

REF: IFB/RS

9 June 1981

Mr. R.A. Hoy
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Dear Ron,

I have your letter about the Swinnerton - Dwyer interim report. The situation is not too alarming and in fact has some elements of advantage for us. First, let me put the reference to nursing studies in its context. This interim report is not concerned with subjects but with institutions. Chelsea came out very badly in this analysis of institutions. However, because its report was so critical the Committee wished to emphasise its support for those specialists area at Chelsea which it did not wish to see go under. Nursing studies is one of these and we can take some heart from the fact that this suggests that the University remains committed to supporting nursing studies as a subject. The full report specifically states that in general it is not dealing with subjects at this stage and, therefore, no significance can be attached to the fact that nursing studies at Bedford College, or for that matter any other subject at Bedford College, was not singled out in the report.

So far as Bedford College is concerned, we are, of course, likely to suffer from the fact that we are not a major school such as UC, or LSE, etc. However, there is no suggestion of abolishing us only of our absorbing Westfield College. Of course, the likely contraction of Bedford College whether it is merged with Westfield or not will pose some problems for us. So far as the Department is concerned, we are committed to nursing studies. So far as the College is concerned, at a 'key' committee on Wednesday last, nice things were said about nursing studies and when the next Swinnerton - Dyer report comes out rumour has it that it will say something positive about medical sociology at Bedford College in which area nursing studies is based.

I agree with everything you say about Chelsea as does Marian Ferguson. The University is well aware that the two courses are deliberately different and I trust it realises that both must be based close to their supporting hospital. It may be necessary for us to make noises about co-operation and indeed I have already told Jack Hayward that if the social sciences are abolished at Chelsea, we will think ourselves under an obligation to support him in that area.

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My own opinion is that we have more to fear from contraction than from the possibility of radical institutional reorganisation. Meanwhile, I am working at plans for an association with University College which your medical school supports and encourages and this, of course, is in line with the thinking behind the Flowers Report.

I will keep you informed from time to time, but in the meantime, rest assured that I have the matter in hand and our thinking is entirely in the same direction.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Ivor Burton

c.c. Marian Ferguson

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RAH/JT

3 June 1981

Dr I. Burton
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Dear Ivor,

I was somewhat disturbed to read in the Guardian that the Swinnerton - Dwyer Committee have recommended that Chelsea College could close although retaining among others the nursing course. The report also suggests that Bedford should form a consortium with Westfield College.

Does this mean a) that Bedford is likely to take over the Chelsea nursing course or vice versa and b) if Bedford and Westfield as the report suggest, are merged and contracted, does the current nursing course have a long-term future?

I do appreciate that of course alot of work must be done on this report, but if you do have some inside information perhaps you would be good enough to put me in the picture.

In confidence - one thing I don't want to do is to find myself under Chelsea's umbrella! I am certain that Chelsea will be making some move based on this report.

Yours sincerely,

Mr R.A. Hoy