



# Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the pay of Non-University Teachers

Chairman :

THE RT. HON. LORD HOUGHTON OF SOWERBY, C.H.

*Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for Education and Science  
and the Secretary of State for Scotland  
by Command of Her Majesty  
December 1974*

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Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for Education and Science  
in pursuance of a resolution of the House of Commons  
on 15th February 1974

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## COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY INTO TEACHERS' PAY

The Committee of Inquiry was appointed in June 1974 to examine the pay of non-university teachers in Great Britain.

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We are glad to send you our Report before Christmas as we had hoped to do.

We were appointed at the end of June and within six months we have completed the most thorough and comprehensive review of teachers' pay for many years. While our terms of reference imposed no conditions upon the production of our recommendations, the teachers' firm expectation of retrospection to 24 May 1974 made the time factor of great importance. This is why we set our own target date for this Report right at the outset.

Our task combined all the urgency of an immediate pay claim with strong demands for recasting grading and salary structures to meet changing conditions. This combination of short-term and long-term requirements gave rise to conflicting aims within our overall review. These were difficult to reconcile. It is not easy to do the work of an arbitration tribunal and of a Royal Commission within the same time scale.

We seriously considered meeting this dilemma by making an interim report. For reasons we gave in a letter to all who came to see us we decided against this. It would have diverted us from our main task and, more important, it became impossible to contemplate making an interim report in face of all the evidence put to us for structural change. It was only very much later that we were able to advise you that a flat-rate lump sum of £100 could safely be given to most teachers pending the presentation of our conclusions.

Our Report is ample evidence of the range and depth of our inquiry. In order to complete our work in time we set up several groups within the Committee to study simultaneously their allotted tasks. Their recommendations were then considered and co-ordinated by the Committee as a whole. By this method we gained a lot of time.

As a former Chairman of the Staff Side of the Civil Service National Whitley Council, I have naturally been interested in the machinery for the negotiation of the pay and conditions of service in our education services. We refer to this in paragraph 264 of our Report. We hope that attention will be given to the absence of any place for joint negotiation on matters of pay and conditions of service common to the profession as a whole.

In the background to our Report lies the overriding question of the principles on which the pay of teachers should be fixed. The teaching profession is a large and important group within the public sector which lacks any agreed doctrine of comparability or a reliable estimate of public esteem. This may account in part

for the pay of teachers falling behind. We have now tried to get teachers' salaries and careers more in line with a realistic assessment of present conditions in our schools and the place of education in the country's future.

Finally, I refer to paragraph 283 in our Report. Negotiations on our proposals should begin without delay. These should be completed, if possible, before the next round of pay negotiations on the settlements due in April 1975. Our Report says plainly (paragraph 278) that we proceeded on the assumption that our recommendations are to be backdated to 24 May 1974. We have therefore conducted our inquiry on the relevant evidence available. Movements in prices, wages and salaries which have taken place since May last have not entered into our reckoning. We have kept to the conditions of April 1974 leaving subsequent changes to future negotiations. This approach was inherent in a retrospective study on how far the salaries of teachers had "fallen behind".

The Committee realises full well that many people may judge our recommendations in the circumstances prevailing in December 1974 and not those of seven months ago. We considered several possible ways of identifying and taking into account factors in rapidly changing conditions which might be reflected in our recommendations. The Committee could find no way of meeting both retrospective and present criteria without anticipating or encroaching upon future negotiations. This they thought it wrong to do. Having stated so clearly the basis of our proposals which we recommend shall be effective from 24 May 1974, any further revision of salary scales would fall to be dealt with through the normal machinery. The next such revision is due from 1 April 1975.

The Committee wishes to record its unstinted praise for the enthusiasm and devotion of members of the Secretariat for their sustained effort in getting this job done.

Members of the Committee have made heavy sacrifices of time and effort to complete this difficult task. They have been under severe and constant pressure. Contrary to widespread belief none of us receives any payment for this work beyond out of pocket expenses.

We emphasise that our recommendations stand as a whole and represent the Committee's considered judgment of what is needed comprehensively to bring salaries and structures more into line with current needs and expectations. We hope that no time will be lost in implementing the improvements and reforms which we unanimously recommend.

*Signed*

HOUGHTON OF SOWERBY

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