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LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SYNDICATE TO THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

2 May 1989

Dear Vice-Chancellor,

The Syndicate on the government of the University have now completed their report to the Regent House. In this letter I do not wish to recapitulate the Syndicate's conclusions and recommendations, since the synopsis prefaced to the report adequately captures its essence. But I thought that it would not be out of place for me to mention to you a few points which we should like to emphasize.

The first is that the members of the Syndicate are unanimous in their support for the recommendations. I believe this to be a significant fact. The members were drawn from a wide field, both within the University and without. Their experience comprised not only the government of Cambridge, but that of other universities, of business, and of central government. We have taken evidence from a large number of witnesses and have spent a year deliberating on the subject. While it is right for the University to give critical scrutiny to what we say, I am sure that it will also give great weight to the unanimity of our report.

My second observation is that we wish our proposals to be seen as an integrated whole. In different ways each of our recommendations represents the specific application of a small number of important underlying principles – the preservation of Cambridge as a self-governing body of scholars, the delegation of executive authority to where it can best be exercised, the elimination of duplication in administration, and the strengthening of the system of accountability to ensure that at each level of government authority is exercised responsibly. We believe that although it may be possible to vary some of our proposals at the margin without damage to the fabric, the substance of what we propose should stand or fall as a whole. For this reason we hope that the discussion of our report will be conducted in terms of principle and of broad application.

My third point stems from this. We very much hope that, when the Council consider the comments that will no doubt be made on our report during the coming six months, they will consult us and give us an opportunity of replying to any criticisms that may be made, and will take our reply into account in formulating the recommendations to be put to the Regent House. We recognize that it is for the Council to consider remarks made at discussions and to decide on the response to them, but we hope that we shall be allowed to make a contribution to that response.

Fourthly, I want to stress the overwhelming importance that the Syndicate attach to co-operation between the University and the Colleges. We recognize the division of responsibilities between the two sides of the academic community in Cambridge, and we do not wish to change this. But these responsibilities must be exercised in a mutually consistent way. This means that each side has a duty to keep the other fully informed of its policies and practices. Each must also be prepared, in the execution of those policies and practices, to accommodate the requirements of the other. In the last analysis this can only be accomplished by a will to make the system work. But we have sought in our report to suggest ways in which the machinery might facilitate a smooth working of the system.

Finally, I want to place on record the thanks of the Syndicate to all those, including all our witnesses, who assisted us in our work. We are especially indebted to the staff of the Old Schools who, largely unseen, gave us excellent service. Above all we are grateful to the Registrar and to our secretary, the University Draftsman, whose wise advice, skill, and diligence enabled us to pick our way through a complex series of issues and whose guidance ensured that we completed our studies on time.

Yours sincerely,
DOUGLAS WASS

SYNOPSIS

The University's present constitution dates from 1926, and has remained fundamentally unchanged since that time. However, the context in which the University operates has altered almost beyond recognition in the past sixty-three years, and we believe that the University must change its system of government if it is to function effectively now and in the future. In this report we put forward proposals for a revision of the University's constitutional and administrative arrangements with this end in view.

The University of Cambridge must conduct its business efficiently, and it must be prompt and decisive in its dealings with outside bodies. It must also remain, as it is now, a self-governing community of scholars. Our recommendations, which are to be seen as an integrated whole, are designed to satisfy these two fundamental requirements.

We propose that a number of the powers currently exercised by the Regent House should be transferred to the Council or the General Board; we believe that the Council should be the principal executive and policy-making body of the University and should be responsible for planning and the overall allocation of resources. The Regent House should retain control over those areas of University business that fall properly to a governing body; it should also be recognized as the authority to which the Council and other organs of the University are accountable. To enforce that accountability, the Council should be required to submit an Annual Report to the Regent House; this Report, together with the Estimates and the Accounts, would be subject to examination and public review by a new Board of Scrutiny on behalf of the Regent House at large.

The Council should be the principal authority of the University and the other central bodies should be formally subordinate to it. The General Board should continue to act as a largely independent authority, responsible for the University's academic and educational work. It should have more powers of its own than now, but should be required to make an Annual Report to the Council, which would form part of the Council's own Report to the Regent House. We recommend that the General Board should include representatives from a wider range of institutions than it does now, and that it should appoint some of its members to serve on the Council (instead of the converse, as at present). The Financial Board, which is responsible for financial management rather than financial policy, should be reconstituted as a Committee of the Council, under the title 'Finance Committee'.

At present, over-centralization leads to cumbersome procedures and creates delay in the conduct of University business. To devolve power from the Regent House to the central bodies will be a partial remedy, but we also recommend further devolution from the centre to subordinate bodies, in particular more delegation of resource management from the General Board to the Councils of the Schools and from them to Faculty Boards and Heads of Departments. We also recommend various measures designed to strengthen administrative support within the University.

The rôle of the Vice-Chancellor has been central to our thinking. The present system limits the effectiveness of the Vice-Chancellor; in our view the University needs a full-time head, who would give up any other University or College appointments and would hold office for a longer period than the present two-year term. We recommend that the Vice-Chancellor should be appointed by the Council and should have tenure for five years, renewable for two further years; we would remove the present requirement that the office should be held by the Head of a College, and we recommend that there should be no restriction on eligibility.

We were also asked to consider the inter-relationship between University and College policy. It is important to emphasize the interdependence of the University and the Colleges as parts of a single academic community; we believe that this is insufficiently recognized at present. Our report includes proposals for some changes on the University side, but we have not made detailed recommendations for changes to be introduced by the Colleges, since we believe that these are largely a matter for the Colleges themselves. We have, however, put forward a number of suggestions for the Colleges to consider, mainly designed to improve the working of the various inter-College bodies.

Report of the Syndicate appointed to consider the government of the University

The SYNDICATE ON THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY beg leave to report to the University as follows:

1. Terms of Reference and Procedure

1.1 We were appointed by Graces 2 and 3 of 24 February and Grace 19 of 15 June 1988 as a Syndicate to consider the government of the University, with the following terms of reference:

To consider, in the light of changing circumstances, the government of the University with particular reference to:

- (a) the tenure, powers, and duties of the Vice-Chancellor;
- (b) the functions of the central bodies and the relationship between them;
- (c) the relationships between the central bodies, the Councils of the Schools, the Faculty Boards, and other authorities;
- (d) the rôle of the Regent House;
- (e) the inter-relationship between University and College policy;

and to report to the University not later than the division of the Easter Term 1989.

1.2 By a Notice published in the *Reporter*¹ we invited members of the Regent House to submit memoranda on any matters falling within our terms of reference. We also solicited comments from particular individuals and from a large number of authorities and institutions (mainly within the University but including a few outside bodies). In all 103 memoranda were received, divided in roughly equal proportions between submissions from individuals and submissions on behalf of authorities or institutions; details are given in Appendix A. It is not our intention to publish these memoranda, but they are available in the University Registry for consultation by members of the Regent House. We invited a number of those who submitted memoranda to give additional evidence in person; we also took oral evidence from representatives of the University of Oxford. We have held sixteen meetings to discuss the matters remitted to us, to hear evidence, and to consider our report.

2. The Present System

2.1 We begin by giving a brief description of the main elements in the University's present system of government.

2.2 The governing body of the University is the Regent House; this consists of the graduate staff of the University and the Colleges, currently numbering about 3,300 persons. (When the present constitution was introduced in 1926 the comparable figure was about 600.) The Senate, which consists of all holders of the M.A. Degree or a higher degree, was formerly the governing body; in formal terms it is still the final court of appeal, but in practice it now has little real power (see section 6 below). The powers of the Regent House are set out in Statute A, III, 7-9, which reads as follows:

7. Any power of making, altering or repealing Statutes which is assigned to the University by the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act 1923, or any other Act of Parliament, shall be exercised by the Regent House by Grace subject to the provisions hereinafter contained.

8. The powers of enacting Ordinances and issuing Orders (otherwise than for the performance of those functions assigned to the Senate by Statute) shall be exercised by the Regent House subject to the provisions hereinafter contained.

9. Whenever it is provided that an act or thing shall or may be done or determined by the University, it shall be done or determined by Grace of the Regent House (subject to the provisions hereinafter contained) unless it is expressly stated that it is to be done or determined otherwise, provided that the Regent House may delegate to the Council of the Senate or to another body authority to act on its behalf in such matters as it may from time to time determine.

All legislative changes involving either Statutes or Ordinances must be approved by the Regent House. Many executive decisions are also placed in the hands of the Regent House (e.g. it approves the establishment or suppression of University offices and of institutions in the University, it makes various appointments, and it authorizes the construction of University buildings). Such decisions are taken by Grace, either with or without a previous Report. The Regent House also exercises authority as an electoral body, by electing members of the Council of the Senate.

¹ *Reporter*, 1987-88, p. 505.

2.3 The Statutes provide for three bodies commonly known as the 'central bodies', viz. the Council of the Senate, the General Board, and the Financial Board.

2.3.1 The Council of the Senate has general responsibility for the administration of the University and for the planning and management of its work. The Council takes decisions on a wide range of matters, and its sanction is required before a Grace can be submitted to the Regent House.

2.3.2 The function of the General Board is to formulate the educational policy of the University and, subject to the powers of the Regent House, to determine the allocation of the resources necessary for the proper implementation of that policy; it is responsible for maintaining the standard of teaching and research, for the appointment of Examiners, for seeing that academic regulations are properly adhered to, and that University officers in Faculties and Departments are performing their duties satisfactorily.

2.3.3 The Financial Board is responsible for the financial management of the University, both in respect of central University funds (the 'Chest') and in respect of the funds of Faculties and Departments, etc. It deals with budgets and accounts, and it advises the Council on trends in University income and expenditure; it is not, however, responsible for the allocation of money to different institutions in the University, this being the responsibility of the Council and the General Board. It controls the University's investments, it maintains University buildings and administers University property, and it arranges for the planning and construction of new buildings.

2.3.4 The three central bodies conduct themselves largely as independent and autonomous authorities, though the Council's general responsibilities give it a senior status; in practice there is a great deal of undefined overlap between the three. Although the Regent House is the supreme decision-making authority of the University, initiatives are in the hands of the Council, in virtue of its power to put proposals before the Regent House.

2.4 The head of the University is the Vice-Chancellor, who is appointed from among the Heads of Colleges and serves by convention for a period of two years while retaining his or her College post.

3. Background

3.1 *Historical survey*

3.1.1 The University's present constitution dates from 1926, when the main body of the Statutes, largely in its present form, was made by the University of Cambridge Commissioners and approved by the King in Council. In broad outline the constitution has remained unchanged since 1926, though many changes have been introduced to improve the working of the University's administrative machine. During the past thirty years in particular several initiatives have been mounted with this end in view.

3.1.2 In 1961 the Council appointed a Committee to consider possible reform of the administrative structure of the University; this Committee was subsumed the following year into a Joint Committee of the Council and the General Board on Faculty and Departmental organization, which reported in December 1963.² Discussion of this Report led to the appointment in 1966 of another Committee, composed of Dr W. W. Grave, Mr J. S. Boys-Smith, Lord Butler, and Sir Frank Lee, to conduct a general review of the University's administrative arrangements. The report of this Committee (the 'Grave Report') was published in 1967.³ Its recommendations included the following: transfer of the Senate's residual powers to the Regent House, and revision of the membership of the Regent House; a revision of the rôle of the Council, which was to become the principal policy-making body of the University, with the Financial Board and the General Board constituted as Committees of it; appointment of the Registrar as head of the University's civil service; delegation of wide-ranging powers by the Regent House to the Council; revised arrangements for the allocation of resources; and an extension of the Vice-Chancellor's term of office to three years.

3.1.3 These recommendations were widely discussed in the University during 1967-68, and in June 1968 the Council published the first of a series of Reports on the administrative organization of the University,⁴ based on the recommendations of the Grave Report. Not all these recommendations were accepted by the Council; in particular, the Council rejected the proposal for a change in the status of the General Board and the proposed extension of the Vice-Chancellor's tenure. In their First Report the Council put forward a number of fundamental proposals on matters of principle; with one exception (concerning revision of the membership of the Regent House) these were approved by the University. Seven further Reports followed over the next eight years, dealing with the detailed amendments of Statutes and Ordinances needed to implement the reforms approved in principle in 1968.

3.1.4 This series of Reports came to an end with the publication of the Council's Eighth Report and Revised Eighth Report in 1976 and 1979. However, there remained a number of recommendations of the Grave Report which had not been implemented, and in 1984 the Council embarked on a further review of certain aspects of the University's administrative and constitutional arrangements. This led to the Council's Ninth Report, published in December 1986.⁵

3.1.5 The Ninth Report was chiefly concerned with the constitutional position of the Council and its relation to the Regent House. As was explained in the Report (paragraph 7), the Statutes at that time gave an inadequate

² *Reporter*, 1963-64, p. 882.

⁴ *ibid.* 1967-68, p. 2134.

³ *ibid.* 1967-68, p. 334.

⁵ *ibid.* 1986-87, p. 186.

account of the Council and its responsibilities, and the main purpose of the Report was to improve the situation by providing a clear statement of the Council's responsibilities and by giving it explicit executive powers. This restatement of the Council's position is now written into the current version of Statute A, IV, 1, which reads as follows:

1. (a) The Council of the Senate shall have general responsibility for the administration of the University, and for the planning and management of its work; it shall have power to take such action as is necessary for it to discharge these responsibilities. It shall also perform such other executive and administrative duties as may be delegated to it by the Regent House or assigned to it by Statute or Ordinance.

(b) The Council shall oversee the work of all institutions in the University except the University Press and those placed under the supervision of the General Board.

(c) The Council shall have the right of reporting to the University. It shall advise the Regent House on matters of general concern to the University.

(d) The Council shall keep under review the University's financial position and shall make an annual Report to the University recommending allocations from the Chest.

(e) The Council shall have the power of submitting Graces to the Senate or the Regent House....

3.2 *Recent developments: the genesis of our enquiry*

3.2.1 This recent reform may have produced an improvement in the sense that it clarified and regularized the *de facto* constitutional position, but it did not lead to any changes in administrative practice. The Report of the Steering Committee for Efficiency Studies in Universities (the 'Jarratt Report'), published in March 1985,⁶ called for the establishment of machinery which would enable universities to manage their affairs more efficiently and to make more effective use of the resources available to them. The Cambridge response to this Report, prepared by the central bodies, seemed to suggest that all necessary measures had already been taken to ensure the efficient functioning of the University.⁷ This response met with a critical reception from the University Grants Committee (UGC), who expressed concern in their published comments that 'Cambridge has not yet adequately faced these issues [the questions of leadership, co-ordination, and strategic planning] and that Cambridge's central bodies may not have the capacity to produce the strategic, academic, and financial plans that are essential in the current financial climate'. The Committee went on to say that in their view Cambridge stood in need of a fundamental review.

3.2.2 This criticism by the UGC no doubt reinforced the belief, already held in some quarters of the University, that Cambridge administrative procedures were slow and cumbersome, and that a thorough-going reform was needed to make possible a more rapid response to outside initiatives. This belief found expression in the Memorial of 5 November 1987,⁸ in which it was suggested that 'the lack of efficient procedures for policy making places the University at a disadvantage when dealing with requests from the Government, the UGC, and other external sources'. At the same time, others felt that the democratic rights of members of the Regent House had been eroded over the years by encroachment of the central bodies and that this process ought to be reversed; this view also featured in the Memorial, which spoke of 'the absence of satisfactory means by which the Regent House can fulfil the normal rôle of a governing body'. It was the publication of this Memorial which led directly to the establishment of the Syndicate.

3.2.3 The Memorialists' second objective, *viz.* to reassert the democratic character of the University, appears *prima facie* to be incompatible with the first; as the Council pointed out in their comments on the Memorial, 'if the University is to respond more swiftly and decisively to current needs, greater authority must be delegated to the central bodies and their officers, but this would reduce the influence of Faculty Boards and similar authorities and would make it difficult to give individual members of the Regent House an increased opportunity to participate effectively in the government of the University'.⁹ In spite of the apparent difficulty of reconciling these two objectives, we believe that they are both important and that a way must be found of achieving both these aims if Cambridge is to retain its place as one of the leading universities of the world. In the paragraphs that follow proposals are set out for a system of government which we believe would satisfy these two requirements.

4. Our Approach

4.1 While we have been conscious throughout both of the reasons for our appointment and of our terms of reference, we have considered the government of Cambridge in a more wide-ranging way than we originally

⁶ A summary of the Report's recommendations was published in *Reporter*, 1984-85, p. 511.

⁷ See the Council's Report, dated 28 July 1986, on the recommendations of the Report of the Steering Committee for Efficiency Studies in Universities, *Reporter*, 1985-86, p. 740.

⁸ *Reporter*, 1987-88, p. 158. The text of the Memorial is reproduced in Appendix B.

⁹ *ibid.* 1987-88, p. 160.

intended. Our enquiry has provided an opportunity to question the premises of the University's administration and management, and to see to what extent they meet modern needs. Financial pressures and the political consequences of state funding are of course very important, and we have tried to take account of likely developments in this area as far as we can. However, finance, administration, and efficiency are not the overriding priorities. Cambridge is one of the world's great seats of learning, and the qualities that have made it so must not be endangered by our proposals.

4.2 There are three features of the Cambridge system which have particularly contributed to the high quality of the University's academic work. First, the University is a self-governing community of scholars. In our view this feature of the Cambridge constitution is one of its greatest strengths, and must be preserved in any constitutional reform. Members of the Regent House are conscious that they form the governing body of the institution to which they belong, and this creates a feeling of involvement and participation in the work of the University. Second, the devolution of academic responsibility to individual Faculties and Departments has given them great freedom in developing programmes of teaching and research. A third factor which has contributed greatly to the success of Cambridge is the College system, in which University teaching is complemented by College supervision, in which academic research is furthered by College Fellowships and Studentships, and in which groups of scholars from different disciplines live and work together and benefit from close association with one another.

4.3 We were not asked to question these basic features of Cambridge, and it may seem superfluous to mention them. However, it is important to understand that our proposals have been constructed with a desire not merely to safeguard the strengths of Cambridge but to reinforce them. What in fact we have attempted to do in our enquiry is to reconcile the aim of the University to develop as a self-governing and responsible academic institution, committed to education and the advancement of learning, with the need for a system of administration that will enable it to operate efficiently, to take full advantage of the availability of resources from outside, to respond in an enlightened and well co-ordinated way to external pressures and opportunities, and to ensure that the choices it has to make are exercised in a considered manner with the maximum participation of those affected. We wish our proposals to be judged by these objectives.

4.4 Our decision to review the government of the University with these ends in mind has led us to pose a number of fundamental questions, both as a matter of generality and in relation to particular bodies and functions. Perhaps the most basic of these has been the question whether the present allocation of functions to the component parts of the University makes for effective democratic government; allied to this is the question whether the powers assigned to the various parts are appropriate to the function that each has to perform. Another issue which has occupied us is the need to ensure that satisfactory arrangements exist for each authority in the University to answer for the exercise of its powers and the performance of its duties. We have been particularly inquisitive about duplication of functions in the University, and we have taken it as axiomatic that the most stringent justification has to be found for any system in which two different bodies, whether belonging to the same hierarchy or not, carry out the same tasks. We have tried to find the right balance between direction by academics and direction by professional administrators. Our intention has been not to call in question the principle of self-government, but to examine the most effective way of implementing that principle. We have been concerned also to improve the arrangements that exist within the University for communicating decisions and information to those concerned or affected by them; consensual government depends for its effectiveness on a wide awareness and understanding of the decisions taken by the various responsible bodies and the reasons for them. Finally, although this was not central to our enquiry, we have looked at the working methods of the organs of the University; for it has become clear to us that the machinery of government, however well designed, will not function properly unless it is used to good effect.

4.5 In the remaining sections of this report we examine successively the various elements in the University's system of government, beginning with the Regent House and the Senate, and moving thereafter to the central bodies and their subordinate organs. We then look at the post of Vice-Chancellor and finally review the machinery for co-ordinating College and University policy.

5. The Regent House

5.1 Powers and duties

5.1.1 Under the 1926 constitution, the Regent House is the governing body of the University, in virtue of the legislative and executive powers given to it by Statute A, III, 7-9 (see section 2.2 above). Circumstances have changed a great deal since 1926, and it is not surprising if constitutional arrangements which functioned effectively at that time have become less satisfactory since then, as a result of the growth in the volume of the University's business, the increase in its size, and the growing complexity of its affairs. In particular, we believe that the procedures of the Regent House for the conduct of business are too slow and too cumbersome for it either to fulfil an effective executive rôle, or to take policy decisions, in a way that is appropriate to modern conditions.

5.1.2 This point can be illustrated from recent events. The University is often called on to produce a response, e.g. to the Jarratt Report, or a policy document, e.g. an Academic Plan. These must be prepared by the central bodies and, while a great deal of consultation (e.g. with Councils of the Schools and with Faculty Boards) always

takes place as part of this process, it is often not practicable, in terms of either the time available or the complexity of the issues involved, to extend this consultation to include the Regent House at large. In some cases, pressure of time is such that the central bodies can only prepare the document and inform the University afterwards that they have done so; this happened in 1987–88 in the case of the Academic Plan.¹⁰ In other cases, when time allows, it may be possible for policy to be worked out by the central bodies and subsequently presented to the Regent House for approval. However, it is rarely possible for the Regent House to be consulted early in the planning process; and if consultation takes place at a later stage, this leads members of the Regent House to feel that the consultation is a mere formality. To take another example, the General Board published a Report in February 1988 proposing the establishment of a Research Centre in Superconductivity,¹¹ and the Regent House was asked to approve this proposal; however, because of the exigencies of the timetable the earlier decision to submit a bid for this Centre was taken not by the Regent House but by the General Board (though the Board acted, of course, only after extensive consultation with members of the Departments most closely concerned). For the same reason it was not possible to consult the Regent House about the desirability of Interdisciplinary Research Centres in principle or to invite it to express a preference for a Centre in one subject rather than another.

5.1.3 As these examples show, it is inevitable, given the complexity of the issues involved, that the Regent House is often consulted about a proposal at a stage when it is effectively too late to do anything but agree. The power of the Regent House to determine University policy is dissipated in a series of piecemeal decisions, and there is no opportunity for it to comment on the framework into which these individual decisions fit.

5.1.4 We are firmly of the view that the Regent House should retain its position as the ultimate governing body of the University. However, for the reasons given above we do not believe that it is practicable for the Regent House to exercise executive authority over the day-to-day conduct of business in the way that is implied by Statute A, III, 9. As we have already indicated, we believe that this section of the Statute is framed in a simplistic way which does not accord with present-day conditions, and we do not think it sensible to retain it in its present form.

5.1.5 In order to discharge its responsibilities as the governing body of the University, we believe that the Regent House should be confirmed in its control over certain aspects of the government of the University which are of fundamental importance, and that it should be able to exercise that control effectively. We propose that all other powers and duties currently in the hands of the Regent House should be transferred to the central bodies, who would exercise them subject to regular reporting procedures (see section 5.1.8 below).

5.1.6 Of the three functions of the Regent House listed in Statute A, III, 7–9, we believe that the first, the power to make and amend Statutes, is so important that it should remain under the control of the Regent House, as the ultimate legislative authority in the University. In this way the Regent House would retain its power to determine the framework for the University's system of government. As for the other functions of the Regent House, dealt with in sections 8 and 9 of the Statute, *viz.* the power to enact Ordinances, to issue Orders,¹² and to take executive action, we propose that these should be shared between the Regent House and the central bodies. The Regent House would retain the power to make and amend Ordinances, and to take executive decisions, in those areas of University business where authority ought properly to be placed in the hands of the governing body.

5.1.7 More precisely, we propose that the Regent House should retain (or should be given) the following powers, which would be explicitly reserved to it by Statute:

Power to make, alter, or repeal Statutes (Statute A, III, 7)

Power to make Ordinances regulating the procedure of the Regent House (Statute A, III, 13)

Election of elected members of the Council (Statute A, IV, 2)

Power to establish Boards and Syndicates (Statute A, V, 1(b))

Power to regulate the use of the Common Seal (Statute A, VI, 8)

Approval of supplicants for degrees (Statute B, III, 1) and Graces for honorary degrees (Statute B, IV)

Power to make regulations for discipline (Statute B, VI, 1) and regulations for the Court of Discipline (Statute B, VI, 10)

Appointment of the Septemviri (Statute B, VI, 2)

Power to establish a court of summary jurisdiction (Statute B, VI, 18)

Power to establish or suppress Faculties (Statute C, I, 2)

Power to constitute or suppress Departments (Statute C, II, 1)

Election of the Proctors (Statute D, V, 3), and the Orator (Statute D, VI, 2)

Power to establish or terminate Professorships (Statute D, XIII, 1–3) and to establish Readerships (Statute D, XVI, 1)

All powers currently exercised by the Regent House under the provisions of Statute G

Recognition of Approved Foundations (Statute H, I, 1) and Approved Societies (Statute H, IV, 1)

Approval of the Council's Annual Report

Approval of the Council's annual Report on the financial position of the Chest (the 'Allocations Report')

Approval of proposals for the erection of major new University buildings¹³

¹⁰ *Reporter*, 1987–88, p. 270.

¹¹ *ibid.* 1987–88, p. 332.

¹² The term 'Order' was introduced by the University Commissioners in 1925 'for convenience to denote an approved Grace which is neither a Statute nor an Ordinance' (*Reporter*, 1925–26, p. 146), i.e. an executive decision. The term has never been adopted into regular use.

¹³ By a 'major' new building we mean a building costing more than, say, £2m at today's prices.

Power to make and amend Ordinances on the following matters:

- The University officers
- Finance and property (including Trust Funds)
- Colleges
- Institutions recognized under Statute H

5.1.8 Although the Regent House would hand over some of its present powers to the central bodies, we think it important to strengthen its ability to act as the final arbiter of University policy. We would seek to achieve this in the following way. The Council, as the principal executive body of the University, would be responsible to the Regent House and would make an Annual Report to the Regent House on behalf of the central bodies, giving an account of their conduct of affairs over the year; this report would be received and considered by the Regent House, who would have an opportunity of voting on it to express approval or disapproval of the Council's policies. We propose that there should be similar opportunities to discuss the Annual Estimates (i.e. the Allocations Report, as now) and the Annual Accounts. In addition, the Council might report to the University from time to time on broad questions of policy; there would also be provision for a specified number of members to call for a discussion on a topic of concern to the University, as at present. A system along these lines would leave the central bodies free to plan and administer the work of the University without being subject to the delays and uncertainties imposed by the present system, while the Regent House would retain its position as the final authority to which the central bodies are accountable.

5.2 *The Board of Scrutiny*

5.2.1 In order to make the central bodies genuinely accountable to the Regent House, we propose the establishment of an elected body which would be charged with responsibility for giving detailed attention each year to the three items of University business mentioned in section 5.1.8 above, viz. the Council's Annual Report, the Allocations Report, and the Accounts. This body, for which we propose the title 'Board of Scrutiny', would be constituted by Statute. It would have no executive or legislative power, nor would it be concerned with the routine business of the central bodies; its duty would be to take the lead in scrutinizing the three major items of University business listed above and to advise the Regent House of any issues arising from them that merited discussion or criticism. Members of the Board would be expected to devote more time and attention to these matters than the average member of the Regent House; the Board would have power to call for papers, to request background information from the central bodies and their officers, and if necessary to engage the central bodies in discussion at a joint meeting.

5.2.2 The Council's Annual Report and the Allocations Report would be put up for discussion in the normal way; the same would apply to the Annual Accounts. In considering these matters members of the Board would see themselves as representatives of Regent House opinion; at the Discussion they would speak in that spirit, rather than as spokesmen for any particular constituency. After the Discussion the Council would reply to any comments as expeditiously as possible; in the case of the two reports, they would promote Graces for the approval of their recommendations. If the Board were not satisfied with the Council's reply in its final form, they would consider whether the matter was of sufficient importance to justify a *non placet*. If they decided that it was, members of the Board would take the lead in requesting a ballot on the issue.

5.2.3 We have specified the responsibilities of the Board of Scrutiny with some precision in order to give a clear account of the rôle that we see for it in the government of the University. We suggest that the establishment of the Board by Statute should include provision for its duties to be adjusted in the light of experience.

5.2.4 The Board of Scrutiny would consist of the two Proctors, the two Pro-Proctors (i.e. those due to be nominated as Proctors the following year), and eight members elected by the Regent House. The elected members would be persons chosen for their interest in University business and their willingness to devote time to it. We believe that, as with the present Nomination Board, provision should be made to ensure the inclusion of relatively junior members of the Regent House on the Board, and we propose that two of the eight elected members should be persons who are members of the Regent House of not more than ten years' standing.

5.3 *Membership of the Regent House*

5.3.1 Under the present Statutes the Regent House is a sub-set of the Senate, being defined by Statute A, III, 3 as those persons who are members of the Senate and who also fall into any of the following classes:

- University officers;
- Heads of Colleges;
- Fellows of Colleges;
- members, secretaries, and assistant secretaries of Faculties, Boards, and Syndicates.

5.3.2 The present provisions for membership of the Regent House are complex, and we propose a simplification of them. We suggest that membership of the Senate should no longer be a prerequisite, but that membership of the Regent House should be conferred by the holding of a University office or a College Fellowship alone, so that it would no longer be necessary to grant the M.A. Degree, or the status of M.A., to those who are not Cambridge graduates in order to allow them to qualify as members of the Regent House. Apart from simplification, there would be a clear advantage in this; the present practice of granting the Cambridge M.A. Degree lends colour to the belief that Cambridge does not 'recognize' the degrees of other universities, a belief which is the source of considerable and understandable resentment.

5.3.3 Some members of the University may regret this proposal on historical grounds; from the earliest times the Regent House or its equivalent has been composed of the holders of Cambridge degrees. Nevertheless, since 1926 it has been the practice to confer Cambridge degrees (or the equivalent status) on persons who qualify on other grounds for membership of the Regent House, and this reduces the requirement for a Cambridge degree to a mere artifice; in our view the real break with tradition occurred when this provision was first introduced.

5.3.4 We further propose that membership of the Regent House should confer membership of the Senate. This would ensure that any members of the Regent House who do not hold Cambridge degrees enjoy the same privileges as at present.

5.3.5 The Grave Committee expressed the view that 'the Regent House should consist of those resident members of the University who are actively engaged in teaching or research, or in administration, and may therefore be expected to have a lively and informed interest in the University's affairs' (paragraph 9). They proposed that the composition of the Regent House should be restricted by removing the entitlement to membership of the following classes of persons:

- (a) members of Boards of Electors to Professorships;
- (b) members of occasional Syndicates;
- (c) persons appointed by a Faculty Board to membership of a Faculty.

The exclusion of classes (a) and (b) was approved in principle in 1968 but never put into effect. The proposal to exclude the third class of persons provoked strong opposition and was defeated at a ballot in November 1968.¹⁴ We do not wish to reopen this latter question, but we believe that the Grave Committee were right in proposing the exclusion of classes (a) and (b) above; we do not believe that membership of a Board of Electors of itself provides a sufficiently close connexion with the affairs of the University to confer membership of the Regent House, and we think that the same applies to those other Boards and Syndicates to which non-resident members are commonly appointed (e.g. the Careers Service Syndicate). We therefore propose that the class of membership currently defined as 'members, secretaries, and assistant secretaries of Faculties, Boards, and Syndicates' should be amended so as to read 'members of Faculties' (if Boards and Syndicates are excluded, there is no need to make reference to Secretaries and Assistant Secretaries, since there is now no such office as Secretary of a Faculty).

5.3.6 The Grave Committee also recommended the imposition of an age-limit for membership of the Regent House. The Committee said in their Report (paragraph 9): 'We do not think... that it should be possible to continue indefinitely the membership of persons who have ceased to play an active part in the University's affairs.' We agree with this view; we believe that membership of the Regent House should not continue for a significant period after retirement from University or College office. We accordingly recommend the imposition of an age-limit of seventy for membership of the Regent House in any category, except for (a) University officers (this is to protect the position of the Chancellor and the holders of ceremonial offices, to whom the normal retiring age of sixty-seven does not apply) and (b) Heads of Colleges (who are similarly entitled, in some Colleges, to continue to hold office after the age of sixty-seven). We also recommend the repeal of Statute A, III, 4, which allows for continued membership of the Regent House on the part of those resident within a specified distance of the University Church if they have previously been members for ten years.

5.3.7 The net result of these proposals would be to confer membership of the Regent House on the following (subject to the age-limit of seventy in the case of classes (c) and (d)), whether or not they hold a Cambridge degree:

- (a) University officers (or persons treated as such under Statute J, 7);
- (b) Heads of Colleges;
- (c) Fellows of Colleges;
- (d) members of Faculties, including those to whom membership of a Faculty has been granted by a Faculty Board under Statute C, I, 5(c).

6. The Senate

6.1 The Senate consists of all M.A.s or holders of comparable or higher degrees (whether resident in Cambridge or not), together with University officers and Fellows of Colleges who have the status of M.A.¹⁵ Until 1926 the Senate was the governing body of the University, and it is still in theory the ultimate authority, in the sense that the Statutes allow an appeal to the Senate from a decision of the Regent House (Statute A, III, 11); however, in practice most of the Senate's former duties have been transferred to the Regent House (either in 1926 or in 1968, following the recommendations of the Grave Report), and its remaining powers are almost entirely formal in character. They are:

- (a) to elect the Chancellor and the High Steward, and to appoint members of the Nomination Board (whose duty is to consider nominations for the Chancellorship);
- (b) to vote on Graces referred to the Senate on appeal;
- (c) to enact Ordinances for its own procedure;
- (d) to meet for the discussion of Reports, etc.

¹⁴ *Reporter*, 1968-69, p. 610.

¹⁵ If the proposal set out in section 5.3.4 above is accepted, there will in future be no need to grant the status of M.A., or the degree of M.A. under Statute B, III, 6, to non-Cambridge graduates to enable them to become members of the Regent House.

6.2 It has been represented to us that the continued existence of the Senate serves no useful purpose. The Senate is a body of perhaps some 150,000 members, though its exact size is not known since there is no system for keeping track of members and noting their deaths. The University does not maintain a comprehensive record of members' addresses, and so the Senate cannot be meaningfully consulted. The right of appeal to the Senate (which requires the support of one third of the total membership of the Regent House) has never been exercised. Meetings of the Senate are held regularly for the discussion of Reports, but notification of these meetings is given only in the *Reporter* and those who attend are almost exclusively members of the Regent House. It has been argued that there are positive disadvantages in maintaining the pretence that this shadowy body plays any real part in the government of the University; it has accordingly been suggested that the Senate should be abolished and its remaining powers transferred to the Regent House.

6.3 We have given serious consideration to this line of argument, but we are reluctant to pursue it to its logical conclusion. We believe that the Senate has a symbolic importance in that it provides a focus for continuing membership of the University on the part of all Cambridge graduates who have taken the M.A. or a higher degree. We also believe that it would be inappropriate to propose the abolition of the Senate at a time when the University needs to forge closer links with its alumni, and is likely to call on their support more than in the past. For these reasons we think that the Senate should continue in existence; however, we propose that its powers and duties should be still further reduced, so as to make it clear that the Senate no longer has a rôle in the government of the University.

6.4 In our view there is no longer any justification for maintaining the function of the Senate as an appellate body. We believe that the ultimate responsibility for the government of the University should rest with the body of resident senior members who constitute the Regent House, and we find it difficult to conceive a situation in which it would be appropriate to appeal from a decision of that body to the whole body of Cambridge M.A.s.

6.5 When Reports or other matters are put forward for discussion, the body that meets to discuss them is technically the Senate. Such discussions form a regular part of the University's deliberative procedures; they afford an opportunity for individual members of the University to comment on proposals before a decision is taken on them. In our view it is the Regent House, as the governing body of the University, which should be entitled to pass such comments, and to make this clear we think it appropriate that the Regent House should be the body charged with the duty of meeting for discussions. In making this proposal our purpose is simply to ensure that the University's procedures properly represent its constitutional arrangements; we have no wish to exclude from discussions those persons who are members of the Senate but not members of the Regent House, and we suggest that such persons should be permitted to attend and take part in discussions of the Regent House, by a provision analogous to the present provision under which persons *in statu pupillari* are allowed to do so.

6.6 We propose that the Senate should continue to elect the Chancellor and the High Steward. We think this not inappropriate; these officers rarely take part in the day-to-day running of the University and, as the Grave Committee remarked, 'the filling of the University's highest ceremonial office is a matter on which senior members of the University outside Cambridge may still value the right to express an opinion'. Moreover, it is a matter of which they are likely to become aware from the national press, which can properly be used to notify them of their rights and of the voting procedure. We therefore propose that the duties of the Senate should be restricted to electing the Chancellor and the High Steward, and to making regulations to govern the procedure at such elections.

7. The Central Bodies

7.1 In our examination of specimen issues which have recently confronted the University we have been struck by the extent to which all three central bodies have been involved, often giving the same sort of consideration to each issue. It is difficult to understand why this should have been necessary. The involvement of all the central bodies inevitably slows down the process of reaching decisions; it may also cause needless waste of time. In formulating our proposals we have sought to ensure that as far as possible the central bodies should not duplicate each other's work.

8. The Council¹⁶

8.1 *Constitutional position: powers and duties*

8.1.1 Under the University's present constitution the three central bodies have their own areas of responsibility. There is thus no single supreme authority in the University charged with the duty of forming policy and making decisions. So far as the Council and the General Board are concerned, the distribution of powers between them bears some resemblance to that between the Council and the Senate in a civic university, where the Council is responsible for general administration and the broad allocation of resources, including financial control, and the Senate for academic matters, including programmes of teaching and research.

8.1.2 We have been concerned at the amount of minor business which currently has to be considered by the Council, much of it not sufficiently important to justify the attention of a high-level authority. To despatch its routine business the Council meets every fortnight during Full Term. In addition to giving final approval to many

¹⁶ In view of our proposals concerning the Senate (see section 6 above), we think that it would now be appropriate to discontinue the title 'Council of the Senate' and to adopt the simpler term 'Council' instead.

decisions taken elsewhere in the University, it has direct responsibilities of its own in diverse fields. It has oversight of planning and resource allocation. It oversees the work of all institutions not under the supervision of the General Board and acts as the establishing authority for their staffs. It deals with student matters, discipline, University-College relations, fund raising, ceremonial business, honorary degrees, and the appointment of both internal and external representatives.

8.1.3 In our view the Council's primary duty should lie in fulfilling the functions allotted to it by Statute A, IV, 1(a), which provides that 'The Council of the Senate shall have general responsibility for the administration of the University, and for the planning and management of its work ...' We believe that its main concerns should be with important policy issues which affect the proper functioning and development of the University and with the satisfactory discharge of their duties by its subordinate bodies. The *minutiae* of administration should be delegated to subordinate bodies or to administrative officers, subject to their giving a periodic account of their stewardship. If the Council were to concentrate, as we suggest, on major issues, it would be more readily possible to enlist the interest of experienced senior members of the University in serving on it. At present we understand that some are reluctant to put their names forward for election to the Council because of the amount of minor business included in the Council's routine agenda.

8.1.4 The transfer to the Council of the executive powers of the Regent House which we have recommended in section 5 would itself go some way towards making the Council the principal policy-making body of the University. We believe that the authority of the Council could be further enhanced by making the General Board and the Financial Board subordinate to it, that is to say by making them formally answerable to the Council for the discharge of their responsibilities. We discuss the implications of this for these two bodies in section 9 below.

8.1.5 This means that we place responsibility for planning and the overall allocation of resources in the hands of the Council. Planning is in our view a matter of fundamental importance; it must include not only routine planning in the short and medium term, but also the ability to take account of long-term changes in the national pattern of higher education and to formulate a response to them. For this reason we see no need for a semi-independent planning body such as the present Long Term Planning Committee, which is constituted as a Joint Committee of the three central bodies and which reports to all three of them; we believe that responsibility for all aspects of planning should be exercised by the Council, though we think it advisable that the Council should appoint a planning committee to advise it, particularly about long-term developments.

8.1.6 If the Council is to function as the principal executive body of the University some radical changes are needed in the way in which it uses its time and exercises its powers. Our proposal for improving the focus of the Council's work is, as we said in section 8.1.3 above, that its responsibilities for routine matters should be delegated to subordinate bodies. The Council would then be able to meet less frequently (perhaps two or three times a term) and would concentrate on major questions of University policy. Subject to the system of accountability to the Regent House which we set out in section 5.1.8 above, the Council should explicitly address itself to such important questions as the adaptation of the University to changes in the sources of its funding, the preparation of a long-term plan for the development of the University, and the broad allocation of resources in the medium and longer term. Its rôle would be to ensure that all parts of the University contribute to the job of shaping the University's policy so as to take maximum advantage of the available opportunities for academic development. Above all it would have the ultimate responsibility for taking the strategic decisions on questions which would otherwise be resolved in a piecemeal and haphazard way. In section 11.4 below and in Appendix D we make some suggestions concerning the way in which the Council might seek to discharge its policy-making responsibilities.

8.1.7 To give effect to our objectives we have two organizational proposals to make. The first is that the routine business of endorsing decisions taken elsewhere in the University, and of enacting and amending Ordinances to give effect to them, should be delegated to an Executive Committee of the Council, which would be appointed by the Council from among its own members. The Committee would clearly have to meet more frequently than the Council; it should be a small body, and should despatch its routine business expeditiously. Any issue which was other than routine or formal would be referred to the full Council. Members of the Council might serve on it by rotation.

8.1.8 Our second organizational proposal concerns the Council's rôle in relation to those institutions for which it acts as the competent authority, commonly known as 'Council institutions'. We have some technical suggestions to offer about the relationship between the Council and these institutions; these suggestions are set out in Appendix C. We also propose that, in order to relieve the Council of routine business in this area, the Council's functions as a competent authority should be delegated to the Executive Committee.

8.2 Membership

8.2.1 In our view the membership of the Council also requires revision. The Council at present consists of the Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor, and sixteen members elected by the Regent House in the following classes: (a) four from among the Heads of Colleges, (b) four from among the Professors and Readers, and (c) eight from among all the members of the Regent House alike.

8.2.2 We think it important to continue class (a) membership, which ensures the representation of College opinion and the involvement of the Colleges in University affairs at the highest level. We propose that the four members in class (a) should be elected by the Regent House on the nomination of the Colleges Committee. We

return in section 14 to the importance of these members in ensuring that the whole body of Colleges is kept informed of Council policy and is given an opportunity to contribute to the formation of that policy.

8.2.3 We believe that the intention behind the present class (b) membership would be better served by introducing members who are directly involved in forming the University's academic policy, and we suggest that the present four members in class (b) should be replaced by four members (not necessarily Professors or Readers) elected by the Regent House on the nomination of the General Board, with a requirement that at least two of the four should be members of the Board at the time of their election to the Council. This would ensure an overlap between the Council and the Board. (Such an overlap is provided at present by the four class (c) members of the General Board, who are appointed by the Council; under our proposals for the General Board, these four class (c) places would be redeployed. See section 9.3.3 below.)

8.2.4 We propose no change in the present class (c) membership, but we have three suggestions to offer about election procedure. First, we propose that each nomination should require the support of twelve members of the Regent House, instead of two as at present. Second, we believe that at Council elections members of the Regent House should be given some information about the background of candidates standing for election in this class; each candidate should provide a short *curriculum vitae*. Third, we propose that postal voting should be introduced for these elections; the current arrangements for elections are inconvenient for voters, and we believe that a system of postal voting would encourage more members of the Regent House to take part.

8.2.5 The present arrangements for student observer representation seem to us satisfactory, and we have no wish to change them.

8.2.6 Members of the Council at present serve for four years, half the membership being elected every two years. We think that this is an appropriate period of service, and we also approve the arrangements for staggering the elections so as to preserve some continuity.

8.2.7 We have given careful consideration to the question whether there should be lay or 'outside' representation on the Council, as there is in the civic universities. Those of us with experience of these institutions have found that outside opinion, based on experience outside the academic world, materially assists the deliberations of their policy-making organs. Outside representatives, like non-executive directors of public companies, are often able to make an important contribution to decisions of a far-reaching or strategic kind. However, it would be difficult for lay members to contribute effectively to the Council at Cambridge; the latter is a relatively small body with a close working knowledge of the University, and even under our proposals it will meet more frequently than the corresponding body at a civic university. We also believe that it is important to preserve the traditional character of Cambridge as a self-governing community of scholars; self-government demands self-discipline, and this is an ideal that we do not wish to undermine.

8.2.8 Nevertheless, we think it important that non-academic opinion and experience should play a part in the policy making of the University. To some extent this happens already; there are several University bodies (e.g. the Careers Service Syndicate and the Board of Extra-mural Studies) which include members drawn from outside Cambridge, and the newly established Cambridge Foundation has a number of external Trustees and an external Chairman. To give effect to this principle at a more general level, we propose the establishment of an advisory body to be called the Consultative Committee; this would consist of eight persons not currently members of the Regent House, together with the Vice-Chancellor (who would be the Chairman) and two members of the Council. The three principal administrative officers would attend meetings of the Committee. The Committee would be appointed by the Council; it would meet not less than once a term, and its function would be to offer advice on important issues referred to it by the Council. We do not think that Cambridge would have any difficulty in recruiting eight persons from outside the University to assist it in this way; it would no doubt be appropriate for the Committee to include some of the Trustees of the Cambridge Foundation. The Committee need not be composed entirely of Cambridge graduates; members should be chosen in the light of their known wisdom and experience, irrespective of their background.

9. The General Board and the Financial Board

9.1 We turn now to the General Board and the Financial Board. The Grave Committee recommended, as a corollary to their proposal about the primacy of the Council, that these two bodies should have the status of Committees of the Council; they envisaged that the Financial Board and the General Board 'under authority delegated to them by the Council would fulfil much the same functions as hitherto. They would, however, derive their authority from the Council and be responsible to it' (paragraph 12).

9.2 The Council of the day, in their response to the Grave Report,¹⁷ set aside this recommendation in respect of the General Board; they argued that 'the working out of academic policy must, in this University as in other universities, normally be the function of bodies directly representing the Faculties'. However, they accepted the Report's recommendation in respect of the Financial Board.

9.3 The General Board

9.3.1 As regards the General Board, we accept the argument put forward by the Council in 1968; we believe that the General Board should continue to be responsible for the academic and educational policy of the University. However, in conformity with our proposal that the Council should be the principal authority in the University,

¹⁷ See the Council's First Report (*Reporter*, 1967-68, p. 2133).

we believe that the General Board should be formally subordinated to the Council so as to be accountable to it for its management of the University's academic affairs. Thus the General Board would be required to submit periodic reports to the Council, and these would be incorporated in the latter's Annual Report to the Regent House. The Secretary General would act as Secretary of the General Board, as at present, and would continue to rank as the University's principal adviser on academic policy.

9.3.2 We envisage that in practice the General Board would enjoy virtual independence and would continue to function much as it does at present, though with two important modifications. The first is that, although constitutionally subordinate to the Council, the General Board would in practice be free to take decisions on matters falling within its own sphere of responsibility, without any need to refer those decisions either to the Council or to the Regent House. The following powers, which are currently exercised by the Regent House, would be transferred to the General Board:

Power to establish and suppress University offices in General Board institutions other than Professorships and Readerships

Power to make and amend Ordinances on the following matters:

Examinations

Degrees, Diplomas, and other qualifications

Faculties, Departments, Schools, etc.

The second modification is that the General Board in turn would delegate to Councils of the Schools a great deal of decision making in matters of detail, and like the Council would concern itself with matters of policy. We have more to say on this second point in section 11 below.

9.3.3 The present membership of the General Board embodies the important principle of Faculty representation; the Board comprises (a) the Vice-Chancellor, (b) eight persons elected by members of Faculty Boards, with two representing the Faculties in each of the four Groups, and (c) four persons appointed by the Council. Among the institutions under the supervision of the General Board there are a number which are independent of any Faculty, and which therefore have no part as institutions in the procedures for the election of members of the Board. We believe that, if the Board is to discharge its functions properly, it should represent as wide a range as possible of academic interests, and we offer two proposals to achieve this. First, we propose that the present Groups of Faculties should be abolished and that class (b) membership of the Board should be linked to the Councils of the Schools;¹⁸ the Groups have no function except to serve as constituencies for the election of class (b) members of the Board, and this proposal would amount to a rearrangement of the present Groups and an extension of their membership. To replace the present arrangements for election by members of Faculty Boards, we recommend that the Council of each School should appoint one of its members to the General Board at each biennial revision of the membership of the Board, thus providing two members to represent each School. However, this would not be enough in itself to secure representation for all General Board institutions, since there are some that do not fall within the scope of any of the Councils of the Schools. Our second proposal is therefore that the four class (c) places (at present filled by the Council, and used to ensure an overlap between the Council and the Board) should in future be used to provide representation for the remaining General Board institutions. In our view, the importance of the University Library and the University Computing Service, which constitute the two largest service institutions in the University, is such that they should each have regular representation on the Board, and we recommend that the Library Syndicate and the Computer Syndicate should each appoint one of their members to the Board. The two remaining places would be filled by co-option; in these cases there would be no nominating body and the Board would be free to select representatives to make up an appropriate balance of interests.

9.3.4 We have been asked to consider whether there should be student representation on the General Board. Much of the business of the Board is at present reserved business under Statute K, 20, and would therefore not be open to students (e.g. the appointment of Heads of Departments, Examiners, etc.; proposals for the promotion of individuals; matters affecting individuals' terms and conditions of service); in our view it is right for such business to be reserved, and we do not favour any relaxation of the present restrictions. Moreover, while we recognize the importance of the contribution that students can make to the formation of academic policy, we believe that their rôle is most effective as members of Faculty Boards; at that level they are able to offer valuable comments on the educational programmes of Faculties and on academic developments affecting them. For these reasons we think it right that student membership should be confined to Faculty Boards, and should not be extended to the General Board.

9.4 *The Financial Board*

9.4.1 The Financial Board does not, as its title might suggest, have responsibility for the University's financial policy or for the allocation of resources to individual institutions within the University. General responsibility for the University's financial position rests with the Council (Statute A, IV, 1(d)), and the Council is the body that publishes the annual Allocations Report, formally entitled the Report on the financial position of the Chest (though the preparation of this Report is largely in the hands of the Financial Board and its officers). The

¹⁸ We use the term 'Councils of the Schools', here and throughout the report, to include not only those bodies formally designated 'Councils' but also the Interfaculty Committee for Arts and Humanities. We have adopted this usage for convenience in the present report; however, for the future, we recommend that a new nomenclature should be introduced for these bodies. See footnote 20, p. 630.

allocation of resources is determined in broad outline by means of the Allocations Report, which recommends allocations to the General Board for the University Education Fund and to the Council for other purposes; these allocations when approved are administered by the General Board and the Council respectively through the Needs Committee and the Allocations Committee. The Council also deals with another important area of financial responsibility, *viz.* property and buildings, though it is advised on these matters by the Financial Board; proposals for new buildings or for substantial alterations to existing buildings are put to the Regent House by the Council on the advice of the Financial Board.

9.4.2 The executive rôle of the Financial Board is largely confined to the management of the University's investment portfolio (including the cash balances), the supervision of its building programmes, and the care and maintenance of its estate. The Board is responsible for the publication of certain financial information relating to the University, e.g. the audited abstract of accounts, and it has certain responsibilities to the Colleges; it is for instance the body which collects College contributions to the Colleges Fund. The Board also has the duty of advising the Council on a number of matters, principally in regard to the financial dispositions of the University.

9.4.3 The Financial Board consists of the Vice-Chancellor and ten other members; four of these are elected by representatives of the Colleges, four are appointed by the Council, and two are appointed by the Regent House on the nomination of the Council. In addition to the Vice-Chancellor, two other members of the Board must be members of the Council.

9.4.4 We have considered whether the Financial Board would be the appropriate body to deal more centrally with resource allocation (a subject to which we return in section 11 below), but have concluded that it does not, and could not, have the appropriate membership for this rôle; we believe that overall responsibility for planning and resource allocation ought to be firmly vested in the Council and that there is no need for an additional body, besides those operationally involved, to participate in major decisions which can only be taken by the Council itself.

9.4.5 It seems to us that many of the duties laid upon the Financial Board at present could be carried out by the Treasurer and his or her staff, operating under the general oversight of the Council. For instance, the publication of financial information does not require the agency of a collective body such as the Board; it could be done by the Council itself on the basis of drafts submitted by the Treasurer. The financial administration currently undertaken by the Financial Board Office (including the administration of accounts, salaries, wages, pensions, and research grants) does not need to be supervised by the Board. The advisory duties, too, could be performed by the Treasurer and his staff; the advice is, after all, based on a professional financial view of the relevant issues, and we do not see any need for the Treasurer's advice to pass through the filter of the Financial Board before being considered by the Council.

9.4.6 The main duty laid on the Financial Board which we believe is best carried out by a collective body is that of portfolio and property management. In this area there is great value in the involvement of a group of people with professional experience and/or experience of the government of the University. We believe, therefore, that the rôle of the Financial Board should be largely confined to this area and that most of its other responsibilities should be vested in the Treasurer under the supervision of the Council itself.

9.4.7 There is one other area in which we think that the Financial Board should continue to have a rôle; this concerns new buildings. Major projects involve a variety of considerations – aesthetic, technical, and functional – and there seems to us to be an advantage in retaining the existing system of Building Committees (currently constituted as committees of the Financial Board) to deal with these questions.

9.4.8 With its work largely confined to asset management and responsibility for property and buildings, the Financial Board should clearly be seen as a body subordinate to the Council; we recommend that it should be constituted as a Committee of the Council and that it should be renamed the Finance Committee. This Committee would be free to establish sub-committees dealing respectively with portfolio investment and real estate, and to appoint members to each. We see no need for the Vice-Chancellor to preside over meetings of the Committee; we propose that the Chairman should be appointed by the Council. We envisage that the Treasurer would act as Secretary of the Committee, in recognition of his position as the University's principal adviser on financial matters. As to its composition, we propose that the Committee should have ten members, like the present Financial Board, and that these should also be appointed by the Council. Under the present constitution of the Financial Board, four members are elected by representatives of the Colleges; this provision has been of value in the past, but we do not favour a continuation of the arrangement in the case of the proposed new Committee. Election by Colleges to the Financial Board dates from a time when a significant proportion of the University's income was provided by contributions from the Colleges, and this is not now the case. We recognize the invaluable contribution that College Bursars currently make to the work of the Financial Board, and we are confident that under our proposed arrangements the Council will wish to see a number of Bursars as members of the Finance Committee; however, we believe that they should be appointed as individuals, for the expertise that they can bring to the work of the Committee, rather than as representatives of the Colleges.

9.4.9 We remarked in section 8.2.7 on the contribution of lay members to the policy making of the University. We believe that there is a strong case for suitable persons from outside the University to be invited to serve on the new Finance Committee and on the relevant sub-committees. There must be many 'friends of Cambridge' with wide experience in finance, property management, and investment who would be willing to serve as members of

this Committee, and their help and advice could be invaluable. We recommend, therefore, that the Council should consider allocating up to four places on the Committee to non-resident members with suitable qualifications.

10. Conduct of Business

10.1 It may be helpful at this point to give a sketch of the procedure that would apply under our proposed arrangements to business which is currently transacted by Grace of the Regent House. If our proposals are approved, this business will in future fall into two classes, (a) proposals requiring decisions by the Regent House, and (b) proposals that can be approved by the Council or the General Board.

10.2 Business falling in class (a) would be conducted as at present; that is to say, minor proposals would be put forward by Grace and footnote, and matters of greater substance would be the subject of a Report to the Regent House. All the bodies that currently have the right of reporting to the University on class (a) business would continue to do so. The publication of a Report would be followed by a Discussion, as at present; as suggested in section 6.5 above, Discussions would be meetings of the Regent House rather than the Senate. The Council would reply to remarks made at the Discussion, either on its own account or on behalf of the recommending body, and would promote a Grace for the approval of the recommendations of the Report (modified if necessary in the light of the Discussion).

10.3 Business falling in class (b) would be treated in one of two ways.

10.3.1 All proposals falling in this class would be for decision by the Council or the General Board, as appropriate; ratification by the Regent House would not be required. In the case of straightforward proposals the central bodies would make their decisions and these would be promulgated by publication in the *Reporter*, where they would appear as firm decisions, announced for the information of the University, rather than as recommendations; this would apply to most proposals of the sort that are currently dealt with by Grace and footnote (e.g. straightforward amendments of the regulations for examinations or prizes), and might also apply to some matters currently dealt with by Report if they seemed uncontroversial (e.g. changing the title of a Department).

10.3.2 On the other hand, any proposal that seemed likely to prove controversial, or on which the central bodies wished to sound the opinion of members of the Regent House before proceeding to a decision, would be published as a provisional decision in the form of a Report, and would be put up for discussion; such a Report would differ from a conventional Report only in that it would conclude with a statement of intention rather than a recommendation.¹⁹ Reports of this kind would be put up for discussion in exactly the same way as conventional Reports; the Council or the General Board, as appropriate, would consider any comments made at the Discussion, and would subsequently publish a Notice containing their reply to these comments and announcing their final decision, which might either confirm or modify the provisional decision.

10.4 We append here some miscellaneous recommendations relating to ballots and Discussions.

10.4.1 First, we propose an increase in the number of signatures required to support a request for a ballot; at present a ballot must be held if requested by ten members of the Regent House, and we recommend that this figure should be raised to one hundred.

10.4.2 Second, we suggest that the Regent House should consider the possibility of introducing postal voting for ballots. We have already recommended the adoption of such a system for the election of members of the Council in class (c) (see section 8.2.4 above), and we think that it could with advantage be extended to ballots.

10.4.3 We propose no change in the present arrangements whereby members of the Regent House can request discussion of a topic of concern to the University. However, we note that this arrangement at present depends on an informal convention agreed by the Council, and we recommend that it should be brought within the scope of the regulations for Discussions. We also recommend that the number of signatures required to support such a request should be increased from three to twenty-five.

11. Administrative Organization

11.1 General

11.1.1 The University's existing committee structure is unsystematic and difficult to understand. This is largely because the simple structure of Faculties and Faculty Boards, devised in 1926, has had superimposed on it over the years a more complex administrative network designed to meet modern needs; the overlay has been introduced piecemeal and has never been planned as a unified system. Numerous conflicting suggestions have been put to us for the improvement of the present system; for instance, some of those who submitted memoranda proposed the abolition of the Faculty Boards and the imposition of a Departmental structure on all Faculties, while others felt that there were dangers in Departmental autonomy. We comment on these suggestions in the course of setting out our own proposals.

¹⁹ E.g. 'The Council accordingly give notice that they are minded to approve the following recommendations:' rather than 'The Council accordingly recommend:'. Reports by Faculty Boards and other bodies would be addressed not to the Regent House but to the Council or the General Board, as appropriate, and would have appended to them a statement by that body. For example, a Report by a Faculty Board recommending revision of a Tripos would be submitted over the signatures of the Faculty Board and would be followed by a statement that 'The General Board give notice that they are minded to approve the recommendations of this Report'.

11.1.2 We believe that the University would benefit from a greater degree of devolution and that more responsibility should be delegated from the centre to the subordinate parts. The organization of the University is already decentralized to a marked degree, but decentralization has not been accompanied by delegation of authority; many decisions taken by Faculty Boards and similar authorities are subject to approval by the General Board, and many of these in turn must be sanctioned by the Council before being submitted to the Regent House for ultimate approval by Grace. It is this retention of power by the Regent House and the central bodies that slows down the decision-making process; evidence submitted to us has led us to believe that, in its dealing with outside bodies such as Research Councils, the University has on more than one occasion lost a promising opportunity through its inability to reach a decision quickly. This was our reason for recommending (see section 8.1.4–6 above) that most of the executive power at present in the hands of the Regent House should be transferred to the central bodies; we now propose that the latter in turn should delegate more power to Councils of the Schools²⁰ and other authorities. This would speed the decision-making process by reducing the number of occasions on which the same issue is considered at different levels.

11.1.3 To a large extent the transfer of power that we propose would be on a permanent basis and would be provided for by Statute or Ordinance. However, we also think it important to allow for delegation of authority *ad hoc*, so that University bodies would have discretion to remit business to their sub-committees or to their officers. This matter is currently covered by Statute K, 9(b), which provides that any body constituted in the University by Statute or Ordinance 'may appoint committees and refer questions to them'. It has been represented to us that this wording is unsatisfactory, because it does not make it clear whether a committee has power to take decisions on behalf of the parent body. There are some cases (e.g. Appointments Committees, Degree Committees, and Boards of Electors to Professorships) where final authority must remain in the hands of the parent body and where decisions should not be delegated to a sub-group. For this reason we do not propose a widening of the terms of the present Statute so as to permit delegation of authority in all cases. We recommend instead that Statute K, 9(b) should be amended so as to provide that, with certain specified exceptions, reference to committees is for the purpose of consultation only and does not extend to decision making; the only exceptions specified by Statute would be the Council and the General Board, but the Statute would authorize the Council to specify other bodies. In practice the Council would probably find it expedient to specify a wide range of bodies, so that all bodies except those whose purpose is to make appointments or elections would have power to delegate authority to a committee.

11.1.4 We now discuss the administrative organization of the University with reference to two major areas of activity. First, we consider management and resource control, where there is a line of responsibility from the General Board through the Councils of the Schools to Faculty Boards and Heads of Departments; second, we deal with decision making on academic questions, where initiatives come from Faculty Boards direct to the General Board, usually without involving the Councils of the Schools.

11.2 Management of resources

11.2.1 The General Board

11.2.1.1 The General Board should be responsible, as at present, for determining the overall academic priorities of the University and for the distribution of the University Education Fund (UEF) between the Schools. However, decisions on expenditure thereafter should in most respects be delegated to the Councils of the Schools. These bodies have a detailed and expert knowledge of the work in their subject areas and are well placed to assess relative academic strengths and weaknesses and to take decisions accordingly. It would, however, be important for the Councils to be accountable to the General Board, and for the latter to ensure that no Council or other body enters into commitments that cannot be sustained in the long term.

11.2.1.2 The annual Equipment Grant from the Universities Funding Council (UFC) would be divided by the General Board between the Schools, as it is now, each being free to determine the expenditure of its share.

11.2.1.3 Responsibility for the allocation of space would continue to rest with the General Board. This seems to be the most appropriate mechanism, because the Board can take an overview of academic priorities; and allocations will in any event cross the boundaries of the different Schools.

11.2.1.4 Similarly allocations for minor building works would continue to be dealt with by the General Board, acting through its Needs Committee. Decisions must be taken centrally in this area because of the unpredictable nature of the demands and the importance of overall financial control.

11.2.1.5 The determination of the conditions of service of staff in Faculties and Departments should also remain the responsibility of the General Board because of the need for uniformity of practice; however, matters of detail such as short-term leave of absence should be delegated to the Schools and, through them, to Heads of Departments, or to Chairmen of Faculty Boards.

11.2.1.6 With the exceptions referred to above, much of the detailed resource allocation work currently

²⁰ Although we have retained the familiar title 'Councils of the Schools' in the text of the report, we recommend the adoption of a new nomenclature. Because the expression 'Councils of the Schools' is cumbersome, it is commonly abbreviated to 'Councils'; we have proposed (see footnote 16, p. 624) that the Council of the Senate should be renamed 'the Council', and we see a real danger of confusion in everyday usage if that term has to do double duty. We suggest that the Councils of the Schools and the Interfaculty Committee should be renamed 'Joint Boards', e.g. 'Joint Board of the Humanities and Social Sciences'. The term 'School' would be retained for the group of institutions represented on a Joint Board.

considered by the General Board would be devolved to the Councils of the Schools. Such devolution would leave the General Board more time to deal with major new academic developments and broad questions of policy in the context of the University's Academic or Institutional Plan. The Board would also retain direct responsibility for matters affecting teaching and/or research which cannot be covered in a rolling institutional plan; examples taken from recent years are negotiations with the Royal Greenwich Observatory regarding its move to Cambridge, discussions with the UFC and with benefactors regarding new academic developments, bids for Interdisciplinary Research Centres, and invitations to bid for the Engineering and Technology Programme and for new blood appointments.

11.2.2 *Councils of the Schools*

11.2.2.1 The Council of each School would be free to deploy its share of the UEF on its own authority. This authority should extend to permission to fill vacant posts, whether academic or assistant, and to decisions on the sub-division of expenditure between salaries and support costs. The establishment of University offices (but not assistant posts) would be subject to confirmation by the General Board on the recommendation of the Councils, because of the long-term financial commitment involved; the General Board would be concerned mainly to ensure that the Councils did not exceed the limits placed on their resources, but it would have power to intervene (by withholding consent to a proposal) on other grounds if necessary. Proposals for promotions involving 'temporary upgradings' would remain in the hands of the General Board, to ensure comparable standards in different subjects.²¹

11.2.2.2 The greater responsibilities of the Schools will carry with them a need for a strengthened system of administrative support. We consider that each School should have a senior administrative officer as full-time Secretary, and that each of the two scientific Schools should have an additional administrative officer to support the Secretary.

11.2.2.3 Under the revised arrangements the Chairmen of the Councils of the Schools would have an enhanced rôle. They would be responsible to the General Board for the expenditure within their Schools in accordance with the approved Academic or Institutional Plan and other guidance from the Board. For the system to work well it would be essential to ensure a frequent and effective exchange of information between the Schools and the General Board. For this reason it would be important for the Chairmen to play a part in planning procedures at a higher level; to ensure this they could normally expect to be nominated for appointment to the General Board, and in some cases would be nominated by the Board for election as members of the Council (see section 8.2.3 above).

11.2.2.4 It would be desirable for Chairmen to serve for long enough to become familiar with all aspects of the work of their Schools, and for this reason we recommend a four-year term of office, with the possibility of reappointment. Given the importance of their rôle, appointments to the position of Chairman should be made by the General Board. However, because of the need for a widespread acceptance of their authority, we propose that these appointments should be made on the nomination of Councils of the Schools. (The General Board would, of course, have power to withhold approval of a nomination.) The Chairmen's responsibilities should be recognized by the payment of an appropriate allowance and by a reduction in their teaching and other duties during their period of office; in some cases the workload involved might justify the appointment of a Deputy Chairman in addition. Apart from the status of the Chairmen, we propose no other changes in the constitution of Councils of the Schools.

11.2.3 *Other institutions*

There are a number of other institutions under the supervision of the General Board, which do not fall within the scope of any of the Councils of the Schools. These include the University Library, the University Computing Service, and a number of smaller institutions. We see no advantage in allocating these to any of the existing Councils or in amalgamating them under a new authority, and we therefore recommend that for allocation of resources they should continue under their existing arrangements.

11.2.4 *Faculties and Departments*

11.2.4.1 Following the principle of devolution subject to accountability, we recommend that the Councils of the Schools should themselves delegate matters of day-to-day responsibility for resources to Faculty Boards or Heads of Departments. Heads of Departments or Chairmen of Faculty Boards, as appropriate, should have greater authority over the budget of their institutions, subject to an annual report to the appropriate Council. This authority should extend to the opportunity to vary the proportion of the total expenditure relating to staff and to other costs within the overall budget when vacancies arise. The establishment of assistant staff posts and the permission to fill such posts should be at the discretion of Heads of Departments or Chairmen of Faculty Boards. The establishment of academic posts and permission to fill should be determined at the level of Councils of the Schools on the recommendation of the Head or Chairman, subject (in the case of the establishment of such posts) to confirmation by the General Board.

11.2.4.2 In view of their greater responsibilities, Heads of Departments and Chairmen of Faculty Boards should serve long enough to become familiar with the working of their institutions and to influence their

²¹ We envisage that the present procedure for the establishment of Professorships and Readerships *ad hominem* would continue unchanged.

development. We recommend a period of five years, with the possibility of reappointment; this is in line with the practice currently followed by a number of the larger Departments. Appointments should be made by the General Board on the nomination of the Faculty Board concerned. (As in the case of Chairmen of the Councils, the General Board would have power to withhold approval of a nomination.) It might be necessary to recognize these additional responsibilities by a revision of the payments for administrative responsibility.

11.2.4.3 Heads of Department are already responsible by Statute for organizing the teaching and research of their institutions, for preparing annual estimates, and for the proper application of funds available to them. In the case of Faculties not organized in Departments, Chairmen of Faculty Boards should be designated the accounting officers for their institutions and should be responsible to the Council of the relevant School for the health of these institutions.

11.2.4.4 There are superficial attractions in adopting a Departmental structure in Arts as well as Science subjects; this would be consistent with our proposals for a more devolved management structure. However, we are persuaded that such an arrangement would not be appropriate; the organization of teaching and research follows different patterns in different subjects, and it would be a mistake to impose the same organization on all subjects alike for the sake of administrative tidiness. In the sciences a Head of Department is needed to manage staff, equipment, and premises and to give direction to the work of the Department; in Arts Faculties the infrastructure is less extensive and there is consequently less need for management.

11.3 *Academic matters*

11.3.1 Under the existing arrangements, questions relating to the structure of Tripos and postgraduate courses are normally discussed initially at the level of Faculty Boards; proposals for changes in the regulations for examinations are forwarded directly by Faculty Boards to the General Board, by-passing the Councils of the Schools. We consider that this procedure is satisfactory since the latter are not well placed to add anything to the academic judgements of the Faculty Boards.

11.3.2 We have considered whether in the sciences, where the Departmental structure applies, Faculty Boards might be abolished, on the ground that they represent an unnecessary tier in the administrative framework. We do not favour such a reform; in our view Faculty Boards perform a useful consultative function within the Faculties, and it is on Faculty Boards that student opinion on academic questions can most usefully be represented (see section 9.3.4 above). The Boards also play an important rôle in the organization of Triposes, particularly those that involve teaching contributions from a number of different Departments; moreover, they provide a well tried and effective machinery for co-ordinating work in different subjects and for fostering the development of research in topics that cross subject boundaries. We believe that in Arts subjects Chairmen of Faculty Boards could with advantage adopt a more prominent rôle; we believe that this is important if the teaching and related work of Arts Faculties is to be properly planned and co-ordinated.

11.3.3 We also favour the retention of Appointments Committees and Degree Committees on a Faculty basis, with their existing powers unchanged. We regard the autonomy of Appointments Committees as a matter of the highest importance. As for Degree Committees, we believe that there are great advantages in the present system, which ensures that the bodies responsible for research degrees are separate from the Departmental structure.

11.4 *Planning and resource allocation*

11.4.1 In section 11.2 we argued for a substantial devolution of management control from the General Board to the Councils of the Schools, and from the Councils in turn to Faculty Boards and Heads of Departments. We were thinking there primarily in terms of the control of those resources immediately available to the University. We believe, however, that there is a wider question of resource allocation and control to which the University must address itself, *viz.* how to accommodate itself efficiently and rationally to the pressure on resources in the medium or longer term and to changes in the likely sources of financing. There is also the question whether the University has the means to think systematically about the direction in which it wishes its policies to develop in the longer term.

11.4.2 As we understand it, little in the way of longer-term resource planning routinely takes place at present, and financial budgeting is organized essentially on a one-year basis. Existing patterns of expenditure by Faculties and Departments are projected forward for one year; account is taken of any expansion or reduction of posts that may have been authorized, and an inflation factor is applied to non-pay items, which is determined by the Needs Committee and the Allocations Committee at a joint meeting. A detailed and comprehensive budget is then drawn up for the whole University.

11.4.3 We believe that measures should be introduced which would make it possible to plan ahead for a longer period than one year; this is all the more important in the absence of a system of quinquennial allocation by the UGC/UFC. In Appendix D we offer some suggestions about the form that such measures might take.

11.5 *Administrative services of the University*

11.5.1 The Grave Report recommended (paragraph 13) that the separate offices of the three central bodies should be amalgamated into one office, under the Registry as the chief permanent administrative officer of the University. In their First Report the Council accepted this recommendation (paragraph 22), and said that steps were already being taken to ask the Registry to accept this extension of his traditional functions under the direction of the Council. In spite of that assurance, given in 1968, we do not believe that this recommendation can

properly be said to have been put into effect; although the Registry may be *primus inter pares*, the three principal administrative officers are commonly regarded as being of equal standing, and this is natural given the mode of operation of the three central bodies which they respectively serve. We have proposed that the Council should become the principal authority in the University (section 8.1 above), and that the General Board and the Financial Board (the latter to be reconstituted as the Finance Committee), while standing in different relationships to the Council, should be subordinated to it (sections 9.3 and 9.4). We suggest that this change would naturally be accompanied by a corresponding change in the relation between the three principal administrative officers, and we propose that the Registry should be formally designated the principal administrative officer of the University. The Registry, as head of the University's administrative staff, would co-ordinate all administrative matters and would be responsible directly to the Vice-Chancellor. He or she, in consultation with the Secretary General and the Treasurer, would advise the Vice-Chancellor on all policy questions and on the implications of all proposals put before the central bodies.

11.5.2 We believe that a radical change is needed in the way in which the University deploys its administrative staff. From what we have said above concerning the responsibilities of the central bodies, the Councils of the Schools, and the Faculty Boards (and from what we shall say in section 12 below concerning the rôle of the Vice-Chancellor), it follows that a major rearrangement of administrative support is needed. While it is clear that the three offices of the central administration (the Registry, the office of the General Board, and what is currently the office of the Financial Board) must function as independent units in their day-to-day business, we see considerable advantages in the creation of a unified administrative service for the whole University. We believe that the present fragmentation of the administrative staff makes inefficient use of the available resources, and we recommend that the separate branches of the administration should be integrated to form a single cadre of administrators under the direction of the Registry. This would make it easier to deploy administrative staff effectively, and to provide appropriate administrative support across the University, particularly for the Councils of the Schools and, as needed, for Faculties and Departments; it would also have the advantage of offering a better career structure for members of the administrative staff.

11.5.3 We believe that a number of institutions in the University would benefit from the provision of additional administrative support; this applies particularly to the Interfaculty Committee and the Council of the School of the Humanities and Social Sciences (see section 11.2.2.2 above), and to Faculty Boards. This would not only allow teaching officers to devote more time to their primary duties of teaching and research; it would also expedite routine business in Faculties and Departments and in the Councils of the Schools. Moreover, the provision of full administrative support for members of the academic staff would enable them to engage more effectively in planning and decision making, and to be active rather than re-active in their attitude to University business.

11.5.4 We also think it important that the University should provide better office accommodation for its administrative staff. The Old Schools, where the greater part of the central administration is housed, is an inconvenient building, ill adapted to modern conditions of work; moreover, it has little capacity for expansion or for rearrangement of office space to meet new demands. We believe that it would be an advantage if all sections of the central administration, including certain outlying departments (e.g. the Board of Graduate Studies, the Estate Management and Building Service, the Assistant Staff Office, the Intercollegiate Applications Office, the Development Unit), could be housed on a single central site. This would allow efficient arrangements for the storage and use of data, as well as the sharing of secretarial services and facilities for photocopying, computing, etc., and would facilitate contact between administrative officers in different sections of the University.

11.5.5 We recommend that the central bodies should take steps to improve working methods in the University. In particular, we think it important to improve the flow of information. At a general level, this should be a two-way process, so that Faculties, Departments, and Colleges may be kept informed of proposals and decisions emanating from the central bodies, and the latter may be made aware of initiatives coming forward from the former; we understand that the Council have recently had under consideration proposals for additional public relations work on behalf of the University, including the publication of a regular newsletter, and we hope that this will improve communication within the University. More specifically, we should like to see more direct communication between the central bodies and other authorities in the University; a number of those who gave evidence to us mentioned difficulties that they had experienced in this connexion. We believe that it would greatly assist mutual understanding and the exchange of views if the officers or other representatives of subordinate authorities were invited to attend meetings of the Council or the General Board (or of the relevant Committees) when business concerning their institutions is under discussion. We recommend that the central bodies should be more ready to issue such invitations than they have been in the past.

11.5.6 We suggest that the central bodies should plan the pattern of their work over the year so as to ensure a smooth flow of business at all times. At present no meetings of the central bodies are held in the two short vacations or in the second half of the Long Vacation, and this sometimes means that important decisions are unnecessarily delayed; there is also a widespread feeling that no contentious issue should be put to the Regent House during the Long Vacation since many members of the academic staff are likely to be away from Cambridge at that time of year. With the devolved system of decision making that we have proposed, it should be possible to avoid these delays and to ensure that business is expeditiously transacted throughout the year. It may be necessary for some Committees of the central bodies, if not the central bodies themselves, to meet during the

vacations, in particular during September. In any case, the central bodies themselves, and the Councils of the Schools, should establish clear procedures for dealing with business outside University term.

11.6 Summary

The principal elements of the system that we have described in this section are illustrated in diagrammatic form in Appendix E.

12. The Vice-Chancellor

12.1 A central issue which has occupied us throughout our deliberations has inevitably been the rôle of the Vice-Chancellor in the University's administration; coupled with that are two related questions: (a) the period of tenure of the office of Vice-Chancellor, and (b) the extent to which the office should be a full-time appointment.

12.2 The part played by the Vice-Chancellor in the government of the University is not defined in detail by Statute or Ordinance. How he or she plays that part in future will turn a good deal on the implementation of our recommendations concerning other elements in the system, and it may be useful at this stage to recapitulate the main thrust of the reforms that we are seeking to promote:

(a) A more systematic approach to academic planning so as to ensure that Cambridge evolves in a rational and well co-ordinated way.

(b) More extensive devolution of managerial authority to the level where it has to be exercised, both on the academic and on the non-academic side.

(c) An increased awareness in the University of the need to adapt to changes in the environment, in particular to new opportunities for funding, different relations between the University and central government, and so on.

(d) Greater and more explicit accountability, which should be laid on bodies to which powers are delegated by a superior authority.

(e) Rationalization and simplification of the hierarchy of authorities and their duties, so as to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort.

(f) Better co-ordination of policy where the activities of one part of the University impinge on the interests of another, e.g. in the use of space and resources generally.

(g) More effective arrangements for the dissemination of information within the University.

(h) A greater awareness of the problems of the Colleges on the part of those responsible for forming University policy, and reciprocally a greater willingness on the part of the Colleges to accept the implications of that policy for their own policies (this is a theme which is developed at greater length in section 14).

The changes in machinery which we recommend will go a long way towards making these reforms possible. So far we have dealt principally with the organization of the *collective* bodies, their functions, and their mutual relationships. But we do not think that the institutional reforms can be fully effective unless they are accompanied by reforms in the way in which *individual* officers of the University exercise their responsibilities; and the most important individual officer of the University is the Vice-Chancellor. The part played by the Vice-Chancellor in any new constitution is therefore crucial.

12.3 Before defining more closely what we would expect of a Vice-Chancellor, it may be useful to summarize what we have been given to understand are the Vice-Chancellor's principal duties at present and the arrangements for carrying them out. Under the present Statutes and Ordinances the Vice-Chancellor chairs a substantial number of collective bodies including the Council, the General Board, and the Financial Board, and a number of other important Committees, including the Long Term Planning Committee and the Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Group. He also chairs Boards of Electors to Professorships and a number of other senior appointments committees. He is involved in ceremonial functions such as Congregations, and in other formal functions such as Discussions of the Senate, University Sermons, and the Assize Service. He receives important visitors to the University and undertakes discussions with benefactors. He serves on the Main Committee of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals and often on one or more of its Sub-committees. He represents the University at other inter-university gatherings in this country and abroad. He attends many formal dinners in the course of each year as the University's representative, and undertakes much entertainment of University guests. He chairs the Parliamentary Liaison Group; this recently established body arranges meetings at which University representatives meet Members of Parliament to discuss matters affecting the University. Recently, as the preparations for a major University fund-raising initiative have begun, he has become involved in discussions with influential Cambridge graduates outside the University whose help is being sought in connexion with the campaign. The Vice-Chancellor will play a major part in this campaign when it is launched.

12.4 These duties have to be set alongside the duties that the Vice-Chancellor retains as the Head of a College, a post with which the Vice-Chancellorship is necessarily coupled under the present constitution. Although the Vice-Chancellor may be released from some College duties he or she normally continues to chair the Governing Body and other important College Committees. A Vice-Chancellor who is also Head of a University Department, or who holds some other University office, may retain some residual responsibilities there. In addition, a Vice-Chancellor may retain membership of bodies outside the University, even though his or her attendance at meetings of such bodies may be intermittent.

12.5 Although we recognize that we have not been able to scrutinize the way in which successive Vice-Chancellors have discharged their University duties, we have gained the impression that under pressure of time and events they have been obliged largely to react to developments and have been greatly preoccupied with the performance of formal functions or purely procedural matters; they have not had the time or opportunity, or indeed a sufficiently long period in office, to set their stamp upon the University's government and to give direction to it. This is in no way a criticism of past incumbents of the office. It has been implicit in the arrangements made for them and in the way Cambridge has expected them to discharge their duties. Indeed a number of our witnesses saw great virtue in the present arrangements and doubted whether any change was required. In particular they argued that:

By combining the posts of Vice-Chancellor and Head of a House the present system helps to bind the Colleges to the University and ensures their sense of participation in University government.

By limiting the appointment to two years and so avoiding a serious break in the Vice-Chancellor's career, the University is assured of willing candidates for the office. If there were a longer period of tenure some candidates would hesitate before accepting the break.

Cambridge's system of devolved self-government and the confederated form of the Collegiate system implies that the centre need not be strong, and indeed that nothing more is required there than an ability to steer matters to whichever quarter is competent to deal with them. There is no room for a managerial head of the whole University.

Tenure of a College Headship ensures that the Vice-Chancellor has a base for living and entertainment; this greatly reduces the expense which would arise if the incumbent were not the Head of a House.

12.6 There is some validity in all these points, but we believe that they overlook a prime requirement of the system of government that we have envisaged, *viz.* that the Vice-Chancellor should be able to oversee all the central functions that have to be carried out and should spend long enough in office to become proficient and effective in exercising this overseeing rôle. A two-year tour of duty may be adequate for the largely reactive rôle now played by the Vice-Chancellor. In our view a more active rôle, both within the University and in dealings with external authorities, requires a longer period in office than is currently allowed.

12.7 We can summarize what we see as the Vice-Chancellor's principal objectives in the new structure that we propose:

(a) The Vice-Chancellor should give a sense of purpose to the central bodies in the important task of developing Cambridge in the changing world of the 1990s and indeed the twenty-first century. This entails thinking ahead and seeking to influence University opinion.

(b) The Vice-Chancellor should keep a watchful eye on all the academic institutions of the University and should be accessible to Heads of Departments, Chairmen of Faculty Boards, Chairmen of Councils of the Schools, Heads of administrative units, and others who may want advice and help from time to time.

(c) The Vice-Chancellor should play an active rôle in ensuring that the Colleges are kept fully informed of developments at the level of the University, and that they have a sense of contributing to University policy and exercise their functions in full knowledge of University policy.

(d) The Vice-Chancellor should make sure that all the University's administrative organs function as they should and take remedial action if they do not. He or she should feel personally responsible for the performance of the University's civil service.

(e) The Vice-Chancellor should be able to detect any weaknesses that may develop in particular parts of the University and ensure that the competent body addresses itself to the problem.

(f) The Vice-Chancellor should represent the University actively in the outside world, and should ensure that the University's views are heard in influential circles.

We acknowledge that the Vice-Chancellor will inevitably have a number of ceremonial functions, not all of which can be delegated to others; these include the duty of entertaining distinguished guests and of attending the functions of outside bodies. However, we do not believe that these obligations should determine the Vice-Chancellor's programme of work; the *substance* of the Vice-Chancellorship should take precedence over its *form*.

12.8 These considerations lead us to the firm conclusion that the Vice-Chancellorship should in future be a full-time post and that the holder should not combine the office with any other University or College duties. They also lead us to the view that the Vice-Chancellor should spend considerably more than two years in the post; our considered opinion is that he or she should be appointed for five years, with the possibility of extension for a further two years. We believe also that the occupant of the post should be chosen with reference to the broad requirements set out in section 12.7 above. This means that the person appointed as Vice-Chancellor should have proven administrative ability, experience of management, diplomatic and political skills (since the job of Vice-Chancellor will call for persuasion rather than direction), and a substantial academic record which will ensure the respect of leading academic figures in the University. The need for all these qualities leads us to the conclusion that the Vice-Chancellor should not be an *elective* officer, but should be appointed by the principal executive body of the University, *viz.* the Council.

12.9 Two corollaries flow from this:

12.9.1 It would be necessary to provide the Vice-Chancellor with an official residence and adequate office facilities, and to pay him or her a salary commensurate with the importance of the post. This would of course add to the costs of the University's administration, but we think that the increase is something that should be accepted.

12.9.2 It would be right to recognize also that the demands of the post as we envisage them mean that the appointing body would be looking for a candidate in full vigour, normally in his or her fifties. This alone may mean that the Council would want to consider a wider field of candidates than that provided by the current Heads of Houses. We propose that the Council should appoint a search committee to produce a short list of candidates; such a committee would include several persons from outside the University. We envisage that there would be no formal limits to the field of search.

12.10 The Vice-Chancellor, like the head of any other complex organization, would need to call on others for advice and support. We note that Statute D, III already provides for the appointment of deputies to assist the Vice-Chancellor by undertaking various duties on his or her behalf: Deputy Vice-Chancellors, appointed under Statute D, III, 6(a) from among the Heads of Houses, regularly assist with ceremonial duties, while a large number of Vice-Chancellor's deputies are appointed each year under Statute D, III, 6(b) to take the Vice-Chancellor's place as Chairmen of Boards, Syndicates, and other bodies. On matters of policy, the Vice-Chancellor can turn for advice to the senior members of the University's civil service; we envisage that the Registry, the Secretary General, and the Treasurer would continue, as at present, to act as regular advisers to the Vice-Chancellor. But the Vice-Chancellor should also have access to a small advisory body, and for this reason we express our strong support for the continuation of the Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Group with substantially its present membership. This body should be seen not as an executive body but as one in which the Vice-Chancellor can share some of the burdens of the office with an informal group of senior members of the University. We also propose the establishment of an office of Pro-Vice-Chancellor, to assist the Vice-Chancellor in a number of ways. It would be open to the Vice-Chancellor to delegate major responsibilities to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor as occasion demanded; he or she would also be *ex officio* a member of the Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Group. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor would be chosen from among the Heads of Houses, and would be appointed by the Council on the nomination of the Vice-Chancellor to serve for three years, with the possibility of reappointment.

13. Cost of the Proposals

13.1 We recognize that, if the changes proposed in this report are implemented, the University will have to spend more on administration. The chief additional liability will relate to the Vice-Chancellor, who would receive an appropriate salary, and for whom office accommodation and supporting staff would be needed. In addition, we have come to the conclusion that the prominent public position of the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge requires the provision of an official residence, together with appropriate domestic staff and a realistic allowance for entertaining. We have also proposed a strengthening of the administrative staff of the University, particularly at the levels of the Councils of the Schools and the Faculty Boards. We recognize that payments will also be needed for the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, and for the Chairmen of the Councils of the Schools. All in all, we estimate that the recurrent cost of our proposals will be of the order of £350,000 a year, together with capital expenditure on the Vice-Chancellor's residence and on general office accommodation. We see no reason why the University should meet the capital costs from its own immediately available resources; it should be relatively easy to obtain long-term finance, e.g. through a mortgage or a lease, leaving only the servicing of the finance as a charge on the University's budget.

13.2 In our view, these increased costs will be fully justified by the benefits that will flow from improved management of the University's resources. Members of the Regent House should bear in mind that the University is a large and exceedingly complex organization, with a turnover in excess of £100m a year. It is essential that the University's administration should be, and should be seen to be, as effective as possible. The University's current expenditure on administration as a percentage of total costs (3.1 per cent.) is low in comparison with that of other British universities (5.7 per cent. on average), even when allowance is made for administration undertaken by the Colleges. Moreover, we believe that the additional recurrent expenditure need not represent a net increase, since reorganization should lead to some economies; we note in passing that our proposals relating to the Vice-Chancellor will lift a financial burden from the Colleges. The capital costs that we envisage are also relatively small when considered in their context.

14. The Colleges

14.1 General principles

14.1.1 We have been asked specifically to consider, as one element in our terms of reference, the inter-relationship between University and College policy; we interpret this to refer primarily to the co-ordination of policy between the University and the Colleges on matters with which both are concerned. In addressing ourselves to this topic, we have not thought it our business to put forward detailed proposals about the way in which the Colleges or the inter-College bodies should conduct their affairs; in what follows we offer a number of suggestions for improvements in the present arrangements, but for the most part we have left the Colleges to consider in detail the most appropriate way to give effect to these suggestions.

14.1.2 The strength of Cambridge depends crucially on a constructive partnership between the University and the Colleges in which each side has an indispensable rôle to play. In particular, as is well known, the educational work of the University interacts closely with that of the Colleges; the University provides lectures, practical classes, seminars, and group teaching, while the Colleges contribute individual teaching in the form of supervisions. Any system of government for the University as a whole must make it possible to co-ordinate the planning of these two kinds of academic activity, so as to produce a unified perception of the objectives that both the University and the Colleges are aiming to achieve.

14.1.3 Although the University and the individual Colleges have considerable freedom under their Statutes to operate independently, we believe it is important to set aside any notion that the University and the Colleges represent different interests which can be pursued independently or in a spirit of rivalry. The Cambridge academic community as a whole will suffer if it cannot plan coherently and handle its affairs in a unified way. This is true in relation to funding by government and also in relation to funding by Research Councils and charitable foundations; the UFC will expect to see Cambridge operating in accordance with an Academic or Institutional Plan for which financial and physical resources are mobilized on the basis of a University-wide strategy, and other funding bodies will expect the work that they support to be integrated within the activities of the University as a whole. It is also true in relation to the major fund-raising campaign to be undertaken under the auspices of the Cambridge Foundation, since potential donors will expect the University to be united behind the major projects for which funds are being sought. The unification of the academic objectives of the University and the Colleges does not necessarily imply any formal reduction in College autonomy. We believe rather that the two sides should each recognize more fully the needs of the other, so as to achieve a better co-ordinated overall strategy, without weakening the strengths which come from the diversity of interests and talents within the Colleges.

14.1.4 The existing mechanisms for co-ordinating University and College policy have not always worked well in recent years. This is partly because University bodies have paid too little attention to College problems and partly because inter-College bodies have not been sufficiently well informed of University objectives or sufficiently willing to set aside College interests for the benefit of the academic community as a whole. It is important that College opinion should be represented on University bodies which determine planning priorities, and conversely that those familiar with University policy should be able to contribute to the discussion of inter-College issues. This should help to ensure an improved flow of information between the University and the Colleges.

14.1.5 We have already remarked that it is important for the University to react quickly to outside events, and we would extend this judgement to include the Colleges; there is a need for the University and the Colleges to agree more speedily than in the past on new developments and changes of policy. This is not easy to achieve in a system in which all important issues are referred to College Governing Bodies, which meet perhaps two or three times a term. Just as we recommend greater delegation within the University from the Regent House to the central bodies and from them to sub-committees and to officers, with an enhanced rôle for the Vice-Chancellor and the supporting officers, so we hope that Colleges will be willing to authorize Heads of Houses and other senior College officers to operate under delegated authority more frequently than in the past. These officers would then be better placed to speak on behalf of their Colleges, and it would be possible to obtain inter-College agreement more quickly. We regard this as an important improvement if the University is to be able to take advantage of its opportunities in an increasingly competitive environment. We do not consider it within our remit to make specific recommendations about the procedures that Colleges should adopt to bring this about.

14.1.6 To a large extent any improvement in the interaction between the University and the Colleges will depend on changes of the kind just proposed within the Colleges themselves and within the inter-College bodies. We believe that these should be matters primarily for discussion and agreement by the Colleges themselves. However, we append a series of comments and recommendations as a basis for discussion among the Colleges; we have concentrated our attention on the way in which these bodies interact with the University.

14.2 *Administrative machinery*

We recommend no change in the inter-College committee structure, comprising the Colleges Committee, the Tutorial Representatives, the Admissions Forum, and the Bursars' Committee. However, we consider that all these bodies in varying degrees should be given more delegated authority by the Colleges and more power to take executive action.

14.3 *The Colleges Committee*

14.3.1 This Committee, comprising Heads of Houses and certain other senior College officers, deals at present with miscellaneous issues which do not fall squarely within the remit of the Tutorial Representatives, the Admissions Forum, or the Bursars' Committee. We suggest that the Committee should in future widen its scope so as to provide a forum for the discussion of all College-related policy questions and the formulation of inter-College policy; we believe that this would help to achieve greater cohesion on the part of the Colleges and enable them to react more quickly to outside initiatives.

14.3.2 We note that in 1962 the Bridges Syndicate recommended²² the establishment of a Board of Colleges, comprising eight representatives of the Colleges and four members appointed by the Council, with the Vice-

²² Report of the Syndicate on the relationship between the University and the Colleges, *Reporter*, 1961-62, p. 1073. See especially Chapter V, p. 1101.

Chancellor as Chairman. This body was to co-ordinate College policy and in certain cases to take decisions on behalf of the Colleges. Given the diversity of interests among the Colleges, we believe that the present Colleges Committee is a more suitable body for determining inter-College policy, since all Colleges are represented on it.

14.3.3 In section 8.2.2 above we recommended that the four members of the Council in class (a) should be nominated by the Colleges Committee for election by the Regent House. This proposal was intended to form a link between the University and the whole body of Colleges, and to emphasize the importance of the connexion between the two; we hope that these members of the Council would regard themselves as under an obligation to keep the Colleges informed of Council policy and to contribute on behalf of the Colleges to the formation of that policy.

14.3.4 Among other issues we suggest that the Colleges Committee should play a greater part in co-ordinating inter-College policy on Fellowships and on appointments of teaching staff, and in providing closer liaison between Colleges and Faculties. The Colleges Committee could also provide an appropriate framework for discussions with the central bodies and the Faculty Boards on the broad issues of educational policy,²³ though any schemes for the implementation of such policy should be worked out by the Tutorial Representatives.

14.3.5 With this enhanced rôle the Colleges Committee would need to meet more frequently than at present, perhaps six times a year instead of four. The Secretary of the Committee might need additional administrative and secretarial support; this could be provided by his or her College, the cost being met as at present by a levy on all the Colleges.

14.3.6 The Vice-Chancellor currently attends meetings of the Colleges Committee in his capacity as the Head of a House. This has proved to be valuable as a way of improving communication between the Committee and the University, and we recommend that in future the Vice-Chancellor should attend *ex officio*. We believe that he or she would wish to use this forum to keep the Colleges informed of developments in University policy.

14.4 *The Tutorial Representatives*

14.4.1 This Committee, comprising Senior Tutors of Colleges under the Chairmanship of the Vice-Chancellor, has lost some of its cohesion and *raison d'être* since responsibility for admissions matters was transferred to the Admissions Forum three years ago. The functions of Senior Tutor and Admissions Tutor are now commonly separated and for this reason it seems advisable to retain the new structure. However, as far as the Tutorial Representatives are concerned, we suggest some reorganization of the working of the Committee and more continuity in the appointment of its officers.

14.4.2 The primary rôle of the Committee is to co-ordinate the educational policy of the Colleges and to deal with welfare matters affecting students. We suggest that it would be preferable in future for it to be chaired by an experienced Senior Tutor rather than by the Vice-Chancellor. This would emphasize the Committee's commitment to College interests and would ensure continuity of policy. The Secretary would be another Senior Tutor, but no longer the Senior Tutor of the Vice-Chancellor's College *ex officio*. We suggest that the Chairman and the Secretary should be elected to serve for a period of three years, it being the expectation that the Secretary would become Chairman in due course. Meetings would be held at least once a term and in the Long Vacation.

14.4.3 We suggest that consideration should be given to re-establishing an Executive Committee to deal with routine business between full meetings of the Representatives, and to prepare recommendations for those meetings. The existence of such a committee would also provide a group of Senior Tutors, familiar with the Tutorial problems of the Colleges, with whom the central bodies could make informal contact.

14.4.4 Interchange of information between the Tutorial Representatives and the central bodies would be facilitated by the attendance of a Registry officer (as at present) and a General Board officer. The Representatives would probably include members of the Council and the General Board among their number; other Representatives would be likely to be active in Faculty affairs, and some would be members of Councils of Schools and Faculty Boards.

14.5 *The Admissions Forum*

14.5.1 This body, comprising Admissions Tutors of Colleges, now has responsibility for co-ordinating College policy on admissions (primarily the admission of undergraduates). It meets at least once a term and delegates authority to an Executive Committee; the latter deals with routine matters and prepares business for the meetings of the Forum. The positions of Chairman and Secretary are filled by election from the Forum, though greater continuity of policy would be achieved if the present short periods of office could be extended to, say, three years. Co-ordination of policy with that of the University is assisted by the attendance of a Registry officer at meetings. Co-ordination with academic policy would be further assisted if a General Board officer were also in attendance.

14.5.2 There are two major matters of policy relating to admissions where effective interaction between the University and the Colleges is essential. The first relates to student number targets. In recent years information has been exchanged on this topic and about the required balance between subjects at joint meetings of the Needs Committee of the General Board and the Executive Committee of the Forum. On the whole, Colleges have responded well to the needs of the University, but there have been occasional problems of mismatch; such difficulties as have occurred have arisen largely because the joint meetings have been too infrequent and because

²³ For example, a scheme for joint appointments between the University and the Colleges such as that currently under discussion between the General Board and the Colleges.

there has been no University-College body to keep matters under regular review. In order to rectify this situation the University has recently established a Joint Consultative Committee on Admissions, containing representatives of the Council, the General Board, the Tutorial Representatives, and the Admissions Forum, under the Chairmanship of the Vice-Chancellor. We welcome this development and hope that the new Committee will provide a better mechanism for co-ordinating admissions matters in future.

14.5.3 In the light of the major curriculum changes that are currently taking place in schools, close consultation between the University and the Colleges is also essential to ensure a match between the content of first-year university courses and the sixth-form curriculum. This matter is at present dealt with by the Joint Committee on the School Curriculum and Examinations, with membership drawn from the central bodies and the Colleges. Since the work of this Committee will in future interact closely with that of the new Joint Consultative Committee on Admissions, we suggest that it may be advisable to merge the two Joint Committees, or at least to ensure considerable overlap of membership.

14.5.4 The admission of Graduate Students is primarily the responsibility of the Board of Graduate Studies. Although we have received a small number of representations suggesting a need for improved liaison between the Board and the Colleges, we believe that in general the existing machinery functions satisfactorily.

14.6 *The Bursars' Committee*

14.6.1 This body, comprising Bursars of Colleges, provides a forum for discussion of all financial matters of concern to Colleges. The positions of Chairman and Secretary are filled by election from the Committee for periods of three years at a time, the Secretary normally succeeding to the Chairmanship. There is no Executive Committee as such, but a number of sub-committees undertake preparatory work for the main Committee. As a general rule Bursars serve for longer periods than Senior Tutors or Admissions Tutors, and the presence of a number of long-serving Bursars has provided continuity and has helped to make the Committee a closely co-ordinated group. Interaction with University policy is assisted by the attendance of the University Treasurer at meetings. We have formed the impression that the Committee operates more successfully than other inter-College bodies in formulating decisions that have the support of all Colleges; this perhaps reflects a greater willingness on the part of Colleges to delegate authority to College officers in financial matters than in other fields.

14.6.2 Among the financial issues of joint concern to the University and the Colleges that have arisen in recent years, the most important is the question of contributions by Colleges to the Colleges Fund and the possible reintroduction of financial contributions by Colleges to University purposes. This is particularly relevant to the provision of teaching and the resources available for this purpose in the University on the one hand and in the Colleges on the other. We understand that the matter has been under consideration recently by the Council, and that Colleges are being asked, in connexion with the University's forthcoming fund-raising campaign, to consider making recurrent contributions to University purposes. We strongly support this initiative, and hope that Colleges will respond, as their means allow; in our view this would do a lot to demonstrate to the outside world that the Colleges and the University share a common purpose. We have not considered it appropriate to embark on a detailed study of the issues involved, but we have given some thought to the arrangements for consultation on the matter between the University and the Colleges. We note that the question is currently kept under review by a committee of the Council, which includes members of the central bodies and representatives of the Colleges. This committee has a membership appropriate to its task, but in view of the importance of the question we propose that it should be reconstituted as a Standing Joint Committee of the Council and the Colleges Committee, under the chairmanship of the Vice-Chancellor.

15. Implementation of the Proposals

15.1 *Procedure*

We were appointed by the University, and we are required by our terms of reference to report to the University. This requirement is in accordance with the views expressed in the Memorial of 5 November 1987, which emphasized the importance of establishing the present Syndicate as a body with power to put its recommendations direct to the Regent House. Our report is concerned largely with matters of principle and with the broad changes that we believe to be necessary; a further report will be required, to put forward detailed recommendations for the legislative changes that are needed to put our proposals into effect. To prepare such a report, we recommend that the Regent House should appoint a Statutes and Ordinances Revision Syndicate as a successor body to the present Syndicate. We should be willing to act in this capacity if the Regent House wishes us to do so.

15.2 *The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act 1923*

We are of the opinion that some of the proposals contained in this report will require the consent of the Colleges before they can be put into effect. Details are set out in Appendix F.

16. Miscellaneous Topics

The memoranda submitted to us covered a wide range of topics, the great majority of which have been dealt with in our report. However, we are conscious that some of the questions raised have not been answered directly. There are a number of reasons for this: in some cases specific proposals were put to us which we did not feel able to support, while in others the issues raised were not directly relevant to our enquiry. We also received a certain

number of suggestions which, although they were concerned with the government of the University, we did not pursue because they would have led to a more fundamental revision of the present system than was envisaged in our terms of reference.

17. Recommendations

A summary of our report is set out in the Synopsis (see p. 616). Our proposals form an integrated scheme, and the report should be read as a whole. The following are our principal recommendations for the action that needs to be taken in order to put the scheme into effect.

1. That the Regent House be confirmed as the governing body of the University, with the powers listed in section 5.1.7.

2. That a Board of Scrutiny be established, as proposed in section 5.2, with the powers and duties there set out.

3. That the following be entitled to membership of the Regent House, subject to an age limit of seventy in the case of classes (c) and (d): (a) University officers (or persons treated as such under Statute J, 7), (b) Heads of Colleges, (c) Fellows of Colleges, (d) members of Faculties (section 5.3).

4. That all members of the Regent House be entitled to membership of the Senate (section 5.3.4).

5. That the powers and duties of the Senate be restricted to electing the Chancellor and the High Steward, and to making regulations to govern the procedure at such elections (section 6.6).

6. That the Council of the Senate be renamed the Council, and that it be recognized as the principal executive and policy-making body of the University (section 8.1); that it be required to make an Annual Report to the Regent House, and that it be made accountable to the Regent House along the lines set out in section 5.1.8.

7. That the Council consist of the Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor, and sixteen members as follows: (a) four Heads of Colleges elected by the Regent House on the nomination of the Colleges Committee, (b) four members of the Regent House elected by the Regent House on the nomination of the General Board, (c) eight members of the Regent House elected by the Regent House (section 8.2.1-7).

8. That the Council have responsibility for planning and the overall allocation of resources, and that the present Long Term Planning Committee be discharged (section 8.1.5).

9. That an Executive Committee of the Council be established, with power to take decisions on behalf of the Council (section 8.1.7).

10. That postal voting be introduced for the election of members of the Council in class (c) (section 8.2.4).

11. That a Consultative Committee be established, as proposed in section 8.2.8.

12. That the Council's position be clarified in relation to the institutions for which it acts as the competent authority, and that the General Board's Work and Stipends Committee be reconstituted as a Joint Committee of the Council and the General Board (section 8.1.8 and Appendix C).

13. That the General Board be formally accountable to the Council, and that it be given the powers set out in section 9.3.2.

14. That the Groups of Faculties be abolished, and that the election of members of the General Board in class (b) be linked to the Councils of the Schools (section 9.3.3).

15. That the four members of the General Board in class (c) be appointed or co-opted in accordance with the arrangements proposed in section 9.3.3.

16. That the Financial Board be constituted as a Committee of the Council and that it be renamed the Finance Committee (section 9.4.8).

17. That the members of the Finance Committee be appointed by the Council (section 9.4.8-9).

18. That one hundred signatures be required to support a request for a ballot on a Grace of the Regent House (section 10.4.1).

19. That twenty-five signatures be required to support a request for a discussion of a topic of concern to the University (section 10.4.3).

20. That Statute K, 9(b) be amended so as to provide that, except in certain specified cases, University bodies may refer questions to committees for the purpose of consultation only; that the Council and the General Board be exempt from this general rule, and that the Council have authority to exempt other bodies also (section 11.1.3).

21. That the Councils of the Schools be given greater authority over the deployment of resources made available to them (section 11.2.2).

22. That Chairmen of Faculty Boards and Heads of Departments be given greater authority over the deployment of resources made available to them (section 11.2.4).

23. That a system of planning and resource allocation be adopted along the lines proposed in section 11.4 and Appendix D.

24. That the Registry be designated the principal administrative officer of the University (section 11.5.1).

25. That a unified administrative service for the University be created (section 11.5.2).

26. That additional administrative support be provided for the Councils of the Schools and for those Faculty Boards that require it (sections 11.2.2.2 and 11.5.3).

27. That steps be taken to improve communication within the University, along the lines suggested in section 11.5.5.

28. That the Vice-Chancellorship be a full-time office and that the holder be required to give up any other College or University offices (section 12.8).

29. That the Vice-Chancellor's term of office be five years, renewable for not more than two further years (section 12.8).

30. That there be no restriction on eligibility for the Vice-Chancellorship, and that the Vice-Chancellor be appointed by the Council, on the recommendation of a search committee (section 12.9.2).

31. That an office of Pro-Vice-Chancellor be established (section 12.10).

32. That the Colleges be invited to consider the proposals set out in section 14 for the revision of the work of the inter-College bodies.

33. That a Statutes and Ordinances Revision Syndicate be appointed to prepare proposals for the detailed legislative changes required to give effect to the recommendations of the present report (section 15.1).

29 April 1989

DOUGLAS WASS, *Chairman*
GEOFFREY ALLEN
ALAN COOK
DAVID HARRISON

GORDON JOHNSON
KEARTON
PETER MATHIAS

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