP staff differ on Rector's paper. A submission from the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education referred to substantial disagreement, within UP staff, with the Rector's paper ("A university with a difference"):

> The paper has no standing in the Polytechnic and has caused considerable apprehension at all levels within the College. There is also disquiet at the lack of consultation within the Polytechnic on management proposals for the new institution, unlike . . .[NUU] where there appears to be widespread discussion between management and staff. (SG86, 1 November 1982)

Coordination of higher education. In a paper submitted to the Education, Science and Arts Committee, Mr. Birley referred to the coordination of higher education in Northern Ireland. He suggested that decision making machinery be set up that was representative of the local community especially industrialists, business and professional people and trade unionists. The committee should include relevant government departments, British academics, as well as DENI and UGC representation (SG90, p.4).

Two merger committees. The "remit" of the Working Party on Constitutional Structures (SG95) was to recommend structures of governance for the new institution to ensure efficiency and effectiveness; to consider the scope of the Charter and Statutes and any other constitutional or structural matters requested by SG. There would be seven SG members, six NUU representatives and six UP representatives on the Working Party.

The "remit" of the Academic Consultative Group was

to recommend to the SG appropriate academic organization and structures with a focus on the range and scope of courses and the development of a prospectus for 1984/85. It was also to facilitate academic continuity for students already engaged in courses and the organization of degree, post graduate and sub-degree courses, in relation to validating bodies (SG96).

Agricultural education. An NUU Students' Council paper called for greater democratic involvement in decisions by an extension of the role of non-academic staff (SG97, p.12, 14). It called for a large amount of capital to cover alterations to buildings and re-siting of departments. When students considered which institution to attend, two criteria applied: adequate resources for the study of the subject and suitable student amenities on campus. NUU appeared to be lacking in both areas. The paper was particularly unhappy that an urban university offered a course in Agriculture whereas a rural university did not. New courses should be developed in Pollution Studies, Music, Conflict and American Studies as well (SG97, p.34).

Universities and economic growth. A DENI statement set out a series of economic implications of higher education in the Province. Because graduates pursued careers outside Northern Ireland, institutions needed to take account of employment opportunities in the wider context of the U.K. (SG105). Universities should cover the needs for Northern Ireland industry and have a technological base for

attracting new industry. Any future coordination processes in the Province would be monitoring an institution's impact on economic growth. Trends of enrolments and an assessment of how well the actual provision was in fact matching current and prospective needs would be the focus of inquiry for the coordinating machinery. A statement was made about possible future arrangements: DENI would encourage each institution to be involved in the coordination process, "including the greatest possible freedom to take their own decisions" (SG105, p.4). The coordinating body would have to decide which institution was to have the lead role in particular areas of educational provision.

The proposal for the future planning, coordination and funding of higher education in Northern Ireland was that UGC would advise DENI as to the financial and other needs of the Province's universities after receiving recommendations from a Northern Ireland Working Party, which would be set up as a UGC sub-committee. The Working Party's task would be to overview and coordinate the two universities and provide a link between the universities and the UGC. The Working Party would include in its membership, "non-academic members from Northern Ireland, whose role would be to advise on the wider social and industrial interests of higher education in the Province" (SG105). People with close involvement in public sector work in Great Britain would also be included. There could be a link with the National Advisory Board which coordinates all colleges and

polytechnics throughout the U.K. DENI would be represented by assessors who would be familiar with further education provision in the Province. There would therefore be two UGC members, two Great Britain public sector members, two Northern Ireland non-academic members plus a Chairman and the DENI assessors and the link with National Advisory Board. If the institutions themselves were represented on the Working Party, it would be impossible to avoid a conflict of interests. "It therefore seems better to look for other means of securing close contact, both formal and informal, between the Working Party and the Northern Ireland universities" (SG105). The Working Party, to this end, would seek comments from the institutions and would develop a procedure for keeping it informed of current academic developments.

Amended draft of new charter. The amended draft (SG107) contained a reference, like all Royal Charters, to the fact that the new institution shall "henceforth for ever be one body politic and corporate with perpetual succession" (p.2). One of the purposes not included in early drafts (e.g., SG17) was a reference to the encouragement and development of creativity and artistic education. The institution should aim, in addition, "to promote wisdom and understanding by the example and influence of corporate life" (SG107, p.2). The fundamental goals of the university were expressed in that the university should be a teaching, research and examining body. The new institution would have

the same provision as NUU did in its Statutes, to amalgamate with another educational, public or private body:

> Statute Y says the University has power: To join or co-operate with any other University or with any Department of the Government . . . or with any authority or other public or private body . . . , in such manner as may be authorised by the Statutes and Regulations. (SG107, p.6)

With regard to amending the new Charter, several alterations to the NUU provision (i.e., Statutes 29-31) should be noted. The Court may add to, amend or repeal any of the provisions of the Charter on the recommendation of Council after consultation with the Senate. The special resolution must be passed at one meeting of the Court and then confirmed at a subsequent meeting, the majority in both cases, having to be at least three quarters of those present and voting (Statute 24/2). In addition, there was provision under the NUU Charter to

> enter into any agreement for the incorporation within or association with the University of any other Institution and for taking over, in whole or in part, its rights, property, privileges and liabilities and for any other purpose not repugnant to this our Charter. (SG197, p.4; SG136 Item Q, p.4)

The Court, on Council's nomination, shall appoint the Chancellor and Pro Chancellors and communicate its opinions on any matters to Senate or Council. The Council is "responsible for the management and administration of the revenue and property of the University and, subject to the powers of the Senate . . . shall have general control over the conduct of the affairs of the University" (SG136, p.7).

The Senate shall be subject to the powers of the Vice Chancellor and Council and shall have control of the academic affairs of the university, both in teaching and in research.

Discrimination. There shall be no discrimination in the new institution, in terms of exclusion from office or admission as members on grounds of religious belief, political opinion, race or sex. The religious beliefs of students shall be treated with due respect (SG136, p.9).

Critical path checklist. A paper produced by the SG and entitled "Critical Path - Checklist" (SG115) attempted to "bring together the various strands of the merger which require consideration" (p.1). It raised the issue of effecting the necessary legislation which ensured simultaneous surrendering of the old, and granting of the new Charter. Some concern was expressed that a possible national election might unduly disrupt such legislation. As the Privy Council would consider both Charter and Statutes at the same time, decisions about aspects of the Statutes would need to be taken beforehand, in such areas as: membership of Senate and Boards of faculties; procedure for appointing deans; student matters; the problem of removal from office and employment, with the inevitable negotiations with the unions, "a task for which the Steering Group has consistently maintained it has no powers" (SG115, p.3); Statutes for temporary provisions; Universities and Colleges Council on Admissions arrangements for the provision of

prospectuses for 1985/86; staff; and other constitutional and transitional arrangements.

Government-university relations. SG118 raised the subject of government-university relations and academic resource management. It pointed out that because of the lack of consensus between government and the university system throughout the U.K., governments were profoundly uncomfortable about the slowness and inadequacy of the responsiveness of universities to the financial constraints that were necessary. Governments had lost faith in what they once believed an expanded education system could do to bring about social and economic regeneration and now sought nothing more than an orderly contraction. The paper claimed that "social priorities today no longer include universities or polytechnics" (SG118). As a result, the institutions that would be favored in the distribution of government funds would be those of academic distinction and those which offered both a good mix of courses and proved able to respond most effectively to reduced resources in terms of the changes they effected in these courses. The new university being planned certainly would not qualify for the first category for many years, though QUB might. Rather, "its academically lower level and part-time/mixed mode courses, rather than its full-time degree courses and general research capability, will be its prime selling point" (SG118).

The writer urged his SG and other colleagues

to structure the institution so that the Council would be in command over the academic affairs and staff, which would represent a "vital confidence factor for the new university in its relations with government and the key elements of the community" (SG118, p.2) In addition, he suggested that each member of the academic staff be assigned a defined teaching load which would allow them time for research and other acceptable activities. Such a step would be unpopular, but would be an invaluable method of "achieving change rationally and restoring the confidence of the government and others in the managerial effectiveness of universities in current conditions" (SG118, p.4f).

Committee structure. A system of academic management outlined in another paper incorporated five basic principles:

a) built-in capacity for review and change;

b) delegation of powers and functions;

c) reflection of managerial responsibility through committee office and membership;

d) collective decision making and open government;

e) integrated resource and academic planning.

Within such a context, a small group of six academic staff would form the nucleus responsible for planning and management: Vice Chancellor, Pro Vice Chancellors of Academic Planning/Development, and Provosts (Coleraine, Jordanstown and Derry) (SG124).

Provosts would be directly responsible to the Vice Chancellor and would have charge of local administration

including

> the smooth running of campus services: links with the local community; the pastoral care of students; liaison with the Students' Union . . . ; and the social and recreational life of the campus. (SG124, p.4)

The major development task would be in Londonderry. One of the hindrances to the creation of a unified institution might be the over-concentration on local affairs and possible isolation. Two additional senior academic posts with university- wide functions would be those of Director of external affairs (e.g., links with industry) and of continuing education. Six administrative posts had been identified as: secretary, finance officer, academic registrar, establishment officer, physical planning officer and management services officer. The leadership of the deans, in the initial stages would have a critical bearing on the ability and extent of cross-campus activity by individual faculties.

Deans. The deans would be responsible to the vice chancellor for faculty leadership; inter-faculty collaboration and cross-collegial developments in continuing education; and participation in the inter-faculty course planning, pastoral, administrative, consultative, social, recreational and welfare systems of the university (SG137).

The Chairman of SG, responding to the many submissions dealing with the appointment of deans, suggested the compromise of a separate Appointments Committee consisting of the Vice Chancellor, one lay Council member, two Senate

members and three members of the particular Faculty (SG150).

The role of Dean of external affairs, the only permanent Deanship, involved industrial liaison (e.g., cooperative education, consultancy); industrial development (e.g., community relations, fund raising, alumni relations); and international links (e.g., student/staff exchanges) (SG159).

Institutional review. A second draft of the Statutes (SG160) contained a provision for a seven-yearly review of the new institution's work, to examine how far the university was reaching the objectives in its Charter. However, the report of the committee would be considered by Court, Council and Senate and had no persuasive or instrumental function as far as the implementation of its recommendations was concerned (SG160, p.14).

Termination of employment. Staff could be removed for "good cause", namely for:

> a) failure through mental or physical incapacity or persistent refusal or neglect to perform to the satisfaction of the Council the duties and responsibilities of office, membership or employment;
> b) misconduct, considered by the Council to be gravely detrimental to the interests of the University or to be such as renders the person concerned unfit to continue to hold office, membership or employment. (SG160, p.22)

The NUU Court decision. The day after the NUU Court failed to gain the necessary majority to repeal its old and petition for a new Charter, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Nicholas Scott wrote to Swinnerton-Dyer, asking SG to "continue to act on behalf of the new institution and to take forward the necessary planning"

(SG178, 28 June 1983). Such action was deemed necessary to counter the inevitable uncertainty among staff and students about the prospects for the existing and new institutions. It was essential to hold to the goal of a 1984 start. Scott agreed with Sir Peter "that the Charter and statutes, together with the petition to Her Majesty, must be presented to the Privy Council in September at the latest" (SG178, p.2). As to NUU's future, Scott said:

> Inevitably, I shall have to consider what other steps should be taken in regard to the future public funding of NUU, for there can be no justification for continuing to fund new intakes to NUU as a separate institution if it has opted out of the merger. The timing of these steps will, to some extent, be conditioned by the University's reaction to its present difficulties and by its achieving some satisfactory resolution of them. However, time is short . . . In the event of NUU being unable to achieve a successful outcome to its constitutional difficulties, and consequential decisions being taken about public funding in 1984 and thereafter, I shall also feel obliged to seek assurances from NUU that it will be possible for the University to maintain teaching and other resources at appropriate levels to allow students to complete their courses of study. (SG178)

A letter from the NUU Chairman of Council signed in his absence by the Registrar, Mr. Ewing, informed Sir Peter of a subsequent Senate meeting which reaffirmed its strong support for the merger. Kidd urged Sir Peter that Council wished NUU to continue to participate fully in the planning of the new institution, that NUU negotiators be allowed to take part in the work of SG and that designated officers from NUU continue to play a role. He also wanted the work of the Academic Consultative Group to continue as before and that SG hold its scheduled meeting at the New University on 5 July as planned.

The report from Senate was appended to Kidd's letter, and referred to a unanimous vote of confidence in NUU officers (i.e. Chancellor, Chairman of Council and Acting Vice Chancellor), one of whom had to be persuaded not to resign. A second motion, expressing continued support for the merger and calling on Council to take all necessary steps to implement it, carried by 21 votes to one.

Government policy on higher education. On 18 July 1983, the UGC issued a press notice with details of the composition and remit of the Working Party on Northern Ireland. Its terms of reference were to advise the Main Committee, in consultation with the subject and other sub-committees on carrying out its responsibilities for advising DENI on the coordination of the universities in Northern Ireland and their funding (SG185).

An accompanying paper from DENI "Higher Education in Northern Ireland: Planning and Coordination", described guidelines for the Working Party as it set about its task. It predicted some reduction in the provision for QUB and the new institution "in order to avoid uneconomic provision and to create a more compact base on which to face financial and demographic pressures" (SG185 p.1, July 1983).

The planning arrangements needed to find a way of reconciling each institution's proper freedom to manage its own affairs with the need to achieve a coordinated system. Three main factors affected institutional development: student demand, the nature of the institution's provision

and funding. Current planning should be conditioned by the assumption that in a relatively short period, the higher education system of Northern Ireland would be operating at a lower level of enrolments. There should not be any significant expansion of basic capacity in the next few years.

The British Government identified a need for an increase in the proportion of scientific and technological studies, and for

> the development of courses at different levels and in a variety of modes which will broadly equip students for a range of vocational outlets. This same need applies equally to the Northern Ireland institutions. (SG185, p.5 July 1983)

With such an overall framework, DENI urged the institutions and the UGC, through its Working Party to examine and keep under review:

> a) the current extent of the provision of vocational courses by the Northern Ireland institutions;
> b) whether the proportion of total provision of the institutions in broadly vocational studies has increased . . . ;
> c) what steps may need to be taken to ensure that the provision of such courses at different levels, and in a variety of modes, is encouraged;
> d) the linkages between industry and higher education and the means whereby industry makes its needs known and whether institutional activity is geared to addressing those needs;
> e) the liaison between higher and further education and between higher education and schools . . . ;
> f) whether existing courses across the broad range of studies place sufficient emphasis on skills of numeracy. (SG185, p.6)

Such criteria provide the first real insight into government thinking about the rationale for post secondary education.

The primary purpose of higher education, from the

government's perspective, was that of career training. Priority should be given to vocational studies and the most flexible curricular methods should be developed to ensure their maximum effectiveness and utility. The Working Party would concentrate its attention on overall course content and modes of study. The greater emphasis on numeracy reflected the evident concern within government that the whole system had failed to deliver adequately trained students for the rapidly expanding field of technology. There were too many unemployed Arts and Social Science graduates in a market asking for Science and Technology graduates: what really counted in tertiary education was its direct impact on productivity and economic growth and its responsiveness to the demands of industry and commerce.

In terms of funding for the tertiary sector, QUB would get US$45.6 million for 1983/4, NUU $13.2 million and UP $23.7 million. Future funding depended on the nature and scope of each individual institution's role and on the overall standard of provision in the light of both U.K. policy and Northern Ireland circumstances. The hint of changes after 1984/5 in the funding situation was given in the following statement:

> Any shifts in the respective roles of individual institutions which may by then be contemplated are not likely to have a very significant impact on the financial allocations to each institution in 1984/85, although some adjustment may be called for to begin to reflect changes which will have a more significant effect in 1985/86 and subsequent years. (SG185, p.7)

No reductions in funding would be made simply on account

of the merger though later, when the new institution was fully established, the scope of the merger might provide for operational economies to balance against the diseconomies for split site working.

The government cautioned that, because of future financial constraints and the pressure of student demand on the institutions' teaching role, it would be difficult to sustain as great an overall research base as in the recent past. With such a possibility in mind, the government asked UGC to consider whether research funding should be more selectively concentrated, and if so, in what way.

Constitutional Structures Working Party Papers

There were 24 papers in the section, containing submissions, letters or papers dealing with the more structural and legal aspects of the merger.

Supremacy of Council over Senate. Paper CS1 suggested a Council of some 30 members, about 16 lay and 14 from within the university. It suggested that, for unreserved business, the Council should be represented by the President of the Students' Council, and members of academic and non academic staff. All teaching and research staff should be members of the particular Faculty Board (CS1, p.2).

In the Working Party's discussion of the Charter (CS2), a marginal note on a term in Item 11 identified the Council as "the executive governing body of the University" (p.7). The note argued that the term suggested a shift of powers to the Council from the Senate, and argued for the

old (NUU) model in which Council was subject to the powers of the Senate. An additional marginal gloss said that the Council "should be left as final arbiter on all matters, including academic ones" (CS2). There was a fear that by giving Senate control over, instead of responsibility for academic affairs, academics rather than responsible citizens would control higher education in the new institution.

R.C. Griffiths, in another submission, highlighted a problem throughout Commonwealth universities, where Councils were "incapable of carrying out their responsibilities and have sunk to the position of puppets of the Senate; or of the Vice-Chancellor and/or a small group of Council members forming a totally dominant caucus determining all important decisions relating to the university" (CS9, p.2). The Council, said Griffiths, must have the overall responsibility of university affairs: "This is going to be increasingly essential in relation, for example, to decisions on future academic developments, including closures, in times of financial stringency" (CS9, p.2). The logic of such reasoning was to restrict Council membership to 25 and abandon the rights of outside interests groups to specific representation on Court. The way around such a difficulty was to introduce a limited number of non voting observers from various interested parties. Academics "must never, if possible, form a majority at any meeting" (CS9, p.3).

Lay membership of Council and Court. CS4 suggested some of the principles in determining lay representation on Council. They were the need to provide for: a lay majority, special interest groups, geographical spread, powers of cooption and the term of office and overlapping periods of appointment. With regard to Court membership, the paper suggested 35 academic and related members and 80 lay interest group members.

Constraints on planning. A note on second tier staff by Swinnerton-Dyer (CS6) asked whether the central administration should have one head or several coequal ones. Whereas the Working Party might regard this as a matter of principle, an answer might be forced on them by consideration of who was available to fill these offices. A major structural constraint on planning for the new institution was that of given positions in the two older institutions. Sir Peter raised the problem of job specifications for pro vice chancellors: the idea of a pro vice chancellor as "as odd job man, landed like an American Vice-President with all the jobs which the Vice-Chancellor doesn't want to do himself, does not work well" (CS6, p.2). As to deans, Sir Peter recognized the need for a reduced teaching load but hoped it would not necessarily be reduced to zero. Discussing the term and method of appointment of deans, Swinnerton-Dyer listed a number of possibilities: election by academics or Senate and appointment by the vice chancellor. He felt however, that the method

of appointment was "less important than it appeared, because all methods are likely to generate the same people as Deans" (CS6, p.3).

Speaking about Provosts, Sir Peter urged a "pastoral and ceremonial rather than policy-making" (CS6, p.3) role. He did not wish to see them in too important a role or they could become a force for breaking up the new institution. Furthermore, there is a "real risk that the Provost will have nothing to do except to get in the hair of the Dean" (CS6, p.3).

Academic drift. A paper by Swinnerton-Dyer described academic drift as the tempation of any institution to "shift its balance away from its more elementary courses and towards its more advanced ones" (CS15). A university must resist the soft option of contemplating its navel rather than considering the needs of the community:

> I am not worried about either of these risks so long as Derek Birley is around; but in 10 years' time, . . . the situation could be different. The proposed Charter . . . would contain all the right sentiments, but that does not in itself ensure their implementation. (CS15)

Because drift is a gradual process, Sir Peter suggested that a Statute requiring a seven-year review be written. An external committee would assess the achievements of the institution and report to Court and Council as well as making the findings public. Such a clause would be unique both in the U.K. and elsewhere.

Academic Consultative Group Papers

The researcher read 31 ACGP, most of which summarised discussions about topics like faculty boundaries, course prospectuses, academic planning, admissions procedure, research and teacher training.

Comparative data from NUU and UP. ACG82.5 contained various statistics of student and staff population at NUU, as of 26 November 1982. Of the total full time undergraduates (1856), 19 were Diploma and 81 Certificate students. There were 33 part time Diploma/Certificate students, and 16 Exchange students. Of the 124 graduate students, there were 58 PhD, 18 Masters and 48 graduate Diploma or degree students. There were 65 part time PhD students, 144 Masters and 68 graduate Diploma students.

The total full time population was 1980 with 310 part time students. The full time undergraduate population per faculty was as follows: Physical Sciences (200), Biological and Environmental Studies, including Psychology (340), Humanities (433) and Education (320). With regard to academic staff, there were 24 Professors, 48 Readers/Senior Lecturers, 7 temporary Lecturers, 6 part time Lecturers, 4 Language Assistants, 29 Research Staff, 68 Technicians and 6 Project Staff.

At UP (ACG82.6) the equivalent were taken for the period ending December 1982. There were 4558 full time and sandwich undergraduate students and 2341 part time undergraduate students. There were 836 graduate students

giving a total student population of 4910 full time/ sandwich and 3337 part time students. Of the full time/ sandwich undergraduate students, 504 were in Science, 1102 in Technology, 779 in Business and Management, 1013 in Social and Health Sciences, 893 in Arts and 267 in Education. Of the part time undergraduate population, 359 were in Science, 373 in Technology, 874 in Business and Management, 56 in Social and Health Sciences, 432 in Arts and 247 in Education. With regard to staff, there were 6 Deans, 35 Directors of Studies, 112 Principal Lecturers/Readers, 3 Senior Lecturers, 396 Lecturers Grade II, 14 Lecturers Grade I, 9 part time Lecturers and 154 Technicians.

Teacher training. A joint statement from the two institutions dealt with future trends in teacher training (ACG82.8). Among other recommendations, the paper suggested: opportunity for delayed vocational choice (i.e., allowance for later, rather than earlier academic specialization for teacher trainees); opportunity to study alongside students interested in entering other professions; close links between academic and professional education and between practical work in schools and related work on campus; opportunity for Protestants and Catholics to be educated together.

Course planning procedures. Both institutions had to submit resumes of Academic Planning procedures. The overall objectives at UP were:

1. To promote learning and creativity by

a) providing advanced full-time, part-time and and in-service courses to meet the needs and the demands of the individual and the society;
b) research to extend knowledge and its application;
c) meeting the social, recreational and cultural needs of students.

2. To cooperate with industry, commerce, the professions and public services in the advancement of knowledge and its application.
3. To serve the wider community through social service and by sharing educational, recreational and cultural resources. (AGC82.9)

As far as teaching programs, each new course proposal was judged according to: compatibility with general objectives; evidence of demand from potential students; evidence of meeting a professional or social need; avoidance of duplication; innovativeness; compatibility with the concept of a flexible, multi-level pattern of courses. Through the provision of opportunity for transfer within interrelated courses, UP has "striven to enlarge the range of student choice, relative to potential employment opportunities, and to provide a broadly based education capable of later application and adaptation" (ACG82.9, p.2).

The planning of any course and the preparation of a submission were undertaken by a Course Planning Committee, made up of a Course Director (Head of School), a Senior Course Tutor, key teachers and coopted persons, including specialists from industry or the professions. The Course Committee was made up of the particular Dean, the Course Director, Senior Course tutor and all staff teaching within the course. The "inter-school character of many of the Course Committees reflects the interdisciplinary approach

to course planning and encourages a continuous liaison which is beneficial to course planning, development and teaching" (ACG82.9, p.2). Course Committees were responsible to the Faculty Boards for the management, review and continuous reappraisal of all courses.

Course proposals could be initiated "as a response to requests from external agencies or through the initiative of individual members or groups of staff" (ACG82.9). Proposals would then be submitted within the overall Academic Development Plan, which was reviewed annually by the Development Committee. The rather rigorous procedure was elaborated in the remainder of the paper (ACG82.9, pp.4-7).

The equivalent NUU statement about Academic Planning had a more traditional approach, reflecting the greater freedom of individual departments to develop courses fairly independently of the line-management structure at UP. Schools of Studies have their independent Boards, whose functions were prescribed by Statute:

> a) To advise and report to the Senate on all matters relating to the organization of education, teaching and research . . .
> b) To consider the progress and conduct of students . . .
> c) To recommend . . . examiners. (ACG82.10, p.2)

The subjects of study were the basic academic units to which staff and resources were assigned. The head of subject had ultimate responsibility to Senate and Council for the maintenance of proper standards. Boards of Studies contain all academic staff involved in the program of study or

subject. Their powers were:

> a) To comment upon and to make recommendations relating to any of their programmes . . .
> b) To make recommendations relating to the progress of individual students. (ACG82.10, p.3)

In terms of program initiation, the head of subject consulted representatives of professional and other outside interests as appropriate. An outline program was prepared and presented to the school board with justification in terms of the academic development of subject, anticipated student demand, present resource capacity. If satisfied that the program was academically acceptable and that full information had been provided, the board referred the proposal to the Senate for final approval.

Coordination of higher education in Northern Ireland. Mr. Derek Birley, in a letter to Mr. John Parkes at DENI (ACG82.12), expressed concern at the lack of adequate representation on the new Coordinating Body for Higher Education in Northern Ireland, from the Province itself. There was on the part of the UGC and DENI, a serious underestimation of "the need for, and the value of, the local contribution, academic and non-academic" (ACG82.12, p.2) which would weaken planning. Not even the institutions (i.e., QUB and the University of Ulster) would be represented, though their views would undoubtedly be heard. Birley suggested the appointment of an independent Chairman from the Province, or at least, the increasing of the Northern Ireland contribution and representation.

Mr. Birley argued that the new institution which was

at the center of this radical reform should be given a fair chance to establish its claims, to produce its plans and marshal its arguments. He had no "disposition to be associated with anything second-rate" (6 January 1983). In a second letter, Mr. Birley's frustration with plans for the coordinating machinery could be sensed in the following comment:

> I'm not sure whether I want to make any more personal comments. Nobody seems to take any notice when I do give them the benefit of my views!

A letter from Parkes to the Chairman of the Steering Group revealed some of the factors which DENI had in mind in suggesting the arrangements for future coordination of higher education in the Province:

> one of the main problems is how best to bring together the separate strands of experience and advice which ought to inform decisions on the roles and funding of the Northern Ireland institutions. (21 December 1982)

The letter called for a single comprehensive forum which brought together perspectives from social and commercial interests in the Province, and from the educational planning sector throughout the U.K. While there was no "attempt to deal with the short term problems of co-ordination and restructuring in the light of current financial pressures" (21 December 1982, p.2), Parkes said the government paper recognized such a problem would be initially important.

Research and consultancy. Birley argued for a corporate research policy where "priorities in the allocation of staff time would have to be determined" (ACG83.4). These alone might collide with current practices, often the

"illegitimate offspring of debased scholarly ideals and union pressure for shorter teaching hours" (ACG83.4). He felt there was confusion over the difference between academic freedom and the freedom of academics to spend large amounts of public funds. Research should be useful according to Birley.

Teaching and research. Professor Brian Manning, the Dean Designate of the Proto Faculty of Humanities, wanted to see the link preserved between teaching and research. He said:

> British universities have won high reputations in research, but at the cost of some neglect of teaching, which is often poor in quality and old-fashioned in method. University teachers are appointed on the basis of achievement and promise in research; they are given little training in teaching . . . Students often get the impression that lecturers are not much interested in teaching; that they regard it as getting in the way of their research; and that they prefer to teach only the better undergraduates in their final year and postgraduates. (ACG83.16)

Minutes Of Steering Group Meetings

The reporting of minutes was highly selective. The researcher was concerned more about uncovering attitudes, aspirations, fears and perceived problems with regard to the merger, than with discussing the minutiae of business within the Group.

Role of Steering Group Secretariat. The Secretariat to the SG, while servicing the committee throughout its deliberations, played a crucial role in drafting the various statements about aims, charters and statutes. In the case of aims, the Secretariat was asked to draft an appropriate

document for consideration. Members of the Secretariat were: Mr. Dan Barry (DENI assessor): Miss Deirdre Fordham (UGC Assessor); Mr. Peter Holmes (Secretary); and Mr. John Coote (Assistant Secretary). They also interpreted government or ministerial policy to the SG (M4, 7.1).

Pension Scheme. The University Superannuation Scheme expressed grave misgivings about 500+ UP lecturers transferring to them. A working group was therefore established to "check obstacles of equity to keeping existing Polytechnic staff in their present scheme" (M4, P.6).

Surrendering a university charter. The SG was obviously expecting legal disputes over the merger (M8, 4.3f). Sir John Megaw initially favored creating the new institution by altering the existing NUU Charter but concluded the task would be awkward. It seemed that, for the sake of legal and administrative convenience, the decision to enforce the surrender of NUU's Charter, in favor of the new one, was made on the recommendation of Sir John. Swinnerton-Dyer felt it would be easier to have a prerogative charter rather than having major legislation (M8, 4.4).

Sir Neville Leigh, for the Privy Council made it clear that "rather than proceeding to a new Charter by amending the existing NUU Charter, the sensible way forward would be for a simultaneous withdrawal of the old Charter and issuing of a new one" (M19/1, 2.5.3). Sir Neville did not consider the need for new legislation a difficulty. At the conclusion of the meeting (16 August

1982), the Chairman "congratulated the Vice-Chancellor of NUU on his forthcoming marriage and the Secretary of the Steering Group on his recent promotion".

Sir John Megaw and Dr. Wilfred Cockcroft. M12 noted that Sir John Megaw "had since concluded that it would be wrong for him, as Visitor of NUU, to volunteer advice on NUU's problem over membership of the [Steering] Group". He would, however, be willing to respond to requests for advice from any properly entitled people. Such a minute highlighted a difficult area of role conflict for Sir John, who, as Visitor ought properly and judiciously to represent the best interests of NUU, but who nevertheless would have private opinions which interested parties might care to explore. Dr. Cockcroft made it clear that,"despite recent newspaper reports, he had not announced that he was not a candidate" (M12, 5.7) for Vice Chancellor.

At a meeting of SG, the Northern Ireland Council and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, one delegate deplored the Minister's "interference" in the internal affairs of the new institution, and "urged the Steering Group to ignore it" (M14/2, 3.1). The Chairman indicated that the SG had invited the heads of each institution to produce a paper setting out their ideas on the new institution. Mr. Birley responded with his paper "A University with a difference", but Dr. Cockcroft did not. An official submission from NUU was being prepared instead.

Whether Cockcroft did not present a paper because it

might place him, as Vice Chancellor, in a precarious legal position (i.e., appearing to be undercutting the NUU Charter), or because he did not particularly wish to push himself forward for the position, might never be known. What was known was that almost simultaneously with the merger, Cockcroft had been offered and had accepted a senior government appointment and been granted a knighthood. A note in M18/1 referred to a discussion of "some matters of a confidential nature pertaining to Dr. Cockcroft".

Steering Group reaction to NUU opposition. A delegation from NUU, led by Sir Robert Kidd met with the Group (M16) on 14 October 1982. At the suggestion of the Chairman, Mr. Barry explained the government rationale for the merger, saying that "the Government hoped to provide a better long-term solution to the problems of NUU and at the same time to achieve better co-ordination of Higher Education in the Province" (M16, p.4). SG members felt that NUU had chosen to distance itself from and challenge the credibility of the Steering Group. The SG decided to ignore NUU's objections and to proceed towards the designation of a vice chancellor; except for Dr. Griffiths who opposed such an idea (M16, 6.6).

M22 referred to

> a Court which would act as a guardian of the Charter and as a bridge into the community and provide an opportunity to explain to the public what the University was doing. It would, also serve as a form of democratic protection against outside interference. (M22, 3.1)

Article two of the Draft Charter referred to revoking the NUU Charter. The meeting felt such a reference should "not be included in future drafts since the NUU Court seemed likely to agree to surrender its existing Charter" (M25/1, 6.1.1).

Absence of women from merger process. The only female member of the Steering Group, apart from two members of the Secretariat, "was concerned at the absence of women in the various sub-groups which reflected the lack of women in senior roles in both institutions. She urged that some women be co-opted to remedy this omission" (M28, 6.4).

An Ulster precedent. A subsequent note referred to the "formalising (of) the bridging of the binary gap" (M34, 8.2), if the new institution were named "The Polytechnic University of Ulster". The implications of funding increases for superannuation schemes was also mentioned. Decisions made by management and unions would set a precedent for future mergers in the U.K. The Department of Education and Science had been alerted to the problem, the Chairman said (M34, 9.2.4).

The psychology of the merger. In a Minute that was later deleted, Dr. Newbould, the Acting Vice Chancellor of NUU, reported that the NUU Council was not prepared to agree to designation of second tier staff "until the Court's consent to further progress on the merger had been obtained" (M39, 3.2). As a result, concern was expressed about the effect of uncertainty on the staff of both institutions. Dr.

Newbould reassured SG that NUU wished all procedures necessary to achieve a merger were carried out correctly. NUU was not seeking to obstruct the work of SG. The Minute continued:

> Mr. Barry registered the Department's concern about the effect of delay. The present stance of NUU was similar to that when a deputation led by Sir R. Kidd had met the Steering Group on 14 October 1982. The outcome of this had been that the Minister had publicly made clear the consequences of Court constraint on NUU involvement for funding of future intakes. If the Steering Group felt that the present position had become intolerable it should report this to the Minister. Professor Newbould said he would . . . seek to achieve a resolution of the problem at the March meeting of the Court. The Steering Group welcomed this offer and asked the NUU nominees . . . to do what they could to assist the process. Success in this would do much to remove feelings of unease. (M39, 3.2)

The revised paragraph read:

> Concern was expressed about the effect which any uncertainty about future progress could have on the staff of both institutions. The members were assured that NUU was seeking to take all steps necessary to achieve a successful outcome. The Steering Group welcomed this assurance. (M47, 2.1)

Obviously the situation was felt by members of SG to be critical. In the immediate emotion of the original Minute, the threat of sanction by a frustrated Minister was expressed by a departmental officer. Great anxiety was felt about the real outcome of merger deliberations for proceedings might well have fallen apart at such a point (i.e., 3 February 1983). The fact that a subsequent meeting (8 March 1983) softened the original Minute, removing all personal references, and adopting a much more positive tone, gave a crucial glimpse of the stress of SG. The amended statement was a "business as usual" note that could only be written after

tensions had been reduced. As such, the original Minute stands as an important testimony to the psychological stress involved at the very highest levels of decision-making.

Evidence From The House Of Commons Report

Reference has already been made above to the report, Further and Higher Education in Northern Ireland, HMSO, London 1983. The second volume contained minutes of evidence ranging over the total field of further and higher education. For present purposes, only matters relating to the merger were considered.

QUB threatened by merger. Professor Cathcart (QUB) was sceptical about the merger and regarded both institutions as entirely viable at present. Presumably the activities of the Ministry were designed to advance to a future when there will be contraction. To that extent, "I suppose we must accept it as a necessity" (HCR Vol. 2, p. 7). He saw the immediate problems arising within a time of financial constraint, and the merger involving a greater expense on the Exchequer than both have been separately. He spoke with some feeling as a member of a University which could well find its support contracted in order to support the new establishment. Professor Fulton shared a similar concern: We in Queen's are concerned that money is not diverted from Queen's to make this possible (HCR Vol. 2 p. 7). Fulton felt that split sites were more expensive to run than one site institutions. Because of the sheer size of UP, Cathcart felt it would tend to dominate the new

institution: and further, that the Poly ethos would find expression through an "elaborate emphasis on continuing education" (HCR Vol. 2, p. 8). He was fearful that the traditional emphasis of a University on research might be diminished.

The Vice Chancellor of QUB felt that the Steering Group was deciding the shape and size of a joint institution, and then, at some later stage, apparently deciding what the institution was to do. "That seems the wrong way round. We should decide what the institution should do and then devise an institution with a structure and with charter and statutes to do it" (HCR Vol. 2, p. 165). Universities, he said

> cannot be allowed to be built exclusively into a regional dimension. The more you get this sub-degree work, the more regional the institution must be. The new institution is going to have a very difficult problem as, indeed, is the UGC and DENI. (HCR Vol. 2, p. 166)

Fears about the merger. At the same session, Dr. Cockcroft suggested that it was not the aims of the merger but the

> Means of getting towards that goal, which has worried people. I think it would be quite extraordinary if an institution faced with 'merger or closure' did not take umbrage, did not bridle with anxiety and worry; once that initial period was over, the institution has had to sit down and try to find the right way through. There are still fears of being involved in the large institution, quite different from whether it will be a university. (HCR Vol. 2, p. 168)

He mentioned fears about where staff children would go to school if their parents have to move because of the merger. An additional problem was that of timetable for merger: "I

would say the proper time scale would require one more year" (HCR Vol. 2, p. 169). When asked whether its staff at NUU were willing to and capable of changing their role to the extent that would be necessary for the merger, Cockcroft said,

> I do not think they will find it easy, but over the period that I have been head . . . they have been willing to make changes; there is an academic inertia to be overcome at the present moment, but I think the thought of belonging to a stable, large institution is a tremendous incentive to want to make it work. (HCR Vol. 2, p. 170)

Optimism at Stormont. Sir Peter Swinnerton-Dyer, in his evidence (2 February, 1983) said that "the merger has been accepted and is indeed being welcomed by the academic staff of both institutions. We have no reason to doubt that the (NUU) Court will welcome the merger. So from that point of view things are going well" (HCR Vol. 2, p. 206). In the same vein, Mr. Birley claimed that many of the apparent differences were perhaps questions of language. There was, he said, general agreement about the style of organisation and the planning process. Furthermore, there would be sufficient funds to enable everyone to go on to the university scale of salaries. Mr. Birley was asked if he knew of a university institution anywhere in the world he would like the new institution to be most like. He replied, "Harvard. Seriously, I think American models are the best and the ones which appeal to me. We could start off with one of the bigger, better State Universities" (HCR Vol. 2, p. 66).

Evidence To The Northern Ireland Assembly

Two meetings, in which key participants in the merger gave evidence, took place in the Stormont Parliament Buildings on 18 May and 6 July, 1983. The transcripts of the procedures were published as Education Committee Minutes of Evidence (EC), HMSO, Belfast, 1983.

Mr. Birley. The first meeting involved Mr. Derek Birley and Sir Peter Swinnerton-Dyer, who were interviewed by an 11-person committee chaired by Mr. Cushnahan. The Chairman said the committee accepted a certain inevitability about the decision to merge but wanted to be "absolutely certain that what is planned will be to the benefit of the education system and also to the benefit of the people of Northern Ireland" (EC May, p. 1). Mr. Birley saw a major regional role for the new institution (EC May, p. 6), yet was keen to develop national and international links. In terms of gaining future resources, he said,

> I think the Polytechnic got its resources because it made a reasoned argument which it has won 9 times out of 10 . . . That is not to say that we have been showered with resources, but I see no reason why, given the same paymaster, which is the Department of Education, and the same orientation of the new institution, the tactics should be markedly different from those of the Polytechnic. (EC May p. 7)

If the claim were not supported, Mr. Birley felt that the university would stop providing the most costly courses for which there was least kudos. He expressed interest in the possibility of developing Agriculture, despite difficulties with the Department of Agriculture at QUB, in the

new institution (EC May p. 10f).

Sir Peter Swinnerton-Dyer. Sir Peter felt that NUU, for all its considerable merits, was well below what seems to be the sensible minimum size for a university. He did not believe that in any way "other than a merger is there any real likelihood at this stage of NUU growing to the sort of size which is desirable for a university" (EC May, p. 12f). He disagreed that the merger had more to do with making economies than with meeting educational needs. The merger was designed to give better value for money in that the new institution would create more and better jobs than the two institutions could have done, but he did not see the cost being less. Superannuation, for example, was a real headache, the seriousness of which neither the Steering Group nor the Minister appreciated at the beginning.

Professor Newbould. At the later meeting (6 July), Professor Newbould spoke of the problems at NUU with its Court and its Charter. The resolution to repeal the NUU Charter was put to Court on 27 June, with a resultant failure to gain the constitutional majority of 75%. At a summary meeting of Senate the next day, the Senate reaffirmed its confidence in the management of the university and reaffirmed its view to press on with the merger. NUU was clearly in a parlous situation, with its Council, Senate, AUT and Students' Council all in favor of the merger, yet the largely lay Court standing out against the other bodies. Professor Newbould reported that the Permanent Secretary

> had prepared two letters, one for if the Court voted 'yes' and one for if they voted 'no', and we got the 'no' letter very quickly by the Tuesday evening after the debate. The Government said that the Steering Group would petition for repeal and a new Charter without NUU, which would suffer progressive reduction in funding. I would prefer not to speculate as to what will happen if it (Court) does not approve it (the resubmitted resolution). We simply have not worked out our contingency plans yet. (EC July, p. 2)

Clergy opposition to student activism. At the same hearing, Rev. William McCrea asked the NUU student Council President, Mr. Eugene Hickland whether getting involved in decision-making structures and committees, would distract students from the purpose of being there in the first place, which was to get themselves education. Mr. Hickland replied:

> As people who make up the majority of the institution, we would like a say in how the institution is actually run. We do not think we are getting away from our actual education. I believe that it is part of our education to participate in committees . . . We believe that through it one comes to realise that there is a democratic process. (EC July, p. 30)

Monopoly of agricultural education. Dr. Froggatt argued against removing Agriculture from QUB to the more rural Coleraine campus:

> People (within the Department of Agriculture) could not hold joint appointments, which would mean dashing up and down the road from one to the other. Also, I understand that DANI (Department of Agriculture) are very happy with their arrangements with us (QUB) and I understand that the faculty are too. There has never been, from our point of view, any argument for divesting ourselves of agriculture, not has any great argument been put to us for doing so. (EC July, p. 44)

Disquiet with UP management style. Speaking about the

UP management structure, another witness said,

> I, and many of my colleagues, have had a lot of problems in the UP, dealing with the autocracy of a service, or a corporate style of management. It is very much centrally controlled . . . That . . . means that the central directorate can manoeuvre and manipulate the institution in whatever direction it happens to think is appropriate. But it certainly means that we chalk face, or rank and file, academic staff have to jump about all over the place trying to keep up with the demands placed upon us. These increase every year and . . . are almost exponential in the way in which we are expected to do all sorts of different things. (EC July, p. 52)

The speaker was concerned to see an accountable management structure in the new institution and not a central caucus that is insulated from the rest of the institution.

The UP Students' Union regarded the merger very much as a UP take-over of NUU. The view was reinforced by the "carve out of positions and the Poly-type hierarchy imposed since then" (EC July, p. 54). Initially the Union's position towards the merger was one of total opposition. However, "as we saw the merger becoming inevitable, we felt it was very important that students' interests should be safeguarded in the merger process" (EC July, p. 56).

Press Clippings

The English and Irish newspapers followed the growth and problems of NUU since its inception in 1968. There have been some strong critics of the university's leadership and of its failure to attract larger numbers of students. Attention here will focus on editorials or news items dealing specifically with NUU or the merger, and also on articles relating to the broader context of higher education in the

U.K.

Speculation about NUU. As early as April 1981, there was speculation about the possible closure of NUU, about its becoming a liberal arts center, or of it engaging in "sub degree work" (Belfast Telegraph, 1 April 1981, "Is there a future for the NUU as a liberal arts centre?") Compared to growth of the student population at UP (134% since 1973), NUU's growth amounted to only eight per cent since 1971. The article pointed out how NUU refused to disclose how many students they had in 1979/80. The moral that the article draws from such figures was that "NUU has simply failed to attract enough students and that they prefer to go across the water or to Queen's or to the Poly" (1 April 1981). Ironically, the writer used a Table which showed that for the four years (1971-1975) QUB student numbers consistently dropped from 5998 to 5471, whereas NUU's comparable figures showed a marginal growth from 1595 to 1630. The Table showed that a return to the numbers of 1971 took Queen's until 1980.

Victim of circumstances. Commenting on the Chilver inquiry into higher education, one Times Higher Education Supplement (THES) article asked whether major rationalization of and contraction in the higher education sector were imminent (24 April 1981, "Ulster: Lockwood to Chilver"). The article referred to the prevalent mood of the day which would have people believe that Northern Ireland has too much higher education and cannot justify three large institutions like QUB, NUU and UP. There was, in the shape of

NUU a "sacrificial lamb that is always included in malevolent 'hit lists' of which universities will have to be closed" (THES, 24 April, 1981). The same article referred to UP as an

> aggressively-led, entrepreneurial institution not always under complete public control. UP moved up market and upset the symmetry envisaged by Lockwood by competing at degree level with the two universities and left technician-level work to be expensively replicated in other Belfast colleges.(THES, 24 April, 1981)

The writer saw NUU as a "perfectly respectable new university of the 1960s vintage with areas of real success. It no more deserves to be closed than any of its contemporary universities (THES, 24 April, 1981). The conclusion of the article was that Northern Ireland doesn't need less, but different higher education.

Another article (The Guardian, 2 March 1982, "Beware of rationalisation") asked why NUU was under attack from the province's Catholics. The Interim Chilver report was examining teacher training in Northern Ireland, and many Catholics felt that the NUU Education Center was being protected from low numbers by government, at the expense of the two Catholic training colleges. The writer asked, "How far does segregated education encourage bigotry and narrow-mindedness and hence help fan The Troubles?" (The Guardian, 2 March 1982).

Commenting on the Government proposal for merger, The Times Educational Supplement (TES) said that actually carrying out such a merger of "two disparate institutions,

operating at a distance of 50 miles from each other, belonging to two different educational traditions and administrative networks, certainly sounds like a mind-boggling task" (TES, 26 March 1982, "Ulster aims to break the binary code"). The article assumed that some redundancy would be built into the merger and that the scheme only makes sense if the UP's ideas were allowed to fertilize the new organism.

The Northern Constitution reported a House of Commons question time in which the Londonderry MP, Mr. Ross criticized Government for going ahead with the merger without the benefit of a feasibility study. He could not understand what the advantage was to either institution, especially if the same funding is to persist and if the number of students at each institution is to remain the same (The Northern Constitution, 31 July 1982, "The New University and Polytechnic").

The official "Queen's response on Chilver" was reported in THES (6 August 1982, "Queen's tears into Chilver"). QUB was disturbed that the Government made decisions and overthrew major recommendations of the Chilver report without any consultation. QUB had reservations about the concept of a merger and the failure of the Government to realize the inherent difficulties. The real needs of the province were being ignored. There was a danger of UP staff "being appointed to do work for which they have not been assessed, and of a "reduction of technical education" (THES, 6 August 1982).

There was a call in THES for the Vice Chancellor of the new institution to be appointed quickly and by open competition, as it was essential that "a man or woman of substantial reputation in British higher education should be appointed as soon as possible" (THES, 10 September 1982, "Bogged down in Ulster"). Neither Dr. Cockcroft nor Mr. Birley should get the job, in the writer's opinion. In addition, there would be very great difficulty in rebuilding the morale of staff on the Coleraine campus after the shock of Chilver. There was a fear that a

> merger may deflect the progress of the polytechnic, which has been so impressive under Mr. Birley's leadership, into the wrong channels. The sorry outcome could be an institution that has too large a polytechnic ingredient to continue to operate effectively as a university and that has too large a university ingredient to keep to its polytechnic mission. (THES, 10 September 1982)

Scepticism about merger. According to another THES editorial, the "whole exercise - Chilver and the Government's plan - is a demonstration of the simple fact that if the wrong question is asked no satisfactory answers can be found" (26 March 1982, "John Bull's Other Island"). It was not surprising that what was offered was decline with passivity and pessimism (Chilver) or with a human face (the Government's alternative)" (26 March 1982).

> The idea that the merged institution may act as a pathfinder in higher education, as the first transbinary or comprehensive university, is instinctively attractive. But it is balanced by the rather more sober idea that in the present public expenditure climate mergers are all too frequently a prelude to rationalization, that over-worked euphemism for a sad retreat from diversity and for contraction. (THES, 26 March 1982)

In the creation of a multi-site university, Ngaio Crequer said the government was "reversing a trend that has prevailed for more than two decades" (THES, 2 April 1982). The normal trend in such cases, was for split-site universities to separate. Moreover, the UGC made clear preference for compact, single sites. Revoking a charter granted by the Queen was a rare event. Any belief that it would be cheaper to merge than to maintain existing institutions, was ill-founded. John O'Leary, in the same edition, said that from NUU's siting in Coleraine, "through the continuing political violence . . . to recent doubts over its future, there has never been a period in which to consolidate and grow" (THES, 2 April 1982, p. 9).

Press bias. Two prominent members of the Coleraine community, wrote, in a letter to the Belfast Telegraph (30 May 1983), that the paper's readers were wrongly being encouraged to believe that acceptance of the merger was now virtually agreed. Unfortunately, the effect was to prevent the kind of open well-informed debate which should take place over such an issue. The authors referred to the very clear misgivings about the merger within the Court of NUU:

> Had a proposal been put to the Court at the meeting (March 24th) to support merger and surrender its Charter . . . it would have failed. Yet your paper gave the clear impression that the University was on course for merger. (Belfast Telegraph, 30 May 1983)

Anti-NUU sentiments. Expressing dismay at the failure of the NUU Court to gain the necessary 75% majority in favor of merger, the Irish News (29 June 1983) said it was "quite

clear that NUU have failed as a university. It is equally clear that it must merge or perish".

Along a similar line, the Derry Journal (1 July 1983) said that NUU has "flopped, not because it failed to get reasonable support from the Catholic minority, who felt aggrieved at its siting in preference to Derry", but because of insufficient support from the majority population.

Sir Norman Lindop on polytechnics. At a more general level, several articles were of interest because of the perspective they offered on higher education in Great Britain. In a profile on Sir Norman Lindop, Deputy Chairman of Steering Group and Head of the British School of Osteopathy, an overview was given of the role and function of polytechnics. Sir Norman said, that "the worst thing which could happen to polytechnics is if they were to turn into universities" (THES, 1 October 1982, "Private view of the public sector"). They were set up in the further education tradition to respond to the market place. One of Lindop's greatest regrets was that polytechnics failed to "change the social composition of students. Middle class students still fill the lecture rooms as they had done at the colleges of advanced technology" (THES, 1 October 1983). He regarded the high drop-out rate from education at 16 as the biggest single problem for education today.

The Leverhulme study. The Leverhulme program of study into the future of higher education, involved a series of major conferences over a two year period, culminating in

the final report, Excellence in Diversity, produced by the chairmen of the eight seminars and follow-up conferences. A report of the study was given lengthy treatment in a special THES supplement (27 May 1983, "Robbins to Leverhulme"). Various themes were analysed in an attempt to develop a coherent policy of higher education. The case for public expenditure, the report argued, should be based on benefits for the nation.

The report encouraged the development of a "network of vigorous, efficient and cost-effective institutions, each excellent in its own range of activities, each imbued with a strong sense of academic purpose and responsive to the needs of a wider society" (THES, 27 May 1983). As a result, the main theme of the report was diversity, which required strong institutions and multiple criteria for policy formulation and resource allocation. Such a strategy had eight main aims:

> To provide greater access to some form of higher education from a "broader social spectrum than at present";
> To reduce undue specialization in secondary and early tertiary levels of education;
> To maintain the quality of teaching and research;
> To stimulate research;
> To encourage institutions to prepare realistic development plans;
> To promote greater flexibility: the capacity of universities, colleges and polytechnics to "respond positively to changing academic, social and economic and industrial needs";
> To foster the efficient use of resources; and
> To develop policy and management studies that will help leaders of academic institutions "to meet the challenge of adaptation without growth". (THES, 27 May 1983)

The report suggested the development of less specialized

two year initial courses with provision for credit transfer between institutions and a variety of subsequent options, allowing students greater opportunity to tailor their higher education to meet their own particular needs and interests. Three layers of higher-level study could be built on the basic two-year course: the first could be course leading either to honors degrees or to occupation-related post-graduate diplomas. Then, further one-year courses could lead to a variety of qualifications at master's level, either academic and research based, or linked to particular occupations. The final layer of post graduate courses would lead to doctorates (THES, 27 May 1983).

Comparing polytechnic with university structures of accountability, the report felt that the non-university institutions should have less external intervention in their academic affairs and that universities should have more. University teachers' rights should be protected, not through life-time tenure contracts, but through employment protection legislation. It was difficult to determine "how well an academic is carrying out his teaching activities except in cases of serious dereliction of responsibility. Management procedures were needed to help encourage good academic practice" (THES, 27 May 1983).

The report called for annual appraisals of performance and fixed terms of appointment for senior positions of responsibility. It urged polytechnics to concentrate on applied research and suggested a few large comprehensive universities each covering a wide range of activities and a large

catchment area. One of the more significant recommendations was for a center for higher education management and policy studies to promote the study of "emergent policy issues and to provide facilities for the professional development of leading members of universities, polytechnics and colleges.

Imbalance between arts and science courses. Maureen O'Connor (The Guardian, 21 January 1982 "Jobs and Market forces") said that the reason universities and colleges have expanded arts and social science courses was that demand was high. The reason was that

> the majority of our sixth formers are not qualified to follow science and technology courses . . . So we go on producing graduates, in arts subjects in particular, whose employment prospects remain consistently poorer than their contemporaries graduating in other subjects. (The Guardian, 21 January 1982)

Elitism and U.K. higher education. Rhodes Boyson (The Guardian, 30 March 1981, "Pruning in Pursuit of Excellence") asked whether Britain could continue to fund 45 universities in a world league, and whether there were already too many universities. The cost of maintaining an average staff-student ratio of one member of staff to 9.3 students was certainly very high. He asked whether the polytechnics need a staff-student ratio of 1:8.5. Boyson argued that excellence must be preserved in higher learning and that there must be universities "in the world league".

Complexity of university management. Geoffrey Lockwood (THES, 25 March and 1 April 1983) saw the few people who formed the government and management of a university at any one time as the shock absorbers in the system in between

the external pressures for change and the internal institutional resistances. He said basic national factors lay at the root of external pressures on a university: economic performance, demographic trends, changes in social structure, technological change, political complexion and stability. Part of the reason for the complexity of the university could be attributed to the following factors: complexity of purpose (i.e., teaching, research and public service); limited measureability; a mixture of autonomy and dependency (legally accountable to and economically dependent on society yet questioning and threatening existing orders within the society); diffusion of authority; internal fragmentation (e.g., the autonomy of disciplines).

Universities and their external environment. Lockwood (THES, 1 April 1983) saw four main challenges to a university from its external environment: the reduction in resources and more specific instructions about how they should be used; the need to be more efficient (e.g., increased use of technology, awareness of production times); the challenge of the market (e.g., student demand, research funding, services to industry and commerce); and living with uncertainty (adjusting to change, rather than being adjusted by it).

Lockwood outlined several areas in which universities of the future must respond to both external and internal pressures. In the political area, universities required political allies, and management in the past has placed insufficient emphasis on the formation of such alliances.

There should be a refinement of the internal management structures and processes: for example, a shortening of decision-making "chains" with the formation of a single hierarchial structure, but where much greater care was taken over the selection of senior officers. A third area of response was that of institutional planning. Planning was the

> continuous and collective exercise of foresight in the integrated process of taking informed decisions affecting the future . . . Getting the right people together at the right time in a conducive setting with the relevant data in front of them for decision-making is as much a part of planning as the use of information and analytical tools to produce options. (THES, 1 April 1983)

A further area of response was that of personnel management. There was a need to educate the members of the university about the external challenges and internal nature of the institution. Individuals should expect to be judged more carefully and personally than in a production process. Moreover, the system of rewards and incentives needed to be strengthened, particularly with regard to risk-taking and industry. Finally, there was the task of training.

Relationship between universities and the state. A series of articles by Peter Scott on "The Achievement of Robbins" (THES, 5, 12, 19, 26 August 1983) suggested that the "modern university has placed the codification of theoretical knowledge at the centre of its enterprise". The search for truth became an essential function and teaching had to be linked with research. As a result, the interests of less able students who could have benefited from a broad

undergraduate education were sacrified to the "high flyers", a development which made the binary policy inevitable. The advancement of learning no longer "took place within the liberal context of integrative human disciplines but in the amoral chaos of specialized disintegrative disciplines" (THES, 5 August 1983). Hence the British preference for honors degrees.

The author drew attention to a "puzzling paradox: the exceptional autonomy enjoyed by British universities, and the almost as exceptional degree of solidarity between higher education and political society" (THES, 5 August 1983). The state allowed universities such autonomy because it felt they could be trusted not to "exploit this independence for ideological causes that might be hostile to the interests of the state. On the whole the profession had accepted this invisible but powerful restraint" (THES, 5 August 1983).

Universities and technological change. Sir Henry Chilver, in a paper given at the Commonwealth Universities Congress in August, 1983, said that "the role of higher education in any modern society, is to develop . . . centres of generation of ideas based on a genuine understanding of the real world, with a focus on essential basic knowledge and ideas" (THES, 12 August 1983). He favored stronger links between universities and industry and the development of cooperative programs, "in which students divide their study and experience between higher education and industry in a

structured way" (THES, 12 August 1983, p. 15). In order to pursue innovation, linkages with small organizations must be sought after for the exploitation of new ideas.

Advisory centers and science and technology parks could accelerate the innovation process. He noted that in Britain, those universities which have contributed most to the basic sciences and arts "are those which are in fact most strongly supported by industry and commerce" (THES, 12 August 1983, p. 16). Bruce Williams, at the same Conference, said that the benefits of technological change would be "much greater if . . . we could make our pre-employment and post-employment education more effective and relevant both to the changing needs of the labour market and the growing proportion of lifetime not spent at work (THES, 12 August 1983, "Technology's social consequences").

Miscellaneous Papers

The first significant document here was a transcript of the speeches and discussion at the NUU Court meeting, held on 24 March 1983. NUU leaders urged Court to maintain the momentum of merger plans.

NUU Court meets. The Acting Vice Chancellor argued that the new institution should be a real university, and that the interests of staff and students be safeguarded. He saw the "positive educational and academic advantages" of the merger as twofold: the

> Strength and flexibility of a four campus institution stretching across the Province . . . the possibility for internal transfer of students within

> the one institution, between courses, and creating a wide range of entry points at which students can come into the institution. (NUU Court,24 March 1983 p. 6)

One opponent of the merger, the Mayor of North Down, called for the termination of proceedings "to cancel or kill this University" (NUU Court, 24 March 1983, p. 7). The first Chairman of the NUU Council and prominent local businessman, Dr. John Moore argued that no sound reasons, whether financial, administrative or educational had been offered to "convince us that this merger is either essential or beneficial" (NUU Court, 24 March 1983, p. 9). He felt that it was most regrettable that Government had convinced the University of an inevitability about the merger:

> The establishment of universities, the government of universities, the establishment of their Charter is all related to the fact that they should be set apart from all the pressures . . . of Government . . . It therefore seems regrettable that at this stage we should suddenly commend an apparent feeling of fatalism and begin to accept something which in our hearts is neither in the interests of this University nor in the interests of this Province.(NUU Court, 24 March 1983 p. 10)

Moore said that no financial savings would be made and called for the putting forward at the next meeting of a reasoned argument for merger, showing the benefits to NUU and its students and to the Province as a whole.

House of Commons debate of the merger. The Adjournment Debate in the House of Commons was recorded and then published through Hansard in an NUU Bulletin (Special Edition, 22 April 1982). The Member for North Down, Mr. James Kilfedder, accused the Government of making a unilateral decision on the merger without proper consultation. He expressed

concern that such a decision might have wider U.K. implications and serve as a forerunner of similar forced amalgamations. What was proposed in Northern Ireland might be a "softening-up process to make the precarious mainland universities more amenable to subsisting on a reduced income, knowing that the alternative may be a shotgun marriage with a polytechnic" (NUU Bulletin, 22 April 1983).

Kilfedder wondered why government wanted to change the nature of UP which was one of the most successful of the 31 polytechnics in the U.K.: "I fear that the proposed creation of a new institution is a device to enable the government to place financial and other restrictions" (NUU Bulletin, 22 April 1983) on the Polytechnic. He argued that a university should essentially be a center for

> learning and culture. It should not be expected to respond to short-term social and economic needs. That is the function of a polytechnic that deals with the here and now whereas a university should concern itself with the forever. (NUU Bulletin, 22 April 1983)

He was concerned that even greater concentration of higher education would occur in the Belfast area, and that the government proposed to demean NUU by making it an instrument through which they could control UP.

NUU still opposed to merger. On 8 February 1983, the Acting Vice Chancellor made a statement to the Coleraine Borough Council (NUU Bulletin, 15 February 1983) that the "University is not committed to the merger". A later NUU Newsletter announced a special meeting of the Senate to be held on 13 May to consider a motion that the University

should now agree to the merger. Even near the mid-point of 1983, NUU had failed to commit itself to the principle of merger.

Robert Gavin's plan for Derry. A Proposal for the Expansion of Courses at Magee drawn up by the Provost Designate, aimed at the provision of broadly based part time and full time programs facilitating local access and minimizing student movement. He wished to attract students from outside the local area thereby avoiding parochialism in student community. If the Derry Civic Committee and other interested community leaders had hoped for a purely Derry College for Derry people, such plans may have had a mixed reception. There would be in addition a multi-level provision for differing ranges of talent, and an interaction between teaching, research and consultancy with regard to local needs and the promotion of industry.

The Proposal contained a five year plan for Magee, in which developments of seven Faculty programs were outlined. For example, in Business and Management, a Full time Diploma and a one year MA in Agribusiness would aim to involve 12 students in 1985/6, 20 more in 1986/7, and 72 students in all by 1988/9. Likewise, a course for BSc Engineers would be offered at Magee, in Agricultural Technology, with 120 students by 1988/9. A full time BA/MA in Peace Studies was projected at Magee to involve 93 students by 1988/9. A Higher National Diploma in Computer Studies, a two year program, would involve 216 students by 1988/9.

Summary

Most documents referred to or quoted in part were felt by the researcher to be important in themselves as an historical record of the merger. As such, they gave important insights into rationale for decisions taken by government, and into the responses to the government proposal both from within the two institutions, and from the wider community of interest groups in the Province.

An attempt was made to include material related to the mechanics of merger processes (e.g., drawing up of a Charter and Statutes, formation of faculty boundaries and committee structures). This work occupied the bulk of energy and time of those involved in the planning. The material helped to clarify what went into setting up a new university that was built on the pre-existing resources, structures, plant space, funding, clientele and educational constraints of two existing institutions.

An even greater concern on the part of the researcher was to consider some of the more social-psychological and intellectual factors that impinge on the merger: the frustrations inherent in the merger process; how organizations such as universities or government react to pressure; and what planners hope to achieve by merger. There has also been some attempt to include material that was representative of the interests within government and the two institutions but also throughout the wider community, whether educational, commercial, political, ecclesiastical or technological.

Many groups were simply concerned to maintain or advance already held positions, when the new institution came into being. The Trade Union movement saw its role largely in terms of protecting the financial and professional interests of its various constituencies.

The broader material, such as parliamentary evidence, press clippings or miscellaneous papers, was included because it set the merger in a wider arena of discussion and debate, highlighting the U.K. context of higher education, and suggesting some of the national implications of the merger. Moreover, some of the Province-wide factors, such as sectarianism and provincialism which could not be ignored in any discussion of education in Northern Ireland came under focus through a study of the press coverage of the merger.

Reasons for the merger remain somewhat unclear. Where the idea of merging NUU and UP originated has never been established, though the document analysis suggests a possible DENI source. The fact that Chilver considered the possibility of merging NUU with one of the Belfast institutions suggests the need for caution in such speculation. However, the idea of merger with UP may well have been suggested by DENI with the upper level management of the UP, and gained a sufficient measure of support to prompt DENI to set merger machinery into motion.

Such a plan, however ill-conceived from an educational viewpoint, may have attracted both DENI and DES senior

officers, firstly because it offered tangible scope for rescuing an ailing university at Coleraine, but secondly, because it provided government with an effective method of controlling and monitoring spending at Jordanstown. UGC may well have expressed an interest in the merger, on the grounds that, by incorporating a polytechnic into its traditional realm of control, its power base, which was no longer secure, could have been expanded. Whether further attempts to bridge the binary gap via similar mergers "across the water" are made, remains uncertain. The documents reveal both the advantages and disadvantages of amalgamating two quite different institutions of higher education, without proper consultation and dialogue.

One of the central issues of the document analysis has been the perception of what purpose a university should serve. The clear calls from government for relevance in Ulster and a consumer orientation echoed thinking about higher education in a section of the literature review which saw the main function of education as that of collective rather than individual growth (e.g., Habermas vs. Newman). A question that must be answered in the final chapter is: Where should authority lie in determining the balance between collective and individual needs in higher education policy making? Government clearly has the power to enforce a more vocational emphasis on its universities but whether assumptions about the impact of such policies on economic growth are accurate, remains a fundamental problem. Universities, by

the same token, like to think they know what is best for students and society: hence the resistance at Coleraine to the merger. Perhaps both sides are wrong. More research is needed to determine the correlation between higher education and economic development.

Some assessment needs to be made of the effectiveness of the particular merger, in the light of the literature concerning organizational communication and educational administration. The government chose to appoint an independent committee (SG) to bring about the merger as opposed to calling on the two institutions to organize the merger for themselves. To what extent was such a strategy effective? If more members of the two institutions had been involved in planning from the outset, would the problems of ownership and anxiety have been resolved more quickly, among staff in the new institution?

Another issue to be resolved is how most effectively to monitor the relationship between a university and its external environment, to maximize the effectiveness of educational provision? Both the literature and the documents reveal enormous diversity of opinion in such an area. Research so far sheds little light on whether more centralized management of higher education, results in a better product (e.g., superior graduates, economic growth, social transformation). What does appear to be true is that, whether through comprehensive universities or community colleges access to higher education is still very much limited to the

middle class.

The documents reflect a deep concern to improve higher education in Northern Ireland. But they fail on the whole to recognize that, for radical change to take place within the structures and curriculum of a university, people must inevitably change first. Questions of staff (i.e., human) development and educational evaluation are of fundamental importance throughout the change process, and yet are noticeably absent from the bulk of merger discussions in Ulster.

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THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire serves as a reminder that structural changes in an organization like a university involve a complex interplay of human dimensions. The social psychology of an organization confronted by mandatory change, must inevitably be conditioned by a large number of personality variables (e.g., sex, age, socio-economic status). While the major emphasis of the data analysis is on differences of perception with regard to key variables, such as campus and status, other significant differences are noted, and could well be explored more carefully in another study or by decision makers of the new institution.

The key issue from the survey is the implications for the new institution of real differences of perception about appropriate aims and structures. Of interest to those most involved with planning will be whether such differences could impede the merger and whether counteractive measures should be adopted at the early stages.

A total of 650 questionnaires was sent out via the internal mailing system at NUU, to a random sample of one third of final year and graduate students, academics and senior administrators on all four campuses. Of the 345 returned questionnaires, an overall response rate of 53%, 333 actual responses could be properly analysed (Appendix A).

Sample Characteristics

There were 210 student and 122 staff (i.e., academics

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and senior administrators) respondents (Appendix A Section A). In terms of campus respondents, there were 89 students from UP (Jordanstown & Belfast), or 42.4% of all student respondents, and 121 students from NUU (Coleraine & Derry), or 57.6% of all student respondents. NUU students made up 36.6% of all respondents, while UP students made up 26.9% of the total. Staff respondents were broken down as follows: there were 58 from UP (47.9% of all staff responses and 17.5% of total response), and 63 from NUU (52.1% of all staff responses and 19% of total response). Of the total NUU response, students made up 65.8% while the corresponding figures for the UP were 60.5%. In other words, a higher proportion of students at NUU tended to respond than at UP, though the figure was not statistically significant.

In terms of Sex, there were 116 male and 94 female students. Whereas 53.5% of all male respondents were students, 81.7% of all female respondents were students. There were 101 male staff respondents, but only 21 female staff respondents. In other words, over the four campuses, 82.8% of all staff respondents (academics and senior administrators) were male. Chi square = X^2 = 24.66, Significance (s) = .0000). Furthermore, 75.5% of UP respondents were male, compared to 57.1% male at NUU. Whereas there was a relatively similar proportion of males at the two institutions (51.4% at UP, 48.6% at NUU), only 31.3% of all female respondents came from UP (X^2 = 11.74, s = .0006). With regard to Sex relative to Age, 83.9% of all respondents over 45 years were male, whereas

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92.2% of all female respondents were between 17 years and 44 (X^2 = 22.77, s = .0000). 83.1% of all respondents were in the younger, rather than older, age bracket. With regard to Mode of Study, 52.1% of all male respondents were full time students, whereas 74.8% of all female respondents were full time students. 59.9% of all respondents were full time students, and only 10.8%, part time or sandwich students.

Religious Composition Of Sample

Eighty nine per cent of all Catholic respondents were students, and 60.2% of all Protestant respondents were students. 45.4% of all staff respondents were Protestant, while only 10.2% of the same sample were Catholic. 16.2% of all student respondents filled out the "Other"/"No Religion" box, or ignored the item altogether; whereas the percentage for the equivalent item for staff was 44.4% (X^2 = 49.9; s = .0000). So, on both questions of Sex and Religion, a clear inference could be made to the population (i.e., staff of both institutions) of a significant disparity between the number of Male and Protestant, as against Female and Catholic employees. Protestants were evenly divided in the sample between the two institutions, whereas only 36.9% of Catholics were at the UP.

Of the UP sample 45.9% were Protestant, and 28.6% Catholic; while 35.8% of the NUU sample were Protestant and 37.6% Catholic. Of male respondents 40.2% were Protestant and 40.2% of female respondents were Protestant; however 27.1% of male respondents were Catholic and 45.8% of

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female respondents were Catholic (X^2 = 16.79; s = .0008).

The predominant age group at both institutions was 17-44 years (83.7% and 82.6% of UP & NUU samples respectively). However, NUU had 55.3% of the total 17-44 year age group and 57.1% of the 45-65 year group. In terms of faculty divisions, 68.9% of Arts/Humanities Faculty members (students and staff) were male. The equivalent figures for Science (inc. Technology) were 77.6% male, for Social Science, 48.7% male. In other words, except for the Social Sciences, females were clearly in a minority across the four campuses (X^2 = 23.63; s = .0000).

As far as Type of Program was concerned, 64.7% of all undergraduate degree student responses were at NUU, with 35.3% at UP. Yet 56.3% of all graduate students were at NUU, with 43.8% at UP. Conversely, 28.9% of all respondents were Diploma students, and 8.7% of all NUU respondents were Certificate students (X^2 = 62.64; s = .0000). Of full time student respondents 37.4% were Protestant (42.8% Catholic); 25% of part time students were Protestant (56.3% Catholic). Of the sandwich students 38.9% were Protestant (44.4% Catholic). It is difficult to explain such a discrepancy between Catholic and Protestant students engaged in part time studies, though it must be remembered that only 16 students in all were registered in the sample as part time (18 sandwich and 187 full time).

The longer a person stays in a particular institution, the more likely that person is to be Protestant. Of the

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respondents (presumably staff) who said they had been in the institution for between 5 and 20 years, 43.8% were Protestant; whereas only 13.3% of the same sample were Catholic. In fact, 86.4% of all Catholics had spent between 1 and 4 years in the particular institution (cf. 62% of Protestants). There was a similar pattern for age. 44.2% of 45-65 year olds were Protestant, but only 13.5% Catholic. More Protestant respondents (students and academics) were in the Science faculty (46.3%) than Catholics (29.1%). The reverse was the case in terms of Social Science: Catholics, 48.5%, Protestant, 28.5%. The balance was more even for the Arts faculty.

It was also noted that a higher proportion of UP respondents were identified with Science (63.8%) than NUU respondents, though the trend was reversed with the Social Sciences (76.1% at NUU), with the Arts proportions about the same. On a three way test, applied firstly to Arts faculty members only, the variance for males versus females on each campus was negligible. However, for Science faculty members, 85.1% of UP respondents (Science) were male; but only 64.3% of NUU Science respondents. In other words, 70% of all male Science faculty respondents (students and staff) were at UP. With Social Science faculty respondents, 28.1% of the males were at UP and 20% of the females.

On a three way tabulation controlling for Campus, 75.3% of UP student respondents were male and 75.9% of UP staff respondents also male. Only 61.1% of female respondents at UP were students. For NUU, 40.5% of student respondents

were male, but 88.9% of staff respondents were male. 91.1% of NUU female respondents were students.

On a Sex by Faculty tabulation, 41.5% of all males were in the Sciences, while 52.2% of all females were in the Social Sciences. It was noted that 68.9% of the Arts faculty (students/staff) were male, 77.6% of Science, and 48.7% of Social Science. The reason why females tend to gravitate towards the Social Sciences, and males towards the Sciences (X^2 = 23.64; s = .0000) may well be explained by comparing equivalent secondary school figures (sex versus subject major). The researcher would need to analyse national statistics to measure if and to what extent such a bias correlates positively or negatively (see below).

On a three way tabulation(s) controlling for Faculty, 68.4% of UP respondents in Arts were male, with an almost identical proportion of NUU respondents in Arts. For Science, however, there was a much greater discrepancy: 85.1% of Science people were male (cf. 64.3% at NUU).

Analysis Of The Responses

So far, several features have been noted which may give some clue as to real differences of perception as to what the purpose of higher education and of the projected merger might be.

Perceptions Of The Purposes Of A University

By simply reversing ranks to allow for an overall Mean (M) for each response item (i.e., 1=6, 2=5), it was possible to say what the total sample thought a university should have

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as its main priority or function (Appendix A Section B). Respondents tended to rank the item dealing with acculturation (e) lowest of all items (M=1.99) and holistic development (d) highest (M=4.61). Inquiry after truth (c) was ranked second highest (M=4.11) and vocational preparation (a) third (M=4.09). In order to discriminate between certain key variables, the six point ranks were collapsed to a two point measure ("Positive toward merger" = 6+5+4; "Negative" = 3+2+1), and then responses measured against Sex, Age, Religion, Status, Campus and Faculty. Significance levels and Chi square values were computed.

Preparation for employment. There was no significant difference according to Sex or Religion. However, a slightly higher proportion of negative respondents was over 45 years than positive respondents. Respondents in the younger (17-44 year) age range tended to rank item (b) more positively than older respondents (X^2 = 4.26; s = .0389). A similar distinction between student and staff respondents was noted (X^2 = 4.55; s = .0329). There was an even more significant difference of response between campuses.

Of all UP respondents 73.6% were positive towards this item, as against only 56.0% of all NUU respondents (X^2 = 9.41, s = .0022). On a three way tabulation controlling for Campus, a much higher proportion of students tended to rank the item more positively than staff (X^2 = 16.22, s = .0001). The researcher can infer from the sample that UP members tended to rank the vocational function of higher

education more highly than members of NUU.

With regard to faculty perceptions on the same item, two observations can be made: firstly, that 78.6% of Science people tended to rank the item positively (cf. 60.9% Arts and 52.4% Social Science), while 45.0% of the negative responses came from the Social Sciences (cf. 21.6% of Sciences and 24.3% of Arts) (X^2 = 17.61; s = .0005).

Promotion of social change. There was no significant difference in responses to this item, except for Campus. Overall, the item received the second lowest ranking (M=2.66). Just the same, 26.3% of males and 30.2% of females ranked the item highly (cf. 29% of 17-44 year olds and 19.5% of 45-65 year olds; 21.4% of Protestants and 36% of Catholics; 30.7% of students and 21.9% of staff; 27.1% of Arts people, 21.6% of Science people and 35.3% of Social Science people). The one variable that proved significant was Campus: 34.1% of positive respondents came from UP (65.9% from NUU). 79.3% of UP respondents were negative (66.3% of NUU respondents) (X^2 = 5.54, s = .0186). Of all respondents 27.8% were positive towards the item.

The pursuit of truth. The only non-discriminatory variables for this item (c) were Sex and Faculty, with the other four variables proving significant. Even with Sex, however, it was interesting that 67.8% of the positive responses and 60.7% of the negative responses were male. It might be worth analysing whether the positive males were largely academics at NUU (and to a lesser extent, at UP)

and the negative males, students at UP (and to a lesser extent, at NUU). A significant finding was that a higher proportion of older (86.5%) than younger (61.1%) respondents, ranked the item positively (X^2 = 11.28, s = .0008).

With regard to Status, staff tended to give this item a proportionally higher rank than students (X^2 = 10.2, s = .0015). On a three way tabulation controlling for Campus, UP staff tended to rank the item more highly than UP students (X^2 = 6.57, s = .0104), and similarly for NUU staff (X^2 = 4.18, s = .0409). Of marginal significance was the fact that Protestants tended to rank this item more positively than Catholics (X^2 = 5.99, s = .0501). "Others" on this item tended to rank it more positively (77.6%) than negatively. The researcher might infer that, aside from people of Other or No Religion(s), Protestants who did not fill out the optional item may have out numbered Catholics choosing to ignore it.

The researcher can understand the discrepancies between student and staff perceptions. The same would apply to younger versus older and NUU versus UP responses (given the latter's greater tendency to rank vocational preparation highest). What is somewhat puzzling is the differentiation on the grounds of religious background. The overall mean ranking for this item (M=4.11) indicates that 65.2% of all respondents tended to rank the item positively (cf. 77.7% for the most popular item d).

The researcher could infer from the data that even

though the vocational role of a university was accorded the third highest rank overall, a large majority of the respondents and thus of the two institutions, still placed high priority on the traditional academic function of a university such as the pursuit of truth. How such apparently conflicting perceptions of what a university is for, actually determine the quality and structure of education in the new institution, and, more to the point still, which principle plays the more dominant role, remain intriguing questions.

Holistic development. The term "holistic development" refers to the growth in students of intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual capacities or sensitivities. Taking Faculty scores first, 51.4% of all negative responses came from Science (cf. 12.9% and 30% for Arts and Social Science respectively) (X^2 = 11.4, s = .0097). With regard to Sex, 60.8% of positive responses to the item were male, and whereas 85.7% of all female responses were positive, only 73.4% of all male responses were positive (X^2 = 5.64, s = .0175). Both age groups tended to respond uniformly to the item, a trend which was repeated for Religion and Status. A noticeable difference occurred according to Campus: whereas 73.0% of UP people ranked the item highly (cf. 81.5% NUU) only 45.7% of negative responses came from NUU.

Acculturation. No significant differences occurred in the responses to item (e) which received a Mean rank of 1.99, and an overall proportion of positive ranks of 11.3% of the

sample. The bulk of respondents did not see the socialization and acculturation processes of a university as a major function of higher education.

Specialised knowledge. Three variables showed significant results on item (f): those of Faculty, Campus and Sex. Of all members of the Science faculty who responded, 73.4% gave a positive rank (cf. 58% and 57.7% for Arts and Social Science respectively); whereas 41.9% of negative responses came from Social Sciences (cf. 27.6% each for Arts and Science) (X^2 = 11.77, s = .0082). Since Science included Technology from UP, one can understand the positive discrepancy between Science and the two other faculties. By the same reasoning, the researcher might account for the negative discrepancy between Social Science respondents and those of Arts and Science. Social Science included Education, Business and Management and Foundation Studies (Magee), all of which could be classified as general education programs. It was noted that 65.5% of all respondents gave the item a positive rank. On the Campus scale, 72.3% of UP respondents gave the item a positive rank (cf. 60% at NUU) and 63.5% of all negative rankings came from NUU (X^2 = 4.46, s = .0348).

As far as Sex was concerned, only 29.5% of all positive rankings were female, while 29.1% of all negative responses were male (X^2 = 6.93, s = .0085). A recent report, Participation in Higher Education: Trends in the Social and Spatial Mobility of Northern Ireland Undergraduates, an SSRC report (October, 1983) by R. Cormack, R. Osborne, N. Reid, and A. Williamson, p.36, shows that of all 1979 entrants into high-

er education in Northern Ireland, 19% of males chose Science (females, 11.6%); 22.6% of males chose Humanities (i.e., business management, economics, geography, public administration, psychology, sociology and social anthropology) (females, 27%); 6.8% of males chose Languages (females, 19.6%); 16.5% of males chose Engineering (females, 1%); 2.1% of males chose Accountancy (females, 0.7%); 5% of males chose Law (females, 5.4%); and 6.2% of males chose Medicine (females, 4.9%). The report showed that the major disadvantaged group of the total study was working class women, though women overall "have still some way to go to attain parity with men" (Cormack et al, p48).

Although not statistically significant, 60.7% of all Catholic respondents ranked item (f) positively (cf. 70.6% Protestants), and 46.9% of all positive responses were from Protestants (cf. 30.2% Catholics). Protestant respondents ranked specialized knowledge more highly than Catholic respondents as a major function of a university. Once again, the recent report (Cormack et al), gives the breakdown of courses studied in 1979 by Religion. Although the gap has decreased between 1973 and 1979 (Table 1.16, p43), there was still a substantial leeway to be caught up by Catholics on Protestants. Whereas 80.3% of students in Agriculture, Forestry or Veterinary Science were Protestant (cf. 65.4% of Medicine and Dentistry students), 53.3% of Social Administration and Business Studies students were Protestant (cf. 56.4% of Education and Arts students).

Perceptions Of Possible Merger Outcomes

There were twelve rank order items, in two different sections, dealing with the effects of the proposed merger. Once again, Means were computed for each item, after ranks were reversed (i.e., 1=6). Chi square tests of significance were run on the same six variables used for the previous section (Appendix A Section B).

Educational benefits of merger. When asked whether the proposed merger would improve the quality of higher education in the Province, 28.6% of all respondents tended to rank item (a) negatively. Of six items, this one had the lowest overall mean rank (M=2.65). Although only one significant variable was located in the cross tabulations, what was of importance was the sense of pessimism about the educational benefits to the Province of such a merger. For example, 71.4% of males and females, 75.3% of Catholics and 66% of Protestants, and 71.5% of students and staff tended to give the item a negative rank. While both institutions gave clearly negative ranks to the item, members of NUU were more pessimistic than their peers at UP (X^2 = 4.13, s = .0421).

On the question of whether the merger would offer scope for more diverse forms of educational innovation, there seemed to be somewhat more optimism (M=3.86), with 56.2% of all respondents giving item (c) a positive rank. Here again, slightly more Protestants (62.1%) than Catholics (48.2%) tended to give a positive rank to the item. Furthermore, staff tended to be more positive than students (not significant statistically).

With regard to the possible development at the new institution of links with industry and commerce 57.4% of all respondents tended to rank the item negatively, with staff tending to be more pessimistic than students (X^2 = 7.74, s = .0054), full time students more optimistic than part time/sandwich students and staff (X^2 = 8.01, s = .0182), and undergraduate/graduate students more positive than Diploma/Certificate/Extramural students and staff (X^2 = 8.58, s = .0137). On the question of extension education, respondents were evenly divided overall (51.0% positive). Catholics tended to rank the item positively (60.5). While 65.3% of academics gave a negative response, 75.2% of all positive responses were from students (X^2 = 15.39, s = .0000). Whether such a discrepancy reflects student idealism or staff realism, cannot be fully ascertained.

A majority (59.6%) of positive responses to the item came from NUU. Only 43.2% of UP respondents ranked the item positively (X^2 = 5.74, s = .0166). Furthermore, 69.5% of full time students, 9.9% of part time/sandwich students and 20.6% of staff gave a positive response to the item (X^2 = 10.79, s = .0045). Whether the inference can be made from the data that full time students tend to be more positive towards the merger than part time or sandwich students, remains somewhat unclear, and caution is required. Degree and graduate students tended to be more positive to the item than Certificate/Diploma/Extramural students or staff (X^2 = 10.17, s = .0062). With regard to another possible

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benefit from the merger, only 33.9% of all respondents tended to give a positive rank to the item suggesting that there would be a significant boost to educational provision at Derry (not significant).

Economic benefits of merger. On the question of whether the merger would enable government to rationalise its funding system for higher education, the biggest majority of positive responses was recorded for the item, relative to the five other items in the section (75.3%) (M=3.86). Similarly, 67.7% of all respondents tended to agree that one of the chief reasons for the merger was that of economics. With regard to Status, 76.6% of staff tended to give a positive response (cf. 62.5%) (X^2 = 5.55, s = .0185). More significant still was the difference in response by Campus: only 56.5% of UP respondents (cf. 76.6% NUU) gave the item a positive rank; 60.6% of all negative responses came from UP (X^2 = 12.28, s = .0005). Staff tended to rank the item more highly (78.2%) than either degree/graduate (66.2%) or Certificate/Diploma/ Extramural (54.7%) students (X^2 = 8.59, s = .0136).

On the question of UP having its finances rationalised, the overall Mean rank was only 2.75 (31.1% positive response). Whereas only 22.9% of Protestants gave the item a positive rank, 42.4% of Catholics ranked it positively (X^2 = 8.45, s = .0148). A similar, though not unexpected difference of perception occurred between campuses: 77.2% of UP responses were negative (61.2% of NUU) (x^2 = 7.23, s = .0072). A higher proportion of full time students (36.6%) than part time/ sandwich students (32.1%) and staff (19.7%) gave positive ranks

to the item (X^2 = 6.64, s = .0362). In the same way, 66.3% of the positive responses came from degree/graduate students (cf. 19.8% from Certificate/Diplomas and 14% from staff) (X^2 = 10.93, s = .0042).

With regard to public accountability of institutions such as NUU and UP, the overall Mean rank was 2.97 (33.2% positive). What was significant, however, was that 73.5% of the negative responses came from students (X^2 = 14.05, s = .0002). In terms of Campus, 73.8% of UP responses were negative (NUU 61.3%) (X^2 = 4.28, s = .0387). Of part time/ sandwich students 83.3% gave negative responses to the item (cf. 72.7% full time and 46.7% staff) (X^2 = 20.08, s = .0000); and 80.4% of Certificate/Diploma students gave negative responses (cf. 71.8% degree/graduate students, 48.1% staff) (X^2 = 18.71, s = .0001). In other words, on the particular item, much of the negativity seems to be accounted for by UP students in part time/sandwich/Certificate programs or modes of study.

Failure of NUU. The particular item received an overall Mean rank of 4.33, with 72.2% giving it a positive rank. Measured against Sex, 76.9% of males tended to give the item a high rank (cf. 63.3% females) (X^2 = 5.27, s = .0217). Moreover, 67.3% of all positive responses were from full time students (cf. 9.8% part time/sandwich, and 22.9% staff) (X^2 = 8.15, s = .0170). Of all positive responses 50.7% came not unexpectedly, from degree/graduate students (cf. 23.4% of Certificate and Diploma students and

25.9% of staff) (X^2 = 6.88, s = .0320). The second highest Mean rank (4.41) was recorded for the item, suggesting that a merger was perceived to provide NUU with an alternative to closure.

The highest recorded Mean rank (M=4.54) was noted on the question of whether enrolments at NUU were too low for viability, with 77.1% giving an overall positive rank. Interestingly, NUU respondents (78.7%) tended to agree to the item as consensually as UP respondents (75.2%), though there may not be an implicit admission of failure here, because respondents were asked to rank reasons for the merger (i.e., perceived by either government or themselves).

Future possibilities. The highest Mean rank overall (M=3.97) was accorded to the assertion that the new institution would find it difficult to improve its public image, with 59% of all responses positive. Catholics (64%) tended to be somewhat more pessimistic than Protestants (56.3%). Of all the positive responses, 71.1% were from students (X^2 = 4.48, s = .0343). More significantly, 66.9% of all NUU responses were positive (cf. 47.7% UP) (X^2 = 9.94, s = .0016), and 69.9% of all positive responses were from full time students (cf. 8.4% part time/sandwich students and 21.7% staff) (X^2 = 10.72, s = .0047).

On the overall response to the statement that the new institution would find it hard to attract top quality students and staff, respondents were evenly divided (51.9% negative), with the lowest Mean rank (M=3.38) for all of

the six items in the section. A significant, and not unexpected finding was that 70.5% of all UP respondents gave a negative response (NUU 36.3%), while 72.3% of all positive responses came from NUU (X^2 = 32.53, s = .0000).

As far as "academic drift" was concerned, a small majority gave the item a positive response (54.8%, M=3.6). The only significant result was for Campus, where 63.1% of UP responses was positive (NUU, 46%) and where 62.8% of all negative ranks came from NUU. Such a finding runs entirely against trends in other response items (X^2 = 7.50, s = .0062). Two possible explanations may resolve the dilemma: either academics at NUU were perceived (possibly by UP peers) as resisting the "lower level" courses in the new institution, or at least not wishing to teach them; or members of UP had witnessed the process of academic drift over the years, and expected an existing trend to continue.

Extent And Nature Of Support For Merger

On the third section of the questionnaire (Appendix A Section C), it was decided to score each respondent over a series of items, compute the mean, and obtain a score of uncertainty (or indifference) at the same time. As a result, ranking was recoded to ensure that pro-merger responses received highest rank (3) and anti-merger responses lowest rank (1), with "uncertainty" ranks of 2. For example, item (c) was taken, if answered positively, as an indicator of opposition to merger; and so a "yes" was given 1 point, an "uncertain", 2 points, and a "no", 3 points. Two ambivalent

items (h & m) were left out of calculations.

Out of 307 total respondents, 104 responded negatively towards the merger, (33.9%); 156 were uncertain (50.8%) and 47 in favor (15.3%). Cross-tabulations were computed, with Chi squares and significance levels, against the following variables: Status, Age, Religion, Sex, Campus, Faculty and Length of Time. One of these (Campus) proved significant (Table 1).

TABLE 1. DEGREE OF SUPPORT FOR MERGER BY CAMPUS

	UP	NUU	Row Total
Against	(27.9) 29 (21.3)	(72.1) 75 (43.9)	104 (33.9)
Uncertain	(46.2) 72 (52.9)	(53.8) 84 (49.1)	156 (50.8)
For	(74.5) 35 (25.7)	(25.5) 12 (7.0)	47 (15.3)
Column Total	136 (44.3)	171 (55.7)	N=307

X^2 = 28.91 df=2, s=0.000. (Missing=26)

Although the degree of opposition to the merger was significantly higher at NUU, only one quarter of UP respondents supported the merger (NUU 7.0%). Half of the respondents from both institutions expressed ambivalence. One cannot be sure whether a respondent checking "Uncertain" was expressing ignorance or indifference. It was decided to isolate all of the "Uncertains", to see if any significant differences existed, either in terms of levels of ignorance or of indifference, across key variables. Degrees

of uncertainty or indifference were divided three ways: "Low", "Medium" and "High" Uncertainty, where "Low" referred to the occurrence of between 1 and 3 "Uncertains" on the fourteen items chosen for analysis; "Medium", to 4-5 "Uncertains"; and "High", to 6-14.

As it turned out 118 responses fell in the "Low" range, 122 in the "Medium", and 86 in the "High" range of Uncertainty (N=324). In other words 26.4% of all "uncertain" responses were in the "High" range. Of these 57.4% were Protestant (cf. 45.8% of "Low" responses were Catholic); 51.8% were UP people (cf. 54.2% of "Low responses were NUU people). 29.6% were Arts people, 39.5% Science and 30.9% Social Science (cf. 41.7% of "Lows" were Social Science). The only variable of significance was that of Status (Table 2).

TABLE 2. DEGREE OF UNCERTAINTY BY STATUS

	Student		Staff		Row Total
Low	(59.3)	70 (34.0)	(40.7)	48 (40.7)	118 (36.4)
Medium	(59.5)	72 (35.0)	(40.5)	49 (41.5)	121 (37.3)
High	(75.3)	64 (31.1)	(24.7)	21 (17.8)	85 (26.2)
Column Total	(63.6)	206	(36.4)	118	N=324

X^2 = 6.83, df=2, s=.0329 (Missing=2)

Students tended to be far more ignorant (or possibly indifferent) about the merger than academics and administrators. At least two possible explanations may account for the

discrepancy. Firstly, students, unlike staff did not feel as strong an interest, in terms of job security, pay scales and research levels. Their futures were not felt to be as jeopardized as those of staff, although they were particularly concerned about the status of their degrees or certificates, on graduation, in terms of credibility with potential employers. With such an interpretation, one could possibly argue for an "Indifference", rather than "Ignorance" scale. A second interpretation might be that students are generally the last members of a university or polytechnic to be informed as to policy or administrative changes (as opposed to pedagogical or curricular matters). They do not feature to any significant level, in decision making, perhaps apart from token representations on Senate or Council.

Against Campus, one could say that there were equally High Uncertainty levels between the two institutions (30.3% at UP, 22.9% at NUU), a fact which needs to be noted because of its implications for communication processes within the merger. The researcher wondered whether much of the anxiety about the merger, was directly proportional to the effectiveness (or otherwise) of communication within the two institutions about merger matters.

To assess, in the same way as for Uncertainty, the degree of support for the merger, positive (i.e., pro-merger) responses were isolated and added for each respondent. They were then given a scale of Low, Medium or High Acceptance. Cross-tabulations revealed Campus, and Type of Program to

a lesser extent, as significant discriminators (Table 3). Low Accepters made up 32.5% of the total response with Medium and High Accepters, 30.3% and 37.2% respectively. A much stronger degree of support for the merger was found at UP than at NUU. Potentially greater benefits might be felt to accrue to UP members than to their NUU counterparts. With staff, salaries would have to be scaled up to parity with university salaries. More senior academics and administrators at UP would benefit through promotion than peers at NUU. Students would possibly feel that as university graduates, their careers would be more secure.

TABLE 3. DEGREE OF SUPPORT FOR MERGER BY CAMPUS

	UP		NUU		Row Total
Low	(26.7)	28 19.3	73.3	77 43.5	105 32.6
Medium	(42.9)	42 (29.0)	(57.1)	56 (31.6)	98 (30.4)
High	(63.0)	75 (51.7)	(37.0)	44 (24.9)	119 (37.0)
Column Total	(45.0)	145	(55.0)	177	N=322

X^2 = 30.06, df=2, s=.0000 (Missing=1)

With regard to Type of Program, 64.9% of "High" supporters were undergraduate or graduate students (cf. 35.1% of Certificate/Diploma/Extramural students) (X^2 = 7.56, s = .0229). The irony of such a discrepancy is that one of the fundamental motives for merging the two institutions was the desire to develop a much more diverse range of

course offerings, with particular emphasis on non degree work. Yet in the questionnaire, it is clear that such reasoning has not been communicated to the very people who could benefit most.

General Attitudes To Merger

Respondents were asked a series of 15 questions on a Yes(1), No(2) and Uncertain(3) scale (Appendix A Section C). On the basis of preliminary cross-tabulations and Chi square tests, seven of these questions were chosen for multiple cross-tabulations against the following variables: Sex, Age, Religion, Status, Campus, Faculty and Mode of Study.

Educational quality of new institution. With item (3), 36.1% of respondents felt that standards would deteriorate in the new institution; 41.3% disagreed, while 22.6% were uncertain. Against the sex variable, females (28.8%) tended to be more uncertain than males (19.4%). Males (46.3%) tended to disagree at a proportionally higher rate than females (31.5%) (X^2 = 7.31, s = .0258). With regard to Campus, there was a much stronger tendency at UP to disagree with the item (Table 4).

TABLE 4. EXPECTED EDUCATIONAL DECLINE BY CAMPUS

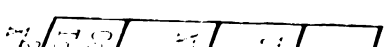
	Decline	No Decline	Uncertain	Row Total
UP	(24.7) 36 (30.5)	(55.5) 81 60.4	(19.9) 29 (39.2)	146 (44.8)
NUU	(45.5) 82 (69.5)	(29.4) 53 (39.6)	(25.0) 45 (60.8)	180 (55.2)
Column Total	(36.2) 118	(41.1) 134	(22.7) 74	N=326

X^2 = 23.96, df=2, s=.0000 (Missing=7)

The Mode of Study proved a significant variable, in addition to Sex and Campus. Whereas 41.6% of full time students agreed that standards would deteriorate, only 25.7% of part time and sandwich students agreed with the item (cf. 62.9% "disagree") (X^2 = 13.69, s = .0083).

Bureaucracy and academic freedom. Respondents tended by and large to agree (44.9%) that managerial techniques in the new institution would threaten academic freedom (Disagree: 24.3%, Uncertain: 30.8%). Students tended to be more uncertain (35.9%) than staff (21.8%) who tended more strongly (52.9%) than students (40.3%) to agree with the item (X^2 = 7.61, s = .0223). While a larger majority of NUU respondents (50.3%) agreed with the item, 38.4% of UP respondents felt that academic freedom would be jeopardized by managerial techniques. Moreover, 28.8% of UP people were uncertain. The fears at NUU about academic freedom suffering are well known; what is not so widely known is the extent of the disaffection with management processes within UP itself (X^2 = 10.9, s = .0043).

From the researcher's own encounters with staff members at Jordanstown, such a problem was already known to exist. Academic managers in the new institution might do well to take note of the proportion of respondents in the sample who either agreed with the item (44.9%) or expressed uncertainty (30.8%). If uncertainty suggests apprehension, and not just ignorance or indifference, then it could be inferred from the data that the large bulk of the sample



(75.7%) was either opposed to intrusive management or apprehensive about its possible effects on academic freedom. There was also a noticeably stronger tendency for staff to agree (55.8%) than students, either full time or sandwich/part time (X^2 = 9.83, s = .0433).

Job security. Item (d) suggested that jobs were threatened in the new institution. Overall, 62.9% of respondents agreed, 20.6% were uncertain, and only 16.6% disagreed (N= 326). Such a finding bears clear testimony to the existence of uncertainty or anxiety across the two institutions. Not unexpectedly, younger respondents (65.8%) tended to respond positively to the item more than older ones (48.1%) (X^2 = 6.08, s = .0478). The most significant distinction was by Campus (Table 5), where NUU respondents tended to agree proportionally more (74.9%) than UP respondents (48.6%). The fact that almost half of UP respondents agreed that jobs were threatened (25.3% Uncertain) gives some sort of indication that communication processes, at such a basic level, and despite government assurances, had failed seriously to put people's minds at rest about their jobs.

TABLE 5. DEGREE OF APPREHENSION ABOUT JOBS BY CAMPUS

	Apprehensive	Not Apprehensive	Uncertain	Row Total
UP	(48.6) 71 34.6	(26.0) 38 (70.4)	(25.3) 37 (56.1)	146 (44.9)
NUU	(74.9) 134 (65.4)	(8.9) 16 (29.6)	(16.2) 29 (43.9)	179 (55.1)
Column Total	(63.1) 205	(16.6) 54	(20.3) 66	N=325

X^2 = 26.21, df=2, s=.0000 (Missing=8)

Government handling of merger. When asked whether the government had handled the merger inappropriately, 65.4% of respondents agreed with 20.2% uncertain. Significant divergencies of opinion occurred on four different variables: Sex, Status, Campus, Mode of Study. A higher proportion of females agreed with the item (73.9%) than males (61.1%) (X^2 = 11.25, s = .0036), and similarly with students (71.5%) relative to staff (55.5%) (X^2 = 9.82, s = .0074). An even greater discrepancy occurred with regard to Campus with NUU far more negative to government (X^2 = 50.72, s = .0000). Table 6 reveals a significant discrepancy between responses from full time and part time or sandwich students.

TABLE 6. GOVERNMENT HANDLING OF MERGER BY MODE OF STUDY

	Anti-Government	Pro-Government	Uncertain	Row Total
Full Time	(75.1) 148 (68.8)	(8.6) 17 (36.2)	(16.2) 32 (48.5)	197 (60.1)
Part Time	(51.4) 18 (8.4)	(20.0) 7 (14.9)	(28.6) 10 (15.2)	35 (10.7)
Staff (N.A)	(51.0) 49 (22.8)	(24.0) 23 (48.9)	(25.0) 24 (36.4)	96 (29.3)
Column Total	(65.5) 215	(14.3) 47	(20.1) 66	N=328

X^2 = 22.22, df=4, s=.0002 (Missing=5)

Full time students tended proportionally to respond more negatively towards government than part time or sandwich students. They were also less uncertain (16.2% cf. 28.6%). Such a difference may well be highly correlated to

Campus, but it certainly underlines the different levels of ignorance about or indifference towards the merger, within the various constituencies of the two institutions.

Those in favor of merger. With N=327, only 27.8% of respondents said they were in favor of the merger, with 20.8% uncertain. Four variables proved significant, though Campus, once again demonstrated the clearest division of opinion (Table 7). Students (55.6%) tended to be more negative than staff (44.8%) with a support rate of only 22.7% (cf. staff 36.1%) (X^2 = 6.93, s = .0313). Science and Technology respondents tended to be more negative (59.5%) than either Social Science (49.6%) or Arts (39.7%) respondents (X^2 = 11.96, s = .0176).

One implication of such a finding concerns the previously noted sample bias among UP students. Most UP students sampled were from Science and Technology. Contrary to the researcher's predictions, such a cohort did feel somewhat more threatened by the merger than peers in the other two faculties. Perhaps Science students at Jordanstown felt they had most to lose if their faculty, for example, were to be shifted, for at the time of merger, it was not known where Science would be located. Technology, of course, would stay at Jordanstown. Full time students (58.9%) tended to be more negative than part time and sandwich students (37.1%), though the latter were also more uncertain (28.6% versus 19.3%) (X^2 = 11.3, s = .0099).

TABLE 7. MERGER ENTHUSIASTS BY CAMPUS

	In Favor	Against	Uncertain	Row Total
UP	(34.9) 51 (56.7)	(39.0) 55 (33.9)	(26.0) 38 (55.9)	146 (44.8)
NUU	(21.7) 39 (43.4)	(61.7) 111 (66.1)	(16.7) 30 (44.1)	180 (55.2)
Column Total	(27.6) 90	(51.5) 168	(20.9) 68	N=326

X^2 = 16.53, df=2, s=.0003 (Missing=7)

On the single item (g), 39% of UP respondents and 61.7% of NUU respondents were against the merger, with a higher degree of either ignorance or indifference at UP (26.0% versus 16.7%). Only 90 out of 326 said they were in favor of merger. How many of the opponents of merger have since changed sides (in the face of the inevitable) remains unknown. The ethnography would suggest that a fundamental disillusionment exists at least on the Coleraine campus, as the decision making process increases momentum.

There was a similar discrepancy between the two institutions on the question of whether it was inappropriate for a university to offer low level courses. NUU respondents tended more strongly to hold a traditional view of curricular planning, but 35.2% of UP respondents also felt that low level courses were inappropriate for a university (X^2 = 15.51, s = .0004). Whether such a finding lends weight to the prediction that academic drift will take place in the new institution, cannot be clearly settled at this stage.

Just the same, 46.2% of all respondents (8.6% uncertain), would tend to agree with traditional university models, as far as course planning is concerned (N=325).

Only a very small proportion of respondents (14.5%) felt that the new institution would do any better than its previous or current competitors at attracting "high-achieving undergraduates". NUU respondents, once again, showed more pessimism than those at UP (7.8% versus 22.8%). However, 44.8% of all UP respondents (NUU 68.3%) replied negatively to the item (X^2 = 22.24, s = .0000).

Organization And Structure

The final section of the questionnaire was for academics and administrators only, and contained ten items related to management and decision making structures in the new institution (Appendix A Section D). Questions were developed, on the whole, in pairs of opposite perceptions, with a purportedly "UP" perception followed by an "NUU" viewpoint. The researcher expected a "UP" response to reflect a particular set of perceptions at UP, and an "NUU" response to do similarly for perceptions at NUU. Cross-tabulations against certain key variables allowed for computations of significance levels throughout. The assumption for the section was that, given the merger as fact, staff might offer suggestions as to the best organizational framework for making it a reality. For the sake of analysis, a three-point scale was developed with Agree(1), Not Known(2) and Disagree(3), based on a collapsing of the original five-point scale.

Teachers as course planners. There was almost universal agreement (97.5%) on the first item (1), and no discrimination on cross-tabulations. While a weakness in the test item was noted by the researcher, as far as its lack of discriminatary strength, the result nevertheless underlined a fundamental value among higher education instructors.

Location of power: department or faculty. The overall proportion of respondents who felt the major organizational unit of a university should be the Faculty, was 54.3% (Uncertain, 9.5% N=117). Once again, Campus was the most discriminating variable, with 50.8% of NUU respondents disagreeing on the item (UP, 21.4%). Whereas 44.1% of NUU staff agreed on the item, 64.3% of UP staff agreed (X^2 = 11.53, s = .0031). Arts faculty (70.8%) staff tended to agree more concertedly than Science (48.5%) and Social Science (47.6%), in which latter case there was a much higher degree of uncertainty (16.7% versus 0%, Arts and 6.1%, Science).

Primary role of deans: academic or managerial. Deans in most British universities tend to be academics who add on administrative responsibilities to their normal academic load of teaching and research. The pay increment is nominal and the position short term. Deans at UP have managerial positions and can teach if they so choose. Their authority covers all areas of decision making, including finances, equipment and course planning. On this item (e), 55.8% of all staff opted for the academic function of Deans (7.1% Uncertain). NUU staff tended to be more disposed towards

the academic function than UP staff (Table 8).

TABLE 8. ACADEMIC FUNCTION OF DEANS BY CAMPUS

	Academic	Not Known	Not Academic	Row Total
UP	(43.4) 23 (37.1)	(3.8) 2 (25.0)	(52.8) 28 (66.7)	53 (47.3)
NUU	(66.1) 39 (62.9)	(10.2) 6 (75.0)	(23.7) 14 (33.3)	59 (52.7)
Column Total	62	8	14	N=112

X^2 = 10.50, df=2, s=.0052 (Missing=221)

79.5% of all staff respondents felt that the main task of the Administration in a university was to serve the interests of Academics. There was no significant distinction by Campus on item (g). With regard to whether strong centralized management was required for split campus development (i), 48.7% of all staff agreed, with 20.5% uncertain (Table 9). While UP staff tended more strongly to agree with the item than NUU peers, the former expressed a higher degree of uncertainty (26.3%) than NUU staff (15.0%). There may well have been a degree of ambivalence (as opposed to outright negativity) among UP staff, which reflects a sense of achievement and pride on the one hand, but discomfort at the resultant loss of freedom, on the other. Science staff were the least uncertain on this item (3.0%, cf. Arts and Social Science, 34%). Arts (53.8%) and Science (54.5%) staff tended to agree more strongly than Social Science colleagues (36.6%) (X^2 = 15.42, s = .0039).

TABLE 9. CENTRALIZED MANAGEMENT BY CAMPUS

	Centralized	Not Known	Not Centralized	Row Total
UP	(61.4) 35 (61.4)	(26.3) 15 (62.5)	(12.3) 7 (19.4)	57 (48.7)
NUU	(36.7) 22 (38.6)	(15.0) 9 (37.5)	(48.3) 29 (80.6)	60 (51.3)
Column Total	(48.7) 57	(20.5) 25	(30.8) 36	N=117

X^2 = 17.84, df=2, s=.0001 (Missing=216)

Respondent Feedback On Questionnaire

Several respondents took the trouble to add their own comments to the questionnaire. The Registrar of NUU, for example, returned a draft copy of the survey with a note to the effect that he was "unable to comment" (3 June 1983). Mr. Brian Linden, Careers and Appointments Officer of UP, having received the Memorandum warning all staff about the survey, wrote to say,

> I am returning your questionnaire unanswered with this letter. I have not felt that I would be serving any useful purpose, in the context of the proposed merger by passing my opinions on it to anyone other than those responsible for it, or to the already designated senior staff of the proposed new institution (4 July 1983).

One NUU officer, who asked to remain anonymous, made several observations. Firstly, the options for Section B ("A university should:") were not fully comprehensive and should have had "something to do with encouraging the student to find out for himself in whatever way he thinks more appropriate". With regard to Section C, he felt that it was

difficult to get a fair representation of the wide range of views which exist. For instance, he felt that there could have been an option for some who thought merger was an exciting but unworkable innovation. He personally felt that the merger would be enormously expensive, for which reason, he had to come down against it. He did not consider the merger as inevitable. He felt that, with regard to Section D, no clear distinction between the "two possibly diametrically opposed traditions" of funding had been made. Where universities are funded by recurrent grant a different set of management and administration criteria apply which are not to be compared to the criteria applicable to deficit funding or private funding (i.e., the UP funding system). With the former system "the academic machine can legitimately offer the esoteric", whereas polytechnics "must offer what the consumer wants/needs/or will pay for".

One of the Computing Services staff at NUU felt that some items in Section B did not seem complete options and could not properly be ranked. He felt that the merger, in its present form would not work.

An NUU Linguist felt that two pairs of questions in Section D (b,c and d,e) were too simplistic an opposition and that there was between them, a linkage which can't be expressed here. One could only answer item (i) if the implications are clear. Summing up the questionnaire, he said,

> I don't mind filling in questionnaires in principle BUT I object to the options offered in this one and the lack of open ended (i.e., uncodable) options and the inadequate allowance for the <u>complexity</u> of academic structures.

Another respondent gave a "most emphatic yes" to item C (i), adding that technical colleges should deal adequately with lower level courses. A student at Coleraine saw the merger as a "last ditch attempt to save a university doomed to failure, primarily because of its location". A second university, if needed at all, should never have been sited in Coleraine.

A female student expressed concern at the little choice students and academics have had in the merger: "academics are in fear of their jobs and students are unsure about their future". For students like her,

> who have just finished at the university we wonder what our degrees will be worth. To put it drastically we will have a degree of a university that no longer exists.

In contrast to the purpose of a university, a polytechnic is more technology based, its learning is more geared to finding the students jobs. Attacking the Conservative UK Government for its ruthless cutting of education, she says,

> The Government wanted to . . . cut out what they called "wastage" and it was the small universities that they set their claws into, giving the students and academics little choice in the matter. In Margaret Thatcher's view NUU was seen to have failed . . . What she has failed to realize is that in the past 2 years . . . more and more English students have been coming to NUU . . . Is that a failure? . . . I ask myself would it be the same in England? The fact that it is NI in her view is different. Either she should treat the university like any other in the United Kingdom or give its running over to its proper owners - the Irish.

Another academic found it difficult to distinguish

some of the items in Section B (1), and felt that Faculty should not be the major organizational unit, but nevertheless should have a responsibility. A professor, he felt, was an "academic manager whose hierarchy of criteria weight academic before business efficiency". Yet another NUU academic felt that none of the 18 options listed under Section B could be agreed to, while still another felt that the rationale for the merger was still unknown. The same person cited similar mergers at both Durham (Newcastle) and St. Andrews (Dundee) as examples of mergers that didn't work.

A female student at NUU criticised the degrading publicity received by NUU. She has just completed a degree and was fully satisfied with the standard of teaching and the whole system at NUU. She felt that the new institution would find it difficult to live down such bad publicity, and would be seen as "another Tech". She favored the smaller campus to the large impersonal institution.

In refusing to answer Section B, one male Arts student from NUU wrote,

> Since it is my opinion that the merger as proposed is a politically cynical act, the request to rank the options in these sections becomes an invitation to comply with and in fact encourage the cosmetic function that a survey such as this is doomed to serve, regardless of the good intentions of those who conduct it.

An academic at Jordanstown was fairly critical of the questionnaire and invited the researcher to "come to the Poly and learn how to do questionaires (sic) properly".

A female student at Coleraine, commenting on Section

B suggested that "as well the merger may lower standards of academic staff at NUU", by drawing off better members of staff to the Jordanstown campus. The new institution might find it difficult to cope with the distances between campus A and B.

An academic at Jordanstown felt the questionnaire was poorly designed and at times ambiguous, so that its results would not be valid. A pilot study would have smoothed out a lot of the ambiguities. The researcher has already conceded the latter point, but would argue strongly for validity within the descriptive framework of the overall study.

One academic at Jordanstown said he lived at Coleraine and therefore saw both sides, sensing a certain Coleraine bias in some questions which, he felt would clearly affect the results of the study. With regard to Section D (g,h), he felt that the primary function of the administration was to serve the students otherwise, a "self-serving organization develops". Academic interests and the balancing of goals and resources are important, but secondary.

Summary

The questionnaire was administered on the four campuses to a randomised sample of academics, senior administrators and final year and graduate students. The purpose of the questionnaire was to test on a broader, inter-institutional and cross-campus level, some of the initial observations made by the researcher at NUU, regarding both the goals of higher education and possible directions and structures of

the proposed institution. Several significant findings were noted, both in terms of the composition of the two institutions with regard to Age, Sex, Religion, Faculty, Mode of Study and Type of Program, and also in terms of the different perceptions on various items, across key variables.

Additional comments, some of a critical nature with regard to the questionnaire itself, were noted. Despite real weaknesses at certain points, the questionnaire provided corroborative evidence, for the fundamentally descriptive study, of important differences of opinion among and between the various merger constituencies, the most obvious of which proved to be that of inter-institutional comparisons.

Results of the questionnaire provided a useful insight into the tension already noted in the literature, between those who see a university's main function as the generation of knowledge for its own sake and those who argue for a more utilitarian function. The questionnaire gives no explanation of such differences but rather quantifies them in a local context. There are clearly two divergent attitudes as to the structure and governance of a university, a fact borne out by both theoretical and empirical observation in the research. One of the central problems to be resolved, is how to balance such antithetical notions about higher education without compromising institutional goals and educational aspirations.

VI

THE ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

One problem inherent in qualitative research, and especially in participant observation, is that of interpreting and establishing both the status and credibility of what informants say. Everyone perceives reality differently, with some people having a clearer grasp of truth than others. One informant may have conferred authority or status within a social group, by stint of a particular office or role. Yet his or her testimony need not necessarily be accurate. Someone with far less official authority in the group may nevertheless have access to information or insights of enormous value to the observer.

With reference to the merger, decision makers had more information at their disposal than those at the periphery; but their interpretations may have been colored by vested interest or personal ambition. It became vital in such research to weigh individual judgments about the merger, firstly against the authority of the particular informant in the total group, and secondly, against a more objective and theoretical standard, such as that provided in the literature review or document analysis.

While the fundamental aim of ethnographic research is to discover how participants see the world, or in the case of the research, view the merger, there is a further issue at stake. An assessment was made of whose, which and why particular perceptions about higher education in Northern

Ireland had the greatest or least impact on the merger process.

One of the concerns throughout the interview analysis was to identify the more dominant ideas of the merger (e.g., structural vs. human dimensions), and to reflect on some of the implications of such phenomena for final outcomes in the new institution. What exactly did informants expect a more "relevant" higher education system to achieve? Who is to say the new institution can fulfil such pragmatic ideals? Another point of interest was the extent to which government thinking about higher education has been absorbed by decision makers as a matter of political necessity, rather than out of intellectual conviction.

Informal Conversations

Over the nine month period of the research, countless occasions arose, both at NUU and in the local community of Coleraine and Portstewart (where the researcher and his family lived), for taking "soundings" as far as opinions about the merger were concerned. The researcher's wife became involved in a baby-sitting cooperative and coffee morning, a university wives' discussion group, a pottery class and a greengrocery cooperative. These networks helped to build bridges for the researcher into the NUU community. People were very friendly and often asked the researcher and his wife to dinner parties, concerts, high teas or drives into the "country". The researcher's children created their own networks through play-groups and school. The

researcher and family soon became involved in a local church, which opened up an additional set of relations.

In a small seaside (and yet rural) town like Portstewart, new residents become known quickly. Bank tellers, post office staff, garage attendants, estate agents and local clergymen (not to mention corner shop owners, telephone operators and librarians) all seem to know that "you're the lady whose husband is studying this merger!", or that the Australian visitor is doing special research at NUU.

As time progressed, and communication bridges were established, such informal networks proved invaluable. They gave to the researcher (and his wife and family) a much-needed sense of identity as visitors in a small community, thus creating a meaningful social and cultural base on which to found the research. Such social intercourse generated many invaluable contacts for the researcher, with key academics or administrators at NUU. It was helpful, in the course of the initial research, for the observer to have cross references with university people in non university contexts, which let such people reverse roles and "observe" the researcher at different (more "normal") social levels.

The Interviews

Interviews have been set out in logical or thematic order, and focus on the distinctive interpretations by interviewees of possible reasons for and outcomes of the merger. The focus of each interview analysis was largely on content, but not to the total exclusion of process.

While it was of primary importance for the researcher to be as non directive as possible, the gradual evolution of his own interpretation of the merger undoubtedly colored many of the questions that were asked.

An attempt will be made to note some of the questions asked, and not merely the responses given. Sometimes, the researcher guaranteed confidentiality, since it was felt to be more crucial to discover what a particular class of interviewee (e.g., professor, journalist or senior administrator) thought about the merger, than to specifically identify respondents by name. The researcher suspected, at the outset, that interviewees would feel more comfortable about speaking without fear of exposure, and thus more honestly if there were a prior guarantee of confidentiality. As a result, and even when interviews were physically recorded on a cassette tape recorder, after obtaining interviewee permission, by far the majority raised no objections at all to the procedure. Any doubts that were raised were settled remarkably quickly, on the basis just outlined.

Most interviews followed their own agenda, within the agreed framework of discussion about the merger. After the initial ice was broken, the interviewer asked a question that focused on the interviewee's relationship to a particular interest in and attitude towards the merger. From that point onwards, the interviewer tried to follow interviewee signals as to what he thought was particularly important. Many questions sought further clarification of a

particular point, historical comment or attitude.

Reasons for merger. The first formal interview concerning the merger took place with an NUU senior academic who saw a tension, in the merger, between traditional liberal studies and the demands of modern technology. The merger, he felt, was part of a government attempt to regain financial control of polytechnics, and was an experiment to test the ground for higher education nationally. He also noted the fact that the preference of Coleraine as a site for NUU was based on business interests. He suggested that senior civil servants in DENI, who advised the Under-Secretary for Education, Mr. Nicholas Scott, may have played an important part in the initial decision to merge the two institutions. Two prominent names in this connection, Mr. Pat Carvill (DENI) from Derry, and Mr. Robert Rhodes-James, MP who was the Prime Minister's special adviser on education, were mentioned by the NUU official.

A social scientist at NUU interpreted the merger as a subtle attempt by the UGC to gain control of polytechnics as well as universities, since "poly's are funded by local councils". The same academic felt that the Department of Education and Science (DES) in London had played a crucial role in the merger decision. He expressed concern over the anti-NUU stance over the years of BBC TV in Northern Ireland. He also observed how the Province had often been used as a "trial horse" for policies which the British Government hoped to introduce more generally. One example

mentioned, in this connection was the introduction of radar speed traps in 1959 on the Antrim road.

One of the UP deans listed four reasons for the merger, from the government's perspective. There was an attempt by the UGC to get uniform funding control of all higher and further education. "No one ever closed a university, and even the Privy Council wouldn't know how to do it." No district council or politician would permit $15-18 million spending power to go out of the area because of the hardship and unemployment such a move would create. NUU was "set up on traditional university lines, and it takes 50-100 years for this model to take effect". The management at NUU has been loose and democratic, whereas what is needed are strong heads of department with high accountability. One problem with such a model, he felt, was that "autocratic deans and heads can't be got rid of". Another weakness with the UP system of research and scholarship was that too much time was spent developing courses and teaching to develop research. The problem wouldn't change much in the University of Ulster, he felt, since NUU has more academic talent than UP, but its administration is "appalling". He continued: "if we could put the program together, they (i.e., NUU academics) could teach it better".

An NUU administrator referred to the Permanent Secretary of the Department of Education and Science, Sir James Hamilton, as the first person to speak of merger.

On another occasion, one of the UP deans saw the merger

as a means of resolving the location of NUU at Coleraine outside the political arena. He thought the government was now trying to ameliorate Derry.

Relevance and flexibility. An economist asserted that economic, rather than educational factors, governed the decision to break the "binary divide". The government, he said saw the merger as a rescue operation for NUU which, until the merger, had had "no constructively critical mechanisms of internal review, both academically and administratively". Speaking of the "pathology" of Northern Ireland, he referred to the loss to Northern Ireland, between 1971-1981, of 130,000 people through migration, mainly to England. The reverse was the case with the Republic, which, in the same period, had gained 400,000.

A leading businessman from Coleraine argued that stable social conditions, accommodation and recreational facilities, and the attractiveness of the area, were the main reasons for choosing Coleraine as the site for NUU. The university, however, had failed to "read Government calls for relevance correctly and respond positively". He contrasted NUU's inflexibility with UP's flexibility and growth. Just the same, he felt that NUU had been as cost-effective as three similar sized universities, namely, Essex, Sussex and Stirling.

An NUU administrator noted the provision within NUU's Charter for association with any other institution, and wondered why a new Charter had to be invoked. NUU had not as far as he was concerned, gone in the direction that

Lockwood planned, especially with regard to offering only Honors standard courses. The latter was one of the most foolish decisions made by academics at NUU, since it "closed the door to a lot of women not ready to risk a career in the same way men are". Such a decision was "one of the nails this university drove into its own coffin". There was in 1965, an increasing demand for part time degrees, a move which met with great resistance.

NUU's reaction to "Chilver". A senior administrator at NUU, after spending some time explaining the authority structures of the University, went on to give a historical overview of NUU's reactions to Chilver and subsequent decisions by government. Initial reaction was "anger throughout". There was suspicion of the government's White Paper because it accepted misleading parts of Chilver, which failed to appreciate the difficulties of the "problems" of Northern Ireland, in relation to the expected growth of student numbers at NUU. The institution had been "pulverised" by the press for not measuring up to the Lockwood projections. No university, he said, has had to "build itself up in the face of the terrorist threat in the Province". NUU was equated alongside other universities which had not faced the same problems. Statistics had been used for political ends.

The officer felt that Chilver's solution to NUU's problems was somewhat strange. The initial solution (closure) had, perhaps because government felt it was too radical and impossible to implement, been softened considerably to

the idea of trying to capture the more mature age market through the development of part time courses and continuing education. He felt that because Chilver had presented an impossible option, government had had to "come in over the top". The Northern Ireland elements on the Chilver committee were "slightly bizarre", in his estimation. There was a lady from the Equal Opportunities Commission, several from local authorities, the Vice Principal of the College of Business Studies at UP and an Australian (the Vice Chancellor of Liverpool). There were only two university people, six "non-Northern Irish", four "Northern Irish" and no representative from Northern Ireland higher education.

DENI Perspectives

An interview took place between the researcher and a DENI officer who played a key role throughout the merger. The officer said there had been no major problems encountered by the Steering Group, though there had been a reluctance on NUU's part to elect members to the Group. QUB had been critical of Steering Group procedure initially. QUB was anxious to get membership of the Group, but the government wanted to avoid in-fighting. The Chairman of the SG felt that all requests must be responded to, yet there were points of disagreement and frustration on SG. The slow pace of negotiations, and assurances to staff and students as to their future were problem areas. Northern Ireland, he said couldn't be exempt from government cutbacks, but this led

to uncertainty, so that there was a need to get clarification of available funding.

Future management style. With regard to the two views of management that had been mythologized on the two campuses, he saw NUU's (wrong) view of UP as "extremely hierarchial, autocratic and highly managed". UP's (wrong) view of NUU was of a "wishy washy, democratic system that took six years to decide what it ought to do". While differences do exist in governance structure, a considerable degree of understanding between the two institutions has developed as talks have taken place. From his viewpoint, the new institution would be more managed than NUU but less managed than UP. There would need to be some "rationalization of boundaries to overcome the duplication of courses, for example, the need for a reduction in Social Workers". Some staff might need to shift priorities and retrain: "this will be the style of management - the humanitarian approach".

Turning to what he called the "mythology of the Poly's development", the officer said that some people saw UP as a "prodigal son spending DENI's money without accountability". While UP was expanding fast, the Department of Education did know what was going on through the detailed UP reports to DENI each year. UP's approach to course planning was based on a marketing philosophy that asked "what needs people were expressing: if we did X, what response would we get?" NUU's approach, by contrast, seemed to be: "we think X is of value willy nilly, so put it on".

Appointing the vice chancellor designate. Two possible methods of proceeding towards merger were open to SG: one (SG's position) to "move ahead towards merger"; the other (NUU's position) to "go up into the mountains and deliberate about feasibility". The one division within SG that did exist was over the method of appointment of the Vice Chancellor Designate: whether the position would be advertised or purely internal. Despite real SG tensions, the decision to make the appointment internal was a "unanimous" one. "No one knows whether Cockcroft knew about" the offer of a Chairmanship of the new Examinations Council before his decision to offer for the Vice Chancellorship of the new institution or not.

At this point in the interview, the researcher was asked to turn off the tape recorder, while the officer gave his personal interpretation of how Cockcroft came to fail to turn up at the interview with SG. The researcher gained the impression that NUU's Vice Chancellor had been "eased out" of an embarrassing situation by the offer of a high status educational position and a knighthood to go with it. With the tape back on again, the officer drew a picture of Derek Birley as a very impressive person who had clever ideas about the new institution. As Cockcroft failed to present himself for interview, there was a unanimous decision in favor of Birley. Neither DENI, nor the Minister, said the officer, had any power or influence over the appointment.

Attitudes to "Chilver". The DENI officer felt that two major concerns arose out of the Chilver report: what to do with NUU, and the coordination of higher education. Chilver felt it "impolitic to suggest closing NUU, though it clearly couldn't go on as it was". A new role was needed. People were not satisfied with Chilver's choice, as "going it alone" was not seen as a viable solution. The government didn't want a merger with QUB as NUU would be the junior partner. So the government's solution was the best available one. Furthermore the "lowering of the binary divide could be seen as desirable".

U.K. educators "will obviously look with interest" at the merger, though Northern Ireland is different in so many ways the officer said. The merger presents a simpler, better coordinated system that uses resources more effectively in the next twenty years or so. The officer, rather poignantly, felt that "you're as likely to get the best or the worst of both institutions if you combine them". A comprehensive university, he felt, however, at least brought practice and theory together.

Processing merger documents. Speaking about the processing of merger documents, the DENI officer said that when papers came to SG, members "presumably read them", though face to face meetings were felt to be more important. The documents were useful in the first phase of planning in setting guidelines for planners. He recognized, however, that no actual processing mechanism ("mincing machine") existed for this purpose. It was simply hoped that members

would get a broad feel for the documents. A decision was made not to analyse and synthesize SG submissions because you lose something via third party interpretation. All papers at a ministerial level and within the Civil Service were covered by the Secret Services Act which lasted for thirty years.

Role Of Steering Group

A senior UP administrator said that there had been no mechanism within the Steering Group to process submissions. The Association of Polytechnic Teachers submission was "simply noted but hasn't been mentioned since", despite the fact that a delegation met personally with the Group. He expected a much smaller Senate (i.e., 46), for the sake of managerial efficiency, than the present NUU Senate. The Steering Group was a kind of "catalyst, creating ideas for comment". Educational leadership, he thought, would come from the professorial level which tried to integrate competing demands at all levels: resources versus demands. The Pro Vice Chancellor would be powerless apart from the endorsement of committees and deans as academic managers would say to staff: "You're not doing enough, you'll need to change to get in line with needs". He felt the major process of the merger was flawed because NUU was never consulted about the government's decision and was a forced participant.

A leading NUU officer said that the Steering Group (and DENI) did not recognize NUU as being in any position to "bargain". He mentioned Sir Norman Lindop as one member of

Steering Group in favor of two faculties, for reasons of greater efficiency. The SG, he felt, was an awkward group consisting of several "mavericks" but lacking cohesion, and whose chairman's style "militated against this". He called for papers, but never discussed them. He didn't handle committees well, though was very good in private and thought about things.

A second interview with a senior NUU administrator focused on some of the constitutional problems of the merger. He denied that the Visitor could be "lobbied" by interested parties in connection with legal advice about how to surrender the NUU Charter. He asserted that the government did not want to legislate on the affair, though "they say they would if they had to". He predicted that "half of the academics here (NUU) will be gone by 1986 because there'll be no extra funds". Similarly, many academics will leave the Derry Campus.

One Steering Group member referred to the initial period on SG as a "difficult start", in which members of the two institutions tried to get on to the same wave length. He felt that NUU was at the "bottom of the U.K. league" and had accepted students with as lower standards as UP. But in the case of the latter, UP, however, aimed to produce qualifications that were relevant, a philosophy that runs counter to the university ethos ("It doesn't matter what you do, choose subjects you like and it will develop your mind"). He felt that just getting a degree was of no value to

society. The University of Ulster should offer a credible alternative to QUB. After all the "choice is the customer's, not the provider's, as to which university to attend". The government, he felt, remained to be persuaded before it released development money, for expansion at Derry.

Future Management And Goals

A senior NUU administrator felt the merged institution would be a university under a standard charter, except for the fact that Pro Vice Chancellors would be appointed for a term of years, rather than the usual situation where a professional administration runs the institution under the authority of Senate and Council". He was afraid that "organization will go out the window", especially "when Derek Birley retires". The officer referred to a speech by William Waldergrove, MP, which spoke of getting rid of the binary system. The parliamentary spokesman for higher education in the previous Thatcher government made it clear that any mergers would take place after discussion, consultation and agreement. The officer noted the irony of the MP's words, in the light of the "merge or close" situation at Ulster.

In a traditional university, he felt ideas come from the bottom up, with the committee system at work, whereas the new institution under Birley, would have a top downwards approach. In the U.K., local authorities fund polytechnics and can therefore cut off funds quickly. The situation was different, he said, at UP which was centrally funded. The Chilver committee was set up to find ways of controlling

spending.

The administrator wasn't sure whether society "impacts" the education system "or vice versa". Universities could improve the quality of society. While he didn't expect to "be around when the merger takes place" and had "kept out of discussions deliberately", he nevertheless could not understand how any university could be dictated to by government. The Charter was supposed to protect universities from the vicissitudes of party politics.

UP perspectives. In the first set of interviews at the UP, one of the deans felt, in connection with the administration of higher education, that there was a need for balance between freedom and accountability. NUU, he said, would be a "lot more healthy if this model had been used". He mentioned how UP had offered courses for small businesses, to help owners or managers starting out to become more effective in business (e.g., in such areas as finance, microprocessing and taxation for small firms).

A senior UP officer felt that the structure of the new university would not be "all that different from how the Poly is run". He continued,

> I know Birley and share his views on how an organization should be run. He really understands organizational structures more than Vice Chancellors normally.

The officer felt that the new institution would be a "super-polytechnic" with its main emphasis on relevance and getting out to people. Many UP staff, he said, were against the merger, wondering if they should "join up with a bum

outfit like NUU!" They preferred to remain a "first class Poly than a third class university"; but such feelings did not reach the press.

One UP academic felt that people at NUU "don't realise what's happening". Birley was "doing some brilliant manoeuvering to get the identical structure to the one that's so objectionable at the Poly" (e.g., permanent deans). The academic felt there was a growing resistance to the merger at UP. One UP dean was described as a "bad manager, aggressive, someone who loves conflict, out-manoeuvers everyone and has massive energy". His faculty was the "unhappiest faculty in the whole Poly". The academic expected courses to be transferred to Magee which meet Derry needs. The Vice Chancellor Designate would raise funds from industry, then pour extra funds to Magee at the expense of Coleraine. If people wanted promotion, they'd have to go to Magee.

New perspectives. One educationist at NUU lamented the lack of "critical consciousness", both among peers at the Education Center and within the university as a whole. The Center, he felt, had been regarded by the rest of the university as peripheral. Decisions about the merger, had been taken elsewhere, not on the two campuses. He suggested that Birley was operating within an equal opportunities school which at least gave "more people greater scope to become an elite". The Vice Chancellor Designate, moreover wanted to use bureaucratic structures to facilitate such a process, as well as to create a market sensitivity. The educationist

made a final point:

> To impose a managerial power structure (a top-downwards approach) on an institution which should challenge the power structures, is to signal the death of the institution.

While much opposition to the merger existed in the early stages an NUU officer felt that there had been a "watershed" with the appointment of the Vice Chancellor Designate. In March 1982 there was a sense of "outrage", but by March '83, things were different: the vast majority of staff expected the merger. Outsiders "don't understand what's going on". He felt the negative reaction from local business at the March ('83) Court meeting of NUU, reflected the outrage of 1982.

From the government's perspective, drastic rationalizations were essential throughout higher education, because numbers were dwindling in the university entrants' age group and would reach a "trough" in 1990. The merger was therefore a cost-cutting exercise and a "saving gesture" with regard to NUU. For a population that desperately needed technical skills and industrial development, there was little need from the government's perspective, for esoteric courses like the classics.

A senior academic at NUU said that Science draws three or four times more funds at NUU than at the UP. The situation, he felt would change in the new institution, but at the expense of NUU. Another scientist feared that if resources were spread uniformly between the two institutions, "you'll kill everything". Much of Physics, for example,

"underpins the electronics industry". Despite this, the Chilver committee "didn't even bother to visit" NUU's Physics Department.

Local community goals. The president of the local Chamber of Commerce urged universities to develop more courses that would help small businesses and industry to grow. If the university were able to provide research and development input for local industry and commerce (e.g., to "develop a model for import substitution"), he felt that real growth could occur in the Province, despite natural constraints, such as high transportation costs, the necessity of importing all energy services, and an essentially "conservative people". He wanted to see courses introduced such as "Understanding the Microcomputer" and "Doing business in a recession".

Local community interest in the proposed merger reached a high point around the time of the first Court meeting. A number of prominent community leaders expressed their concerns and vision to the researcher. After the NUU Court made its negative decision regarding the merger, one person felt it came as a disaster. The decision had destroyed the New University of Ulster's "negotiating credibility, and put the Poly back in a much stronger position". Much of the initial "groundwork done by NUU had been lost". The researcher was approached by one community leader who sought information about decisions taken within NUU management.

Telephone Interviews

The first of several telephone interviews took place with Mr. Robert Rhodes-James, MP, who, the researcher was told, had played a strategic role as educational adviser to the Prime Minister. A letter requesting the interview had been sent by the researcher.

Mr. Robert Rhodes-James

Before preliminaries had been dealt with, the MP asked what the status of the researcher was. Having cleared the air, the researcher commenced what he felt was a rather awkward forty minutes. The MP seemed defensive from the outset, and made it clear that, "despite what everyone at Coleraine thinks", the merger decision was taken as a measure "saving Coleraine". Chilver, he said, was "moving rapidly towards closing NUU or diminishing and downgrading it". He said that he "spoke strongly against that". The whole situation, he felt, was the "fault of history, not NUU's".

Reasons for the merger. Rhodes-James referred to certain fears at QUB about NUU's growth, but felt that NUU was not a normal British university because it had never been allowed to develop medicine or agriculture. He referred to both political and educational reasons behind the merger decision. The government felt that it was a good idea to "merge the Poly, which had been a brilliant success", with NUU and to "ditch Chilver" by upgrading UP and combining the two institutions. Such a move "gives us a guide for

the rest of the U.K.", he said. An appalling overlap existed between polytechnics and universities. Some polytechnics were better than the universities because they had much closer links to commerce, industry and the local community.

The government saw itself as expanding, not cutting higher education expenditure, since spending over the last four years had increased from $12 million to $204 million per annum. The government was raising the quality of higher education. Rhodes-James felt that QUB was "absolutely fine as it is", and noted that the merger had been "Swinnerton-Dyer's idea", although the government and DENI had been "toying with it too".

He felt that the UGC was entirely independent and saw no reason to believe that the merger was a UGC "plot" to "expand its empire": such an idea was felt to be absurd. The merger was the offer by government to NUU of realistic survival. In the same breath, he asserted that universities are "totally autonomous".

When the researcher asked the MP how the merger might enrich the Province educationally, he replied: "Thank you Mr. Carr, Goodbye", and put the phone down. He had expressed an increasing impatience towards the end of the interview, especially over questions which related to the educational rationale for the government decision at Ulster.

Sir Henry Chilver

In a telephone interview, Sir Henry spoke of concern

in Northern Ireland about the "problem" at NUU. In addition, there was a feeling that both QUB and NUU were "linked loosely" to the UGC, so that "parity funding" which was so central to U.K. higher education policy, was "out of kilter" in Northern Ireland, with the rest of the U.K. Two basic problems were "bedevilling" educational politics in Northern Ireland. The first was the comparative isolation of NUU (i.e., its "loose link" with UGC). The second was the decline in numbers which was related to cuts in higher education in Great Britain. The most significant change in higher education provision, he felt, would be the development of regional planning under Professor Clayton's Working Party to coordinate the tertiary sector in the Province. He felt there was a real "breakthrough for the first time in the U.K." whereby the binary system, with its two distinct funding systems, would at last be rationalized.

NUU's location. One of the key political issues, he felt, was that of having an institution outside Belfast, which had been the "central political issue" in establishing NUU in the first place. When asked why the government had rejected his committee's proposal, he said, "we put up a number of options": to leave NUU as it is; or a merger with the UP.

The government felt that the committee's recommendation, however, could lead to "failure" and that NUU needed an association with a bigger institution to safeguard the regional interests outside Belfast. He felt some concern

that, with the two major institutions now in Belfast and without a powerful activity outside Belfast, there was a built-in risk that peripheral campuses would "tend to be dictated to, especially in structure, by Belfast". In terms of the "closure" option, the government would have closed NUU. Sir Henry felt this was a "real option" with several committee members in favor of the idea. There had, moreover, been "a lot of pressure from outside to close" NUU. The government felt this was too narrow a view.

No one could "quibble over the membership" of the Chilver Committee, with an equal representation of members from Great Britain, Northern Ireland and Scotland; from polytechnics, universities and industry; and from Roman Catholics and Protestants.

Higher education in the U.K. Asked about the future trends in higher and further education in the U.K., Sir Henry described two "routes": the university system, attracting the most highly qualified A-levels from school and the polytechnics, drawing on less qualified people on a regional basis.

According to Chilver, one of the great problems for higher education in the U.K. was the inability to change and to develop new systems and teaching methods. Universities always had "difficulty reacting to needs" (e.g., the "trauma" created in tertiary institutions by the shortage of computer engineers in the U.K.). On the other hand, if polytechnics simply confined themselves to degree work,

"they'll do themselves out of business". For Chilver, "the future lies in diversity, not concentration", with less formalized conventional courses and a growing emphasis on continuing education.

The fundamental problem for institutions of higher education in the future was to "understand what younger people wanted to gain from employment". Universities and colleges must try to understand the economic, social and political realities in the country, in relation specifically to what they are "trying to do" themselves. He argued for a much closer link between practice and theory. Universities and polytechnics, he felt, are too protected and must be exposed more and more to "external pressures". There was a need, for example, for decisions to be taken more by students within institutions of higher education.

Professor Keith Clayton

The Chairman of the Northern Ireland Working Party on Higher Education, and member of UGC and the Steering Group, said that DENI thought that " a great deal of money could be saved by rationalization". Clayton disagreed. He felt that the real constraint in the U.K. further education context was the "local authority that gives little money but has a lot of control".

NUU was doomed, according to Clayton, unless it could have held 2000 students into the 1990's, in which case it would have been left alone. He felt that there was "more paranoia at Queen's" than at either of the other

institutions, because of a fear of its losing first place in the funding arrangements. Clayton saw his role as an "umpire" vis a vis competing claims on funds in the future.

The scenario for the future, according to Clayton, was that the UGC would have as its "hidden agenda", an attitude to the funding of research:

> We fund quality research rather than teaching. It pays to be elitist. After all, there is no incentive to enter an institution which has easy entrance requirements. (23 May)

He said that very little, if any money, would be siphoned off the traditional university entrants sector, in favor of continuing education, because "it's a myth that many people are clamoring for continuing education".

Sir Norman Lindop

In an interview by telephone with Sir Norman Lindop, Vice Chairman of Steering Group, he said that further education was very "important, and must be sustained". He joined the SG with "misgivings" as he was not "at ease with the idea of merging a university and a polytechnic and calling it a university". Yet he was assured there was no other way of a merger. He saw polytechnics as "no-walls institutions which react to the environment and offer courses at all levels", cater for "18 plus levels in a variety of ways": not just full time or part time, but involving "re-entry and transfer credit". Universities, he said, could behave in this way, but there was not financial support. They could, he felt, have been as comprehensive

as polytechnics.

One of the "oddities" of the merger was that UP was not typical of polytechnics across the water, as it was funded directly by government. As a result, the "binary system doesn't apply" to Ulster.

Coleraine was "launched at an unpropitious time" which was unforeseen by its founders. There have, however, been other universities, like Stirling, which have not suited the demographic situation, particularly in regard to the "age cohort pattern". Lindop admitted that "we goofed with Coleraine: let's try and mend it". The UGC would certainly, if forced, "starve" NUU of funds, as it has already withdrawn block grants from certain colleges which are closing down.

Future funds. Lindop said that, as an outsider and stranger to the Province, the merger seemed crucial for diversification to take place. The four campuses offered a considerable range for such diversity though, with regard to internal arrangements. He wished Derek Birley "good luck". He expected a number of people to take early retirement, thus leaving enough unfilled posts for economies to take place.

People wouldn't "notice changes overnight, even in Derry". They would need to change attitudes and look at other forms of job satisfaction, especially those who prized research, which he expected to suffer, "when the structure gets squeezed". Some would need to change the

balance of their priorities. Conversely, some could do more research than before. Academic quality should never be equated with quantity of research. Standards depend on the quality of people.

People at Derry had a "strong feeling of injustice", so that one of the results of the merger would, he said, be that Derry will become a "major education center". However, Lindop cautioned that there would be no overnight transformation. Resources would be moved across through time, and an injection of money was needed from DENI. Derry needed to get the recognition of being a "campus of equal standing" with Coleraine and Jordanstown. As a result, however, there would be a great deal of travelling.

Lindop saw distance learning as of high importance in putting the new institution on the map, and felt that in ten years the Ulster University could be the "dominant" institution. With the "extreme parochialism in the Province", where "everyone was looking over his own shoulder", it was understandable that QUB was never sympathetic to the new institution.

Role of universities. Lindop saw the purpose of a university as that of "universality", or having "aspirations beyond the purely local" (e.g., the international fellowship of Science and Letters). He suggested the polytechnics would need to be stronger before the entire binary system would disappear, possibly within ten years. The present

system was a "damn good one", even though it was founded on the model of "elitism". Universities, he said, have "done a narrow job well" and it would be a mistake to replicate it on a grand scale: it is good for the "top 5%, but not for the 15% or 25%". American institutions, by way of contrast, were more vigorous and characterised by greater openness.

Ms. Karen Gold

A THES journalist, in another telephone conversation, felt that education was not a terribly high priority with the government. She saw Swinnerton-Dyer, the new Chairman of UGC as a "more impressive manoeverer" than the previous incumbent and felt that the recently published report by the Department of Education and Science on higher education in Northern Ireland was "very waffly" and of little substance.

She felt that one of the main reasons NUU was a "major flop" was its failure to develop "one major professional faculty, thanks to Queen's". There was an increasing division between "top quality institutions: Oxbridge and six or seven other elites", and others "more closely connected with the economic needs" of society. She felt that before long, the bottom institutions like local colleges and polytechnics will "fall off the bottom".

Gold referred to two definitions of continuing education in Britain ("Left" and "Right") where one was a more radical, liberal concept, referring to post schooling

education; and the other, to experience education, used by people in commerce and industry who were already skilled but who wanted to update their skills by means of short courses. She identified government thinking in reference to the latter approach. The former approach focused more on adult literacy and on ways of bringing adults "back into the educational system". Derek Birley, she felt, "thinks of continuing education in commercial terms".

The UGC, she felt, had set up an adult and continuing education committee, not because it thinks the field might be a "money spinner", but because the traditional university clientele was diminishing and such planning might "draw in new money for universities from the public sector".

Meetings

One of the first joint meetings of NUU/UP staff that the researcher gained access to was a discussion, chaired by the Vice Chancellor Designate, of faculty structures. The first item on the agenda was whether to have one or two Science faculties. The Chairman reported that the Academic Consultative Group felt that "the fewer the faculties the better". He stressed the need to integrate not split. There was the additional fear of less money if the two separate faculties were combined. However, Birley replied that "big faculties get big sums". A Social Science professor at NUU warned against excessive travel.

The second major item was whether to place Humanities

on its own, or with the Health Sciences. The Social Scientists from UP argued strongly against splitting something up "that's working well already".

As the meeting drew to a close, the Chairman outlined the purpose of the meeting: a forum for "opinion sharing rather than decision making". Throughout the entire meeting, four people spoke half a dozen times each (Chairman apart, who spoke much more), ten people spoke once or twice over the two and a half hour session. It was clear by the end of the meeting, that UP staff had developed a well-orchestrated case compared to that of NUU's, which was weak and uncoordinated. It was interesting to notice how one UP Dean would present a forceful case and then nod to one or other of his colleagues, who seemed to have rehearsed a similar case in advance.

Place Of Continuing Education

The researcher gained access to a joint meeting to discuss the role and structure of continuing education (CE). At the outset, the Chairman asked "what is adult and continuing education?" He said that the meeting was to help draw up a job description for continuing education. A member of the Magee contingent suggested that the concept referred to "extension, extra mural work, foundation studies and promotional work". One professor came in at that point and said, "I'm getting worried. I don't want to undermine the universality of continuing education across the campus as a whole. I'd be concerned if I thought there was to be a

substantial proliferation of the faculty of continuing education". He asserted as strongly as possible that there would be no such faculty.

The UP Director of CE suggested that, while CE was not a discipline, there was a need for a unit that reminded people of the necessity and philosophy of CE. The Chairman interrupted and asked, "How many troops are you talking about? . . . we need a sensitizing group". A lecturer from Magee suggested that 40 people (33 academics and 7 administrators) would be involved.

After further discussion, a senior officer said, "We don't want to tie things up too tightly today or preempt deans from having a say as to how best to develop CE". The Chairman announced that the director of continuing education "whom we appoint will facilitate the function of CE on each campus". People involved in CE, though not a faculty, will be "missionaries" who spread the news across the whole institution. He added that it would be "sad if you kept quiet. I'm trying to convince you. I won't disturb what's going on at Derry, but there'll be no headquarters [for CE] at Derry". He felt it would be wrong politically to associate Derry with a branch of education that is not mainstream.

At the close of the meeting, the Chairman told the group of some 20 academics that he would try to persuade the Academic Consultative Group of their recommendations. In the meantime, people would just have to "wait for the

new Jesus figure" to be appointed as Director of CE.

It was interesting to observe that the Director of the Institute for Continuing Education (ICE) at Magee, kept silent throughout the meeting. Like his counterpart at UP, he may pose the new administration an embarrassing dilemma, in terms of how best to accommodate him, given his existing status and role.

The researcher asked various people, at the end of the meeting, what they thought had been achieved. Mr. Bonar Hill (UP) said it depended on "what the agenda was". Mr. Fred D'Arcy (Magee) saw the meeting as the "defeat of the ICE document: at best, it might work; at worst, it's a stay of execution". What struck the researcher was the interventionist style of Chairmanship, which seemed on the one hand, to want to hear ideas, but which on the other, became intolerant of ideas which did not coincide with the thinking of top management.

Association of university teachers. The researcher attended a branch meeting of the Association of University Teachers at which the National Chairwoman (Ms. Diana Warwick) spoke. She referred to the impact on the university system of decisions taken at Coleraine. She saw three basic issues: tenure, research, and the AUT's relationship to the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education (NATFHE). A motion was put by the Chairman, Professor Brian Manning and seconded by Dr. Chris Knipe, that the AUT support the merger and encourage Senate to press

ahead to implement it. The motion was carried (34-8, 12 abstentions), but only after two professor opponents (Jolles and Carter) had spoken against the merger.

The Final Interviews

A schedule of ten questions was used as a basis for the formal interviews with the fifteen designated officers of the new institution (see above). People interviewed were the Vice Chancellor, Pro Vice Chancellors, Deans/Directors and Senior Administrators. At the time of interviews (August 12 - September 15, 1983), no designations of heads of Departments had been made, though some fifty were pending. Interviews lasted approximately an hour and a half, though some were longer. Except in two cases, at least one prior interview with each officer had already taken place.

Institutional Goals

An officer saw the main aims of the new institution as its "overall contribution to the industrial and commercial life of the Province". The goals, he felt were pragmatic, with an early emphasis on the "vocational and professional needs of both the young people and the Province". He didn't feel that there would be a significant diversion from polytechnic terms of reference. He took comfort in the government's statement that the new institution would not be bound by traditional university norms.

On the question of complementarily with QUB, he said, "If Queens' are very good in one thing, then the new institution must be very good in a different way". Such

institutional goals would need to permeate all campuses, so that the challenge for faculties, which would remain as a one campus expression, would be to relate across campuses, and not to "fall into that kind of self satisfied mode of thinking".

Another officer saw the main difference between the new institution and QUB, in terms of philosophies, where the "American State University style", with its cooperative programs, sub degree and diploma work, characterized the University of Ulster. He saw education as an industry producing the "best-educated potential workforce in the world", which entailed stepping out of the tried and tested modes, and engaging in student exchange where students actually wanted the thing the institution offered. Such a process not only enlarged the institution's perspective but "improves our basketball team!". Another innovation would involve working with underdeveloped countries. Leaders should look at different approaches to problems and thus facilitate staff development. He would like to see a Business Studies program that attracted young American students.

After seven years, he hoped that the university would have a local reputation and would attract a distinctive kind of undergraduate. He also hoped, by then that the institution had established a name through sports scholarships. In the end, however, he felt the institution would have to be "satisfied with rather negative goals like not having made a mess of the thing, not having run out of money, not

having failed". He would be very disappointed if people didn't see the reinstatement of Derry. The only way to attract high quality undergraduates, he felt, was to "provide the best courses you can and do your marketing". A vision for the future of the Province was expressed in one interview:

> In ten years time you know what I want to see? I want to see peace and stability in this place and these IRA and UVF buggers on-side. I want to see a bit more wealth in the place, and the two are hand in hand. If we resolve the stability, we are going to attract investment. The Northern Irish person has the reputation of being a good worker, and coming up with the goods. But we have got to get stability here first of all, and then we can really go to town on creating wealth.

One interviewee wanted the new institution to "increase the educational opportunity for the Northern Ireland people" and provide a more relevant education, and thus produce a "more flexible graduate at the end of the day". He also hoped to satisfy many of the "goals the students might have in coming here" (e.g., enjoying themselves, learning a discipline). Like some other interviewees, he was worried that a faculty "might start identifying with a site rather than the University", and look inwards to the site instead of outwards to what opportunities might be provided.

The goal of the new institution was also seen as trying to enhance the material and cultural wealth in Northern Ireland. The interviewee felt there was a need "to be more aware of the economic significance of certain actions", but that one should not simply aim at scientific and technological advancement. He hoped that the new institution "might

be a step in the direction towards pulling the community together".

The rate of unemployment was blamed by one person as one of the main reasons historically for "The Troubles".

After the second World War, when unemployment dropped, membership of the IRA declined very seriously. He felt that the new institution could play a major role in alleviating present rates of unemployment in the Province.

> So if we are to increase the rate of employment in the Province, we must be looking toward new industrial opportunities - the creation of new industries. And in some cases, education can take a lead in doing this. You see what's been done in some parts of the United States - (where) the micro electronics industry has developed substantially . . . as a result of the impact of the universities themselves.

Another officer felt that the new institution would serve more local, rather than national interests. He felt the university should "monitor its own performance in respect of job placements each year, or in terms of graduates starting their own businesses". He pointed out that for every engineer turned out, there was a need for an additional five technicians to support and service the engineer. He felt that British universities, on the whole, were isolated from the needs of the real world. Leading industrialists in countries like Germany and the U.S., he said, were often faculty members who interacted with undergraduates. He hoped that students weren't "shunted between campuses", and felt that the matrix system produced greater coherence and academic rigor than any other teaching system or model.

"Trying to make a comprehensive Polyversity was a

major aim, as well as breaking the binary divide" was the goal of another. He hoped to preserve all that is best in NUU. Outreach into the community would be facilitated by having four campuses. He also felt it would be good to break down some of the traditional elitism associated with British universities. He felt there was a great danger that things could polarize by campuses. He was disappointed that "there is not anything very exciting in the faculty structure".

Faculty Goals

Each interviewee was asked to outline faculty goals. A selection of key goals is offered for comparison.

Humanities. One officer saw the main goals of the Humanities faculty as the "preservation and transmission of culture" and the "maintenance of standards of excellence", particularly in its research. In addition, it would need to have subjects which are "specifically growth areas" (i.e., media studies). He argued strongly for interdisciplinary studies and against single discipline subject areas, in the new institution.

> We're not interested in studying history according to periods, of plodding through the 16th and 17th century, but taking themes like Nationalism or Revolution. I think one of the things wrong with History teaching is that dreadful plodding through chronologically.

Another principle he felt was important was that of "delayed choice", whereby early specialization was discouraged until students had an opportunity to experiment with other subjects and test their own ability in different subjects.

One of the key goals of a Humanities faculty was the "business of teaching individuals how to think", how to organize and express their thoughts. He was highly critical of traditional assessment systems in the British educational system:

> I think that the examinations system tends to push them (students) all into a single mould. We talk about being good examinees and bad examinees, and at the end of the day, we want good historians and bad historians - not good examinees and bad examinees.

Technology. Concern was expressed "that technology is applied properly". The officer went on,

> It's our intention . . . to make sure that students are capable of looking at technology and assessing both the good and bad bits, and try to work out some criteria as to whether or not it is worthwhile pursuing. Are we making the best use of our own resources? Is what we are about to do going to do more harm than good? You have got to consider the effect on the individual and society of their proposed solutions . . . Of course, the hard-nosed materialists will say, 'Well, hold on now, at the end of the day, we want to do this as cheaply as possible'. So let's continue the battle.

Science. Another officer did not envisage any dramatic change of educational provision, but rather, just "more of the same" in the new institution. He felt that one of the Science faculty goals involved the "personal satisfaction of acquiring education in the old-fashioned sense". Furthermore, a person with "any qualification at all is better and more employable than somebody without". He felt that the expectation was that UP Science staff would carry on and develop a combined science degree, which they do at present and that single subject Honors would continue at Coleraine. Another faculty goal was that of research.

When asked about the development in students of ethical awareness and self critical thinking, he said, "I don't think a lecturer or academic should impose their views" on undergraduates. He felt that Science in the foreseeable future, would follow a functionalist, rather than critical educational path, with degrees serving essentially as career tickets for industry. His reason for such a stance was that "there is so much to get into the syllabus" and such a short time to prepare students.

Social Science. The overall aim of the Social Science faculty was explained as "holding a mirror to society" and educating people in terms of the "consequences of what they are doing, what determines their behavior and consciousness". The mere fact that Social Science was available should "Improve the quality of society". It should also promote relevance, by offering courses which "appear to relate themselves in some way to the needs and demands of the community" and which students wanted to enrol in. The officer expected the new faculty "to continue and develop the idea of bringing courses to students at the time and the place when they need them rather than simply saying to the students "this is what we are providing whether you like it or not".

Another faculty goal was to maintain a commitment to the integration of theory and practice, that is, to educate and train students so that they can speculate in an open-minded way and generate novel solutions. He felt that the way for such a process to take place was "to try and build

some sort of supervised work experience into their degree program", such as a placement lasting a few months or a year.

Business and management. One of the main aims of the faculty of Business and Management was expressed as trying to relate very closely to industry. Another aim would be to ensure that all its members were reaching as far as possible their full potential. The faculty was "marketing-based", not "production-based".

On the distinction between education and training, the interviewee preferred to drop both terms and talk about human development which "doesn't stop at any point in time". He felt that the sandwich programs at UP aimed more at human development than at education or training. Sandwich students may in fact not be able to use a typewriter or a computer to any extent, but they know the "potential of the computer and the limitations of their training. They know about getting along with people; they know about negotiating skills". When asked about the extent to which students were exposed to diverse theoretical frameworks, he felt that in both first and final years, there would be some exposure to different viewpoints.

Structures And Management

Describing certain changes that had taken place since planning had started, an officer said,

> We started off with a rather Polytechnic type styled managerial system and it related to . . . line management and clear responsibility . . . and all sorts of things that we didn't have very much of in a university.

> Then the university people as it were, fought back and pushed a sort of pseudo-democracy into it. And I think we're going to have a lot of conflict actually in trying to get the best of both worlds: to get the cumbersome committee system of a university fitted on to a sort of line management, a rather autocratic line management . . . and I begin to shudder a bit as to what we're about really.

On the difference in management styles between a university and a polytechnic, one interviewee said he was an advocate of the Polytechnic system, despite criticism that it was non-democratic. He was a great believer in authority, as long as it was accompanied by responsibility as well:

> You take the action and your backside is kicked if that action is incorrect. Provided everyone can make their say at the appropriate level; and within the Polytechnic, the deans . . . have come under considerable criticism by colleagues at NUU as some sort of ogres who run about kicking asses and telling people what to do without any discretion. It is not my experience actually . . . Again, maybe I see it through rose tinted glasses. It has worked and I often say that that is the proof of the pudding. Look around you; the place is thriving.

Another officer contrasted the two styles of management at UP and NUU, the former a highly centralized, authoritarian system and the latter a highly democratic or even "anarchic" system. The UP system, he said "produced an alienation of some of the staff", a fact which was marked by UP's success:

> If you probe beneath this, there was obviously a considerable degree by which members of staff felt that they were just hired hands, that they were cogs in a wheel, and very little participation of the average academic helped to develop the institution.

NUU, by way of contrast, suffered from a lack of central direction and leadership. He argued for a balance between

the two systems, especially in the light of the great deal of waste of money at NUU:

> there is no encouragement to be thrifty because if I have a surplus at the end of the year, I in fact lose it; so I'm under pressure to spend all the money. At the end of the financial year, I tend to spend a lot of money, rather than hand it back to Central Administration.

On the question of organizational structures and authority relations, an officer felt that the new institution would be more like an industry, where "you are competing with 45 other universities and another 13 polytechnics". As a result, he felt that:

> on the one hand, you will have a very tight bureaucratic streamlined structure given the caliber of the staff: they're all pretty switched on, human people with minds and powers of analysis . . . And on the other hand, neither could you just meander around waiting for committees to get you out of some situation and finally somebody will make a decision that is about 2 years late . . . I think that what needs to be developed further is the sub dean structure: the Departmental sub faculty structure . . . and the interesting balance of power between the Product Managers, as I would call them: the course leader and directors who are delivering the product to the client, and the Resources or Input Managers, who are the subject leaders. Now I think there is an interesting dilemma, you see, how much power do you give to each?

Comparing teaching time between the two institutions, an interviewee said "Poly teachers teach 12-14 hours every week, and University people two-thirds of that". He admitted that much of one's spare time at UP was "taken up with meetings, course planning, etc.", and so there was "less time for preparation for teaching and research". Such a fact grew out of UP's "raison d'etre as an essentially teaching institution".

One officer said that a lot of NUU people "appear on paper as apparently teaching lots of units, but there may not be any students for those units". Furthermore, "colleagues are unwilling to criticize, shock each other, and in fact the whole tendency in this small community is to cover up for each other". He referred to "Doctor X who constantly misses lectures and doesn't in fact mark his assessment essays" and who is "frequently covered by a colleague". The amount of "poorly deployed and underused resources" at NUU, he said, was disgraceful, and he was looking forward to greater efficiency in the new institution.

One of the weaknesses in the structure of the new institution, was that one Pro Vice Chancellor had no control over any resources. He went on,

> I myself would have at the center I think, probably a Development Committee which would have been a joint Senate-Council Committee, which would have in fact been responsible for both the long-term planning . . . and the distribution of resources, and I shall certainly strongly be arguing in favor of that: but I think that we are in danger of a structural defect.

He felt that the structure would depend on the deans, with the Vice Chancellor leaving most things in their hands, but keeping certain key decisions in his hands, and simply interfering "when he sees the deans are making a mess of it". With regard to the four Provosts, he felt that "there is only one Provost who has any significance at all", namely the Provost at Derry. But even he is "rather like a beggar going round appealing for everybody to give him resources".

In theory the structure of the new institution would

not work, according to an interviewee:

> Well, they have a Pro Vice Chancellor who if you examine his post, is really in effect the Establishments/Personnel/Public Estate Officer. You have a Secretary who is the minute writer, the legal officer, the senior administrator. You then have a Finance Officer who seems to override all of these functions in terms of his direct line to the Vice Chancellor . . . Then we have a Resource Planning Officer . . . I think there are weaknesses and mainly because there are people who have to be fitted into jobs.
> Qn. Well, how would you structure it then?
> A. Personally, I would structure it with three administrators: a secretary-legal, an estates-personnel with finance function and an academic registry . . . separate in three groups. I would do away with the Pro Vice Chancellors.

He went on to suggest that the Pro Vice Chancellor for Development would not have great authority and would not be terribly busy. The reasons for such a structure, he said, were twofold: the Vice Chancellor didn't want to have a head of administration because of the problem of too much power focusing on him; and the other was that people didn't want a Pro Rector who, at least, at UP has all responsibility, except for finances (a "two headed monster"). He predicted that as soon as the present Vice Chancellor resigned or retired, the whole administrative system would change back towards a more traditional university structure simply because "it makes a lot of sense".

On the issue of faculty structure, an officer argued against too rigid a structure because "there are bound to be very important links" between each faculty. With regard to the faculty, he saw a struggle for funds in the new institution vis a vis the more vocationally oriented faculties.

Some doubt was expressed by an interviewee as to the wisdom of having so many people directly responsible to the Vice Chancellor: such a system was tied up with the idea that there wasn't a single head of Administration, a system which had been a "disaster" at NUU. Yet he felt something could be lost "by dividing the university into too many sections and it may pass too much power to the Vice Chancellor". The problem at NUU had been, not the separation of academic from administrative functions, but, "the way it has been operated" at NUU.

One senior officer predicted that a more federal structure would emerge "as each of the campuses begins to sort themselves out and see where they fit within the institution". After fifteen years, he expected a more collegiate structure to emerge. He also expected the initial source of conflict to be between the deans and the heads of departments "because that's where the suspicions essentially are and that, in a sense, is a check on the power of the deans". He singled out as a major difference between NUU and the new institution, the capacity for review, which had been done badly at NUU. Courses would require much greater consideration before being put on, with market forces playing a much larger part. He felt that academics would have to work harder in the institution, compared to the "soft ride within NUU" that some academics had enjoyed.

The greatest problem one officer saw in the new institution lay in the fact that people were "wanting the merger

to be a federation of existing things and wanting to carry on doing exactly what they are doing at the moment". Giving a concrete example, he said:

> I asked people for their views on departmental structure and the view came forward . . . that we should have two departments . . . in the new faculty. By a strong coincidence, one of them should be located at Coleraine and one at Jordanstown . . . and their major activities should be of course as it is at Coleraine and Jordanstown . . . You can imagine what a coordinating Committee would make of that! I mean I am well aware . . . of how fearful people feel at Coleraine about things which they prize being somehow dashed aside or their being moved in some arbitrary fashion. I might say there are similar fears here at the Poly . . . so I think there is a good deal of fear to be overcome.

According to one interviewee, financial decisions would be made on the advice of the Finance Officer "adjusted by the inputs of the Vice Chancellor and by the Committees" to which they go:

> Then the Standing Committee of the Senate would be the final one that would adjust things, and that's where I would expect to see the deans doing much more combative work between each other in terms of actually fighting for funds.

On the issue of review of the university performance every seven years, the officer said that there was "nothing in the legislation (i.e., Charter) that requires Council" to do anything about such evaluative reports.

Referring to the much vaunted committee system, an officer felt that decisions taken at committee level are thought to be more democratic and therefore good. People should "feel they're part of the decision making process, especially if we're involved in spending public money: a

defence against autocracy". He thought that the best safeguard against academic drift was that three quarters of the new staff would be "ex-Poly staff who've seen degree work and non degree work side by side", and are "committed to multi-level work requirements". He also thought that the public image of the University of Ulster would rise if its soccer team beat QUB.

Efficiency. Asked whether the committee system might prove unwieldy, another argued that each committee should have a clear objective and that there shouldn't be meetings for the sake of meetings. For a meeting involving 25 people, he said, "you're going to end up with a meeting which costs 2,500 pounds". He compared the efficiency of the auto industry, where a 10% rejection rate was unacceptable, to failures in academic courses above 15% and to the time taken for students to complete their courses. If students realise that they could graduate from another institution in 3 years instead of 4, they would not enrol at the new institution. He also saw job placements as an important criterion of effectiveness. The new institution would be too complex an operation to have one man making the decisions. In fact, "some of the best organizations or corporations are the organizations where there is not just one director". He felt that the team approach to management was the most successful one.

He expressed concern at the "lack of real industry or manufacturing leadership" on the coordinating committee for

higher education in the Province:

> I am worried about the UGC . . . I just think there is a complete mismatch about the whole UGC value system, the norms and terms of reference and the kind of things they back . . . My long term hope is that in three or five years there could be a more radical look at higher education in the U.K. and the UGC and the whole binary system be coordinated in one body.

Role Of Deans

In a discussion of leadership styles among deans, an officer said that a "fascist" style would not work in the long terms because there would be a "kick-back from the faculty" and from the unions, if a dean did not genuinely consult his faculty:

> A dean who behaves in this way in this (fascist) way wouldn't last long. Even if he was a permanent appointment, he might . . . get his salary, but he wouldn't carry any sort of weight on behalf of his faculty.

A strong argument was made by one person for permanent deans, who had, in the initial years, a great deal of authority, but who relaxed their control once the institution was established.

Another did not see the appointment as permanent:

> I'll do my stint and then I would hope that it would be a Jordanstown based person picked for next time round . . . I personally intend doing both teaching and research . . . and timetabling things accordingly because I like teaching.

On the role of deans, an interviewee did not see the role as an "innovator unless the dean happens to have any bright ideas, but equally any faculty member can have their own views". The role was not to impose ideas from above. On the question of promotion, he felt that a person with no

research experience, but expertise in teaching should be equally eligible for promotion. What he would not accept, however, was "some Professor with nothing other than good teaching ability".

Continuing Education

On the question of continuing education, an officer thought that each faculty would handle its own affairs. There was no reason, he felt, why any faculty should "hand it (CE) over to some central continuing education unit". He preferred to "remain open to being convinced by whoever is running continuing education, that they can offer something that is not already being offered in preference". He continued:

> I think the ball is in their court really. I have never been convinced in this institution . . . I am afraid there was no particular need for continuing education faculties. It just seemed to me to be an aspect of everybody's work . . . You might just as well say that virtue is a good thing in the institution so let's set up a virtue group that will check if everyone is virtuous.

Another felt that continuing education had more scope for courses in areas like "Social Sciences and that kind of thing that a retired housewife is interested in", rather than in his area.

One person felt there was a considerable amount of confusion about the concept or definition.

Another argued for the provision of facilities for the "ruthless, critical investigation of religion in relation to society". On the question of Religious Studies as a course designed to offer scope for coming to grips, over

time, with the religious conflict in Northern Ireland, one officer referred to the bigotry of the Northern Ireland community. One of the best things that happened at NUU, he felt, was the Education Center's training program for teachers in Catholic and Protestant schools. It is done "quietly and no one beats a drum about it", but it had been enormously successful. He thought that the best thing a university could do was to be non denominational:

> I am not a terribly religions person myself and I have been terribly shattered by it I must say. On personal terms I was almost on the brink of becoming religious when I came here, and when I came to Northern Ireland it so appalled me that it sort of pushed me off really. I mean if various denominations of Christians can sort of take the views that they do of each other, it doesn't seem a great advertisement for the overall concept.

Staff development. Another officer saw his role as "acquiring students for the new institution" and selling the curriculum and research programs to a potential market. He saw academic evaluation as the most exciting challenge: monitoring the academic pulse of the institution, constructing the academic plan, reviewing it annually, seeing where we're going. He raised the question of staff development. In response to a question about how to teach professors how to be effective chairmen, he said,

> I believe in the adult-centered way . . . and that is not that somebody stands and tell you how. It is to have the skill . . . to put people in groups and to give them the right questions to answer: 'What do you think are, for example, the characteristics of a good agenda? How should it be done? What do you believe from your experience?', and let a group work on it.

Problems With The Merger

The interviewer asked him why Coleraine was chosen as headquarters for the new institution, given that Jordanstown had the larger population and amenities. ("Was it purely a political choice designed to placate the Coleraine people?"):

> No, I don't think so . . . I think it was Derek Birley who made that decision. I think you'd have to ask him. It does pose problems for the likes of myself and others here (Jordanstown) . . . There is an excess of space at Coleraine. And it would therefore seem logical that the headquarters ought to be there. We are choc a bloc here . . . In students, we are at least 1,000-1,500 over-capacity.

Competition with QUB. On the question of competition with QUB he said UP was probably "the most significant prompt to Queen's to change". He cited several new courses (e.g., European Business Studies) which QUB introduced immediately after UP launched them:

> We have a Combined Science Degree - they did not have it - they had it the next year . . . and you could go through a fair list. You talk about the Poly aping Queen's; in fact it's the other way round . . . Because they're on our Council of Governors, it goes back to Queen's straight off and it goes right into their network. We have a tremendous relationship with the teaching profession which they will never have . . . We've probably got much stronger relationships with the whole of the professional industry, the surveyors, the physiotherapists, the paramedical side, social workers.

According to one officer:

> It is now difficult for the staff of the New University to accept the merger and it is equally difficult for the staff of the Polytechnic who feel that they are looked down on by the staff of the University - that they are academically inferior . . . So there will be a considerable difficulty of building up trust and confidence between the two groups.

He went on to refer to the amount of uncertainty about the merger and felt that communication throughout the two institutions had created much of this uncertainty.

Agriculture. Another officer referred, rather bitterly, to the Department of Agriculture with its "hands off" approach to agricultural education in the Province:

> I would certainly like to see the new institution looking at the whole area of agricultural food processing and the latter, I think, is enormously important, given the poverty of resources in Northern Ireland.

He agreed that areas such as agricultural economics, technology and marketing, could be introduced in the new institution.

Psychological aspects. Turning to the issue of how some members of either institution perceived the other institution, he said "some members of the staff at the Polytechnic think of NUU as academic lotus eaters" while some folk at NUU "see the Polytechnic as some sort of mindless technocrats". He disagreed that NUU was all academic and UP all applied. He asserted that many members of the UP staff would say that "the hierarchy structure here (UP) is dominating one and that the participative structure is mere tokenism". Although he felt such a belief was only a stereotype, if enough staff believed it it became very important, especially when there were fears at NUU that some "more dominant institutional management structures" would be superimposed on something more participative.

One person referred to certain apprehensions he felt

about the merger:

> The Poly people are very formidable. At Committees they can handle work much better than I can. I'm OK if I have got time to prepare something. I can then speak in public, but they are much more able to make points. But frequently, the points they make are . . . without substance. But their skill of oratory: that's my own fear, that I would be kind of left at a disadvantage . . . But one or two personalities I find most peculiar and self-centered.

The surprising change of attitude that occurred among UP staff was mentioned by an officer: UP staff, he said used to defend the UP ethos as a wonderful thing. Yet as soon as the "smell of University status wafted about", he was disappointed at those colleagues who wavered in their loyalty. He felt it was "amazing how quickly you can turn your coat". Another officer catalogued the levels of anxieties experienced from the Vice Chancellor Designate downwards, but balanced such uncertainty against the "kind of psychological damage they might have felt if they'd been out of a job completely". The researcher asked whether the critical function of a university was going to be jeopardised by the increasing movement towards a vocational emphasis. The officer's response was that students of every discipline should be "trained to think critically". One possible conflict area the officer foresaw was between Provosts and Deans, especially at Derry, where "Provosts would have to work very closely with Deans in relation to the smaller units that a faculty might have" in the Derry campus:

> If you've got only half a dozen members of staff in the Derry Campus belonging to a particular faculty, the dean cannot be up there every day,

> seeing what is going on . . . and I think that the Provost would have to act to some extent as the agent of the Dean, in helping to supervise the staff and assist him in various ways . . . What I'm suggesting is that . . . a Provost (might) act as sub-Dean.

One officer felt that the main fear at NUU was that the self-expression of the scholar would be curbed by interventionist management that says, "that's your syllabus, now you teach it".

With regard to the problem of Northern Ireland students crossing the water to attend English universities because of "The Troubles", another interviewee said,

> I wouldn't want my children to go to University in Northern Ireland terribly. You know, I think it is a rather narrowing, confining environment. I think it is all for the benefit for Northern Ireland students to get this experience. I argue with (Norman Gibson) who is always wanting to restrict free trade. I have always wanted to stimulate the reverse flow. I think that is much more important than trying to stop people going over.

An officer felt that one of the main problems in the new institution was the welding of two distinct philosophies of education. He feared that there would be misunderstandings and a "fair amount of 'blood, fur and feathers', as they say, flying". One possible area of conflict was if UP heads of subject were automatically made professors, a move which would be anathema to Coleraine academics. He also felt that to impose a UP management structure on NUU was a "recipe for conflict", and that it might have been better to have streamlined the university model, than to have democratised the UP model. He said it would have solved several problems if the Vice Chancellor's appointment had been

externally advertised: "I think his blueprints were too closely related to the Polytechnic model and that led to a reaction against them from the University". He felt that the Vice Chancellor would find the job very frustrating as more of his hands were tied by university models. On the question of communication, he said that too much was kept confidential and secret at NUU and he preferred openness. If NUU had presented a "much stronger and more forceful case to the Chilver committee", he wondered whether the merger would ever have been recommended.

One of the major problems of the new institution, an officer felt, would be adjusting to the multi-campus situation and learning to use "technology rather than face to face communication processes". He favored bringing the two religious communities (i.e., Protestant and Catholic) together "by stealth" in joint programs, than approaching the conflict head on within curricular structures.

Another major problem envisaged by an interviewee was that of getting academics to "lift their eyes to the horizon and say 'We are in a new institution: NUU is dead and gone, UP is dead and gone". He felt a great deal would depend on the enthusiasm of leaders as to how effectively loyalties would be transferred from the old to the new institution: "I think the major problem is to get themselves thinking of one organization".

Another officer felt that the Ulster merger ought to be the model for the whole U.K. system, and saw the binary

divide as a social nonsense:

> I think the rest of the U.K. will be learning from this merger, to see how it goes. There is already talk about Manchester, Wales and a few places like that. They are beginning to look closely at such a thing. They will be watching us. If it works out financially you see, I think there will be a great drive then for the government to pursue it.

On the role of the UGC in the new institution, one interviewee expected it to take a stronger line with "firmer letters of guidance" to Vice Chancellors and with some universities being penalised by having grants reduced:

> We get a sort of guarantee of funding in my view in the early years. After that we may be rather more on our own. They also know a good deal about the institution, and if, for example, as some of us fear, we are developing a top heavy administrative structure which might prove expensive, then I have no doubt they will point that out to us, because they will have that information perhaps more than for other universities where they may not know the structure so well . . . I am a little worried that we are putting in too many people who don't do any teaching - the seconded academic bit.

One of the weaknesses in the British system of higher education, one officer felt, was that academics needed training in educational administration, so as to be aware of external pressures and relations with government, the community and industry. "Our academics", he said, "are too keen to preserve their academic integrity" and freedom.

> I believe in relevance in courses, and in many universities it is a very dirty word, but I think it may be easier in my area. I think courses should relate to the world outside . . . I am more inclined to plunge them (students) into some problem in the first year, and if they need tools to solve it, we have to somehow acquire the tools. But I think the acquiring of basic disciplines first and then applying them is the correct academic procedure.

Another officer felt that British universities have been "too narrow educationally both in terms of their recruitment and indeed their goals". The new institution, he hoped, would not define university education so narrowly and would recruit more broadly, having a "much higher proportion of students without the traditional qualifications for university entry".

Another person felt that one of the key lessons learned through the merger was that government was all powerful in matters relating to education.

> There has been a myth . . . that universities are free chartered organizations which cannot be changed by government . . . I never believed that, but a lot of people did . . . I think really over the course of the last 20 years the government has been very gentlemanly in its approach to higher education, hoping that higher education could indeed put its own house in order. But where . . . its own house cannot be put in order simply by itself, then I think government has a degree of responsibility to ensure that the needs of the society, and the public money are properly catered for.

One interviewee said that one of the main lessons he had learned from the merger was that "personality is much more important than I thought it was in the development of human events. Had Derek Birley not been appointed, there is a great likelihood that this merger would not have gone ahead". He saw community feeling as a more important issue in Derry than Catholicism or Protestantism.

Weaknesses in merger planning. Another problem with the merger process was in the area of decision making. The interviewee thought the Steering Group idea could be said to have been a rather poor idea really. He felt it was

wrong to set up a "group of people, none of whom are going to have to live directly with the consequences of their actions". He mentioned the delaying of merger processes by constitutional problems within the university, as a major difficulty: "there has been an element of uncertainty which has come from people believing it were possible to stop it". Another weakness, he felt, was in the mode of staff designation. By protecting jobs, he felt, "you may not have the very best sort of people in the positions of authority". When asked what were the major lessons learnt from the merger, one officer said, "Not to do it this way". He felt it was wrong for government, through a steering committee to "force a merger". Either the government should have closed Coleraine and Jordanstown and told the new institution to get on with its business, or government should have said "we want you to merge" and persuaded the two separate Councils to get on with the merger. If he had planned it,

> It wouldn't have been a merger. It would have been the creation of a new institution out of the two existing ones, using such staff as the new institution wanted to take on. Everyone would have had to compete for a job. We've had the luxury, you see . . . of being able to participate in the merger in the knowledge that our jobs were secure . . . I would have been less worried about actually trying to get jobs for every single person who was here at the levels at which they work.

Research

An officer suggested that one of the most crucial safeguards against academic drift was for the new institution to be a market (not producer) oriented institution. Yet he

placed a high priority on research:

> If a fellow goes into a lecture room and lectures about a particular subject. If he can say, 'Yes, I've written a paper on this, I'm in correspondence with this scholar . . . the student pays ten times more attention to what he thereafter says, than if he delivers a clever lecture. Students . . . have the aspiration to reach frontiers of knowledge and it is most important that . . . staff should be engaged in research.

Another officer hoped with regard to research, that the institution would "concentrate resources and attention on certain areas of excellence", with a focus on consultancies and outreach. He expected a closer scrutiny of research interests and patterns, with a distinction between research "that's good for the researcher" and research that has some useful outcome or pushes back the frontiers of knowledge. The distinction between teachers and researchers is "a bit artificial. There will be the consultant types, there are the managerial types; a lot of people like academic management, you know, committees and all that". One of the major differences according to one interviewee between the new institution and QUB was in the type of research conducted:

> I think there is still room for the chap who wants to refute Einstein's theory . . . It may not increase knowledge, but I think if we are to resolve the problems in this corner of the world, we have got to focus on applied research . . . I think Queen's is well established on the scholarship front, and good luck to them! . . . I think we are going to get out there and try to get more jobs, more industry and try to solve some of the social problems through research.

Another officer argued that high quality students were

essential for establishing the integrity of the new institution. He admitted that neither UP nor NUU was attracting quality students, except in one or two areas (e.g., Physiotherapy), on which to build a high reputation. Research at UP, he said, was "patchy", though teaching and course organization were satisfactory:

> We've had a monopoly as a Poly - the only one in the Province, whereas NUU has had to compete nationally. Where is the University of Ulster going to be in rank order in ten years? Very good quality students lift teaching standards and become the best ambassadors in the market.

He asked which courses "can this institution offer that are in high demand". He mentioned, by way of answer, Nursing, Speech Therapy, Home Economics and Teacher Education. He argued for the deletion of courses of dubious educational value and the elimination of some staff ("get rid of a lot of fat, the businessman's approach"). He felt the new institution needed "some courses that are exclusive to us" (e.g., Nursing).

Furthermore, Northern Ireland, he said, didn't have a Veterinary College, which could be useful for the food and agriculture industry and would serve as a flagship for the university. He admitted, however, that if you took "one vet student, you'd have to cut out others". There would be a big multiplying factor, because it would "stiffen up Chemistry, Physics, Biology, etc.", by drawing in the best students and putting the Science staff on their toes. Such a project, he admitted, would be enormously expensive, and would require a ten year plan.

Summary

Reference has been made to how the researcher gained entry to the field, negotiating interviews with leading figures outside the two institutions, as well as with faculty and administrators who had some stake in the merger. A final set of interviews was conducted towards the end of the nine months, with the fifteen designated officers of the new institution. Several formal meetings were attended by the observer, which focused on merger plans. On only two occasions, one at Coleraine, and the other, during a telephone interview, was the researcher treated with anything less than courtesy. Towards the end of the research, an interview was sought with the Chairman of Steering Group, firstly, by telephone and then, when that failed, by appointment. Interviews were sought with the Permanent Secretary of DENI and with two of his staff. Replies to the researcher's requests are found in Appendix B.

Interviewees expressed a considerably varied range of attitudes towards the merger. Many held the government to account for its intervention in the affairs of a university, but took such measures as a sign of things to come, especially in times of financial stringency.

A significant level of uncertainty and opposition was uncovered from interviews in the early months, with many interviewees, from the community or from either of the two campuses, failing to see the educational logic of the government's decision. Both institutions tended to feel they

would be losing something from the merger. NUU academics saw the merger as a further downgrading of academic standards and as a takeover by a bureaucratic management model to which universities were unaccustomed. At Coleraine and, to a lesser extent, at Derry, there were real fears of UP deans intruding upon the boundaries of academic freedom, by their so-called "autocratic style". UP staff, on the other hand, while seeing the merger as a "promotion", nevertheless resented being forced by government to rescue a "failed" university. Several interviewees referred to the possibility of a first class polytechnic becoming a third rate university.

As the inevitability of the merger dawned on the communities at Coleraine and Jordanstown, many staff members became more pragmatic in their attitudes, realising that they must adjust to reality and stake their claim for whatever benefits might accrue. It was clear from the interviews with designated officers, that those who had the greatest responsibility for making the merger work, had reconciled themselves to previous misgivings or resentments, and were determined to create the most innovative structures and programs and, hopefully to set the new institution on a path to distinction in the Province. Such officers expressed both hope and doubt as to the ultimate impact of the University of Ulster, realising that in many ways, their task was unusually difficult, because of financial and social constraints on growth, and also because it would

take years to establish public credibility throughout the Province. The majority of the latter group felt that the greatest strength of the new institution lay in its concern to offer programs, at all academic levels, and through both traditional and innovative learning modes, to a far wider clientele, based, not on producer, but consumer needs. They were not over concerned that the new institution's main rival (QUB) had a century long tradition of excellence, and a larger slice of research funds, because their own management style and educational ethos would over time, establish the University of Ulster as an institution that was relevant and that made a significant impact on economic and social life in the Province as a whole. To have four campuses was seen as a sign of a dynamic, thrusting institution whose concern was to reach people where they were with whatever programs they felt in need of. There were in addition, great hopes of "making amends" for past neglect of the Derry community and its needs, by the gradual development of undergraduate, part time and non degree courses, and the facilitation of capital expenditure on a building program to service Derry and satellite centers.

It would be inappropriate to close the ethnographic section without a brief reference to the researcher's own sense of his identity as it evolved over the nine month period. One observation, at the outset, is that if the researcher had been female, she may have found gaining access to so many male academics and administrators or to the

various all male merger meetings, a far more daunting task than the present researcher experienced. As it turned out, being accepted as a colleague within a particular department at NUU, provided the easiest of entries into the field work. Needless to say, the first six weeks were difficult in the sense of the researcher's having to explain the purpose of his study repeatedly to everyone he met, and to have his lunch by himself in the cafeteria, until he had developed enough links at a personal level to feel more at home.

Quite early in the research, the observer made a point of having his lunch at the Staff Common Room, which opened up a very useful information and social network, as time progressed. After the first two months, the researcher became more confident of key areas to focus interviews on. Moreover, he became known as "the merger man" and was often seen as a useful source of knowledge. In fact, after the first two months, it was a rare coffee break in which the researcher was not surrounded by academics who were preoccupied with merger developments.

One of the more important tasks of the final chapter will be to compare what planners of the new institution hope might eventuate with some of the more persistent fears they and others have shared with the researcher. Another will be to suggest possible weaknesses at a structural level, as perceived by certain high level planners, but also in the light of the insights from other chapters.

VII

CONCLUSIONS

The final section of the study gives a review of all previous material and both an analysis and synthesis of the data that relates most directly to the underlying aim of the research. The chapter concludes with some implications of the study at both practical and theoretical levels.

Review

The aim of the research was to determine the extent to which important educational ideals are constrained by economic and political pressures on curricular and administrative structures in higher education. Two very distinct British institutions, a small rural university at Coleraine and a large urban polytechnic near Belfast, were called upon by government to amalgamate. The background to and rationale for such a unique decision, at least in British higher education, were outlined by reference to a series of government reports and white papers (I). The NUU at Coleraine, with its offshoot at Londonderry, Magee University College, was judged by higher education authorities in both London and Belfast, to have failed to measure up to projected enrolment figures, partly through mismanagement but also because of social unrest in the Province. The recommendations of the Chilver committee, that NUU should undergo radical changes within its existing Charter and structures, were rejected by the government, which set up a Steering Group to establish an entirely new institution. The hope of the

government was that by combining the strengths of both institutions, and developing academic programs that catered more readily for the needs of the Province, with its high unemployment and decimated industrial base, a more relevant and market-oriented style of higher education would evolve.

Some time was spent outlining certain characteristics of higher and further education in the U.K. Particular reference was made to a system of governance (the "binary divide") that treated universities, for funding and policy making, separately from polytechnics. The expansion of polytechnics was noted, particularly in terms of degree work, with the result of considerable overlap at a curricular level with their senior partners, the universities.

The researcher brought to the study his own concern to find possible ways, at both curricular and structural levels within higher education, of creating a learning environment which did justice both to the legitimate career aspirations of students and expectations of the tax payer; but which, at the same time, facilitated human development, critical awareness and ethical responsibility. The three research methods used to throw light on the fundamental problem, were document analysis, questionnaire and ethnography. While the study had a provincial focus several larger areas of interest were noted: the social and philosophical foundations of higher education, organizational communication and educational administration theory, and future trends in the

U.K. system of higher education. Such concerns prompted and controlled the review of the literature (II). The researcher was preoccupied with what light each separate field of literature (e.g., philosophy of education, organization theory) cast on how educational administrators might hold the two apparently conflicting concerns in creative tension within the structures of higher education.

The third chapter provided both a description of and rationale for each particular research procedure. The researcher wanted to gain an insight into what individuals or representatives of public bodies perceived to be the relevant issues with regard to the merger. A descriptive study, based primarily on participant-observation, was chosen for the same reason.

The document analysis (IV) presented a selection of papers related to the merger. Formal public submissions were called for by the government, about specific aspects of the merger in the papers dealing with the structural aspects of the merger, both constitutional and academic or administrative. Reference was made to government committee reports, parliamentary evidence papers, press statements and other related documents. It was through these documents and press clippings that the researcher gained an insight at the very early stages of the study, into the complexity of the merger process, as perceived by the various interested parties: government, local educators, trade unions, the press, members of the two institutions, welfare agencies,

church officials and representatives of commerce and industry.

After several months, a questionnaire was designed (V) and sent to a random sample of academics, administrators and students on each of the four campuses. Having realised the potential bias placed upon the study by his being based at Coleraine, the researcher devised the survey to measure any possible differences of perception, between the university and the polytechnic, about the aims of higher education and, more specifically, about the merger itself. Chi square tests of significance and comparison of Means were conducted on the data.

The bulk of the research took the form of participant observation (VI). The researcher was given an office in a particular NUU department, which gave immediate access, as a quasi-faculty member, to the normal social and administrative functions accorded to staff. Interviews took place, both formally and informally, at the various campuses, with academics and administrators. Where face-to-face interviews were difficult (because of distance or time constraints) the telephone was used instead. At some small level, the observer became a participant when, firstly, he was consulted by staff as a source of knowledge about aspects of the merger, and secondly, when a paper he wrote became the focus of discussion about possible models of outreach and continuing education in the new institution. Several joint meetings were attended by the observer, including the very

first meeting of the proto-Senate of the new institution.

The Documents

A number of documents expressed opposition to the merger for a variety of reasons. Some people in the Province or across the water, felt that the government's intrusion into the affairs of a university was reprehensible, particularly because they felt there had been inadequate prior consultation with NUU and UP about the feasibility of a merger. DENI was felt to be at fault in this area especially. Others felt that NUU was only a young university, and that it had experienced the misfortune of trying to compete for students as a rural campus, both against the much more established QUB, but also, at the time when "The Troubles" frightened many English or Scottish students away from the Province. NUU, they felt, should be allowed greater freedom and more time to expand and establish credibility; it was thought to be unfair to force it to surrender its Charter. Some felt that local commerce and employment trends would suffer, if Belfast became the dominant center for higher education. Many saw the merger as a "trial horse" for future rationalization of higher education, and possible mergers, in Great Britain. Almost none felt that the primary motive for the merger was educational: here was a clear case, so people felt, of economics and politics determining educational policy.

Members of UP who opposed the merger, felt that it was unfair to expect a first rate polytechnic to be called

upon to "rescue" a "failed" or "ailing" university. There was a fear that the fundamental mission of a polytechnic, that of servicing the more technical and clerical needs of industry and commerce, would be jeopardized, and that lower level or non degree work might give way, in the new institution, to the more "prestigious" degree work.

Some people simply thought that the possible economies brought about by a more efficient managerial system, under Derek Birley's able leadership, would be offset by the expense of running a unitary system across four campuses. Where would funds come from, to cover problems like transport and communications, growth of the Derry campus, transfer of UP staff to university salaries and pension schemes? Many feared that such developments would be funded at the expense of possibly their own careers at some future point, when rationalization took effect.

A significant number of documents expressed doubt as to whether two such different types of institutions could be "married". Academics at Coleraine and to a lesser extent at Jordanstown, saw the merger as a UP "takeover" of NUU. Some wondered whether educational standards would drop even further.

Several documents reflected a more positive attitude to the merger, seeing it as a real opportunity to rethink higher education, and to shift away from the past rigidity and conservatism of traditional British universities, towards a more service-oriented model. Programs should be relevant to the needs of the community, and learning should be

more accessible to all who wished to avail themselves of the new institution's facilities and resources. Courses should exist which allowed transfer upwards or downwards, and a credit system devised so that mature age students especially could benefit by the opportunity to enter and exist as occasion demanded.

Several documents referred to the kinds of innovation that might take place within the curriculum. There were suggestions about developing Agriculture, Veterinary Science and Religious Studies, and of developing links with American Universities. One person thought the University of Ulster might well look to the U.S. Community College, as a model for development. There was a clear sense that the new institution would relate, in its structures and programs, far more closely to market and consumer needs, than NUU and QUB had done in the past. There was a concern that complementarity rather than competition with QUB would characterise the role of the new institution.

A proportion of papers was preoccupied with the role of Derry and of the Institute for Continuing Education at Magee University College. The weight of the material came down on the side of major expansion, of both buildings and resources, into a more normal university campus with course offerings at each faculty level, but geared to the specific social and economic needs of the Northwest of the Province. Continuing education, while still having an expression at Magee, would not be the totality of its educational

provision. Furthermore, suggestions were made of possible links with the North West College of Technology nearby. There were mixed reactions to the suggestion that an independent polytechnic be established in Derry, instead of the original plans under the merger.

Inter-institutional rivalries were evident in some documents. Naturally, staff at both institutions felt somewhat vulnerable to such possibilities as retrenchment, voluntary retirement, relocation on another campus and loss of academic freedom or seniority. The role of the various unions was to seek protection of their members' interests generally, but particularly in regard to job security and superannuation benefits. Possibly one of the main reasons for the decision to exclude external appointments, was the threat of union action nationally.

There is ample evidence, within the documents, of a sense of insecurity and even suspicion, among faculty members of both institutions. Many documents expressed real concern about decision making structures, and bureaucratic patterns within the UP management system. Deans were singled out as likely sources of suspicion or even hostility, particularly if the authority structures set them over staff in some sort of hierarchical chain of command.

Many documents focused on organizational structures, faculty boundaries, constitutional problems and curricular strategies. A great deal of attention, for example, was placed on the drafting of the new Charter and Statutes.

Academic planning focused on such areas as departmental structure, course development and assessment procedures. Some of the correspondence had a similar focus. Two major concerns were to guarantee a unitary, rather than federal structure, and to monitor, by means of various committees, the life of the new institution, at both a curricular and administrative level. If the new institution were to compete for funds with QUB, then it had to establish credibility with the UGC and the Northern Ireland Working Party, in both areas. One major constitutional issue, in this regard, was felt to be the relationship of the new Council to the Senate. Several submissions or Minutes suggested that the new institution would be controlled by lay members (Council) rather than by academics (Senate). Such a reversal of previous constitutional practice should be noted as an indication of the growing disquiet in the community with the independent role of universities, and with their lack of accountability.

The government's role in the merger was the subject of several documents. Many recognized the importance of economic and political accountability for all public institutions. Few, however, felt that the government's handling of the merger had been above reproach. The victim naturally, had no respect for his assailant. One could argue, however, that change of a radical nature, might only be brought about by strong, intrusive and sometimes ruthless measures. Several people recognized that if NUU and UP had been asked

to discuss the feasibility of a merger, they would most probably still be arguing about where the first meeting should take place. The government, rightly or wrongly, came to a decision and therefore had to take every step to ensure its implementation. The fact that the NUU Court attempted to block such a decision reflects both a legitimate democratic right and yet a failure to understand the fundamental responsibility of public institutions such as universities to give an account of themselves. Needless to say, one cannot help being curious as to the scenario if the Court had not capitulated to government pressure: Would funds have been withdrawn, as threatened, thus preventing any further student enrolments? Would legislation have been drawn up to overcome the resistance? Could NUU have mounted a campaign of opposition, on the basis of the Ulster problem and of anti-British sentiment, possibly appealing to Dublin or the European Parliament?

The question of a rationale for the merger was referred to in several documents. Many saw the decision as the first attempt by government to break the "binary divide". Others saw it as a largely economic decision. The only real clue to government thinking lay in its July 1983 paper. The government saw a need for more "scientific and technological studies" and for a greater variety of courses equipping students vocationally. The crucial implications for both the new institution and for QUB, were contained in the guidelines given to the UGC and its Working Party that will

coordinate higher education in the Province. Heads of the new institution would do well to study the guidelines carefully, and respond to them positively, if they are to win government approval and funds for further expansion. Presumably, it is more important for a university to contribute to economic growth than to provide a learning environment conducive to critical inquiry, imagination, compassion, tolerance and interdependence. To limit the scope of higher education to the facilitation of material prosperity alone, especially in Northern Ireland, where social and material needs go hand in hand, offers some insight into the poverty of government leadership in Northern Ireland.

The Questionnaire

The survey underlined the difference of perception about the goals, functions and structures of higher education, between members of a Northern Ireland university and polytechnic. Despite real problems in administering the survey to UP students (final year and graduate levels), the data showed significant disparities of perception between the two institutions. UP respondents saw the primary function of a university as vocational preparation whereas NUU respondents placed higher priority on human development and the pursuit of truth. Ironically, if NUU had been more self-consciously vocational over the years, perhaps the government may never have felt it necessary to intervene so dramatically.

An important minority gave high priority to the critical

function of a university (almost one third of the sample), with a higher proportion of preferences for the item from NUU. The remarkable point to consider, in relation to such a finding, was that such a concern among academics was rarely expressed formally in conversations about the merger, unless the researcher raised the issue first. People seemed to be far more preoccupied with the practical details and implications of merger decisions. It could probably be inferred that visionary thinking was overshadowed by more pragmatic considerations in the planning processes at both Coleraine and Jordanstown. To the researcher, one of the most disappointing features of merger discussions was the absence of serious consideration of how the University of Ulster might bring about changes in ideological, cultural and religious attitudes and practices in the Province over time. Perhaps such a perspective could develop after the initial problems of establishing the new institution have been resolved. The implications of this finding for research in the new institution are worth noting: valuable research in the more critical areas, may well be thought by senior management to be irrelevant and not utilitarian enough. A purely mechanistic transfer of skills or information by faculty to students, may lead to better career opportunities, but may not have trained people to think for themselves and to be self-directed learners.

By far the majority of respondents gave highest priority to holistic human development as the main function of any university: the growth in students and staff of

"intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual capacities". The whole person becomes a central concern to life at a university, and not merely one small aspect of the human personality (e.g., cognition). Planners of the new institution will need to provide space, within the academic and administrative structures, for facilitating growth of both students and staff in all such areas. If people are so preoccupied with taking or teaching classes, attending committee meetings, and sitting for or grading term papers, then the cultural impact of the new institution will be seriously limited. Facilities for bringing staff and students together for recreation, celebration, aesthetic and religious experiences could well provide a more balanced environment for personalities to develop in an otherwise cerebral community. If the University of Ulster saw one of its main educational tasks as providing a learning context based on principles of cooperation rather than competition, mutual interdependence rather than rugged individualism and critical openness rather than craven dogmatism, then its chances of making a lasting impact on the community, might be increased.

Another significant finding was the widespread pessimism about the educational benefits of the merger to the Province. At NUU, there was a greater sense of despair about the public image of the new institution, than at UP. Planners of the new institution would do well to restore confidence among NUU faculty members and to build credibility

into the new institution, as it evolves. Such a process, would no doubt, involve an innovative promotion campaign in the schools, welfare agencies, employer organizations and industry.

The Interviews

A similar pattern of perceptions of the merger, to those identified in both the document analysis and the questionnaire, soon emerged from early interviews. Interviewees spoke of the "breaking of the binary divide" and of "rationalization" of higher education. People at Coleraine expressed "anger" at the Chilver report and the decision to merge. UP interviewees tended to think the new institution would be more efficient than NUU had been, and in fact, quite similar in structure to UP itself. One of the UP deans admitted that there had been problems with the UP management style, especially in terms of its effect on research and scholarship.

Early interviews took place, face to face and by telephone with both government officials and academics or administrators involved in the merger at some level. The question of traditional elitist attitudes towards universities was raised by several interviewees. The Oxbridge model still remains, in people's minds, as the epitome of what a university should be like. Certainly, it is true that senior civil servants and parliamentarians, as well as influential members of the upper middle class, would tend to have come from Oxford or Cambridge. The irony of such deeply

entrenched thinking is that such institutions cater for a minority of the most outstanding undergraduates throughout the U.K. and beyond. They have little or no impact on the more pedestrian undergraduates. One person made the distinction between "top quality institutions" and those connected with the "economic needs of society".

The observer could not help sensing at NUU, among several faculty members, a kind of inferiority complex based on a comparison of academic and student life at Coleraine, with what it was like at Oxbridge. Without wishing in any way to disparage the rich traditions of such institutions as well as their contribution to the society, the researcher would hope that the opportunities for innovation that such a unique event in British higher education as the breaking of the binary divide affords, might give a certain optimism to any who can only see gloom ahead.

If the University of Ulster became known as the institution that had a major impact on social and economic life in Northern Ireland, and whose research was utilized directly for the benefit of the surrounding environment, one feels confident that it would eventually change elitist thinking in higher education, to the point where universities were seen as serving the community, first and foremost. Sir Henry Chilver saw the greatest problem for higher education in Great Britain in terms of its inflexibility and lack of responsiveness to social need. Universities he said, must come to grips with the "economic, social and

political realities" and develop a much closer link between theory and practice. Once again, the opportunity provided through sandwich courses involving at least a few months in the field or workshop, should help bridge such a gap and produce graduates who are more mature and more able to relate to the non university world at the end of their program.

Several discussions took place on the question of Derry interests. It would seem that a case is being made to government by the new institution, for significant expansion of both plant facilities and academic courses. There would be no overnight transformation of the Magee campus, but a gradual shift of existing resources and personnel from both Jordanstown and Coleraine. One UP academic expected growth at Derry to be "at the expense of Coleraine".

The uncertainty about the definition of continuing education became apparent from various meetings as well as from almost every interview on the subject. Some saw it as extramural studies; others, in terms of a second chance learning situation; or again, as an upgrading of vocational expertise. The perception of key officials in the new institution, was of an activity engaged in across all four campuses and at every level of faculty programming, with the possibility of extension into other centers of the Province.

It did not take long for the researcher to realise how costly the merger had been in terms of demands on people's time, energy and emotions. There is still some

doubt as to whether the vast majority of informal conversations held by the researcher over coffee, lunch or a beer at NUU gravitated towards the merger because of a sense of urgency about careers and future roles shared by one and all, or because of a role expectation ascribed by people to the researcher. Perhaps both elements were at play. What could not be denied, was the level of anxiety reflected by the almost compulsive tendency to want to hear the "latest" on the merger. Such a tendency resulted largely because of the weak formal communication processes. Many interviewees admitted that the psychological stress caused by the merger was due largely to the failure of communication structures throughout the four campuses. The researcher himself gained a considerable amount of esteem, personal satisfaction and a healthy sense of identity as a researcher from being regarded as a kind of authority.

The final set of interviews proved to be the highlight of the research. By August, 1983, the questionnaire had been administered and the researcher had developed a much clearer picture of the key issues related to the merger. It became important to the researcher to assess the degree of both consensus and dissensus among the heads of the new institution on certain key issues: goals, authority structures, public image, academic freedom, continuing education, research and scholarship, funding, possible problems, lessons learned and social impact. The first two items were felt by the interviewer to be the most important, and so

most of the time was spent exploring them.

There were seventeen designated officers and fifteen were interviewed, after a schedule of the above items was mailed to each person in advance. Because of the problems encountered by the researcher in gaining access to student files at UP, in connection with the questionnaire (see above), the researcher felt very diffident about approaching certain UP officers to seek interviews, after they had refused permission or created obstacles. It was therefore a great relief when every courtesy was shown during the interviews. However, the researcher, very likely because of an avoidance mechanism, did not seek an interview with the officer who actually asked the researcher to leave the building while collecting student names from UP files.

On the whole, a certain consistency between the various officers was noted, especially in terms of the perceived direction the new institution would take. There was to be a refreshing attempt to offer courses at a wide range of academic levels, to both traditional and mature age students. The institution was to be consumer oriented and geared much more to the demands of the industrial and economic base in the Province.

An interesting feature of the interviews was that the officers had all come through the initial trauma of the merger, and reconciled themselves to change. As a result, they were far more positive about the future than other

colleagues whose positions had not yet been finalized. The researcher could predict that when the 50 heads of departments were appointed the same transformation would probably occur with them. The researcher can only sympathise however, with academics or administrators who for various reasons won't enjoy the privilege of promotion, but who may be forced to take early retirement, or be shifted to another department, discipline or campus. It will be such folk whom the administration will need to reconcile as soon as possible, if the institution is to move forward in a concerted way. Otherwise, bitterness and frustration could slow academic growth, and lead to unnecessary divisions in a period which will have plenty of conflict from other sources.

The question of power was raised throughout the set of interviews, and the role of committees would seem to be crucial as a balance against a line-management model. However, deans could play a central role as mediators between line and staff. It will be interesting to monitor the relationship between deans and heads of departments at an individual level, with the balance of power resting presumably with the more politically sophisticated of the two. Collectively, deans could act as a major political force in the new institution, though rivalries over funding allocations between faculties should soften any corporate tendencies. Some apprehension existed about the possibility of Provosts usurping too much power and thus

jeopardizing the unitary structure of the institution as a whole.

A possible structural weakness was mentioned by some interviewees, firstly, in the fact that there would be no head of administration (like a Registrar), and secondly, in that the institution was "top-heavy" with non teaching academic managers who could prove very expensive and not necessarily efficient or effective. Some referred to the inordinate amount of authority vested in the finance officer, and others to the lack of power of the Pro Vice Chancellor for Academic Planning. One person argued for a more traditional management structure. The impression gained from different sources, was that the head of the new institution tended to choose his key officers very carefully (including deans and senior administrators) but then handed almost total authority over to them. Naturally, if they did not function effectively, he held them to account. One possible weakness in such an approach, and one that was beyond his control, was the constraint of existing personnel within each institution, from whom he had to choose senior officers. No external appointments were allowed, unless no suitable candidate could be found internally. Time alone will tell how the actual senior appointments, including heads of departments, measure up against a management model that could be somewhat awesome for those incumbents who are unfamiliar with the new approach.

Comparing The Research Methods

It would be helpful, before ending the analysis of the data, to make a few comparisons of the three research methods, to see if any conflicting findings occurred across the three procedures. The document analysis, unlike the other two methods, served a larger purpose of shedding light on the merger at a more national level. It showed what government officials, civil servants, leading educators, trade unionists, headmasters and other British or European academics, thought about higher education or about one aspect of the merger. It set the context for the study, in terms of a rationale for the merger in the form of government inquiries and reports into higher education. Press clippings helped the researcher assess national and local feelings about NUU or about future directions for higher education in the U.K. The documents also gave a clear picture of the actual structures of decision making within the Steering Group itself, but also in relation to DENI and the Minister responsible for making the merger work. The merger documents should furthermore, be regarded as a major historical record of a unique event in British Universities and should prove a vital source of information for any future institutions which undergo similar pressures from a government.

The questionnaire, like the ethnography, had a much narrower point of interest, in terms of measuring differences of perception about higher education, between

academics, administrators and students on the four campuses (Jordanstown, Coleraine, Londonderry and Belfast). While certain significant differences were noted according to such variables as Faculty, Age, Religion, Sex, Mode of Study and Type of Program, the major difference throughout the whole survey was in terms of Campus. The researcher found such data extremely helpful, because he had received somewhat conflicting reports through interviews and informal conversations of the differences (real or imaginary?) between a university and a polytechnic. The questionnaire made it quite clear that the two institutions are very different, in both management structures and philosophy. Having highlighted the differences it remained for the document analysis and interviews to throw light on ways of overcoming such differences and, hopefully, making the merger a success. It must be remembered, however, that each method pointed to the fact that there was a great deal of opposition to the merger and doubt as to the feasibility of such a plan.

The greatest value of the ethnographic aspect of the study lay in the fact that, when paper work was done, what really counted in such a process as the merger, was its human potential: people have human faces and behave differently under stress. What a researcher heard about one of the actors in the drama, from friends or foe, could be tested over time through personal encounters. One particular person had been so maligned by different academics,

for example, that the interviewer was quite pleasantly surprised in the course of various encounters with him. In addition, as far as interviews (formal and/or informal) portrayed important aspects of the interviewee (i.e., ambition, energy, vision), a certain feeling of confidence or otherwise tended to emerge after a series of interviews. With such subjective criteria in mind, the researcher had confidence that if intentions and energy were predictors of success then the new institution, judging by its key officers (with only one possible exception) would soon make its mark on the British higher education scene.

The interviews like the document analysis, showed the paucity of thinking among academics at Coleraine and Jordanstown, about the critical function of a university. The questionnaire, however, at least revealed a certain concern for such a role. In this connection, once again, there was a surprising lack of concern to see religious divisions tackled head-on by the new institution. The documents at least showed some concern in relation to religion, whereas people interviewed felt that such a role would be too explosive to adopt.

Research Questions Reconsidered

Four central issues were the focus of the research questions which shall be examined in the light of the overall findings.

Merger Planning

There should be a more honest and rigorous attempt to

take public submissions on higher education seriously. The Steering Group failed to do justice to the many and varied ideas about goals and structures of the new institution. The Chairman must take most of the responsibility for such a cynical neglect of normal democratic processes. Yet even he was acting within the constraints of bureaucratic exigencies, such as the government's desire to expedite matters as quickly and economically as possible. As it turned out, the research provided a rather fortuitous opportunity to present many of the merger documents for public scrutiny. Several such submissions bear testimony to a clear sense of frustration at the lack of true accountability of government committees and at the absence of meaningful consultation about the proposed University of Ulster.

Most of the key decisions affecting the merger were taken by half a dozen people: Nicholas Scott, whose role as the Minister responsible for Education in Northern Ireland,and future career as a politician depended on a successful delivery of the new "infant"; Sir Peter Swinnerton-Dyer, whose advancement to the prestigious position of Chairmanship of UGC may well have seriously affected decisions taken at Steering Group level; Mr. John Parkes and Mr. Dan Barry from DENI who naturally would have serviced the Minister with many of the ideas about the merger; Professor Keith Clayton, the newly appointed Chairman of the Northern Ireland Working Party; and Mr. Derek Birley, whose vision and administrative ability provided the basis for

the evolution of the new institution.

The NUU position in negotiations was weakened by a lack of organic unity and academic leadership from its foundation, and also by a consequent furtiveness in any strategies designed to defend itself against growing public criticism or to block merger processes. The UP position provided a sharp contrast in almost all negotiations, with much more effective structures for decision making and educational planning and evaluation. One of the major tensions within the new management system was to draw on the strengths of both institutions without undermining an essentially polytechnic framework that worked well and promised much.

A major flaw in planning, and one that could only have been avoided at the expense of significant staff retrenchment arose out of the above tension. The government failed to provide a clear educational plan and financial framework for the new institution, and the Steering Group ignored such oversights altogether. As a result, decisions were based on the soft option of guaranteeing all staff contracts from both institutions, and of therefore simply enlarging rather than rationalizing academic structures. The starting point and rationale of the whole planning process seemed to be the pragmatic concern to protect jobs on the one hand, yet at the same time to give the appearance of a radical departure from the traditional models of a British university. The faculty structure, however, reveals

beyond a shadow of doubt that traditional thinking about higher education has changed only marginally in Ulster.

If planners had seriously wanted a different system, and one that offered a balance between conservative and radical forces in educational thinking, then all positions in both institutions should have been declared vacant and advertised openly against a more innovative and visionary frame of reference. The fact that senior positions were handed out on a quid pro quo basis within the two institutions may have protected jobs and status. But it may well have seriously undermined the potential for radical change in a system of higher education that has been dominated by conservative and elitist ideals. In at least two senior academic posts, appointments were made largely out of a sense of obligation to one institution or individual. The person's ability was of secondary importance: what counted was that he had to be taken care of or that it looked bad if too many UP staff occupied senior posts.

While academics and administrators were confident of keeping their positions, they felt little or no need for serious change in their patterns of thought and practice. From a position of security they could stand outside proceedings, finding fault with decisions or even attempting to block merger outcomes. They were not asked to take part in planning, and naturally they did not gain a sense of ownership or of commitment to the new institution. Instead, a fundamental division between management and employees

was occurring, which unless stemmed as soon as possible, could lead to further conflict and to the displacement of innovative thinking altogether.

A better way of bringing about a merger might be to appoint an independent chairman of a Steering Group composed of elected members of the two institutions with power to co-opt representatives from government, trade unions, industry, professional agencies and community leaders. By placing most of the responsibility for decision making on the shoulders of those who had the greatest stake in final outcomes, potential conflict between senior and junior partners may have soon been overridden by the sense of ownership. The existing Steering Group, by its very composition had less reason to quibble with government thinking about the new institution than a body of individuals who were going to have to live with the consequences of their own decisions. As a result there was never any serious challenge offered by SG of government assumptions about the kind of institution that was most suited to the educational and social needs of the Province. A question still remains as to whether a larger polytechnic with various campus outlets, would have been a better solution to what government saw as the problem.

Gaps in planning occurred in other areas as well. The issue of teacher education was clearly a political one, with government sacrificing principle to expediency. NUU, UP and QUB have offered the only training context that

brings Catholics and Protestants together. But the sectarian institutions, through the churches, have forced government to cut back on the "opposition's" quota, with the result that QUB and the new institution will have less and less impact on the area of religious education throughout the elementary and secondary school system.

Agricultural and veterinary studies should logically be located in a rural area such as Coleraine. Once again, however, government has shown that its hold on power has precedence over educational logic. Yet if the University of Ulster is to make any real impact then such facilities must be provided eventually, regardless of the vested interest of DENI or QUB.

Possibly the most serious gap in planning was in the area of staff development and communication. As the literature review showed, effective change in higher education can only occur if serious efforts to inform and involve staff are made from the outset. Much of the anxiety about the merger resulted from the failure to include the majority of staff and students in the process of decision taking. If a series of in-service education seminars, student and faculty retreats or campus conferences were organized to inform people and raise their consciousness of the required changes in the new institution, some of these gaps in planning could be bridged before the actual merger took place.

Perceived Goals

Various levels of perception about goals were uncovered

in the research. Government and DENI wanted to see a more relevant, flexible and vocationally oriented system of higher education, but assumed that the best way of achieving such a goal was by imposing the UP structure and philosophy on NUU. Several public submissions raised real doubts about both the wisdom and feasibility of such a plan, but to no avail. The questionnaire and the interviews revealed considerable divergencies of opinion about the goals of the new institution. Senior management would do well to take note of fundamental differences between UP and NUU thinking, but also between senior officers, especially with regard to continuing education and the unitary structure and management system. Otherwise the new institution is going to be pulled in different directions and have its growth seriously impeded.

One of the most puzzling findings of the research was the unusually narrow definition given to the notion of "relevance". Everyone from the Minister downwards agreed that universities should make a bigger impact on the society. Yet virtually no attempt was made to seek models of higher education outside of traditional British ones that have been tried for so long. Professor Malcolm Skilbeck in his submission outlined various possibilities from the community college and liberal-arts school experience in the U.S. The land grant universities of the U.S. as well as some of the Chinese and Japanese universities could have provided planners with a far broader set of options from which

to establish goals at Ulster. The researcher recommends the establishment of a staff and student exchange mechanism to facilitate at graduate student, faculty and management levels, the cross-fertilization of ideas about goals and curricular structures outside of conservative British circles.

In addition, the so-called seven year review of the University of Ulster will have only a cosmetic function unless a rigorous system of evaluation is established at three key levels: institutional, campus and faculty. The literature review listed some of the most important ideas about the goals of higher education throughout time. At no point in merger discussions have such ideas been the focus of interest or debate. People at all levels seem to merely assume that such issues have long since been settled, and that educational planning needs practical rather than critical or visionary thinking. How administrators perceive the goals and functions of a university may differ significantly from how faculty or students may see things. There was little evidence from the Ulster merger of any awareness that such differences mattered.

For a new institution of higher education to be established in Northern Ireland to provide a more relevant form of services to the community, and yet which fails to address major problems such as social and religious conflict, can only be seen as a gross dereliction of responsibility by its planners. Structures could still be erected which

confront such deeply embedded conflict. A set of compulsory undergraduate units could easily be devised on an inter-disciplinary basis, which helped students from both sides of the religious and ethnic divide to understand what was happening in the Province, why and how they might best react constructively to prejudice and conflict. It is one thing for graduates to acquire professional skills at a university; it is an infinitely superior legacy if the same graduates have been given some insight into the basis of major differences between people and skill in coping positively with such differences.

Of all the possible places where a department of Religion (or Religious Studies) could provide a context for Catholic and Protestant scholars from round the world to engage in critical dialogue and thus have a catalytic impact on a divided community, the Proposed University of Ulster would seem to be the most obvious. The researcher is aware of the hazards of such a plan, but wonders what could be more "relevant" than the critically open examination of religion, where the two sides listened to each other and, hopefully, started to find common ground. One of the ironies of the original curricular structures was that students could take courses in Reformation History, Philosophy of Religion, Religious Education, Ethics and the Sociology of Religion. If such courses were expanded somewhat and others added, then all such programs centered in one department, a far greater attempt could be made at

both undergraduate and graduate levels to make an impact towards the resolution of conflict. With the additional possibility of extension services being offered throughout the Province to mature age students, clergy, parents and religious education instructors, the impact of the new institution on such a profound social need, increases exponentially.

Autonomy vs. Accountability

The concern to make the new institution more responsive to social and economic needs was reflected in a move to place greater authority for decision making in the hands of its Council rather than its academic Senate. Planners of higher education in Great Britain are coming to realize that universities have had too much autonomy, with academics being allowed, whether competent or not, to determine how public money should be spent. As the literature showed, universities have by and large respected the authority vested in them by government. However, in the context of greater financial constraint on the higher education sector, it becomes essential from the government's perspective, for the development within university structures of clearer lines of accountability between the public and the university. Hence the conflict between NUU and government: it was the first time a British university experienced such strong government intervention in its affairs. It probably gives some indication of what might happen to other British universities that are judged to have failed to meet certain

standards of "relevance".

If NUU is typical of the structures of accountability in other British universities, then it is probably time for change. Unless academics are formally trained, as in the case of senior appointments in U.S. institutions, to administer academic and budgetary affairs, responsibility may well need to be shifted to qualified lay people on Council. The researcher wonders why universities themselves cannot provide a solution to the dilemma by developing graduate programs for educational administrators in all three sectors of education. It would be a simple matter for academics, either in their graduate programs or while teaching, to take classes at a Masters or Ph.D. level that would equip them for decision making at departmental, faculty or more senior levels. Here again, a first step for the new institution might be to develop a course of in-service education programs for potential or actual administrators in elementary and secondary schools around the Province, but also for all of its own staff. Overseas models (e.g., the U.S. system) should be examined carefully and advice sought on how best to proceed. It is not good enough to leave academic planning to well meaning amateurs. The new institution has an opportunity to provide a unique service to the entire British educational community, by developing programs in Higher Education (e.g., curriculum development and evaluation; organization and management; extension education) specifically for planners and decision makers.

With such a strategy, there would clearly be a greater sense of confidence, engendered over time, that academics could behave responsibly with regard to the deployment of public money. At the same time, academic freedom, a much abused concept on both sides of the debate, would become a more meaningful concept. Academics would no longer feel threatened by a so-called market oriented approach to research and teaching. As in the case of the Cooperative Extension Service in all Land Grant Universities of the U.S., research and teaching would be based on the actual problems in the community (e.g., human ecology, agriculture, cultural conflict). The university would be seen by the community as a resource available to all groups, rather than as an elitist institution isolated from reality.

The so-called "matrix" system of educational management that is to be used in the new institution may have the advantage of integrating faculty in the course planning function. Yet the major disadvantage of such a system, and one that was spoken of freely by several senior officers at UP (where the system has been applied), is that it leads to the proliferation of committees and thus to a reduction in quality teaching and research.

The continuing education thrust of the new institution will have only marginal value. If each faculty, as one officer interviewed said, were doing its job properly and offering courses at all academic levels and monitoring the needs of the community, there would be little need for a

coordinating unit to act as a "conscience" for the faculties.

Probably the most effective way of developing a more accountable university system is to adapt the Extension Education model from overseas and gradually integrate it into the University of Ulster. One immediate bonus is the four campus situation. If the Provost of each campus were allowed to develop an agency for extension work in or near the city in which his campus were based, then the university would begin to have a public face. The office could be staffed initially by a small team of academics and administrators whose task was to serve as consultants and facilitators in their particular area of expertise (e.g., soil science, home management, finance, technology, agriculture). People from the region could either come to the office or call a consultant to their farm, office or home. Problems generated at such a level could be publicized via an agency magazine. Eventually, further agency outlets might be opened in more remote parts of the Province.

Human Development

Because of the way planning took place in the Ulster merger, the majority of people affected were not included from the start, in planning and discussion. They were alienated almost entirely from the process. Eventually certain elite committees were formed, with the purpose of bringing about the merger. Bulletins were occasionally published furnishing, rather crudely at times, the details of decisions

taken, though rarely including reasons for such decisions.

One of the biggest weaknesses of the entire merger was the failure of planners to give due consideration to the human dimension of the change process. The researcher was overwhelmed after nine months by the obsession with structural and bureaucratic details among planners. It was no surprise to discover that, while planning was proceeding, staff and students were becoming more and more anxious about their future. Speculation and rumor increased as the alienation and sense of powerlessness increased. The literature made it quite clear that significant psychological effects of mergers must be taken into account. Otherwise the merger may not be effective. Academics and administrators, like students have strong feelings. A university is an academic community composed of people whose feelings by and large govern their behavior and competencies.

It would have been a simple matter for the Steering Group to have had occasional public meetings. Its main business could have been conducted normally with a gallery for interested observers to watch. At the end of normal business, a question time could have given the audience a chance to give SG some feedback and to become better informed as to reasons for decisions. When the lives and careers of academics, administrators and students are at stake, every effort should be made to include such people in decision making and communication processes.

Likewise, a monthly forum on each of the campuses could have been held (and still could be held in the months remaining), at which the total community, both inside and outside the institution could present its views to planners and receive information in return. The literature made it quite clear that the essential purpose of communication is the reduction of uncertainty. Academics, students, parents, politicians and local businessmen would have had opportunity to meet key planners (e.g., Mr. John Parkes, Mr. Nicholas Scott, Sir Peter Swinnerton-Dyer, Mr. Derek Birley) and allay some of their anxieties about the merger. Ignorance and thus anxiety may well have been replaced entirely by information and concern.

Another major problem in the merger planning arose out of the hierarchial decision making policy that was adopted. The government refused to consult either institution or the local communities; it simply issued directives which had to be obeyed ("merge or close"). Academics were sent bulletins informing them of decisions already taken. One of the most poignant aspects of the merger was the fact that while upper management was loudly proclaiming at Stormont and elsewhere how much support there was at NUU and UP for the merger, the interviews and the questionnaire bore testimony to a deep pessimism and anxiety. People's feelings did not count; what really mattered for government, Steering Group and upper management was getting the machinery rolling. The researcher predicts that when

the "engine" starts, the "oil" that keeps it going will be the people whose feelings have been ignored. Such people may well, to change the imagery slightly, become the "spanner in the works", unless radical measures are taken immediately to include them and take account of strong and often bitter feelings.

Staff development is human development. The new institution must find ways of building bridges between upper management and its other 7000 members. For students, the need is for less monologue (i.e., lectures) and more dialogue (cf. Buber, Freire). For staff, there must be a radical retraining program which aims to conscientize teachers and researchers about what true education involves. Teachers are learners too, and students are teachers! When a university begins to see itself as a community in dialogue, where different gifts, skills and insights are used to facilitate human (not just intellectual) growth, then perhaps public confidence will be restored in universities, and more importantly, the university will be seen as a human development agency rather than as an information factory.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Questionnaire

A comparison of attitudes to the possible goals, functions and structure of the proposed University of Ulster.

NO NAME REQUIRED

Please note instructions throughout survey. Students do not need to complete Section D.

Section A

General Background. Put appropriate number (e.g., 1 = Male) in box at right of page.

SEX

1. Male 2. Female

AGE

1. 17-24 2. 25-44 3. 45-64 4. 65 plus

RELIGION (optional)

1. Church of Ireland
2. Presbyterian
3. Methodist
4. Baptist
5. Roman Catholic
6. Other (please specify)
7. None

STATUS

1. Student 2. Administrator 3. Academic
4. Other (please specify)

CAMPUS/INSTITUTION

1. Jordanstown 2. Coleraine 3. Derry 4. Belfast

ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE

1. Arts/Humanities
2. Physical Sciences
3. Biological and Environmental Studies
4. Technology
5. Education
6. Business and Management
7. Creative Art and Design
8. Social/Health Sciences
9. Foundation Studies
10. Other (please specify)
11. Not applicable

LENGTH OF TIME (e.g., as student)

1. 1 year 2. 2-4 years 3. 5-10 years 4. 11-20 years

MODE OF STUDY

1. Full time 2. Part time 3. Sandwich
4. Other (please specify) 5. Not applicable

PLACE OF ORIGIN

1. Co. Derry
2. Derry City
3. Co. Antrim
4. Belfast
5. Co. Fermanagh
6. Co. Tyrone
7. Co. Down
8. Co. Armagh
9. Republic of Ireland
10. Great Britain
11. Other (please specify)

FATHER'S OR MOTHER'S OCCUPATION (students only) ☐
Please Specify
TYPE OF PROGRAMME
1. Degree (undergraduate) 4. Extra mural
2. Certificate 5. Post graduate/experience
3. Diploma 6. Other (please specify) ☐
7. Not applicable
MARITAL STATUS
1. Single 3. Married (no children) ☐
2. Married (children) 4. Other (please specify)
EMPLOYMENT SITUATION ☐
1. Job (full time) 2. Job (part time) 3. No job

Section B
Please rank in order of importance (e.g., d = [3]).
IN YOUR OPINION, A UNIVERSITY SHOULD (please rank):
a. Prepare students for useful employment ☐
b. Promote social and cultural transformation ☐
c. Develop the capacity and enthusiasm for inquiry after truth ☐
d. Promote in students the growth of intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual capacities ☐
e. Pass on to the younger generation the national heritage and cultural foundations of the society ☐
f. Provide a learning context for the pursuit of specialised knowledge ☐
IN YOUR OPINION, THE PROPOSED MERGER WILL (please rank):
a. Significantly improve the quality of higher education in Northern Ireland ☐
b. Provide a boost to educational provision in Londonderry ☐
c. Offer scope for more diverse forms of educational innovation (e.g., extension education). ☐
d. Enable government to rationalise its funding system for higher education (e.g., break the "binary divide") ☐
e. Offer a real alternative to the closure of NUU ☐
f. Enable government to control spending at the Polytechnic ☐
IN YOUR OPINION, THE MERGER WAS PROPOSED BECAUSE (please rank):
a. NUU was judged to have failed ☐
b. The Polytechnic was judged to be too expensive ☐
c. Government hopes to rationalise all higher education throughout the U.K. ☐
d. Universities and polytechnics must all become more accountable to the public ☐
e. Projected undergraduate enrolments were too low for NUU to survive ☐
f. The Polytechnic was judged to be successful enough to be granted university status ☐

IN YOUR OPINION, THE NEW INSTITUTION WILL (please rank):

a. Find it difficult to improve its public image ☐
b. Develop closer links with industry, commerce and technology ☐
c. Find it hard to attract top quality students and staff ☐
d. Engage in major programmes of extension education throughout the Province ☐
e. Become a technological university ☐
f. Experience significant levels of "academic drift" (the institutional bias towards degree work). ☐

Section C

General Attitudes. Please put one (yes) or two (no) or three (uncertain) (e.g., b.=[3]).

IN YOUR OPINION:

a. The real reasons for the merger are not known ☐
   1. Yes 2. No 3. Uncertain
b. Managerial/entrepreneurial techniques in the new institution will threaten academic freedom ☐
   1. Yes 2. No 3. Uncertain
c. It is still not known whether the extra funds required for merger will be provided ☐
   1. Yes 2. No 3. Uncertain
d. Jobs are threatened in the new institution ☐
   1. Yes 2. No 3. Uncertain
e. The overall quality of education will suffer in the new institution ☐
   1. Yes 2. No 3. Uncertain
f. Government handling of the merger has been inappropriate ☐
   1. Yes 2. No 3. Uncertain
g. I am in favour of the merger ☐
   1. Yes 2. No 3. Uncertain
h. Authority and decision-making structures in the proposed institution will be more centralised than those at NUU ☐
   1. Yes 2. No 3. Uncertain
i. It is inappropriate for a university to offer low level courses (e.g., BEC) ☐
   1. Yes 2. No 3. Uncertain
j. The new institution will attract more high-achieving undergraduates than previous institutions in the Province ☐
   1. Yes 2. No 3. Uncertain
k. The proposed university will offer more courses which integrate theory and practice ☐
   1. Yes 2. No 3. Uncertain
l. The Steering Group has worked effectively ☐
   1. Yes 2. No 3. Uncertain
m. The merger is inevitable ☐
   1. Yes 2. No 3. Uncertain

n. We must try to get the most we can out of the merger
   1. Yes 2. No 3. Uncertain ☐
o. The merger won't work.
   1. Yes 2. No 3. Uncertain ☐

END OF SURVEY FOR STUDENTS. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

Section D

Organization and structure of a university (for academics and administrators only).Please tick the appropriate column.

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Not Known
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	
a. Those who do the actual teaching in a university should be responsible for course planning and development						☐
b. The faculty should be the major organizational unit in a university						☐
c. The department should be the major organizational unit in a university						☐
d. The primary function of the dean should be managerial						☐
e. The primary function of the dean should be academic						☐
f. Decision-making structures should be participatory and democratic						☐
g. The primary function of the administration is to serve the interests of academics						☐
h. The primary function of the administration is to balance educational goals against organizational resources						☐
i. Strong centralized management is required for split-campus development						☐
j. Strong centralized management is required for curricular expansion and diversification						☐

END OF SURVEY. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

APPENDIX B

Two replies to requests for interviews.

St Catharine's College
Cambridge
CB2 IRL
Tel. 359445
21 September 1983

Dear Mr Carr,

Thank you for your letter of 13 September. I only expect to make one visit to Ulster between now and November; that visit will probably have happened by the time you receive this letter and in any case it does not include any spare time in which you could interview me. Moreover, the topics you raise are not ones which could be covered in a mere couple of hours; and they are ones on which, as Chairman Designate of the UGC, I would wish to think very carefully what I ought to say in circumstances where my remarks are bound to become public. In the circumstances, I am afraid that I shall not be able to give you the interview you have asked for.

Yours sincerely,
P. Swinnerton-Dyer [signed]

Rathgael House
Balloo Road
Bangor
Co. Down
2 November 1983

Dear Mr Carr,

Thank you for your letter of 13 September 1983 and your subsequent 'phone calls. I am sorry that there appears to have been some confusion as to who should contact whom to arrange a meeting. I hope that any problems which have arisen can be overcome, and we would certainly wish to help if at all possible.

I think it has already been pointed out to you that Messrs Barry and Carvill have moved to new duties in other Departments and I am sure you will appreciate that it would not be possible for me to make any arrangements for meetings on their behalf. You may, however, wish to write or contact them directly; Mr. Barry can be contacted at Department of the Environment, Parliament Buildings, Stormont, Belfast 4 (Tel No: Belfast 63210) and Mr Carvill at Central Secretariat, Stormont Castle, Belfast 4 (Tel No: Belfast 66311).

If in the meantime you would wish to discuss the various issues outlined in your letter with Mr Peter Holmes, Mr Carvill's successor, this can certainly be arranged.

To avoid any further confusion, perhaps you could contact Mr Holmes directly to make any further arrangements.
Yours sincerely
J H Parkes [signed]

APPENDIX C

Government Reports Into Higher Education

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