

**A. K. TURNER** (a member of the Auckland University College Council and of the Massey Agricultural College Board of Governors):

I THINK that the change is inevitable, but just how soon it will come about is another matter. I am of course now expressing only my own personal views and not those of the governing bodies of which I am a member; there may in fact be many of my colleagues who will disagree. The change-over will take time—too rapid a transition could be dangerous; but we should now be making some preliminary surveys and contemplating the first steps to be taken. Independence is the very life-blood of University institutions and any step which will increase the independence of University Colleges must be in the right direction.

Let us look for a moment at how the present federal system works from the academic point of view. A professor, say, in chemistry, or in classics, may have a brilliant and original mind and be a stimulating teacher. Such a man is probably an enthusiast in some particular branch of his subject—let us say in the problems of physical-chemistry or in the archaeological side of Latin. Most people will agree that if such a man is attracted to one of our University chairs he should be encouraged to impart his knowledge and his enthusiasm to those who are fortunate enough to sit under him. But he may find that the syllabus as laid down by the New Zealand University pays no regard to the special topics on which he is an authority, and before he can alter the syllabus he must secure the agreement of his colleagues in the other University centres. This is sometimes difficult, sometimes impossible; and an opportunity is lost of attracting to the college in question students possibly from all parts of New Zealand and Australia who would like to reap the advantage of this man's special knowledge. There is the syllabus, and the professor must teach to it or else his students will fail in the (federal) examinations. The result



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is that too often the professor is reduced, by being forced to teach on topics that do not interest him, to mediocrity born of boredom.

Of course there is something to be said on the other side and any change would have to be gradual and subject to proper safeguards. If it is true that a brilliant and original teacher may be

frustrated by the present system it is equally true to say that a lazy and capricious one is kept up to the mark by it. A student who sits for the federal examination of the New Zealand University is at least protected in some degree from unfair marking and from unfair papers, and particularly in the senior scholarship and honours stages it is very important to see that degrees are awarded with complete objectivity. The present system goes a long way to ensure this, and I think that from the point of view of the examination candidate it may be desirable for some considerable time to retain some form of examination system short of complete internal examination by a single college professor. The New Zealand University or one of its committees may possibly long continue to act exercising functions similar to those of the British University Grants Committee.

Then there is the question of the agricultural colleges. The future of these would form a special problem. I myself am not inclined to favour the evolution of the agricultural colleges in the measurable future into full University colleges; I think their functions as specialised institutions are too important to allow their energies so to be dissipated. But a consideration will have to be devised into which they fit—it may be that they will still remain within the New Zealand University after all their elder brothers and sisters have left the family home.

**PROFESSOR J. PACKER** (Professor of Chemistry) and **DR. H. N. PARTON** (Associate Professor of Chemistry, Canterbury University College):

THE federal university has survived in New Zealand, not because it is a sound institution, but because it has had the services of able administrators who have striven mightily to overcome its weaknesses. The effort this has needed would have had far greater results, educationally, if it had not been expanded in overcoming difficulties which should not exist. We think the only sound plan for reform is to establish four separate universities.

It is true that some of the reforms necessary to raise the level of university education can be made within the present federal framework. In fact, we believe many will be made. We have largely rid ourselves of overseas external examiners. They personified that suspicion of the teaching staffs which has been a regrettable characteristic of New Zealand education in the past. They were justified by the illusion that they "kept up the standard." We believe that the standard of the degrees is determined by the calibre of the staffs, and that in our own subject and in others, internal examining has raised the standard. We can, no doubt, get greater freedom in teaching and examining, without abolishing the Federal University. Why, then, abolish it?

In the first place, if it is largely stripped of its examining functions, the New Zealand University will have few functions left. The important ones can be carried out by bodies much smaller than the present Senate. The broad framing of policy and the allocation of Government grants could be in the hands of a Grants Commission. General co-ordination of the policies of the four independent universities could be obtained through a committee of the academic heads.

Then there are some positive advantages which separate universities might reasonably be expected to provide. Freedom in designing courses and experimenting with teaching methods would be greater than under the best possible federal system. Specialists would be able to teach their specialties, and at the university level, this may be expected to achieve greater educational results than if they have to spread themselves over the whole subject.

Some limitations would be essential, notably to prevent the wasteful multiplication of professional schools. Important as they are, and obvious as their contribution to the community is, through the provision of professional training, these schools are not the whole or even the most important part, of a university. We believe that a major contribution to New Zealand's future would be made by a university which decided to make its specialty the development of post-graduate research. We think the most important task of a university is the training of students in general fields, rather than technicians in particular fields. With four universities in existence, one might very well specialise in this way, developing post-graduate work in the fundamental disciplines of the arts and science faculties. It would have no difficulty in attracting a first-rate staff.

We think, then, that separate universities should be established, and that the transition period should be short.

**PROFESSOR G. W. Von ZEDLITZ** (one time Professor of Modern Languages, Victoria University College, and a former member of the Senate):

THE administration of the University in New Zealand is absolutely unique, because not only do laymen make up nearly the whole of the governing bodies of the four university colleges, but they are also in the majority on the Senate, which handles the purely academic side of University affairs.

It is good that there should be an admixture of non-academic men in the supreme governing body, and that is done in the "red brick" universities overseas, but everywhere else there is a sharp differentiation of function, the governing body has no powers whatever over the curriculum; and the representation of the academic staff is always large, and often in the majority on the governing body.

Yet they say the patient often recovers after all the doctors have called his case hopeless; and though the authorities may agree that we have the worst possible system, yet it does seem to work satisfactorily. And I've always had the impression that the chief reason is the excellence of the raw material. But the average adult New Zealander is a great disappointment when you think of the youthful promise there was, and it may be that a system that has been condemned by all the authorities has something to do with that—it's on the cards. "The question now is, whether the time is ripe for a change. We always used to think we would have to wait until some other howling anomalies had been removed.

"The great obstacle before, to having four universities, was the lack of money to make them worthy of the name. But now, with the phenomenal increase in numbers—which I don't believe will stop—and far more people with money to spend on higher education, I think it could be done."

**PROFESSOR IAN A. GORDON** (Professor of English, Victoria University College):

THE University of New Zealand has never been a University. After efforts at reform stretching over years, it is still a filing system and a series of rubber stamps. It does not teach; it has no corporate life; its students feel no warmth or loyalty towards it; its teachers have no final voice in its destiny but must await the decisions of the Senate, a governing body of laymen.

To me a university is a community of scholars, both young and old, bound together in the pursuit of knowledge by the complementary activities of teaching and research. It has a corporate life and both staff and students feel such affection and loyalty towards it that they often work more than forty hours per week within its walls. In this sense (and there is no other sense worth considering) there are universities in each of the main centres and (within their more restricted field) in the agricultural colleges.

The problem in New Zealand is how to make university education the satisfying and enriching experience that is characteristic of the best universities all over the world. The simplest way in which this can be done is to give teacher and student conditions that will make

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## HIS MAJESTY'S COLONIAL SERVICE

There are vacancies for Civil Engineers in the Public Works Department, Malaya.

2. Qualifications entitling applicants to consideration are Corporate Membership of the Institution of Civil Engineers of Great Britain or Degrees or Diplomas recognised by that body as granting exemption from Sections A and B of its examination. Applicants, preferably between 25 and 30 years of age, should have had experience of the construction and maintenance of roads, buildings and bridges, or of aerodromes or of urban water supply schemes.

3. Appointments, which will be subject to a medical certificate of fitness for tropical service, will be on probation for a period of three years with the prospect of emplacement on the pensionable establishment at the end of this period. Salary is at the rate of 400 dollars a month, rising by annual increments of 25 dollars a month to 800 dollars a month. Starting salary will depend on age, civil experience, and length of approved war service.

4. Free quarters are not provided, but Government quarters partly furnished are usually available at low rates. Free passages for the officer, his wife, and children under the age of ten years, are granted on first appointment and on leave. Home leave on full pay is normally granted after 3 to 4 years of service at the rate of 4 days for each month of service.

5. Allowances in respect of children are payable at the rate of 70 dollars a month for the first child and 50 dollars a month for the second child until completion of the 18th year of age, and outfit allowance equivalent to £60 sterling is payable on first appointment.

6. For the purpose of exchange with sterling one Malayan dollar equals 2/4.

7. Applicants would be required to serve anywhere within the Malayan Union, Singapore, or Brunei.

8. Those interested should write to the Colonial Office Representative, Office of the High Commissioner for the United Kingdom, P.O. Box 992, Wellington, stating age and professional qualifications and giving date when those qualifications were obtained.