

AN INQUIRY INTO BIAS IN EDUCATION

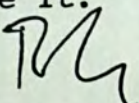
The tasks of any inquiry in this area should be first to expose the facts on bias to the general public; and second to propose some way of achieving balance.

It is clear from Lord Whitelaw's note that the House of Lords is not an appropriate vehicle for an inquiry. It is also clear from the DES note that officials are very sceptical of getting at the facts through an official inquiry.

It might be best to develop a two-pronged attack.

First, the unearthing of facts regarding political bias might be better done by a private initiative (similar to that achieved a number of years ago by Professor Julius Gould on "Marxism in Higher Education"). Apparently Lady Olga Maitland has already set up a committee to look at the issue (Oliver Letwin is a member). It might be useful for Central Office to give the committee some standing, publish its report and then, on the basis of its evidence, invite the Secretary of State to take action?

Second, and at the same time, why not invite the HMI to give a factual report on extra curricula courses at schools for students between the ages of 11-16? This would not be a report into political bias as such, but should nevertheless expose it.


BRIAN GRIFFITHS