

# CAFAS Update No 8

15th January 1996

Council for Academic Freedom and Academic Standards

Next Meeting:

Saturday 27th January 2 - 4:30pm

Conway Hall,  
Red Lion Square,  
Holborn,  
London WC1  
Nearest Tube: Holborn

## The David Regan Hardship Fund

Enclosed with the Update is an appeal for the CAFAS sponsored David Regan Hardship Fund. Please help us to reach the widest audience by photocopying the appeal and distributing it to all your colleagues, and any other interested parties.

## Open Letter to the CVCP

Enclosed with the Update is an open letter sent to the Chair of the CVCP from JAG Griffith drawing attention to the implications of the recent changes in funding of research and the implications for the current Research Assessment Exercise.

## The Case of Subha Ktorides

CAFAS was approached by Nottingham's Students Union at the end of November about the case of Subha Ktorides, a PGCE candidate in the School of Education. Subha had been a victim of racial harassment in the school to which the university had assigned her for teaching practice. She believes that the effect of protesting about this, of taking it to the CRE, and of arranging a replacement school with the help of other black educationalists, had been to antagonise the university. In any event, she had been failed, despite being given very favourable reports by the replacement school. This school has declared that the university's decision to fail her is incomprehensible, that they were aware of the hostility generated by her having taken her case to the CRE, and that in their view she was a victim of prejudice.

On 1 December 1995, CAFAS wrote to the Head of Nottingham's School of Education asking for factual answers to some factual questions.

CAFAS pointed out, first, that one of the most important issues concerned the racial harassment to which Subha was subjected and the university's response to her distress over this. Granted that Nottingham is an area in which ethnic minorities are substantially

represented, we said, what provisions are there in the School of Education for the special problems to which this gives rise and, in particular, does their staff include any Afro-Caribbean or Asian members?

CAFAS pointed out, secondly, that due to recent changes introduced by the government, most of the responsibility for training and assessing teachers has shifted to the schools, but the power to award qualifications still rests with university examining boards. What happened in Subha's case is that the school thinks she is first-rate, the university that she is not fit to be a teacher. When there is a conflict of this kind, we asked, what is the procedure for resolving it? And is the school represented on the examining board?

CAFAS pointed out, thirdly, that the system of examining PGCE candidates in Nottingham includes a "mid-practice profile" prepared by the school. In Subha's case, however, something called a "parallel mid-practice profile" was introduced by the university as well. The first profile was apparently favourable, the second unfavourable. What provision is there in the regulations, we asked, for the second kind of profile?

These are straightforward questions which could be given straightforward answers. But the Head of the School of Education did not trouble to reply, and the bureaucrat who replied instead managed to fill a page without answering a single question. We wrote again, on 7 December, restating the questions; but we have so far received no reply.

Perhaps Nottingham are refusing to answer these questions because they have no special provisions for training teachers to work in a multi-ethnic community, because they have no Afro-Caribbeans or Asians on their staff, because they have no proper procedure for resolving conflicts between themselves and the schools which do most of the work in training teachers, or even because there is nothing in the regulations about the "parallel mid-practice profile" used to fail Subha.

It is of course possible that the system in Nottingham is not as bad as these speculations suggest. But we do not

think that a policy of evasion will encourage anyone to believe so.

We have publicised the case in the TES, January 5, in the local press, and in a leaflet to Nottingham's staff.

Colwyn Williamson,  
**CAFAS** Case Co-ordinator,  
The University,  
Swansea SA2 8PP  
Tel: 01792-295895

### CAA Research Assessment

The present RESEARCH ASSESSMENT EXERCISE features significantly in the lives of most Academic staff in universities, and, we suspect, must have an influence on academic freedom and university autonomy. This influence may be beneficial or it may be detrimental. For example, there may be a stimulus to more and better academic research, but pressure to meet the criteria of the exercise may be to the detriment of the quality of the research involved. There have been many reports of staff movements associated with the exercise - it has been likened to football teams' buying players - which again could be good or bad.

The Council for Academic Autonomy has decided to conduct a survey of the effects of the research assessment exercise on academic freedom and autonomy. It is the intention to publish the results of this survey. The anonymity of individuals and institutions will be respected, unless it is mutually agreed that there is no reason for it.

Academics and others who can give specific examples of the effects of the Research Assessment Exercise are asked to send details, in confidence, to:

Dr D E Packham,  
School of Materials Science,  
University of Bath,  
Claverton Down,  
Bath, BA2 7AY  
Tel: 01225-826570  
Fax: 01225-826098  
Telex: 449097  
E-mail: D.E.Packham@bath.ac.uk

### Iris Brooksbank Case

**CAFAS** asked the Secretary of State to intervene in the case of Iris Brooksbank who was dismissed in July 1995 by Buckinghamshire County Council. In spite of the political nature of the case and the evidence submitted, Gillian Shephard has still not intervened. **CAFAS** has informed the Secretary of State that it will be writing again after the Industrial Tribunal. This has been adjourned until 18 March 1996. The hearing will resume from 18-22 March, commencing at 6:30 on the 5th Floor, 30-31 Friar Street, Reading, Berkshire.

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Entrance is in Merchant Place which is within walking distance of the station. **CAFAS** members are urged to attend on any of these days in support of Iris. A supportive presence is crucial.

### Panorama

A Panorama programme is being prepared on problems in Higher Education. Liz Clare (XYTV) would like to hear from anyone who can give her information about ways in which 'managerialism' is damaging standards or conditions of service for lecturers, especially the effects of commercialisation, reprisals against whistleblowers and so on. She would like people willing to appear either as blanked-out profiles or with their faces showing. She would also like information in general, and names of further people she can contact. She promises to treat initial approaches in complete confidence.

XYTV  
'The Old Stables',  
7 Regent Street,  
Leeds, LS7 4PE  
Tel: 01132 371199  
Fax: 01132 371000  
Mobile: 0831 412154

### Intellectual Property

We are beginning to get cases which raise issues about the law on intellectual property as it is being applied in institutions of further and higher education. This is especially a problem for scientists, who have, in practice, few rights over their work. If their head of Laboratory wishes to publish it in a form, or an order, or at a date, which goes against their wishes, or to block their publishing it themselves. This is as true for senior research scientists as it is for PhD students.

A particular worrying development is the attempt by the University of Leeds to force PhD students to sign away their intellectual property rights (both copyright and moral rights) to the University before they are registered. Two politics PhD students have recently successfully resisted this. If this is happening elsewhere **CAFAS** would be interested to know about it, and to have copies of any text given to prospective students for signature.

#### Write to:

Dr G R Evans,  
Faculty of History,  
University of Cambridge CB3 9EF

Letters on any issue, news items and short articles for **CAFAS Update** should be addressed to:

Sara Brown  
39 College Street,  
Grimsby DN34 4TN  
01472 340018

## CAFAS Publications

All available at £1.50

Academic standards under pressure: the case of Swansea - Michael Cohen & Colwyn Williamson

The other plagiarism case: Mrs Jones & the University of Wales - Michael Cohen & Colwyn Williamson

Prospects of promotion: towards a common code of practice - G R Evans

Research assessment: as strange a maze as e'er men trod - John Griffiths

Also available:

Sir Michael Davies: The Davies Report: the 'great battle' in Swansea Thoemmes Press, 1994 Price £4 (£3 to **CAFAS** members)

from: **CAFAS**  
The University,  
Swansea SA2 8PP  
01792-205678

## Patrons

**CAFAS** is bringing together a body of eminent academic patrons willing to associate their names with our objectives and to assist in specific cases of victimisation. Those who have so far agreed are Professors Geoffrey Alderman (London), Elizabeth Anscombe (Cambridge), Michèle Barrett (London), David Beetham (Leeds), Jennifer Birkett (Birmingham), Noam Chomsky (MIT), G.A. Cohen (Oxford), J B Deregowski (Aberdeen), Ray Dils (Reading), Michael Dummett (Oxford), Terry Eagleton (Oxford), Chris Freeman (Sussex), Peter Geach (Leeds), John Griffith (LSE), David Howell (Manchester), Richard Hyman (Warwick), J F Lamb (St Andrews), David McLellan (Kent), T J Reed (Oxford), Steven Rose (Open), Hilary Rose (Bradford), James Sang (Brighton), John Saville (Hull), Phil Scraton (Edge Hill), Stan Smith (Dundee) and John Westergaard (Sheffield).

## Membership Fees & Affiliation

Photocopy this application for membership and distribute it among your colleagues. If you haven't yet joined yourself, could you pay your membership fees. Try to get your local AUT or NATFHE to affiliate to **CAFAS**. Please complete the form below.

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Please send to **CAFAS** Membership Secretaries, 7 Benn Street, London E9 5SU

Name.....Address.....

.....Post Code.....Date.....

I/we wish to join/affiliate to **CAFAS** and enclose a cheque/sent a Bankers Order for £.....00

(£10 p.a. for individual membership, £5 p.a. for students and unwaged, £25 p.a. for trade union affiliation)

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**Bankers Order** please send to your bank.

To (name & address of your bank).....

.....Post Code.....

Your Bank Sort Code.....Your Account Number.....

Please pay **CAFAS** the sum of .....every year starting on (date).....

Signature.....

*For Bank Information*

Account: **CAFAS**  
Lloyds Bank plc, Swansea Branch, PO Box 66, Swansea SA1 3AP

Sort Code 30-95-46

Account no: 1868136