



The Canada UK Colloquia

**Post-Secondary Education:
Preparation for the
World of Work**

Mississauga, Ontario

20 - 22 November 1988

**Contents
Participants
Introduction**

Contents

Preface	ix
Préface	xiii
Introduction	1
<i>Ronald L. Watts</i>	
Colloquium Paper	
I. The Challenge of Change	9
The Challenge of Change for 2001: The Canadian University in a Knowledge-Intensive Society	
11	
<i>Geraldine A. Kenny-Wallace</i>	
Education, Economic Prosperity and the Role of the State: Britain's Problem in Perspective	
25	
<i>John Rae</i>	

II. Coordination versus Decentralisation	35
*Centralisation or Decentralisation: Alternative Strategies for Public Policy for Universities and Colleges in Canada	37
<i>David M. Cameron</i>	
*The Struggle for Higher Education Resources	49
<i>Ralph G.M. Sultan and Paul E. Sultan</i>	
Policies for Access and Expansion in British Higher Education	69
<i>John Barnes and Nicholas Barr</i>	
III. Governance and Accountability	87
The Governance and Funding of University Education in Britain: Retrospect and Prospect	89
<i>Nigel F.B. Allington</i>	
*Accountability and Autonomy in Canada's University Sector: Business as Usual or the Lull Before the Storm? ..	111
<i>J. Cutt and Rod Dobell</i>	
IV. Open and Distance Education	135
The Open College of South London: A Development in Post-School Education	137
<i>Margaret Bird</i>	
Distance Learning and Management Education: Developments and Prospects in the United Kingdom ...	151
<i>Rob Paton</i>	
Post-Secondary Distance Education: Canada and the United Kingdom Compared	163
<i>John S. Daniel</i>	
V. Private Sector Participation	173
An Example of Successful School/Industry Links: The East London Compact	175
<i>J.F. Jarvis</i>	

• Training and Development: The Shadow Higher Education System in Canada 189
Gilles Paquet

VI. Lloyds Bank Lecture 203

Education for Life and Work in the 1990s 205
Sir Jeremy Morse

Annex A - Participants 213

Annex A – Participants

Canada

Mr. Robert Bandeen

President and Chief Executive Officer, Cluny Corporation
Past President, Canadian National Railways

Mr. Tom Boehm

Minister, Political and Public Affairs, Canadian High
Commission, London

Mrs. Betty Jean Brown

Member of the Legislative Assembly, Prince Edward Island
Minister of Education

Dr. David Cameron

Professor, Public Administration, Dalhousie University, Halifax
Past Vice-President, Planning and Resources, Dalhousie
University

Mr. Nigel Chippindale

Director of Policy and Analysis, Education Support
Department of the Secretary of State

Dr. John Daniel

President, Laurentian University, Sudbury
Past President, International Council for Distance Learning

Mrs. Joan Dougherty

Member of the National Assembly, Quebec
Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Superior Education
and Science

Mr. Peter Dobell

Vice-President, The Institute for Research on Public Policy
Director, Parliamentary Centre for Foreign Affairs and
Foreign Trade

Dr. Rod Dobell

President, The Institute for Research on Public Policy
Former Dean, School of Public Administration, University of
Victoria

Mr. Jeff Greenberg

Associate, Parliamentary Centre for Foreign Affairs and Foreign
Trade
Research Director, Senate National Finance Committee

Mr. Robin Harris

Professor of Higher Education, Emeritus, University of Toronto
Contributor to the Financial Post

Mr. Lorne Hepworth

Member of the Legislative Assembly, Saskatchewan
Minister of Education

Dr. Geraldine Kenny-Wallace

Chairman, Science Council of Canada
Past Professor of Chemistry and Physics, University of Toronto
Chair of Research

Dr. Gilles Paquet

Professor of Economics and Management
Former Dean, Faculty of Administration, University of Ottawa

Mrs. Lisa Peacock

The Institute for Research on Public Policy

Mr. John Strimas

Vice-President, Corporate Communications
Northern Telecom Limited

Dr. Ralph Sultan
President, Northern Investors Inc.

Dr. Ron Watts
Former Principal, Queen's University, Kingston
Chairman of the New Zealand Universities Review Committee

United Kingdom

Dr. Nigel Allington
Lecturer in History of Economic Theory, University of Wales,
College of Cardiff

Dr. Denis Balsom
Chairman, British Committee, Canada-United Kingdom
Colloquia

Mr. John Barnes
Lecturer in Government, London School of Economics
Former Chairman, Education Committee, Kent County Council
and Member of the Council of National Academic Awards

Dr. Nicholas Barr
Senior Lecturer in Economics, London School of Economics

Ms. Margaret Bird
Researcher, Inner London Education Authority

Mr. Richard Bone
Director, Atlantic Region, Research Department
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Mr. Alistair Burt
Conservative MP for Bury North
Parliamentary Private Secretary to Minister of Education and
Science

Ms. Berenice Erry
Canada Desk Officer, North America Department
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Mr. Mark Evans
British Council Representative in Canada

Mr. Freddie Jarvis

Regional Community Affairs Director
Whitbread & Company
Manager, East London Compact

Dr. Ian Johnston

Deputy Director General-The Training Agency
Moorfoot, Sheffield

Mr. Robert Key

Conservative MP for Salisbury
Parliamentary Private Secretary to Minister for Overseas
Development

Mr. Don G. Libby

Under Secretary, Further and Higher Education
Department of Education and Science

Sir Jeremy Morse

Chairman, Lloyds Bank Plc

Mr. Rob Paton

Director, Voluntary Sector Management Program
The Open University School of Management

Dr. John Rae

Director, Laura Ashley Foundation
Former Headmaster, Westminster School

Mr. Bryan Sparrow

Consul-General, British Consulate-General, Toronto

Mr. Gerry Steinberg

Labour MP for Durham
Member, Select Committee on Education

Mrs. Annis May Timpson

Lecturer in Canadian Studies, University of Birmingham

Mr. Roy Walker

Under Secretary, Department of Employment
Head of Training Policy Division

Sir Alan Urwick

British High Commissioner in Canada

Introduction

RONALD L. WATTS, QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY, CANADA

Both the United Kingdom and Canada are currently grappling with the need to reassess their public policies for post-secondary education in the face of new realities. Two major factors have contributed to this rethinking about the role of post-secondary education within society.

First, there has been the emergence of the information society changing the context within which universities and colleges are having to operate. Under the impact of the post-industrial revolution since the 1970s the radical transformation from an industrial society to a knowledge-based one has produced a new emphasis upon the importance of post-secondary education and research for the development of society. Closely related to this has been the growing global economic, interdependence. This has led to a recognition that post-secondary education and research are important instruments contributing to a nation's international economic competitiveness and to prosperity. From this perspective, the cost of supporting education in universities and colleges is not so much a problem as an essential part of the solution. Consequently, post-secondary education is seen as an investment in the development of valuable human capital, and academic research and scholarship as an investment in the development of knowledge essential to the adaptiveness, growth and vigour of society.

A second and equally important factor focussing attention upon post-secondary education has been the increasing emphasis upon

education as a means to increasing social equity and mobility. Growing attention has fastened upon post-secondary education not only in terms of how it can contribute to national economic, social and cultural development, but also in terms of how it can provide the means for greater social equity, social mobility, and equality of opportunity.

At this time when changes in society are forcing a rethinking of the role of post-secondary education in both the United Kingdom and Canada, similar fundamental questions about the appropriate focus of post-secondary education are being raised in both countries. First, what should be the main functions and objectives of universities and colleges faced with the challenge of these radical changes in society? Are there conflicts between these functions and can priorities be specified? Closely related is the question of how the functions of the different institutions of post-secondary education, the universities and colleges, relate to each other? Second, is the contribution which universities and colleges can make to society enhanced by public policies and funding arrangements focussed on reinforcing the co-ordinated direction of these institutions, or by policies that emphasize decentralization and institutional variety and initiative? Third, given the clear value and importance of post-secondary education to national development and social equity, how can greater efficiency, effectiveness and public accountability in the performance of these institutions be ensured without undermining their vitality and innovative spirit? Fourth, can new and imaginative forms of open and distance education improve the development of the nation's human resources-and-the equality of opportunity for citizens? Fifth, what are the emerging trends in the role of the private sector in post-secondary education both in terms of greater co-operation with existing universities and colleges and in terms of the provision of alternative corporate programmes to fulfil needs not being met by the universities and colleges?

It was to address these issues that the Canada-United Kingdom Colloquium on 'Post-Secondary Education: Preparation for the World of Work', was held in Mississauga, Ontario, Canada, November 20-22, 1988. This volume contains revised versions of the papers presented on that occasion. A full list of the British and Canadian participants is given in the appendix to this volume and the programme of the colloquium is included there.

The discussions in the colloquium in Mississauga proved highly interesting. Participants from both countries agreed at the end that the calibre and intensity of discussion had been extremely high and that each group had learned a great deal from the other. The gathering was particularly useful not only in identifying common

concerns, but also in making participants aware of otherwise unrecognized differences between the two countries. Thus the colloquium provided a process contributing to mutual understanding that was felt to be of benefit to both. Moreover, given the current degree of ferment in the world of higher education, the comparative analysis contributed new insights for each group into the issues and into appropriate policies for their own countries.

Not surprisingly, on most issues attention was drawn not only to points of similarity but also to differences between the two countries. Four points of difference drew particular attention. The first arose in the discussion of the interrelationship between quality and participation within post-secondary education. While a major British concern seemed to be how an essentially elite system of post-secondary education might obtain the resources to broaden participation in it, the Canadian concern focussed primarily on how, having achieved a broad participation in post-secondary education, resources might be ensured to enhance and maintain quality. Two simple statistics illustrate the different bases from which the participants from the two countries approached this balance. Where for every 100,000 of population Canada annually produces 616 higher education graduates annually, the comparable British figure is 280.1 But in terms of expenditure per student Canada spends only 66 per cent of that spent by the United Kingdom.² This contrast, of course, must not be overdrawn. There are concerns in Britain about ensuring the quality of post-secondary education, and there are continuing concerns in Canada about areas where, in the interests of social justice, expansion of participation in post-secondary education needs to be further encouraged. Among notable examples are the First Canadians (Canada's native peoples), women in certain professional programmes, francophones outside Quebec, and those living in the remoter areas. Nevertheless, the contrast between the two countries in their main concerns was clear.

A second important point of difference between the two countries which affected the discussion of many of the issues was the contrast between their frameworks for public policy making. Britain's unitary constitutional structure gives to Westminster an ability to make or even impose radical national changes in policy relating to post-secondary education which Canada's federal system, with its divided and shared jurisdiction between federal and provincial governments, constrains. The Canadian constitution assigns jurisdiction over education to the provinces, but many areas which clearly fall within the federal domain or shared federal-provincial responsibility, such as those relating to the development of the economy and the encouragement of research, are closely related to the basic activities of contemporary universities and colleges. Thus, there has developed a

long history in Canada of a shared interest on the part of both the federal and provincial governments in the support of universities and colleges and of research. It is not only the requirement of joint federal-provincial action which constrains the development of coherent national policies relating to post-secondary education in Canada. The political strength of regionalism and the emphasis upon different priorities and interests in various provinces has made reaching agreement upon coherent national policies particularly difficult. The other side to this contrast with Britain, however, is that the Canadian federal system has allowed some provinces to experiment with innovations without having to wait for nation-wide agreement upon a uniform national policy.

A third significant difference between the two countries affecting policy relating to post-secondary education is the contrasting size and distribution of their populations. The population of the United Kingdom is both much larger and geographically more compact than Canada's smaller and continentally dispersed population. This has led to different emphases, for example, in the form and character of open learning and distance education programmes in the two countries.

Finally, while post-secondary education in both countries is marked by a combination of universities and colleges, the role of polytechnics in Britain and the resulting binary character of the degree granting institutions there has, with only a few exceptions, no real parallel in Canada. Where the word 'university' is more or less synonymous in Canada with 'degree giving institution', polytechnics in Britain represent a major group of degree granting institutions, educating something like 50 per cent of the full-time students in higher education and offering the main route for continuing and vocational education. In Canada, on the other hand, of a total full-time enrolment in post-secondary education of 1.1 million, 71 per cent are enrolled in universities and the other 29 per cent are enrolled in the diploma programmes of the colleges which generally do not offer degrees. This contrast has important implications for the different roles played by universities and colleges in relation to each other within each of the two countries.

But while there are significant differences in the context and structure within which post-secondary education is provided in the two countries, the colloquium had no difficulty in identifying a number of areas of common concern where the sharing of views proved helpful. The first of these related to the challenges facing our systems of post-secondary education. There was general agreement on the urgency of responding effectively to the challenge posed by the increasingly knowledge-based character of society and the competitive global economy, a thrust which Geraldine Kenney-Wallace's opening

contribution emphasized. John Rae examined, from a British perspective, the relationship between education and economic growth. This led a number of participants to suggest that, although a substantial international literature has developed in this relationship, we still need to pin down the precise linkages between education and economic growth. There was also considerable interest on the part of participants in the significance of the epistemology of learning as exemplified by the impact of a vocational focus on learning and motivation. At the same time emphasis was put on the importance of education directed not at pigeon-holing for a specific vocation, but at providing a base for a life-time of personal development. A point that was echoed by a number of contributors, particularly Geraldine Kenney-Wallace, Rod Dobell and Gilles Paquet, was that in responding to the challenges facing society in both countries, universities and colleges, as agents of change in society, need to be ready to change themselves. A further point that attracted discussion was the balance between education geared to enhancing economic efficiency and social justice. While these could be in conflict, a number of participants argued that this need not be the case and that as dual objectives they should complement each other.

The sessions of the colloquium on co-ordination versus decentralization and on governance and accountability also identified common concerns among the participants from both countries relating to the way in which the provision of post-secondary education should be organized. David Cameron converted the issue of centralization versus decentralization into an analysis of the relative merits and dangers of governmental co-ordination versus institutional competition within systems of post-secondary education. John Barnes and Nicholas Barr addressed the issue by proposing for Britain a system in which higher education institutions would be left to conduct their affairs as they wish. This would be achieved through a system of government funding students rather than institutions. Thus, students would be assisted by loans whose repayment would be related to their subsequent earnings. Interestingly, Ralph Sultan advocated a somewhat similar solution for Canada. Nigel Allington, after reviewing the history of developments in Britain, concluded that academic excellence and academic freedom had proved incompatible with state control of universities and urged a policy of gradual privatisation of post-secondary education. Rod Dobell, in addressing accountability and autonomy in Canada's university sector took a quite different tack. He noted how elsewhere, particularly in Britain, governments were demanding greater accountability on the part of universities in meeting national needs. He went on to raise the question whether, given the scale of public funds being provided, Canadian universities are showing enough

initiative and imagination in responding to public concerns about their performance. This led to considerable discussion of the issues of tenure and unionization as constraints upon responsiveness to change in the two countries.

The third area of common interest related to new modes for provision for post-secondary education as represented by open learning and distance education programmes and by private sector participation. In the area of open learning and distance education Margaret Bird, Rob Paton and John Daniel outlined a variety of innovative arrangements that have been developed in Britain and Canada. As John Daniel pointed out, there are some significant differences between the two countries due to differing historical and demographic circumstances. But there was general agreement that interaction between the British and Canadian traditions would be fruitful in terms of what each could learn from the other. In addition, the contribution of technological advances to open and distance learning was noted, but it was also recognized that there was a danger in being mesmerized by technology: often low technology works best in reaching out to the public. The importance of marketing and of relating policies and expectations to each other was also emphasized. The need for open learning and distance education programmes to take account of the requirement for adult education and interdisciplinary studies directed at longer-term personal adaptability was also stressed.

Participation of the private sector in post-secondary education was reviewed from two quite different perspectives. Freddie Jarvis outlined some very interesting examples of school-industry links and this led to a review of the variety of co-operative arrangements between the private sector and the institutions of post-secondary education in each of the two countries. Gilles Paquet on the other hand drew attention to the rapid growth in recent years in North America of a whole range of post-secondary education programmes provided by the private sector as alternatives to those provided by the traditional post-secondary education institutions. He raised the question of whether this had been the result of a lack of responsiveness to social needs on the part of the traditional institutions.

Inevitably, in the two days of discussion, the colloquium was not able to deal as fully as it might have liked with each subject. The discussion concentrated rather too much perhaps on the university as the primary post-secondary education vehicle at the expense of proper attention to other institutions of post-secondary learning. A fuller discussion of the relative roles and relationship to each other of universities and colleges would have been desirable. There could, as well have been more discussion on the role of teachers and on the

relationship of education and research to each other (and of the methods of funding them). At the end there was also some discussion as to whether the colloquium had adequately clarified the nature of the world of work for which post-secondary education was preparing people. It was appropriate, therefore, that Sir Jeremy Morse, in his closing address to the colloquium, concentrated his remarks on this subject.

If complacency is the greatest danger to an effective response on the part of post-secondary education in the United Kingdom and Canada to the challenge of change, there was little complacency apparent in the discussions at the colloquium. The discussions pointed to exciting developments and imaginative ideas in variety of areas in both countries. For all the problems that beset post-secondary education in our two countries, the colloquium provided encouraging signs that there are real prospects for future development.

Notes

1. Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission, *Review of efficiency and effectiveness in higher education* (Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1986), p. 104. Comparable figures for other countries are: U.S.A. 621, Japan 432, Australia 430, West Germany 270.
2. Report of the Universities Review Committee to the New Zealand Vice Chancellors' Committee, New Zealand's *Universities: Partners in National Development* (Washington, N.Z.: New Zealand Vice Chancellors' Committee, 1987), p. 20.