

CHAPTER EIGHT

1975-1977: ACCREDITATION OF THE SCHOOLS AND PROBLEMS IN SYDNEY

Symbolic power - as a power of constituting the given through utterances, of making people see and believe, of confirming or transforming the vision of the world and, thereby, acting on the world and thus the world itself, an almost magical power which enables one to obtain the equivalent of what is obtained through force (whether physical or economic), by virtue of the specific effect of mobilization - is a power that can be exercised only if it is recognized, that is, misrecognized as arbitrary. This means that symbolic power does not reside in 'symbolic systems' in the form of an 'illocutionary force' but that it is defined in and through a given relation between those who exercise power and those who submit to it, i.e. in the very structure of the field in which belief is produced and reproduced. What creates the power of words and slogans, a power capable of maintaining and subverting the social order, is the belief in the legitimacy of words and of those who utter them. And words alone cannot create this belief.

Bourdieu, 1991:170

The Business of the Association: PEAC and the Journal

The Association came out of 1974 prepared to speak and exchange information with the Australian Institute of Welfare Officers (AIWO). More schools were being planned and there was pressure on institutions to be brisk in proposing courses within the current round of triennial funding. At the same time, the Commonwealth Social Welfare Commission (June 1975) began a review Education and Training for Social Welfare Personnel in Australia. Eva Learner headed the review. Her discussions with PEAC reveal their perception of their role, responsibilities and powers.

The main issues for the Association and PEAC in particular in 1975-1977 were the review of the Minimum Educational Requirements for eligibility for membership (MER) and the re-accreditation of the thirteen schools of social work in the country at the time. For two courses, WAIT and Sydney University, the reaccreditation process was not straight-forward.

The reaccreditation of the course at Sydney University was complex and is not described in detail here. However, the responses of the AASW and PEAC in particular, are examined. It highlights the assumed power of the Association and what it saw as being its legitimate concerns and processes of influence. The way in which Sydney University's Head of School managed negotiations with the AASW is instructive for other academics in this position. There is no investigation made of the role and actions of any of the stakeholders in the dispute itself.

Again, the Association was marked by internal differences. At the last Federal Council Meeting of 1974, PEAC proposed that an exceptional circumstance clause be inserted in the MER. The clause would allow membership eligibility for a person who was a distinguished practitioner in their country of origin, whose qualifications as a practitioner are acceptable there and who provides evidence of senior professional standing of exceptional ability but whose formal educational qualifications do not meet the MER. The proposal was lost. PEAC persisted arguing that this clause was important to the image and standing of AASW, especially when accusations of elitism and inflexibility about admission policy were numerous.²¹⁰ It is puzzling that an overseas course which would be assessed as the equivalent or less than a College of Advanced Education degree could lead to such recognition for an experienced graduate but not for an Australian national. However, in that same year, Colin Benjamin (President), Irons (Vice-President) and Bruce Belcher (Federal Secretary) met with the AIWO to discuss the widening of the Association Membership to take in 'sub-professionals' and others working in the welfare field. These disparate actions by the Federal Executive and Federal Council serve to illustrate the internal differences.

Eva Learner and the Review of Education and Training for Social Welfare Personnel in Australia

The Social Welfare Commission in June, 1975 had appointed Eva Learner. Her task was to investigate and advise the Government on the need in Australia for a body such as a Council for Education and Training in Social Welfare and, to assist in developing organizational structures for any such body, if the need were established. These terms of reference were subsequently altered and the following applied.

To evaluate the need for and feasibility of a body such as a Council for Education in Social Welfare in Australia having regard to the existing educational planning structures and other interested parties within the welfare field.

If appropriate, to make recommendations as to possible structure, composition and function.
Learner, 1979:1

In the United Kingdom the CCETSW (Central Council for Education and Training in Social Welfare) is an independent body with statutory authority to promote education and training in

²¹⁰NLA MS6202/50/6/Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee /29 September 1975

all fields of social work and to recognize courses and award qualifications. This includes probation, after care services in local authority social services and social work for hospitals, education and voluntary agencies. The CCETSW reviews preliminary training, basic qualifications, in-service schemes, researches social welfare education and assesses overseas qualifications. Learner's task was to assess whether such an organizational model could be successful in Australia.

Eva Learner surveyed welfare and social work courses in Australia, workers and some volunteer programs. She consulted the AASW and the AIWO and, in each state, educators, employers, unions and other interested parties. She attended a PEAC meeting²¹¹ and talked with the committee. Her interest in PEAC was in 'ordering the broad group of organizations that were really making decisions about the establishment, funding, (re)creation of courses and the system of courses.'²¹² The record of the PEAC meeting she attended articulates PEAC's view of their role, responsibility and power.

Margaret Lewis, the convenor of PEAC, began by providing an example to show the need for some authority to plan for social welfare education programs. Her example showed how PEAC stepped out of its role as an advisory committee and took executive action over the location of a social work course in Newcastle. The University of Newcastle had been in contact with the CAE on the planning for social work and social welfare courses. PEAC members had been part of a local planning committee since 1975 with the CAE which was suddenly suspended by the Principal, who submitted for funding for a social work course. Responding to the alarm of the local social workers, PEAC approached the Higher Education Board of NSW to slow down the process and enable consideration of the concerns of its members.

Eva Learner clarified that the Commonwealth perspective was about providing people with information and advice whereas she perceived that Margaret Lewis was talking about controlling and limiting educational development.

It illustrates the particular role of PEAC in a network which has potential for influencing important developments in social welfare area. ²¹³

²¹¹NLA MS6202/50/7/ Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee /20 December 1976/1-11

²¹²These included the Universities Commission, Board of Advanced Education in all states AASW, AIWO and ASWU to a minor extent.

²¹³Margaret Lewis NLA MS6202/50/7/ Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee /20 December 1976/11

Eva Learner's focus was primarily on how much did AASW Federal Council work out what its thinking was itself and how much did the membership reflect what it really wanted and should it have this power?²¹⁴

PEAC explained that the committee advised Federal Council. The membership was ambivalent about PEAC partly because there was 'not enough constructive to-ing and fro-ing with the membership either informally or through membership channels²¹⁵.

PEAC probably carried an enormous burden of responsibility and power which, with its limited resources, was not always justifiable.²¹⁶

PEAC members were not elected but appointed by Federal Council and, although states had education committees, only Victoria was thriving. Further, PEAC had just become aware of the need to involve interested members.²¹⁷ Margaret Lewis clarified that the final objective of PEAC was eligibility to join AASW. PEAC's activities constituted a service to employers, the Immigration Department and social workers wanting jobs. The spin-off was increased membership. Margaret Lewis conceded that there was almost no feedback from the general membership in a systematic way. PEAC communicated directly to and from, Federal Council. Its contact with general membership was, she said, its downfall; it could be used but was not.

Peter Wilson from the Committee on Overseas Professional Qualifications (COPQ) had looked at the process of accreditation for a week. He concluded that PEAC had a wealth of information, was doing deeper research than most other people do and seeing the service offered, suggested it could improve PEAC's public relations if the membership knew of this. To date PEAC had not let members know these things.

²¹⁴Eva Learner NLA MS6202/50/7/ Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee /20 December 1976/4

²¹⁵Elspeth Browne NLA MS6202/50/7/ Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee /20 December 1976/4

²¹⁶Elspeth Browne NLA MS6202/50/7/ Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee /20 December 1976/4

²¹⁷Lindsay Napier NLA MS6202/50/7/ Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee /20 December 1976/4

Margaret Lewis added that

PEAC processed most of the meeting material at last Federal Council meeting. The business of the Association was now PEAC and the journal. ²¹⁸

Eva Learner asked whether the AASW should hold on to the responsibility of professional accreditation? Elspeth Browne replied that

this got back to the nature of professional association - any professional association would see some ongoing responsibility with respect to people who practised that profession in the name they bear which was tied up with quality of educational programs and practice, code of ethics; any professional association would be concerned with the clientele who carry the name of their profession. ²¹⁹

Margaret Lewis added that no one but PEAC was addressing standards. On the question of where this responsibility should lie the response was that resources were limited, within and without the Association. Elspeth Browne thought another body, like a registration board should take this role. Registration for counsellors and caseworkers was raised.

Eva Learner spoke against the wholesale registration of the activities in social welfare commenting on a recent Bill in the Queensland Parliament. She felt it was dangerous because if the bill passed, there would be no personal activity between individuals, families and groups and only persons registered could do this work. Currently, the only people in the exempt group were doctors, teachers and preachers. She added that since 'our tools are our methods' she would be keen to know what the arguments were on this question of registration.

The arguments she was given included that some social work registration increases accountability and consumer protection was needed. PEAC was 'protecting the public from incompetence so far as one could measure this in terms of qualifications.' PEAC was the only group doing this and the market could not be relied on to sort this out because many workers were employed in statutory rather than private practice. ²²⁰

At this point Margaret Lewis commented that she would like to see accreditation go out of AASW and that PEAC was a group consulted about social welfare policy and practice.

²¹⁸NLA MS6202/50/7/ Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee /20 December 1976/5

²¹⁹Elspeth Browne NLA MS6202/50/7/ Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee /20 December 1976/5

²²⁰Elspeth Browne NLA MS6202/50/7/ Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee /20 December 1976/4

Accreditation would then go to an autonomous organization which could take into account employers.

Eva Learner pointed out that the

AMA [Australian Medical Association] didn't really develop the methodology for medicine and that social work or welfare currently was still struggling with a terrible elusive body of knowledge and skills or tasks not clearly defined in terms of actual practice. In other professions there was more definition, although loose boundaries and the equipment for working was established outside of the professional association by practice, research, invention and so on; although that occurred with the social welfare area, the nature of the equipment used and the nature of studying it was still so elusive and few resources were put into developing it.²²¹

She added that if one looked hard for research into the methodology of practice there was some in the UK and USA; 'a little... one or 2 PhDs'²²². The Social Welfare Commission was the first body to start funding of research that could help develop instruments for practice in this area.

John Tuchin added that the whole issue of accreditation used up people's time and good will and needed money to be injected. He said that the members of PEAC were feeling strain of voluntary work and they are called on to justify their decisions. Elspeth Browne he said, had 100% load on eligibility alone, they reviewed courses and never got around to reviewing policy.²²³

If someone else took over accreditation the AASW would continue with COPQ [Committee on Overseas Professional Qualifications], especially a pilot study on the Philippines and UK. PEAC would still be responsible to set the criteria for eligibility for membership. If a statutory body was set up the AASW could not call the tune and other interests would be taken into account including employers.²²⁴

Eva Learner asked about having a body to develop educational documents on the policy and practice of social work. At this point Bob (Robert) Doyle made the comment that 'so many students have anti-professional attitudes and don't want anything to do with the Association but they will link with the Union.' Eva Learner thought that the difficulty was with the word 'professional'. Indeed she raised this point again in her report;

²²¹Eva Learner NLA MS6202/50/7/ Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee /20 December 1976/6

²²²Eva Learner NLA MS6202/50/7/ Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee /20 December 1976/6

²²³Elsbeth Browne NLA MS6202/50/7/ Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee /20 December 1976/6

²²⁴Elsbeth Browne NLA MS6202/50/7/ Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee /20 December 1976/7

However, it is important from the outset to clarify the distinction between professional social work and the vast field of social welfare.... Social workers, therefore, comprise a specific group of professional workers characterised by having achieved the appropriate (accredited) level of education and practical experience to enable them to carry out social work.

The term 'professional' is used in this report to refer to a group of workers, usually prepared by a program of education and training, who perform a service which is sanctioned by the community, with a characteristic set of values, skills and knowledge base. There is, however, considerable conflict over the use of the word 'professional'. The problem is particularly evident between the social work profession and many of the groups designated as welfare workers.

The view held in this study is that there is no clear-cut monopoly of professional practice in the social welfare field. Although social workers comprise one of the most established professional groups, in the spectrum of other welfare personnel a degree of professionalism can be ascribed to certain workers, in terms of their preparation, approach and competence in the work they perform. In addition, it is possible to consider that some workers without prior formal training may have developed a professional approach in the course of their work experience, particularly under professional supervision.

Lerner, 1979: 12-13

Margaret Lewis stated that PEAC's mandate was to review policy and make recommendations about social work educational programs: what ought to go into them and what constituted adequate practice. She stated that PEAC never met with employers. Further, the membership of PEAC reflected her own idea about the sort of advisory committee she wanted to be involved with and the way in which the decisions were made and sent to Federal Council. Margaret Lewis was particularly concerned, she said, to not do anything to foster anti-academic snide leveled at PEAC or the school bias suggested. At the time there were 5 field workers (one of whom was a researcher) and 3 educators (one who taught welfare) and 50:50 men and women.

The meeting went on to discuss PEAC's role and responsibilities in course evaluation and accreditation and particularly the educative role PEAC took to 'make-up' the SAIT students resulting in a whole course restructure. PEAC was the decision-maker and administrator; the auspice was the local school. PEAC negotiated with institutions but experienced a dilemma if a new Australian course was set up and failed to meet the criteria for eligibility. Eva Lerner asked what was PEAC's responsibility and why were they colluding in such a situation?

Elsbeth Browne explained that it was because the SA Government and Commonwealth said they would employ these people as social workers. She is reported to have said that if the Association did not get into this, they (the graduates) would continue to practice with deficient educational background. 'The only other school in this situation had a 15-month course. In its early development they were offered a consultant but, in the case of SAIT it was too late. A

stop-gap measure had to be put in, then an ultimatum was issued to the school to put its house in order.’

Peter Einspinner predicted that ‘this will happen again over Newcastle and Milperra where the welfare course will hope to escalate to a social work course and people will be led to believe this would happen.’ Eva Learner asked how could he predict this and Margaret Lewis responded that PEAC had its fingers burnt too often to wait until first graduates came off the course. In fact PEAC had already alerted Mary McLelland to consult for Newcastle.

PEAC used consultants who were senior academics to assist universities in the establishment of their courses. They received only travel and out of pocket expenses which were paid by the universities and institutions. Accepting a consultancy was accepting a service for the development of the academic program. No consultants were on PEAC.

Eva Learner asked, ‘Are the educational processes, in the way they are defined, clearly held to ransom by PEAC?’ She said that she preferred to look at a course and ask ‘what is it trying to do?’ then, ‘how it goes about it?’ She stated that guidelines on basics were necessary but she was not sure the criteria were not too tight, partly because of shortage of placements, ‘perhaps this could be loosened up.’²²⁵ Eva Learner was alluding to the requirement that field education placements be supervised by a qualified professional social worker and since there was a severe shortage of placement opportunities for students, being more flexible could expand the range of work areas in which future social workers may be found.

she was troubled because there were other areas that could be built on outside the social work areas which could produce a person who was much more flexible and could go into a system. ²²⁶

Margaret Lewis responded saying that PIT (Phillip Institute of Technology, Victoria) emphasized fieldwork with an eye to the future rather than fit social workers into traditional settings. She added that one criticism of their students was that they asked too many questions and did not fit into traditional settings. Elspeth Browne said that using quantitative criteria, was

²²⁵Eva Learner NLA MS6202/50/7/ Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee /20 December 1976/10

²²⁶Eva Learner NLA MS6202/50/7/ Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee /20 December 1976/10

an 'easy saving cop-out from not having other tools to measure qualitative things.' She expressed concern about people who say 'once trained and holding a ticket, always trained.'²²⁷

In this short statement we hear that the criteria based assessment used by PEAC is recognized as having significant shortcomings. We see the requirements of the AASW defended by Margaret Lewis who gives one example out of the thirteen schools to show that it is possible to be flexible within the requirements with, however, an outcome of the students being less likely to be used in traditional social work settings. There was no verification that these students had difficulty in gaining employment and her comments constituted anecdotal evidence.

In discussion about the UK Manpower report by the UK Council on Social Work Education, Elspeth Browne made the observation that British employers were more sophisticated than Australia. Eva Learner's reply was 'No' followed by an example, of lack of understanding of welfare's educational requirements. She took her example from the Seebohm²²⁸ Report:

There was a veto to appointment to any local authority directorship if that applicant did not have sufficient primary experience in the field and what they got was senior professional people who had been in the field - and many who had not been professionally trained. It was a myth that they were good: they were shocking for a year or two, although they were getting better now because of other influences...

[Australia:]...here there has been a terrible fragmentation between employers and the field - social work in Australia had historically been enclosed and only in recent years had it begun to open out and see this was not only social work's territory but many contributions made up the field.²²⁹

In this meeting, PEAC effectively clarified to an outsider its perceived role, function and processes not written in the documentation. The members of PEAC saw that they had a responsibility to all social workers; to all people who carried the name of the profession in Australia, whether they were members of the Association or not. They recognized the burden of this responsibility and the power vested in them to advise Federal Council and to do so without input and exchange of information from the membership of the Association. While they reflected on their growing awareness that exchange of information with the membership was necessary,

²²⁷Elspeth Browne NLA MS6202/50/7/ Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee /20 December 1976/10

²²⁸The Seebohm Report, attempted to diagnose what was stopping social services from providing effective help to individuals and families; to recommend organisational change and to suggest guidelines for future functions and strategies of the services. See also Leonard, P 1973:103-117.

²²⁹Eva Learner NLA MS6202/50/7/ Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee /20 December 1976/1-11

there were real limits, related to the need for confidentiality about individual applicants, concerns and internal problems of courses under review for accreditation.

PEAC members were very busy. So busy that they had no opportunity to review policy. As a consequence of their load, they had to delegate the responsibility of communicating their activities to Federal Council and the State Education Committees. Only one state education committee was fully functional at the time. PEAC's structure and its burden would seem to have contributed significantly to its distance from the membership and the perception of it being an élite within the élite.

The roles PEAC undertook were varied. They influenced and controlled the development of courses either directly through the system of consultants or through raising issues with major decision making bodies like the Higher Education Boards. They provided a service to employers, the Immigration Department and people wanting work, by assessing that applicants met minimal educational requirements to practise as a professional social worker in Australia. They believed that they were addressing standards and protecting the public from incompetence. Hence, they were performing a service to the governments (local, state and federal) in Australia. They realized that their assessment criteria, based on quantitative measures, were flawed. Nevertheless, they researched applications thoroughly, especially within COPQ. There was no reason to suspect they would be less diligent in other assessments, for example course accreditation.

In assessing courses they consulted, acted as a link between competing schools, made decisions, evaluated and sometimes ran education programs to provide make-up programs. Throughout this process they did not consult with employers and recognized that if accreditation of courses and registration was taken out of their hands, employers may have a greater voice and the Association comparatively less influence.

PEAC's activities were the core activities of the Association. Their views of their tasks and responsibilities reflected the beliefs of the Association at the time PEAC was established. The structure of the Association, with PEAC as a specialist group, left them in a difficult position. As education changed, as the field of welfare changed, as the profession was not able to get enough social workers educated for the expanding numbers of work places, much responsibility fell to PEAC. PEAC was responsible for fitting an MER system to a changing society but with

insufficient resources and with ideas that limited them in communicating with employers and non-university educational institutions. The more they did and the harder their job became, the less they could explain to the general membership and the more they were cemented as the 'high priestesses and priests' of the Association. The Association's own membership regulations in the constitution ensured that non-social workers and students could never be members of PEAC. The rule that people could only attend meetings if there was a matter that directly affected them and only as an observer, enhanced the superiority of this body and perception of it operating in secret: untouchable.

The 'messages to PEAC' that the committee recorded and sent to Federal Council following the meeting with Eva Learner, did not cover the scope of the discussion above. Margaret Lewis reported that there were limitations of paper accreditation. She said that as reviews were not done on campus, PEAC never got to the core of the course (quantitative versus qualitative criteria and methodology). Involvement of employers needed to be looked into in an innovative way. Welfare education required a full-time PEAC convenor but there was no money for this and that PEAC's public relations activities needed attention as finance and manpower was a major issue for the committee.

Accreditation and the Minimum Educational Requirements

At the Federal Council meeting in September 1975, a general review of accreditation for all schools was agreed. In October, the Federal Secretary wrote to the schools to inform them of the new round of assessments.²³⁰ However, in May, 1976, PEAC was also engaged in a review of the Minimum Educational Requirements for eligibility for membership that altered the base on which the schools would be assessed. The new MER called for a four-year course with integrated fieldwork and teaching program. Part of the argument was, that if the student spends the equivalent of six months on fieldwork, then the actual course has to extend into a fourth year to be the same equivalent length of a three-year degree.

²³⁰Michael Horsburgh NLA MS6202/50/1/ Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/12 October 1977/

Degree courses are of at least three years duration at tertiary level. Degrees which seek to incorporate professional training require additional practice and applied study which if included in a three year, must reduce the academic level of the course through reduction either quantitatively or qualitatively in the academic and theoretical content of the course. There has therefore been difficulty in justifying the degree status of such three year professional programmes.²³¹

PEAC also argued that the growing complexity of the welfare scene in the late 1960s and 1970s, with the expansion of social work out of service delivery into social planning and community development, had accentuated this need. Yet, it had in no way lessened the desirability that professional social workers be generic in their training and versatile in their employment.

Social work theory and practice by its very nature require advanced conceptualisation based upon a knowledge of social sciences. A satisfactory educational program requires firstly introduction to general principles and ideas of a number of relevant disciplines followed by specific application of a variety of social work practice models and integration of these into practice and theory. Uniquely it must also involve the students (sic) development of his (sic) own personal strengths and skills, preparing him (sic) to use those in intervention to achieve change at a number of levels with one individual, a group, an organisation or organisations, a community and society itself.

These were the arguments used to encourage Higher Education and Advanced Boards in the states to enable four-year degree courses in social work to be developed in Colleges of Advanced Education and Institutes of Technology.²³²

Most of the Schools of Social Work were able to pass this accreditation round. Some, Margaret Lewis reported had made a two or more volume presentation document about their course. The accreditations were all 'on paper'. Most of the schools were co-operative, some were hostile and/or obstructive. Some Heads of Schools expressed realistic scepticism about on paper assessments. In the PEAC report to Federal Council Margaret Lewis stated

it is difficult for us to confront the resistance, hostility and destructiveness with any degree of confidence. This is aggravated by the seemingly low-status position of the Association over the last five years or so, both in the perception of the profession and the wider community.²³³

²³¹NLA MS6202/50/3/Statement Relating to Requirements for Four Year Social Work Educational Program/31 May 1976/2

²³²PEAC for example, received a letter from the NSW Higher Education Board in relation to the proposed social work course at Newcastle CAE. The letter is reported to state that the Australian Committee on Advanced Education is not generally in favour of four year courses, partly for financial reasons. At the same meeting however, PEAC received a letter dated 24 June, 1976, from Dr Richard Nies Head of School of Social Work at SAIT to the Federal Secretary, informing that the South Australia Board of Advanced Education had approved a 4 year degree proposal and was forwarding it to the Tertiary Education Commission. He requested the AASW's assistance with information on employment qualification involving AASW membership eligibility. Clearly, the question of four-year degrees in the Advanced Education Sector was still negotiable and was in some states eventually achieved.

²³³NLA MS2602/50/6/PEAC Report to Federal Council for 6 Months/Oct 1976- May 1977

However, Margaret Lewis could see problems in the assessment of the WAIT documentation and in relation to staffing. The discussion that followed, in the PEAC meeting, was full of accusations that WAIT had special treatment from the beginning. For example, that the accreditation in 1973²³⁴ was 'done on shaky grounds and was given on grounds of their intention of moving ahead.' Michael Horsburgh stated that, at the last accreditation the WA Minister for Education was waiting for a phone call to inform him of the outcome of the Federal Council decision. Michael Horsburgh suggested that there was considerable 'tension' which may have affected the decision at that time and that Federal Council did not want to face the consequences of rejecting WAIT.

Margaret Lewis stated that one needed to be careful about saying what happened in 1973. 'Federal Council voted to accept WAIT. Re-accreditation has to work from that base-line.' Margaret Lewis also said that the 1973 accreditation was tentative and exposed in precise terms. There was a question about the group work teacher and MER qualifications.²³⁵ In the 1975 round of accreditation,²³⁶ she had not been happy with the material from WAIT. She asked for more information and found inconsistencies in the documentation. She called Dr Roberts (Acting Head of School, WAIT) who expressed interest in PEAC's comments because they had a curriculum review operating. Margaret Lewis returned to the material from WAIT and found the document relating to the curriculum review. She said that PEAC had 'not done an incisive scrutiny of that document.' Margaret Lewis recognized that she was questioning the decision made on WAIT. She commented on significant staffing changes, overseas appointments of staff, some who had temporary residency status and families who were having difficulty adapting to Western Australia. PEAC considered more than just the course structure and content or the qualifications and experience of the staff involved, when they accredited courses. The limits of the Association's attention in assessing a course for accreditation were broad. PEAC decided that WAIT could feasibly make the changes necessary in two years with the assistance of a consultant: Frances Donovan was chosen. Their 1974 accreditation was extended and WAIT would make a supplementary submission once their review was complete.²³⁷

²³⁴NLA MS2602/50/6/Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/8 August 1977

²³⁵This discussion may show that the process of taking the recommendation to Federal Council for a vote could appear democratic and unbiased but in reality inadequate assessments could pass through without challenge. PEAC was attributed with high levels of integrity.

²³⁶NLA MS2602/50/6/Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/19 April 1977

²³⁷NLA MS2602/50/6/Report of PEAC for 6 months Oct 1976-Mar 1977 to Federal Council

Therefore, PEAC was relying on paper based assessments of courses which, on reflection, were not being carefully read. Whether pressure from politicians or external bodies altered PEAC's recommendations about accreditation was only hinted at and not confirmed. PEAC did not contain itself to course content issues but staff qualifications origin, experience and stability. PEAC had expanded its powers but had not necessarily tightened up its obligations. In the case of WAIT, cooperation and flexibility were the keys to the response made by PEAC and securing the accreditation of the course. The response to Sydney University took a different path.

Sydney University

As part of the same bulk re-accreditation, Sydney University replied to the AASW on 26 March, 1976. Michael Horsburgh an academic at Sydney University who was also an active member of PEAC wrote the report.²³⁸ The committee recommended that the Sydney University course be accredited. Margaret Lewis went to Federal Council with information on what schools were to be accredited. On 'the same plane went a submission from students saying the course was not meeting MER.'²³⁹ As PEAC does not accredit schools of social work, only recommends, the students' report to Federal Council constituted a formal challenge to PEAC's assessment of the Sydney University course.

The students' report listed a range of difficulties primarily based in a breakdown of communication between staff and students - specifically about staff shortages. When Margaret Lewis reviewed the documentation from Sydney University, she realized that the information on which PEAC made the decision about recommending accreditation, was too scanty. This was because, following the challenge, PEAC did not have sufficient information to be confident of its recommendation. Sydney University's submission was 'minimally sufficient; it was only in retrospect that it became apparent that PEAC made an assessment on inadequate evidence in the first instance.' Michael Horsburgh at a later date²⁴⁰ stated that he had 'prepared and provided the minimum amount of information requested by PEAC originally.'

²³⁸NLA MS2602/50/1/Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/12 October 1977/7

²³⁹NLA MS2602/50/6/Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/9 May 1977/9

²⁴⁰NLA MS2602/50/1/Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/12 October 1977/9

When she looked at Sydney University's documentation and MER, she felt the most constructive way of going about this was to move a motion²⁴¹ that, on the recommendation of PEAC, the Bachelor of Social Work Course at Sydney University be re-accredited, subject to successful negotiations by PEAC with the Staff and the Student Association, regarding the submission made to Federal Council by the Sydney University Social Work Students Association, to ensure that the staffing of the course is adequate. This was, in effect, 'rubber-stamped'. She said that Federal Council did not have to accept it but there was limited time and that politics of Federal Council meant that a fair amount of rubber-stamping occurred.²⁴²

There are a number of issues that would be raised and hotly debated in the months to come. They included the appropriateness of a member of PEAC being responsible for writing the submission to PEAC on a course's accreditation. Also raised was the workload of PEAC and the inadvisability of accrediting 13 schools at once in a centralized process. Assumptions made about the adequacy of long-established courses akin to equating quality with seniority were challenged and the case for on-campus assessments rather than relying on paper reports from the universities was strengthened. The rights and legitimacy of students to contribute to the accreditation process and the mechanisms through which communication of grievances in particular were seen to be proper, were discussed. The powers of the AASW to enter an internal dispute of a university were debated and whether PEAC only made recommendations to Federal Council or were they the key decision-making body within the Association whose resolutions were automatically processed without dissent?

Federal Council directed that PEAC seek an interview with Professor T Brennan but this was not acted upon immediately. On 13 December, 1976, the Federal Secretary wrote to the Head of the Department at Sydney University informing him of the Federal Council action and stating that the PEAC convenor would be in touch with him. Margaret Lewis wrote to Professor Brennan shortly after the Federal Secretary's letter was sent. She received no reply from Professor Brennan. The long vacation period began and Margaret Lewis reported she took no further action until early 1977.²⁴³

²⁴¹NLA MS2602/50/6/Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/9 May 1977/9

²⁴²NLA MS2602/50/6/Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/19 April 1977/2.

²⁴³ibid.

When I was about to follow this up, having heard nothing, the students were seeking to see me because of new concerns about the course. So I felt it was important not to move in (sic) with Tom Brennan until I had up-dated myself with regard to the students' submission. I did this and received a verbal outline of the situation; from which I felt things could not go unexplored.²⁴⁴

Margaret Lewis talked with students and staff. The students concerns were related to: inadequate staffing levels; concerns about staff qualifications to teach method subjects; particular subjects which had been found to be inadequate but were retitled without changing the content or teaching method; subjects in the course not offered; lack of student influence in decision-making - their only channel of communication was in an advisory committee; and student experience of interactions with the Head of School. The latter, they interpreted as one of taking no notice and doing his 'own thing anyway'. For example, the subject Human Behaviour and Environment had, they said, been renamed in the course handbook but used the same health and disease model previously taught in Physical and Mental Health which had been found inadequate. As a result, they expressed their frustration and concern about their apparent impotence in decision-making with respect to the change and improvement in their course.

Their complaint reinforced the problems related with the AASW relying on paper assessments. On paper, this subject had changed; on campus it had the same content and in all other respects, to the students' view, remained unchanged. None of the students spoken to was on the Board of Studies. The Board of Studies, not the Advisory Committee, was the decision-making body.

The students' ire led them to boycott the advisory committee. Margaret Lewis reported that she suggested they re-think as it would cut them out of communication. Michael Horsburgh made the following statement.²⁴⁵

Michael stated that if the students did opt out of that committee and took other action about courses and all failed, then within the university system and in any public discussion they would be seen not to have a leg to stand on.

Lindsay Napier asked Margaret Lewis what she had said to the students. Margaret Lewis replied that she strongly encouraged the students to take responsibility for establishing further constructive communication with the Head of School and with the particular committee on

²⁴⁴ibid.

²⁴⁵NLA MS2602/50/6/Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/19 April 1977/7.

examination of the subject. Margaret Lewis said she 'got the feeling' that the student's primary concern was on the content of their course.

Margaret pointed to Section 2.42 of the 1974 MER which states that 'students shall have opportunity to put forward proposals on the planning and evaluation of the school's educational programme;' It seemed to her that within an advisory committee they had this opportunity of putting forward proposals on the planning and evaluation of their educational programme.²⁴⁶

Yvonne Geikie (AASW Vice-President) stated

This has been going on a long time and it was delicate. Margaret was operating under an assumption when she suggested the students pursue further constructive approaches; Yvonne did not think there had been any and for whatever reason, if they go on in the way they have been going on - on both sides - things would only get worse.

Margaret Lewis replied that she 'did not want this to be seen too negatively. None of the parties had been first-class in their communication or in their acceptance of the viewpoint of the other. There had been head-on clashes - difficult for meaningful communication to occur.' She continued saying that there had been another clash today between Tom Brennan and the students and she thought it would be difficult for open communication to be constructive. There was a lack of trust on both sides - no-one identifying positives on the other side.

The staff concerns were primarily about the way in which the student's were making their protest. The staffing levels were a real problem and the students had legitimate concerns. The staff contacted expressed their belief that students were making more of a case about student power in school government than on course content.

Margaret Lewis, herself an academic at UNSW, confirmed that her contact with the students and staff had been informal and that she needed the committee's endorsement to make any further contact. She is reported to have said,

it was disastrous for her to get in to an active policing role in regard to another university; preferably it should be a specially appointed person from Federal Council - outside of the local scene - or else, hopefully, someone else on the PEAC committee.

Michael Horsburgh, stated that his position was more difficult than Margaret Lewis's 'and it was also very difficult because - justifiably or not- we were dealing with suspicious students who

²⁴⁶NLA MS2602/50/6//Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/19 April 1977/4

were not only suspicious but ideologically committed to being opposed to the established authority.'

The discussion ranged broadly. Should the Association offer Sydney University a consultant; that the Association's credibility may be in the hands of the students if they are let down; the Association has a responsibility to respond to the students to investigate; that negotiations should begin with Professor Brennan and that the accreditation should be temporarily extended until PEAC could take up invitation from board of Studies to take part in the current course review. It was discussed that in the light of the information received, it would be very difficult to recommend to Federal Council that the course be accredited.

Michael Horsburgh stated that this raised issues for accreditation of all other schools.

Regardless of what originated PEAC's present interest in Sydney University, if Sydney University was subject to a greater degree of investigation in respect to its accreditation, then all the colleges accredited in the last round would make a big noise about this; directly rather than publicly - have something to say.

Margaret Lewis stated that PEAC was aware of additional information that cast doubts on previous assessment and put PEAC in a difficult position regarding the accreditation of other courses. Michael Horsburgh added that PEAC was running the risk of being involved in internal disputes.

John Tuchin said that in view of the formal approach made to the Association and the failure of Professor Brennan to answer PEAC's correspondence, it was necessary to get together to get him to answer. PEAC members needed a formal response from the school. Michael Horsburgh put the motion that

This Committee ask the convenor to pursue her initial correspondence with Professor Brennan to effect a meeting as soon as possible concerning the submission made by the Student Association of Sydney University to the last Federal Council Meeting.²⁴⁷

Michael Horsburgh abstained from voting on the motion and then said ²⁴⁸that he couldn't pretend at Sydney University that he was not part of PEAC. He needed instruction on what statement he could make with regard to the decisions of the Committee.

²⁴⁷NLA MS2602/50/6//Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/19 April 1977/4/7

Michael Horsburgh's role in the dispute and in the response from PEAC and the Association was unclear from the beginning and becomes increasingly complex. Up to this point he has authored Sydney University's document which he admits was inadequate; he appears from the minutes to be critical of the students; he made a statement (above) on the concerns other universities will have about the accreditation process which was echoed by Professor Brennan later (below) and; he has moved this motion for PEAC. He then advised the committee to ensure when they go to negotiate with Professor Brennan that it would be useful to 'send a man along'. As a result, David Neely was selected to accompany Margaret Lewis to the meeting with Professor Brennan.

Sydney University had set up an inquiry into the course due to the severity of the incidents including an alleged assault of a student by a member of the academic staff. Further, the Board of Studies²⁴⁹ in Social Work of the University of Sydney, responsible for the award of the degree of Bachelor of Social Studies, appointed a Committee to review the structure and objectives of the degree. Mr. Kenneth W Knight, Registrar of Sydney University wrote to Margaret Lewis on 20 April 1977 seeking frank informative advice on the course.

The Meeting with Professor Brennan

On 9 May, 1977, David Neely and Margaret Lewis reported to PEAC on their meeting with Professor Brennan. At the meeting with the Professor was Michael Horsburgh in his capacity as a member of the academic staff at Sydney University.²⁵⁰ David Neely began by giving the background as a resolution of Federal Council about accreditation of the Sydney University Course and referred to the document the Students Association presented to that meeting.

Tom Brennan did not have a copy of the student's letter before hand but received one at the meeting. It was conjecture but he might not have agreed to the meeting if he had had that document.²⁵¹

Professor Brennan challenged the status of the students' submission to Federal Council regarding it as having no status. Given that PEAC had no concerns about Sydney University's

²⁴⁸NLA MS2602/50/6//Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/19 April 1977/8

²⁴⁹The Board of Studies membership was Professor T Brennan (Head of Department of Social Work), Convenor Professor PJY Beaumont (Head of Department of Psychiatry), Professor C Bridges-Webb (Head of Department of Community Medicine) and, Miss HM Bradbury (4th year candidate).

²⁵⁰As stated above Michael's role becomes complex and confusing.

²⁵¹David Neely NLA MS2602/50/6//Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/9 May 1977/8

submission on accreditation before the appearance of the students' document, Professor Brennan took the view, that other educational institutions ought to be subjected to the same scrutiny. He demanded this as a condition of giving further information to PEAC.

David Neely went on to report that Margaret Lewis, in a 'fairly open way, expressed fairly honestly, the background material and her feelings about it, in the hope of developing a climate of discussion about the issue.' He said that climate was never achieved.

it was understandable as to why the school would approach the question from a fairly legalistic point of view and would be careful and not commit themselves to recognising in that sense. A fairly difficult situation is now faced by PEAC as to what it is going to do.²⁵²

Yvonne Geikie commented that the document constituted a submission from an accredited body - the Students' Association - to the AASW. 'It did not have to have status in his eyes'. Margaret Lewis responded that Professor Brennan was 'doing exactly this and refusing to comment on it.' She said that PEAC was aware some details in the student's document were erroneous and proposed to identify them but focus on areas of continuing concern. 'As soon as she said 'the concerns in that document', he rejected it.'

Yvonne Geikie re-joined stating it was entirely proper to make no comment on a document with no status. 'But (their emphasis) he was approached by a professional association on a professional basis.' This, she said, 'is the point of confusion.'

One of the technical problems was that there was no opportunity for students to contribute to the Sydney University written submission on accreditation. In accreditation there was no student voice until and unless, an on-campus assessment was done. Students would not usually have known the process of accreditation.

Margaret Lewis said that it was not until the student document challenged the accreditation recommendation that she was aware there was inadequate information to counter the student's claims. Elspeth Browne commented 'that it was understandable then why Tom Brennan said in effect, O.K., what about your other assessments, are the others as sparse?'

²⁵²NLA MS2602/50/6//Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/9 May 1977/8

Michael Horsburgh then proposed the following motion:

That PEAC recommend to Federal Council:

1. unconditional accreditation of Sydney University Course;
2. that discussion continue with the University of Sydney as appropriate;
3. that PEAC formulates and presents to Federal Council a policy for dealing with unsolicited comments concerning courses subject to accreditation;
4. that PEAC formulates and presents to Federal Council a policy concerning the role of third parties in original or subsequent accreditation proceedings.

In speaking for this motion, Michael Horsburgh stated the students' submission had its origin 'in the interests of the people making comments, not in the interests of the process of accreditation.'²⁵³ This comment of Michael Horsburgh's places people who critique the course as having interests outside that of accreditation. Since they are slowing down or attempting to halt the process, they must therefore be against the process. This does not necessarily follow.²⁵⁴ This construction of 'if they don't let something sub-standard through then they are wanting to destroy everything' is a strategy used in this case to protect one interest and undermine the review process. Earlier we saw an example of the AASW deliberately slowing down the development of the social work course at Newcastle to enable adequate planning and consultation to occur. In that case the AASW did not see itself as being against the development of a course. This construction by Michael Horsburgh could be seen as an attempt to manipulate. One needs to ask, 'what benefit would the students gain by having the course at Sydney University lose its accreditation?'

Unsolicited Documents, Case Law And Inadmissibility

Michael Horsburgh questioned the status of the students' unsolicited document and said that the Federal Council had made a wrong decision. He wanted a decision made about testimonials and one made about to whose testimonial the AASW should pay attention. Elspeth Browne asked 'why what the students had been saying in their submission should not be regarded; she had not yet heard a reason that satisfied her as to why it was inadmissible evidence.' Elspeth Browne's question was not answered. It continued to be unanswered.

²⁵³NLA MS2602/50/6//Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/9 May 1977/10

²⁵⁴Those who critique may want to ensure the process is valuable not just a rubber-stamp, not something that anyone can slide through with sub-standard performance. In fact it shows that the people involved in using the AASW Federal Council mechanism and trying to delay the accreditation value the Association, its powers, the process of accreditation and want it to be able to do what its sets out to do.

David Neely thought there was a need to decide what issues the profession discusses with students and he would keep an 'open mind' about unsolicited documents. He also challenged the proposition that the student body constituted a 'third party' saying that they were a fairly integral part of the school.²⁵⁵

Pam Roberts asked about on-campus reviews and whether the students would be included. Margaret Lewis stated that, although it is not policy, 'case law' has it that every on-campus review included students together with a whole range of staff members. She cited SAIT and TASCAE where three social work academics and one social work practitioner conducted the review and students were interviewed.

Yvonne Geikie said that the situation here was not as it could or should be. 'PEAC asked school for information, they supplied it. PEAC accepted it without criticism or comment. PEAC did not have a leg to stand on so far as the propriety of introducing a new, unprovided for element in the accreditation process.'

The most that could be said was that the Federal Council decision at that time constituted policy; if this could be said, PEAC could go ahead. The only avenue to get anywhere is to consider the situation with Sydney University; if PEAC goes on antagonising Tom Brennan any further, it will get nowhere. If the proposed motions are passed and PEAC acknowledged that Brennan was right in saying PEAC accepted his information, in the situation in order to continue leaving the door open for further discussions is what was indicated. The best thing to do, thought Yvonne, was to say yes. Yes, yes, PEAC would give him accreditation. She agreed to the first motion and thought the others followed from this.

Michael Horsburgh added²⁵⁶ that the research process (re accreditation) was a two-part process between the Association and administration of the school. They [the students] were a separately organized group and they sought to have a view and he thought the introduction of this point showed the weakness of existing policies. Michael Horsburgh's expressed view at this point was a reflection of common views held at the time. There was, in 1977, no general awareness or agreement that students need to be included in the administrative process of the school as integral members of the school. It showed the weakness of existing policies and administration processes not only at Sydney University. It is more difficult from the vantage-point of 1999, to understand why Michael Horsburgh was permitted to be an active participant in these PEAC meetings during debates on Sydney University. The question of interest and possible conflict of interest arises.

²⁵⁵NLA MS2602/50/6//Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/9 May 1977/16

²⁵⁶NLA MS2602/50/6//Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/9 May 1977/17

Margaret Lewis, who was chairing the meeting, did not enter the debate although she alluded to concerns she had. She stated that she would not vote unless a casting vote was required. She reminded PEAC that its job was to advise Federal Council whether the Sydney University course met AASW criteria at the time. Part 1 of the motion was carried with one abstention. Parts 2-4 were carried unanimously.

Discussion moved to the way in which these motions would be presented at Federal Council. One member of PEAC suggested that all the documents related to the decision should be available for view and the potential harm for Sydney University of this display could not be overlooked. It was decided that the motions would be verbally supported and documents made available.²⁵⁷ The verbal report was to provide a brief summary of the actions that occurred between the two Federal Council meetings. As the convenor of PEAC and therefore the presenter of this pre-amble to Council, Margaret Lewis asked for direction saying, 'had she joined the discussion she would have put a different viewpoint in terms of social responsibility issues which would have led her to voting against the first issue. She was not at all sure of her putting that opinion when it was not part of the discussion at Federal Council.' She asked PEAC whether she had a right to disclose her personal opinion? Elspeth Browne said that was why she abstained and asked could a minority report be sent.

The following exchange then occurred in relation to the student's report to Federal Council:

Elspeth: Why not a minority report? Raised the question why was the evidence inadmissible but was unable to pursue this.'

Michael Horsburgh: Reiterated - 'Not admissible because it has no status'

Margaret Lewis: Thought Elspeth's point was valid because it was accepted by Federal Council as evidence at that point of time.²⁵⁸

A decision was made that a formal majority report and either a formal or informal minority report would be sent to Federal Council with the motions.

The formal meeting procedures used in PEAC and the inability for the person in the chair to step out of it and join in the debate, led to this outcome of conflicting reports being sent to Federal Council. The members of PEAC did not suspend standing orders to allow a full and frank

²⁵⁷This is very different to the protection of information about a school that surrounded the SAIT accreditation problems. Legal advice was not sought on this occasion.

²⁵⁸NLA MS2602/50/6//Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/9 May 1977/11

discussion. Standard procedure was adhered to, even though one person in the discussion could have been seen to be actively representing the University's interests and not that of the staff, the students or the broader community.

Federal Council Puts Conditions on Sydney University

On the 14 June, 1977, Margaret Lewis presented the report to Federal Council and read the minority report. Federal Council ultimately resolved to accredit the Sydney University course with conditions. It was stated that the evidence of concern about staffing was sufficient for them to build in conditions to the accreditation. Federal Council also decided to establish a Task Force that would review all the documentation on the course and complete an on-campus review.

The PEAC meeting on 8 August, 1977, was primarily taken up with debate surrounding Sydney University. Two academic members, a researcher and four practitioners attended it. The committee received the report from the Sydney University Vice-Chancellor with the results of the inquiry into the course. Prior to the meeting, Professor Bridges-Webb (of Sydney University) spoke with David Neely and told him that Professor Gunn had been appointed as temporary Head of Department. Professor Bridges-Webb was reported to be hopeful that the Vice-Chancellor's concurrence with the report would result in there being no further problems with accreditation. He is also said to have said that he looked forward to the Association's contribution to the review of the whole social work course and asked what would PEAC like to see in an ideal social work course?

David Neely's view as an outcome of the report and this contact, was that the course ought to be re-accredited and that the Minimum Educational Requirements needed revision. He said that the Vice-Chancellor expects the students to complete the course and stated, 'the situation, fortunately for the Association, lets us off the hook; and the hook we were on should not be underestimated. The way was now clear for the students to go back [the students has gone on strike] and a positive focus could be put on the future; it was imperative that the Association respond to the broadening of the arrangement.' David Neely was asked to define what he meant by 'the hook'. His minuted reply was,

...in summary , he would say there was a situation where PEAC was unable to resolve itself this question of Sydney University; having been unable to do that, Federal Council received conflicting advice and chose at the time - he was not present at the discussion - to take a course which raised serious problems. Federal Council removed responsibility from PEAC and appointed an enquiry committee and also specified an on-campus review as part of the process, thus changing the whole of the accreditation process used to date. David was not clear as to what the ramifications were. ²⁵⁹

There was discussion about the credibility of PEAC. The establishment of another group to review the Sydney University course was seen by some as a vote of no confidence in PEAC. Elspeth Browne contributed that PEAC is advisory only and the advice Federal Council got was conflicting. She went on to say,

PEAC was not able to present itself as a united front on this issue; therefore it was, in her opinion, appropriate - with respect to this issue at any rate, not to mention all the other problems of accreditation - that all the matter be place in the hands of an expert committee. She did not see this as being 'on the hook' but rather the process of committees.

David Neely's view was that PEAC already was the expert committee and when PEAC 'couldn't resolve - appoint another and cross-fingers.'²⁶⁰ Doubts were expressed that people would be willing to go on this new committee or that the Head of School would accept their recommendations.

Pam [Roberts] added that there was no guarantee that the Head of School would take that input from an outside committee and there would have been difficulty getting people to go on such a committee.

Yvonne said Grace Vaughan (current President) had called her and told her the gist of the report and following PEAC tonight she would call FEC and put a resolution that the Association did not go ahead with the review committee and that Sydney University be accredited.

She went on to say that Professor Bridges-Webb wanted to set up a good school of social work and wanted the Association to be part of that and Grace Vaughan (Federal President) had replied that the Association would help in any way possible.²⁶¹

John Tuchin argued that if PEAC were to resolve its doubts about Sydney University the new committee would not be needed.

²⁵⁹NLA MS2602/50/1/Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/8 August 1977/1

²⁶⁰NLA MS2602/50/1/Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/8 August 1977/2

²⁶¹The statement raises the issue as a researcher of the value or lack of value of historical records. Compare what Ms Yvonne Geikie says about her exchange with Grace Vaughan here and what she reports later at October Meeting; or is it the problem with verbal accounts and how quickly they can change?

Margaret Lewis reported on separate conversations with Grace Vaughan saying she did not get the impression from Grace that she wanted Sydney University accredited but rather that she wanted the whole issue to go back to PEAC tonight and would take PEAC's recommendation to Federal Executive Committee (FEC). Margaret Lewis outlined that the previous accreditation could be extended till middle of end of next year. This avoided accrediting a course that PEAC was currently uncertain about.

Margaret Lewis then stated

There were comments made about the fact that Prof Brennan's reaction to further contact from AASW was that maybe he would not accept any further investigation; but, in fact, in the light of the events of the last few months it was obvious to a whole range of people outside Sydney University that he was accountable to the Sydney University hierarchy and the Board of Studies and that the autonomy he may have had was unlikely to have proceeded. The current report rules out that possibility; it does not seem to her to say distinctly that Professor Brennan would not accept an on-campus assessment and achieve such a rejection; other aspects within the University would come into play and influence what happened. As Margaret saw it, PEAC and the Association had never been on the hook. The accrediting authority advises FC or FEC re accreditation and all other schools up to this point in Australian history have accepted this. PEAC had always resolved the situation up to this point. There was clear evidence that Prof Bridges-Webb was seeing the Association's role in accreditation as being active and legitimate one, (sic) not as something to be rejected by him or taken less than seriously. Just as Margaret was concerned previously re the role of PEAC as the standard-setting committee, she was still concerned that members were clear about that aspect of their role and leave small 'p' politics to some other arena.²⁶²

By small 'p' Margaret Lewis meant whether Sydney University would or would not accept the AASW role of coming in as the accrediting body with an on-campus assessment.

While the Report under discussion today addresses itself to great improvement in the staffing situation, it is potential not actual; and to accredit the course the Association has to see that staff are actually in a position to staff the course components rather than that these are about to be created.

The motion was put that, the existing accreditation of the Social Work Course at the University of Sydney be extended until the end of 1978 by which time the full review of the accreditation of the course should be completed, thus allowing time for consolidation after the present unrest and allowing time for the appointment of suitable staff at all levels.

David Neely spoke against the motion stating that Professors Bridges-Webb and Gunn had done a 'remarkable job' in a difficult situation. He wanted to reaccredit. He stated that accreditation was important but that the AASW was measuring Sydney University against a document (the MER) which was itself undergoing change. He then said that whatever PEAC decides tonight let

²⁶²NLA MS2602/50/1/Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/2 August 1977/3

it be from PEAC and 'not followed by a barrage of letters and phone calls from people who were not here and feel differently.'²⁶³

The discussion moved on to identify the things that had changed within Sydney University. Although PEAC had strong, positive statements from the University, PEAC did have the responsibility to see that these were implemented. The minutes state that PEAC and the AASW should always take a strong stand - even when under threat from universities and staff members, real or implied.

the Association should stand its ground with Sydney University and accredit the course as members see it, not on promises to alter the course

Margaret Lewis stated that she considered that the Association would be the laughing stock of the University, the profession and the country if it gave blanket accreditation at this time, given the history of its involvement.

David Neely said he would put in a minority report to Federal Council and Margaret Lewis said that, while she had anything to do with PEAC, anyone had a right to submit a minority report; they would not be gagged. There followed a debate about offering Sydney University a consultant (Federal) as they do with new courses. The motion was narrowly won.

At the meeting of PEAC on 12 October, 1977, all this was overturned in the most heated way, resulting from Sydney University's inability to resolve the conflict and address the issues which put their ability to provide suitable education for social workers at risk.

Conflicting Interests

The meeting started with a dispute. Robert (Bob) Doyle, who was a staff member at UNSW and who partially taught at Sydney University, had spoken directly to the media about the situation at Sydney University. Although he was not a member of the AASW, he had been a member of PEAC and assisted in the assessment of overseas applicants, particularly from Canada and the United States. Bob Doyle had attended the meeting when Eva Learner gave her presentation. Bob Doyle wished to attend the 12 October meeting. Yvonne Geikie remarked that she had asked about Bob Doyle's membership 5-6 meeting ago and Margaret Lewis had stated that

²⁶³ibid.

PEAC would have to consider Bob Doyle as no longer a member of PEAC. Margaret Lewis agreed that, pragmatically that was so; and that as he was on the brink of returning to Canada there seemed to be no point in pursuing the matter further. Margaret Lewis reminded the committee that at Federal Council it was resolved that PEAC meetings were open and student members and others had the right to attend 'when there were issues of relevance to them and the PEAC convenor was asked to note that point.' This was the first time it had come up since then, so PEAC had a right to admit others to the meeting.

Michael Horsburgh asked 'Is Bob a member or not?' (Emphasis in original). 'No' Elspeth Browne said 'PEAC had people who were not members of the Association and never seen fit to close meetings to Association members.' Elspeth Browne moved the motion that Bob Doyle be admitted as a participant observer. The motion was lost with no count recorded. Bob Doyle, therefore, was the only other academic who knew the situation of Sydney University from the inside and who held an opposing view to Michael Horsburgh. Bob Doyle was unable to attend the meeting, hear the deliberations or provide alternate evidence. It was an inauspicious start to a turbulent meeting.

Margaret Lewis as convenor notified that she would apply formal meeting procedure for 'efficiency and effectiveness'. Beth Ward took the chair so that Margaret Lewis could actively participate in the meeting. Michael Horsburgh withdrew from voting and the Chair then had a casting vote. Michael Horsburgh took the view that if there was a tied vote the status quo prevailed. Margaret Lewis countered, saying if there was no result the matter should be left on the table. The motion was put and it was agreed that a tied vote would be resolved in the negative.

Elspeth Browne then moved Motion 4:

(a) On the basis of further information about the unsatisfactory educational conditions for students currently enrolled in the course leading to the Bachelor Degree in Social Studies at the University of Sydney and the apparent non-implementation of the recommendations and spirit of the report of the Committee of Enquiry into the course in that Department, we recommend withdrawal of the course accreditation effective from 1st January, 1978.

(b) We recommend that the A.A.S.W. approach the Australian Universities Commission to request the allocation of funds to another tertiary institution offering an accredited course in order to provide satisfactory arrangements for the students currently enrolled to equip them to be competent social work practitioners.

Seconded by Carol Pedersen²⁶⁴

²⁶⁴NLA MS2602/50/1/Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/12 October 1977/3

Elsbeth Browne addressed the meeting. She covered the Association's responsibility in course accreditation. She related this to the report of the Vice Chancellor from the Committee of Enquiry - termed 'the report'. She identified the extent to which the course fulfilled the MER. This was 'the only way PEAC can look at the course that is, in terms of the policy PEAC administered.'

Elsbeth Browne chronicled the events from 2nd August when PEAC was impressed with the Committee of Enquiry Report. The report made PEAC feel that resolution was possible. She then went through the report noting the recommendations that had not been implemented (see Appendix 8). She ended her analysis by saying:

There were some ten identified areas specified in MER which were at present, not met or where there was considerable doubt about Sydney University fulfilling these. The Association ignores these at its peril of losing its credibility as a responsible and concerned organisation.

In speaking to the second part of the motion, Elspeth Browne wanted PEAC to uphold its obligations to students affected by this dispute who had entered a course they thought was accredited.

Elsbeth Browne's main concerns included that the administrator appointed to get things back in order in the Department ²⁶⁵was no longer there 'and the present situation is not in order'. She stated that workshops to improve communication at Sydney University, to the extent these were established, were not effective. Communications had deteriorated in the School²⁶⁶ and adequate staffing had not begun.

Since publication of the report 29 July there had been one ad in the local press, 8 October (SMH) concerning the Chair of Social Work; while at the other end of the matter were the staff resignations or some question with respect to termination of qualified staff²⁶⁷; despite the urgency of an appointment of a Chair concerned with the professional development of the school the matter was considered by Senate 1 August it was 10 weeks later 10 October, before the advertisement appeared. The closing date 15 November was five weeks later which Elspeth said gave little likelihood of interested people from overseas or even interstate the opportunity for application. In the interim she said, a person from within the school is filling the position in an acting capacity, who - it is believed - does not have the confidence of all staff, all students nor all field staff. 'Additionally, in the ad there is no statement of the

²⁶⁵Elsbeth Browne Recommendation 1 NLA MS2602/50/1/Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/12 October 1977/3

²⁶⁶Elsbeth Browne Recommendation 3 NLA MS2602/50/1/Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/12 October 1977/4

²⁶⁷Elsbeth Browne Recommendation 4 NLA MS2602/50/1/Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/12 October 1977/4

relationship between Chairs in Social Work Department. Which of the two is to assume responsibility for HOD?.

She further commented on the 'ongoing disturbance and polarisation within the Department which is certainly recognised nationally and to some extent overseas which makes the position far from attractive to a well-qualified person. The possibility of the position being filled from within the Department, in view of the present situation, may further a continuance of the ill will and unsatisfactory conditions prevailing.'

She continued on the Role of the Board of Studies saying it was one of the most significant parts of the structure of Sydney University.²⁶⁸ In view of its role, she asked to what extent are the Heads of School, staff and students who are all represented on this Board, held to account by the Board? To what extent are the behaviours of the Head of School, staff and/or students - behaviours that by all accounts were reprehensible - justified before the Board? To what extent was the Board really empowered to carry out its brief, responsibly and effectively? It would seem to her that if the situation, both past and present, has been permitted to continue, this question must be answered in the negative.

The persistence of ill-will, distrust, personal vilification, polarisation, staff resignations and/or terminations of contract and other behaviours, reduced the possibility of mounting an accreditable program in social work education in the foreseeable future.

The report was only implemented in small part. The general question she said, must be raised... as to the spirit and intention of this document, if short-term gains have not materialised and whether in the long term it can be implemented?²⁶⁹

Elsbeth Browne ended her statement by referring to MER 3.12 'For a course to be approved it must normally meet each of the requirements. A particular requirement may only be waived if it is demonstrated that there are sound educational reasons for its non-observance.' Clearly this was not the case for Sydney University.

Michael Horsburgh indicated that he wished to speak against the motion. Before he did, Margaret Lewis commented that she had correspondence from the community - unsolicited - which should be reported to the meeting.

²⁶⁸See ref 2.3 of the report re Board of Studies in Social Studies NLA MS2602/50/1/Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/12 October 1977/4

²⁶⁹NLA MS2602/50/1/Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/12 October 1977/4

Michael Horsburgh began by saying that his position on PEAC with respect to Sydney University was relatively difficult. He said that at no time did he seek to defend Sydney University or take advantage of PEAC Membership. His role on PEAC had been flung at him in confrontations at the University. He challenged Elspeth Browne's statement 'on the basis of further information' saying there was no evidence. He constructed the information as 'at best hearsay, at worst it contains lies and misrepresentations and innuendoes.' He said that

In exercising this function of accrediting schools this committee is operating in a quasi judicial fashion, making judgements which have an executive effect, notwithstanding they are recommendation to Federal Council.

Elspeth Browne notified a point of order saying she had evidence. Michael Horsburgh responded that he was not implying Elspeth Browne herself was knowingly presenting untruths to the committee; his notion was that opinions had been conveyed to her in a misrepresenting fashion. Elspeth Browne parried on a point of law; the first evidence she referred to was the report of the Committee of Enquiry to the Vice-Chancellor which everyone had seen. [original emphasis] If, she said, Michael Horsburgh wished to draw attention to things that were untrue he should specify them. The chair upheld this.

Elspeth stated that she would like it withdrawn that what she had stated was hearsay, therefore equivalent of lies. There was further argument - Michael withdrew his comment.

Michael stated that he wished to draw a distinction between the knowledge of this committee which the committee had obtained through its own actions and its communication with people who might provide it with information and the information which may be held by members of the committee, as individuals. They were all members of PEAC and each may know a large number of things. He suggested that what the members of this committee know or believe they know, is not the knowledge of the committee; and that so far as the committee was concerned the knowledge of members was hearsay until the committee, by its own motion and its own action, seeks to verify and investigate that information. Many of the things Elspeth had said could be subject to investigation by PEAC, he did not doubt that; but in so far as they were put forward as a basis for action on the assertion that the committee had this information, that technically was a matter of procedure that information was hearsay.²⁷⁰

Michael Horsburgh said he refused to speak on behalf of Sydney University or to give any information about Sydney University.

If this committee wanted to know anything about Sydney University it must communicate with the authorities at Sydney University.... From him the committee would get hearsay only and this was not the basis of the functioning of this committee, whether from him or from Elspeth.

²⁷⁰NLA MS2602/50/1/Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/12 October 1977/7

Michael itemised the information the committee had which was a formal chronology. He commented on the extraordinary length of time the process had taken and said that the Committee has made only one investigation of Sydney University and on the basis of that investigation recommended that the courses at SU be recredited. The second possible investigation was the meeting on 5 May and, for quite proper reasons, this Committee did not follow up the request to Prof Brennan to ask him any questions. If the committee passes this motion it must do so in the clear knowledge that it has made one investigation, one only, on which basis it was prepared to re-accredit.²⁷¹

There was discussion on what constituted legitimate knowledge, hearsay and the knowledge of the committee. Michael Horsburgh then said, ‘What if students from Sydney University sued for being “willfully deprived of the opportunity of employment?”’ The credibility of Sydney University, he argued, would be intact. The credibility of the AASW and actions of PEAC would be in question. Michael Horsburgh asked would members of this committee be prepared to defend their actions?²⁷²

Michael Horsburgh said that the Vice-Chancellor appointed the Committee of Enquiry. It was an internal investigation not a report to PEAC; it did not absolve PEAC from investigating. Federal Council, he said, did not make accreditation dependent on internal documents from Sydney University.

Michael Horsburgh then moved to question the wording of the motion, especially ‘apparent non-implementation’. This, he said, implied that evidence was not necessary and questioned ‘upon what basis is the spirit of the report, with its apparent non-implementation, a suitable case for action by this committee?’ The motion, he said, was a ‘denial of the fact that evidence is necessary before action is taken.’

Michael Horsburgh’s only comment about the second part of the motion was that it was ridiculous. The Australian Universities Commission no longer existed and if the Committee passed this, it would make a fool of itself. Michael Horsburgh’s final statement and the manner, in which the information was conveyed indicates the heat in the meeting.

Michael Horsburgh continued, saying that Sydney University had been subjected to a virulent political campaign. There had been unsigned statements circulated. The activities of PEAC had

²⁷¹NLA MS2602/50/1/Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/12 October 1977/8

²⁷² This is an example of *trope*. The students would not sue the Association but the University. Michael has constructed this erroneously and is banking on the lack of knowledge of the members of PEAC about an earlier strike at Melbourne University where the university was advised by legal counsel that students who had gone on strike over inadequacies in the course would win a case against the university on the basis of fraud for the false and misleading advertising of the course.

been communicated to students and used as part of their political campaign. The notice of motion got to students before [original emphasis] PEAC members. There are many in the campaign, including the ASWU, who don't hold to the objectives and goals of the AASW and are not in agreement with the functions and responsibilities of this committee, he said. This committee is being used by people involved both in the Sydney University internal political campaign and the external political campaign on issues of professionalization. Finally, he said, this motion had in it the capacity to destroy the AASW.

He said that if this motion was passed, the AASW would be in direct conflict with one of the oldest and most substantial universities in Australia. He then enlarged the field by saying that, due to the manner in which the AASW had dealt with this issue, the AASW was in conflict with all schools of social work. 'They will have no confidence that procedures adopted with respect to them will be better than those adopted with Sydney University.' He then said that if people in the campaign succeed in destroying the AASW and the Sydney University course, they would be very happy and thankful to members of this committee who assisted them in their objectives.

He finally stated that the motion was opportunistic and gave no credit to the mover or seconder. For a member of PEAC who was *not* in the role of defending Sydney University, he had joined the thrust and parry with all his strength.

Margaret Lewis informed the committee that, following the first Federal Council decision to set up an investigating committee or assessment committee, the Federal President (Grace Vaughan) consulted with Professor Bruce Williams, the Vice-Chancellor. He made her aware of the Committee of Enquiry. Subsequently, she became aware of evidence of the enquiry and asked PEAC to reconsider the recommendation on setting up an on-campus assessment.²⁷³ PEAC reconsidered and recommended to Federal Executive that the existing accreditation be extended till the end of 1978 by which time the Department of Social Work would have had time to implement the recommendations of the report. This included the arrival of new staff (particularly the 2nd chair - but not exclusively) and the resolution of headship.²⁷⁴ Between that time and ratification, PEAC had been asked to do nothing further. Therefore, PEAC had no investigation role and could not approach Sydney University but it did have an advisory role to Federal Executive Council.

²⁷³NLA MS2602/50/1/Report of PEAC Convenor to Federal Executive Committee/29-30 October 1977/1

²⁷⁴NLA MS2602/50/1/Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/12 October 1977/1

The motion presented by Elspeth Browne was amended at this point so that after, 'course in that Department', PEAC recommends the suspension of the course accreditation effective from 1st January 1978 and further, that an expert assessment panel be set up under the auspices of FEC to undertake a full on-campus assessment of the course pending further consideration of the accreditation of the course.²⁷⁵

Part b of the motion was amended to Australian Universities Council and the amendment was carried.

Margaret Lewis stated that suspension of accreditation rather than withdrawal was appropriate in these circumstances. The students in the system need to be clear about their status; it would be improper for students to be denied access to employment before the assessment was complete and a decision made on the accreditation of the course. Margaret Lewis believed that setting up an assessment panel, with the course accreditation being suspended, was the only likely way of the Head of School co-operating in the provision of the information required for an adequate assessment. She stated that PEAC members had a social obligation to act on the evidence they had before them and would be socially irresponsible if they failed to do so.²⁷⁶

The AASW is the only accrediting authority in social work courses in Australia therefore, the entire Australian community was at their mercy on this issue; therefore the Association also has a role in terms of social responsibility.

Margaret Lewis invoked people's fears of the whole matter becoming political by saying that 'the problems with Sydney University are now big P political!' She went on to state that Michael Horsburgh's arguments were extreme and absurd. PEAC had no evidence coming from the Head of School himself, provided directly by him and, because they had solicited no evidence and had no status for soliciting evidence, they had no right to present that evidence to FEC and Federal Council. Professor Brennan could be expected, in the light of history, not to co-operate. Margaret Lewis said that the proper arena for collection of evidence was a specialist advisory panel.²⁷⁷

²⁷⁵NLA MS2602/50/1/Report of PEAC Convenor to Federal Executive Committee/ 29-30 October 1977/1

²⁷⁶NLA MS2602/50/1/Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/12 October 1977/11

²⁷⁷ibid

Margaret Lewis then asked (but acknowledged that Michael Horsburgh may not wish to answer) 'Is Sydney University providing an appropriate educational claim and educational resources for the education of competent professional social workers?' She added, 'there are serious accusations suggesting 'No'. Some field teachers expressed concern about the course offered'. Michael Horsburgh declined to answer.

Yvonne Geikie (National Vice-President) spoke against the motions saying that the internal problems of Sydney University were not the business of PEAC. She then said that at the August meeting the Federal President told Yvonne Geikie that she had been in touch with Professors Bridges-Webb and Brennan and had promised them the full cooperation and help of the Association. (Margaret Lewis noted that Professor Brennan was out of the country when the President talked with Bridges-Webb.) Yvonne Geikie said that Sydney University had no further contact from the AASW and did not even have a MER where their inadequacies were ticked and called the earlier motion 'infamous'. She ended saying that

Whatever individuals in the school have/have not done (no love lost for some) she respected the institution and its contribution to the profession. She respected its good intentions and felt PEAC had no grounds in evidence. PEAC not being objective or professional nor would they be if they passed this motion. [original emphasis]

Lindsay Napier spoke against the motion because, as far as she was concerned, the new committee would be assessing what PEAC just has. Michael Horsburgh then stated that the duty to offer advice was not an invitation to say whatever you think. The advice as well as the decision was subject to evidence.

The correspondence was presented at this stage and Michael Horsburgh objected to it being read on the basis of his previous objection to paying attention to unsolicited testimonials. The correspondence included²⁷⁸ letters from practitioners, letters from staff about why they were resigning from Sydney University. At this point the following was recorded:

²⁷⁸ a. Letter from David Neely - concern re the motions b. Copy of letter to Sydney University Board of Studies with 17 signatures from social workers in Inner City and West Suburbs expressing concerns at situation at Sydney University. c.2 letters of resignation from field work staff who made letters available to Margaret., d.3 page Report from Bob Doyle documenting support for the motion and notes items of student and staff dissatisfaction. e. List of incidents since Prof Brennan had returned to the Department which had contributed to the deterioration of relations within the Department - unsigned f. Telegrams and notices of letters held up in the mail from professional social workers and local government community workers association - expressing concerns re Sydney University and support for the motion.

Michael bangs table - objected to the reading of this material - overruled²⁷⁹

The correspondence continued with a three page report from Bob Doyle documenting support for the motion, noting items of student and staff dissatisfaction and a list of incidents since Professor Brennan had returned to the Department which had contributed to the deterioration of relations within the department. The last document was unsigned.

Telegrams and notices of letters held up in the mail from professional social workers and Local Government Community Workers Association - expressing concerns re Sydney University and support for the motion.

The Part a of the motion, as amended, was passed, that is,

On the basis of further information about the unsatisfactory educational conditions for students currently enrolled in the course leading to the Bachelor Degree in Social Studies at the University of Sydney and the apparent non-implementation of the recommendations and spirit of the report of the Committee of Enquiry into the course in that Department, PEAC recommends the suspension of the course accreditation effective from 1st January 1978 and further, that an expert assessment panel be set up under the auspices of FEC to undertake a full on-campus assessment of the course pending further consideration of the accreditation of the course.

Part b, on the requesting an allocation of funds from the Australian Universities Council to another tertiary institution offering an accredited course in order to provide satisfactory arrangements for the students currently enrolled to equip them to be competent social work practitioners, failed.

Michael Horsburgh stated that

the passing of that motion was the most scurrilous piece of action he had ever witnessed and it bears no credit to this committee and would destroy the Association. He would have to consider his position with respect to membership of the committee and would remove himself from the meeting for the rest of the time.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁹NLA MS2602/50/1/Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/12 October 1977/12

²⁸⁰NLA MS2602/50/1/Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/12 October 1977/13

PEAC Dissolves

The next motion was to recommend that PEAC be dissolved, effective at 30 November, 1977 and that the executive function of the Committee would be continued by Elspeth Browne who would be retained as a paid consultant and report to Federal Executive Committee. This was especially relevant because the Council on Overseas Professional Qualifications (now called NOOSR National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition) was located in Canberra, the new location of Federal Office. Accreditation henceforth, would be carried out by *ad hoc* specialist panels reporting to FEC. The continued development of policy regarding professional accreditation would be the responsibility of a standing committee accountable to Federal Executive Council.

In the discussion, it was asserted that PEAC did most of the job of AASW except the journal, that it had an important advisory function to Federal Council, i.e. accreditation and this has been overwhelming. Eligibility for membership was managed outside and only brought to the committee if there was a matter of policy involved. Accreditation was the equivalent of the Minimum Educational Requirements interpreted for 13 schools. The executive function of accrediting the schools could be handled like eligibility and this made FEC responsible for accreditation. Peter Einspinner stated that the standing committee should be a representative body with a student member.

Yvonne stated that ever since she had been to Federal Council with Margaret the agenda did not get as far as the PEAC business because the Association thought that, despite difficulties, PEAC would carry on. On one occasion when Margaret was allowed to speak they were all exhausted and said, 'We had no idea you had done so much!' If we are having a total re-look, PEAC is the Association and FEC should know the full range of activities, duties and responsibilities involved and the time given to these.²⁸¹

The motion to dissolve PEAC was therefore, not a vote of no confidence. At 10.30 pm the meeting on Sydney University was over and so was PEAC.

²⁸¹NLA MS2602/50/1/Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee/12 October 1977/17

Margaret Lewis's report as Convenor to the Federal Executive Committee meeting in Canberra on 29-30 October, 1997, outlined the justification for PEAC's changed recommendation on course accreditation.²⁸² Included were statements questioning the power the Board of Studies in Social Work at Sydney University had over what was happening in the Department and questioning its role as an academic standard-setting body. Where previously the University was trusted to be self-correcting and committed to high academic and professional standards, the events at Sydney University now brought this into doubt.

The report from PEAC dovetailed with Federal Council Procedures for Finalising Assessment of Courses. The new document outlined a capacity the schools had to request an on-campus assessment if they fail the accreditation process. It became Federal Council's responsibility to determine whether a course passed or failed accreditation and offer a consultant or reject the course outright. If a course needed to have an on campus assessment, a panel of assessors was appointed but the institution could object to individuals and make other nominations. The institution had to bear the costs involved in this on-campus assessment. *The onus of proof was now on the school.* The panel of assessors makes a report and Federal Council's decision is confidential and final.

²⁸²She stated that since the university's report and PEAC's recommendation to extend accreditation to the end of 1978 the conditions in the Department of Social Work University of Sydney had deteriorated visibly. Students were experiencing alienation precipitated she said by sudden changes in student assessment which they felt were vindictive. She related that personal threats had been issued to some staff and students regarding their role in the previous strike and that students had subsequently gone on strike again. Communication of a constructive kind seemed to her to be non-existent in the Department. Many students were reported to be seeking transfer to other educational institutions to complete social work qualifications. Professor Brennan, on return from overseas, was almost immediately reinstated as Head of Department.

'He is reported to have acted in such a ways as to widen and deepen the chasm already existing. In addition he is reported to hold the view that the Board of Studies in Social Work has no control over what happens in his department (sic) and thus the role and power of the Board of Studies as an academic standard-setting body must be questioned. (p2)

Local social workers expressed concern to PEAC about their relationship with the Department of Social Work at University of Sydney with regard to field education instruction and the unsatisfactory conditions under which the students were undertaking their current educational program. Some staff of the Social Work Department previously involved in the strike were informed by Prof Brennan that their services were to be terminated, although this was subsequently reversed by intervention by the Staff Association. The person centrally responsible for field education coordination and the lecturer in community work practice have already resigned. (p2)

In this way the Association executive moved away from dealing with senior academics, Boards of Studies and vice-chancellors and instead decided to make their assessments independently of the internal university machinery and relationships. Professor Brennan had, in a sense, won. He maintained his autonomy and did not have to answer to the AASW. His course would henceforth be treated the same as every other course in Australia. Professor Brennan actively ensured the sovereignty of the academic in matters of the educational experience of those studying in university, even when undertaking a professional degree. Professor Brennan and Sydney University were effective in reducing the expansion of the role and powers of the AASW.

Sydney University continued to operate a course that allowed its graduates to be eligible for membership of the AASW. Some graduates decided an additional Honours year would cement their claim on employment. Some changed universities. The University was able to continue to provide a course in conditions that were not conducive to enabling a professional education to the level preferred by the AASW. There was posturing, pressure and influence; in the end the University succeeded in maintaining autonomy and accreditation.

One of the things not included in the minutes was the knowledge that Professor R.J. Lawrence had opened his classes at UNSW to any Sydney University students who wished to attend so that they would suffer no penalty as individuals with respect to their eligibility for membership.²⁸³ Because the AASW also accredited individuals (throughout the overseas program) any graduate from Sydney University could apply as an individual to the AASW even if the course lost accreditation. Lawrence's action enabled Sydney University graduates to have access to this way out if necessary.

All future courses were allocated a consultant, directly answerable to Federal Executive. The consultant was in place to assist the educational institution in the course development and meeting the AASW's Minimum Educational Requirements and to allow innovation in teaching practice (problem-based learning and distance education). The AASW too would grow away from 'the sad words'²⁸⁴ in accreditation *until* the next major changes in the tertiary education system: amalgamations of universities and colleges, the competency debate, recognition of prior learning and special entry students.

²⁸³Personal communication with Professor Robert Doyle 1998.

²⁸⁴See Nyquist Appendix 5

CHAPTER NINE

ANALYSIS

The Central Question

It seemed to me that the documents I was reading from within the Association reflected the late 19th Century and early 20th Century concepts of profession. I could not help wondering why, given the more critical analysis that was available in the 1940s to 1970s, these concepts kept recurring as if they were immutable truths. It was precisely these concepts that were used in discussions preceding decisions about the position of people who did not meet the Association's eligibility criteria, the quality and standards of tertiary courses, the status of non-university institutions of tertiary and higher education. It was easy enough to identify when these concepts were used and to see the outcome of their use in the cementing of the Association's position vis-à-vis government, tertiary institutions and personnel deemed to be sub-professional. The two big questions were, then, why and how? Why would a profession like this continue to do this and how, in the face of sociological and political analysis and in the face of major restructuring of tertiary education in Australia, were they able to sustain these worn-out arguments and their position?

(Chapter 2)

The Socio-Historical Context

The five preceding chapters have taken us on a journey through the beginnings of social work education in Australia to the mid-1970s. The external influences, internal debates and social interaction during times of decision-making within the AASW have been outlined. It constitutes the socio-historical narrative based on the four key events: establishment of the AASW; accreditation and the binary system; the split in the AASW and the problem in Sydney. The intention of this chapter is to uncover the meanings that actions and events had for those involved at the time and to identify the processes and mechanisms used by the AASW to achieve the position they held by 1975.

The first step in this analysis is the use of Thompson's framework of Depth Hermeneutics. His first stage is to describe the spatio-temporal setting; to describe the fields of interaction; to identify the social institutions involved; to examine the social structure and, to analyze the technical media of transmission of symbolic forms. The description of the spatio-temporal setting has been completed within the preceding chapters. The analysis of the fields of interaction has not. Its full analysis requires some other steps to be completed first.

The second step for this study must be the identification of the relevant sections of the social structure, the symbolic forms that emanate from them and their choice of media transmission. The response to these symbolic forms from the other elements of the social structure indicates not only the relative valorization applied to the symbolic forms by the other members of the social structure but also enables an identification and structural and conceptual analysis of the social institutions. Hence, the formal discursive analysis of symbolic forms is an essential precursor to the identification of the social institutions.

Formal and discursive analysis is concerned with analyzing what was said and written at the time. There are several different types of analysis which can be used: *semiotic*, *conversation*, *syntactic*, *narrative*²⁸⁵ and *argumentative*. Argumentative analysis is where the analyst breaks up the discursive corpus into sets of claims and assertions organized around certain topics or themes and then maps out the relations between these claims in terms of certain logical or quasi-logical operators (implication, contradiction, presupposition, exclusion etc.). Thompson states that argumentative analysis is particularly useful for the study of overtly political discourse - speeches of those who exercise power. Such discourse is often presented in the form of an argument: 'a series of claims or assertions, topics or themes, strung together in a more or less coherent way and seeking, often with the aid of rhetorical flourishes, to persuade an audience' (1996:289).

For the purposes of this study, the most useful type of discursive analysis is argumentative. The minutes of the meetings and newsletters are full of reports and position statements, there are plenty of debates and discussions in which competing arguments are put for the purpose of influencing others to support or oppose a particular view or decision. There are some conversations but most of the documentation is argument or statement. There is often no dialogue and certainly none in the documentation from social welfare. I am not equipped to complete a semiotic analysis and this would I predict reflect the symbolic forms used by professional associations and universities. Syntactic analysis will not advance the purpose of the paper because the syntax used by most of the people in the field of interaction is similar. The

²⁸⁵*Semiotic analysis* is the study of the relations between the elements which compose the symbolic form or sign and the relation between these elements and those of a broader system of which this symbolic form or sign may be a part. *Conversation analysis* is the study of the systematic properties of various forms of linguistic interaction. *Syntactic analysis* is the study of the grammar or syntax operative in every day discourse. *Narrative analysis* is the study of the devices which operate within a particular narrative and an elucidation of their role in the telling of the story including the patterns, characters and roles which are common to a set of narratives constituting a common underlying structure.

narrative analysis could be helpful if there was a wealth of writing on social work and social welfare in Australia during this period. There is insufficient material to establish any common structure. Hence argumentative analysis is the most applicable for this study.

Discursive and Argumentative Analysis: Establishment to 1965

In the section on argumentative analysis, Thompson's concepts outlined in Chapter 4 are systematically applied to each of the key points in the historical record. In this immediate section the analysis is applied to Chapter 5 from the establishment of the AASW to 1965.

Throughout the period of establishment of the AASW, the main concepts invoked were related to the characteristics of traditional professions. These included: prolonged training organization, formal 'higher' education, high status, ensuring occupational advantage, status (gender base of), monopolistic privileges, management versus profession, legislative protection, autonomy, selective recruitment, controlled by ethical codes, standards and, altruism. These are all features found in the earlier discussion on professions (Chapter 3).

Legitimization was the most frequently used mode of ideology in this period. *Unification* and *fragmentation* were used almost equally but their purpose was to reinforce the special nature of the profession and clarify those people and ideas that lay outside its boundaries. They were a force for unifying the membership. *Dissimulation* related primarily to shifting the responsibility for issues and decisions away from the Association on to others for example, blaming the low status of the profession on the gender of its members. *Reification* related mostly to status, the existence of social work as an entity and privileges resulting from professionalization. All the strategies identified by Thompson, except metonymy, were identified as used in this period.

The implications of the arguments used in the period of the establishment of the AASW have some striking features. The arguments are primarily focused on establishing the discrete realm of social work as a separate entity from social welfare. Status and employment standards are central to the debate. The arguments were put that the low status of the profession had been caused by the preponderance of women and that the early leaders were more interested in establishing education opportunities and engaging in social action than in fighting for increased employment standards. This last situation typifies the arguments in this period. In the early years

of the Association, there was considerable social action and debate on the needs of women and children both in Australia and internationally during the war years and in the post-W.W.II period. In particular, there was action to have an Australian social worker appointed to the United Nations to assist with repatriation.²⁸⁶ To ignore the socio-historical context in criticizing past administration of the AASW for their failure to attend to employment standards during the war years and in the immediate post-war period reconstructs reality and attempts to place the AASW outside of the major concerns of the age.

Access and availability to employment at the correct salary and status level and quests for employers to recognize the authority of the Association to designate which positions required 'qualified professional social workers' were more important in the period from 1952 onwards. The move to register as a union and the discussions on registration were actions to protect the profession from incursions by sub-professionals, the untrained and management.

There was continued concern about the development of sub-standard courses and the employment of less qualified personnel. The message from the Schools of Social Work to the Association was to get on with the business of social work and allow the other courses to develop - in effect to 'stop being so precious'. The Association took the view that the establishment of a strong defensive line, separating social work from social welfare, would protect the profession in the long term and ensure it was able to gain high status and regard.

The contradictions come in the strength and vehemence about unqualified workers, especially in remote areas and work places where remuneration was low in contrast to the profession's commitment to altruism as a core of professionalism. The Association was wedded to the notion of university-based education. There was no ability to contemplate using the Technical Education system (which was at the time under-resourced). The AASW at the federal level did not examine cooperative pathways between technical education and universities similar to those used by the engineers because they did not see social work as a trade or technology but as a profession. Further, they did not look at establishing small schools or systems of training similar to the original schools of mines or railways institutes to meet the needs of those people working in the field in remote and rural areas with little access to formal university education.

²⁸⁶NLA MS6202/12/38/18 June 1949

On one hand, we can say that this is obvious in hindsight. However, on at least two occasions during this period, there were attempts to investigate the needs and conditions related to employment, education and registration of social workers. On each occasion no action was recorded. The professional association took a particular stance without investigation (Chapter 5).

Primarily, the statements made in the arguments put have no reference to the relationship of the profession and the professional Association to the wider social system and the conditions operating in society at the time. (This may be more a function of the nature of minutes than the quality of the actual debate, however, it is also not reflected in other communications.)

Accreditation and the Binary System

It is not unexpected that the concept of professions developing and maintaining standardized educational programs and processes is the most frequent concept appearing in the arguments and utterances of the Association and its members in this second period. Arguments based on the concept of prolonged training and standards of competence predominate. The other three major concepts were status, autonomy and monopoly (claiming a special industrial position). In fact, the non-release of information especially about the non-accreditation of SAIT was more about the Association's insistence on its autonomy and status which it legitimized by reference to legal opinion. The Association would not yield to pressure from within or without and as such their defiance was equally a symbol of unity.

Most of the modes and strategies of ideology used in this period (Chapter 6) focused on *legitimation* of the Association and its leadership against not only educational institutions and government but against its own membership. There is a higher use of *symbols of unity* and threats or actual *expurgation* of others - as not having a legitimate right to speak nor having a competent view. Compared to the previous period, there was also more *dissimulation* through the use of *metaphor*, *synecdoche*, *euphemization* and *displacement*. Of these, *displacement* is the most frequent. In speeches or reports by individuals, *universalization* and *narrativization* are mixed with *dissimulation* strategies and tied together in calls for *unification*. Good, Hamilton-Smith, Stockbridge and Lawrence show facility in this capacity to mix modes of ideology to an end of *unification*. They sought *unification to their vision* of the Association.

The meeting of the Association over the plebiscite was replete with *fragmentation* (*differentiation* and *expurgation*) and *legitimation* (*rationalization*, *universalization* and *narrativization*). The only statements of *unification* (*standardization* and *symbols of unity*) recorded during that meeting came from Marie Coleman who, although she moved dissent from the Chairman's position and charged Elery Hamilton-Smith with misleading the Victorian Branch, seemed to read the bigger picture. She saw that the debate was not just about the plebiscite. She demanded that the assessments of SAIT and WAIT not proceed and provided a lateral option for resolution: wait until the report of the Joint Committee on Social Welfare Education in Australia was completed.

When analyzing this period (Chapter 6), there are some communications that are clearly *dissimulation* but which do not fit within Thompson's framework. When, for example, the AASW Executive kept from the Branches and membership, the information that the Commonwealth Public Service Board (CPSB) would employ graduates from the non-accredited SAIT courses for Grade 1 Social Work Positions, this was *dissimulation* by silence or omission to communicate. It was also *dissimulation* when R. J. Lawrence wrote to J. M. Fraser (then Federal Minister for Education) stating that the CPSB were not accepting graduates from SAIT when he knew they were and so did Fraser. There are therefore at least two more strategies to add to Thompson's framework within *dissimulation*: *concealment* and *mis-information*.

The Split in the AASW

The period of the split (Chapter 7) was characterized by the use of concepts related to the necessity for a well-organized professional body which had the appropriate policies and mechanisms to ensure the aims of the Association were achieved. The debate formed around attempts to define social work, levels of competence, the minimum educational program and the process of learning (including Field Education) and, the establishment of a monopoly either through occupational closure and close ties with employers ensuring only qualified personnel were employed or, through unionism. Unionism could lead to broader control of the whole industry of social work (not just professional social work) and would incorporate welfare personnel. In retrospect, the concepts and arguments look more like a contest between élite and universal modes of operation. The élite mode sought status and authority in the short term; the universal model could lead to reductions in quality of professional practice in the short term but

almost total coverage of the field and potential to develop integrated training methods and higher membership levels in the longer-term.

This debate occurred in Australia during a time of unprecedented social change. The Federal government moved from conservative to social reformist policies under Whitlam. Social Welfare services in traditional (casework) and non-traditional (community work, social action, social planning, community development) were proliferating. Community Health Services, for example, were established locating social workers outside of statutory welfare agencies and hospitals. There was greater concern for the welfare needs of the disadvantaged and the feminist movement had shaken the beliefs of the community. Combined with this was a growing awareness of citizens' rights to demand appropriate services and appeal decisions of those in authority. Authority was beginning to be replaced by accountability and public scrutiny. In some agencies (particularly Community Health in Victoria), boards and committees of citizens were managing services, rather than expert clinicians or practitioners. 'Community' became part of the rhetoric of the period and as Bryson and Mowbray (1981) would later write, it was used like a 'spray-on solution'.

Radicalism in social work was debated and taught in the universities. Castro (Draper 1962; Halpern 1972), Guevara (1969), Freire (1970, 1972) were studied. Alinsky and his *Rules for Radicals* (1971) and *Reveille for Radicals* (1969) were common texts. Spurred on by changes in the US of the 1960s race relations and anti-poverty programs and the community actions and sense of outrage over the Vietnam War, the student body, the client body, the nature of organizations and community changed in Australia.

In reading the minutes and the newsletters the federal AASW, only the President's report by Edna Chamberlain reflected some of this flavour of transformation in the external world. For the most part, it is as if the manner in which the Association was structured meant that the issues from the environmental context were quarantined from the business of the Association. On the other hand, the laments by the members of PEAC, especially to Eva Learner in the subsequent period about the low levels of activity of the membership and the low numbers of financial members, may be more indicative of social workers' engagement with the times rather than their apathy about the Association and its workings. Having said that, however, those who were involved especially in the Federal Industrial Committee, the Federal Executive, PEAC and the Victorian Branch of the AASW were highly active and engaged.

The use of the modes and strategies of ideology is markedly different between speakers and locations in this period. Edna Chamberlain as President (Chapter 7, October 1970) begins with *reifying*²⁸⁷ social work and its relevance, moves to *unification*, distances the association from the less palatable aspects of professionalism by using *fragmentation*, returns to *unification* and finally to *legitimation*. It appears to be an elegant scheme. Lawrence and Tierney in their approach to McCusker of the CACAE and Ponsford (Chapter 7, 27 May, 1970) used *legitimation* by way of narrative and mixed it with *unification* by initially focusing on the efforts the AASW had gone to historically to promote standards of practice and training. They used *fragmentation* to differentiate Australia from the UK system, then inserted rational argument (*legitimation*) mixed with *differentiation (fragmentation)* in order to distinguish between the unqualified, less professional and the senior professional social workers who expect and require a career path, status and commensurate salary. The thrust of their utterances to government was to establish the Association's legitimacy and the rationality of their claims.

The communications following Justice Richard Kirby's question about the assigning of an industry to professional social work, (a symbol of unity), was responded to with a mixture of *standardization* and *fragmentation*. From July 1971 to October 1973 most communications were more about *standardization* and making efforts symbolic of unity than they were of *fragmentation*. The focus appeared to be on trying to get the AASW to change its rules and mechanisms suiting the new face of the industry.

As the MER (Minimum Educational Requirements) changed (May, 1974 onwards) the number of unifying statements increased. One has to consider that in this period the AASW was in financial difficulty and the threat of losing members through the tightening of the eligibility requirements was of concern for some.

In the later part of this period (Chapter 7), the use of concepts upholding *unification (standardization and symbols of unity)* were matched with those of *fragmentation (differentiation and expurgation - especially of welfare)*. False dichotomies emerged: if you were social work you were not social welfare; if you were for high standards, you could not be

²⁸⁷ *reification*. In this, relations of domination may be established and sustained by representing a transitory, historical state of affairs as if it were permanent, natural or outside of time. Processes are portrayed as things or as events of a quasi-natural kind, in such a way that their social and historical character is eclipsed. (Thompson 1996)

anti-elitist; if you were professional you could not be anti-professionalization; if you were anti-professionalization, you had to be a radical. Concepts of professions were parading as unifying and fragmenting forces. There did not at the time appear to be an alternative path. During the final throws of the split, most of the communication was about the establishment of various committees and studies (the Social Work Academy, the National Council for Social Work Education and the Committee on Welfare Education and Employment Issues). This suggests an active commitment to develop a legitimate role and function for these proposed instruments. No matter what the rift, from the record, the message from the Association is one of attempting to maintain unity. The statement on poverty removed the focus from standards, educational quality, competence, status and influence. It was an appeal to the common ground and to the shared values of the members of the profession. It was a tool of *unification*.

Accreditation of the Schools and the Problem in Sydney

Clearly the *standardization* of educational programs for the future members of the profession was the single concept most frequently used (Chapter 8). The second in importance revolved around the structured organization of the Association and its process for dealing effectively with accreditation, and particularly with Sydney University. It is here that the notion of an organized profession, through a professional body was tested and honed. The rights of the profession to deal with universities and influence their practices and the procedures for communication and pressuring a major educational institution were debated. But so was the potential for loss of the profession's autonomy and status and fear of a reduction or downgrading in their level of professionalization.

The preponderant mode of ideology used was *legitimation*. The strategies of *narrativization*, *rationalization* and *universalization* - the story of what had happened, appeals to logic and knowledge, appeals to common or standard practice elsewhere - were used in every debate and every defence. There were few *symbols of unity* and more appeals to *standardization*. Therefore, even though the mode of *unification* was being used *dissimulation* and *fragmentation* assailed it (Chapter 8).

The debates in this period underscore why it is important to move beyond an analysis of the modes of ideology into argumentative analysis and power analysis. Formal meeting procedure requires that there be an opportunity for a speaker for and one against every motion put at a

meeting. Where there is a difference of opinion, one can expect the speaker for the motion to use strategies associated with *legitimation* - to gain support from the listeners and vote for the motion. It is wise to construct a logical, coherent and rational argument with appeals to 'universal truths' and stories of the saga to date and sometimes reference to past myth and legend. The opposition's task is to fragment the argument, to use *euphemization*, *displacement*, *synecdoche*, *metonymy* and *metaphor* to try to reduce the first speaker's credibility; to test the validity of the 'evidence' being used; to ensure the argument appears irrational; to infer that the universal truth is irrelevant and, the narrative resembles 'old fairy stories' (PEAC Meeting 12 October, 1977). An analysis of individual speakers' arguments is therefore pointless. The analysis has to cover the whole argument; its progress from *legitimation*, *dissimulation*, *fragmentation* to possibilities for *unification* and sometimes *reification*.

As an outcome of the debate about Sydney University, the AASW resolved that accreditation was core business and would be the responsibility of Federal Council, thus bringing it back from being something processed by a Standing Committee (30 November 1977). It also placed the onus on the university or college to show cause why it should be accredited rather than on the Association to investigate or prove that it had checked the paperwork thoroughly. Nor would the Association again allow itself to be seen to be treating institutions differently so that an institution could claim to be unfairly processed and imply that all the others could join with it in defiance of the Association.

Now, each institution would have its own consultant; on campus assessments would occur; and the decision of the Association would be final. Accreditation achieved *reification* as a result of the debates and the difficulties at Sydney University. The Association claimed its autonomy and status out of the crucible that saw the demise of PEAC. How this occurred is less a matter of analyzing discourse; it is more a matter of power, influence, control, interests and manipulation.

The Valorization of Symbolic Forms

Thompson's framework is not only concerned with the delivery of the concepts and their use but also the value attributed to them. In attempting to operationalize his framework of symbolic valorization, there is a significant difficulty. The analyst has to predetermine the level of power occupied by the individual or group producing the symbolic form or utterance. The very first statements in Chapter 6, for example, come from the thesis of R. J. Lawrence. At the time of

writing the thesis he was a student. One could place him as being at an intermediate power position where he used *moderation* by positively valuing the academic process (that is attempting Ph.D. research and writing a thesis). He could also be seen to have used *pretension* by appraising the social work training movement as if he were a member of the dominant power position and have used *devaluation* to debunk the performance of previous senior members of the AASW administration. Conversely, if he was assessed to be a member of the high power position, then he could equally be seen to have used *distinction* with respect to the social work training movement, *derision* with respect to the preponderance of women in the profession and, *condescension* with respect to the early AASW administration.

Further, the symbolic valorization of Lawrence's work changes over time. He may be in an intermediate power position as a Ph.D. student but this changes as his book is published and used as a core text in the study of the social work profession and as he becomes a Head of School and the President of the AASW. If one takes the view that Lawrence was a member of a relatively powerless occupational group, one could assess his statements on the need to get more men into social work as the most practical and easiest way to deal with the profession's low status (*practicality*). One could say that he was *respectfully resigned* to the symbolic form of the established professions as being male dominated. Therefore, social work must emulate those professional models to achieve higher status.

While the position one individual or group holds over time changes, it can also change from issue to issue. This is the case for Margaret Lewis, Elspeth Browne and Michael Horsburgh during the term of PEAC as their positions in the power struggle, particularly with Sydney University, waxed and waned (Chapter 8). Consequently, Thompson's framework has only limited value as a tool for analysis of symbolic forms in order to identify where a person or group may lie in relation to the power of others in a field of interaction. In fact, it is of little use at all unless one can establish the agents' power positions initially.

If the utterances, communications, points of debate and other symbolic forms can be defined as belonging to any of the three power positions, there needs to be a method of identifying where the initiator of the symbolic form lies in the field of interaction with respect to their position of power. For example, in the visit by the President, Vice-President and Federal Secretary to the Minister of Education (9 April, 1973, Chapter 7) the AASW representatives gave high symbolic value to the scarce good of professional social workers (*distinction*). They devalued the

proliferating social welfare courses (*devaluation*). They criticized the use of unqualified and less qualified staff (*derision*) and, they produced a document by PEAC on how to increase the quantity and quality of social welfare services in Australia as if they were the authority on the matter (*pretension*). Senator Beazley, in reply, positively valued the range of social welfare education currently available (*moderation*) and asked what was the AASW's attitude to the WAIT course which was respectful but not resigned. The reply was that there might not be sufficient funds to maintain the course at the level required which was appraising the WAIT course as if it and the government's funding were being appraised by dominant persons (*pretension*). Senator Beazley's reply was that reforms were urgently needed to address the shortages of personnel which again was positively valuing those things within reach so that the policy and position of the government was maximum style for minimum expense - to use Thompson's words (*moderation*). Senator Beazley then went on to say that the government was not wanting to get more social workers by lowering standards which again held a line of moderation. He undertook to consult about post-graduate education and exchanges (*distinction*) and asked about the welfare and education of Aboriginal people and minority groups who were not eligible currently to attend universities, this was again *moderation*. He articulated the distrust these people had for professionals which communicated the rejection of those communities in contrast to the position being put by the AASW.

The person in the higher power position in this interchange was Senator Beazley, not the AASW. Yet, using Thompson's framework, we could assess the position as the reverse. Every utterance of Senator Beazley's has high symbolic value. A personal audience with a Federal Government Minister itself is a scarce good, largely inaccessible to those with less capital and, unless the delegation members were representing the AASW, they as individuals may not have achieved this.

His politeness and moderation are in fact condescending - not because he seeks to condescend. Further his mild confrontation of their position in not considering Aboriginals and minorities and in not having a whole-of-nation focus is derisive, although he is most respectful and moderate in the manner of his communication. This reinforces the point, therefore, that in order to assess accurately the valorization of a symbolic form, one must first know the relative power positions of the actors. It also highlights Brym's point (1980:26) that the three most important structural determinants of the capacity to control others are: group size, level of group social organization and resource control. In this interaction, the Minister has the ultimate resource control and is

representative of a larger social organization, his actual power supersedes that which can be determined by the analysis of the symbolic forms being used by both parties. If the relative power positions of the parties involved are already determined through other means, then the need for the analysis of the valorization of symbolic forms is less significant. The role and position of the agent therefore has more significance in terms of an analysis of power and influence than the valorization of their symbolic forms. The role set in effect determines the valorization.

Thompson states that if the recipients of a symbolic form reject it or deride it then it is less valuable. This assumes that the recipients have sufficient relative power to make a difference to the group or individual who has constructed the symbolic form. If, for example, I think that modern art is ridiculous and neither wish to purchase it nor have any power within art criticism and art appraisal circles, then my derision, devaluation or rejection is inefficacious - silence will be as effective. This framework of Thompson's is therefore of limited use for the analysis of this case study.

Analysis of Power Relations

Establishment to 1965

Using Lukes to analyze the power relations in this period highlights the inadequacy of a one-dimensional analysis. The analysis would only be able to assess the decision on whether to proceed with the study on male social work employment and the work of the Ways and Means sub-committee in terms of behaviours. The analyst can briefly examine the competing interests of male and female social workers for jobs and adequate salaries. The analysis can cover the issue of untrained social workers; the press of the Association for higher status; the defining of what is a social welfare course and that social workers cannot teach methods in sub-professional courses. One dimensional analysis shows that the Ways and Means sub-committee saw their main task to increase standards of social work practice and reduce the threat from social welfare especially the threat that all social welfare graduates represented as they competed for jobs in the 'industry'.

The two-dimensional analysis helps to examine the way in which social and political values were created and how the scope of public consideration of issues was both reinforced and limited to innocuous ones for the profession. The following eleven tenets were reinforced: social change itself stimulated the requirement for higher levels of training of social workers; the AASW formed to represent those (university) qualified personnel; the low status of the profession is due to its female domination; the primary functions of the AASW are education, industrial and social action; the shortage of senior social workers is a major problem, untrained or lower trained workers continue to be seen as a risk to the community; only professional social workers can assess which jobs require a qualified person; the profession needs higher status; ethics training is essential in university courses; there is a distinct difference between social work and social welfare; social workers can define and identify social welfare courses; the unique methods of social work need to be kept from sub-professionals and that increased standards in courses will lead to a reduction of the threat to employment from social welfare trained people.

These values and beliefs worked to prevent the presentation of issues that might be seriously detrimental to the AASW's set of preferences. They were strong enough tenets to influence members to not seek the opinion of social welfare personnel. This was made somewhat more difficult by the lack of an organization representing those people except perhaps ACOSS.

There were two examples of coercion. One was the instruction to members not to teach method to social welfare courses (one that had no official penalty attached). The other was through the threat that supporting sub-professional courses would lead to less access for social workers in employment. This sense of threat was reiterated even to the Schools of Social Work and AASW meeting. It was an internal coercion asking members to be loyal to the AASW and accept that the penalty for disloyalty is the loss of the status and employment gains achieved to date.

The way in which these values were established and articulated left no room for challenge or demands for change - there was no access to discussions for those with an opposing voice. Any possible demand for change was effectively suffocated, for instance by the AASW's decision to close its conference to those who were qualified social workers or members of the AASW. Their need to assert their status, to set their conference up as a scarce resource at which only a select group could attend closed the Association further from dissenting voices. On the one occasion when a challenge was successfully mounted against an AASW position it was, in Lukes' words, 'maimed and destroyed in the decision implementing stage of the policy process.'

This occurred when the Schools of Social Work suggested that the AASW stop worrying about the perceived threat from welfare courses and get used to the changing landscape of tertiary education. The AASW acknowledged the opinion and took it back to the AASW. But, Federal Council and Federal Executive could not be convinced that sub-professional courses were not to be feared and defended against.

The three-dimensional analysis shows up places where issues that one could predict would be raised, did not appear. For example, there is a lack of comment from women social workers when the study of positions for men in social work's wages and conditions was found to be unfeasible. They did not assert that they too needed a study to investigate their working conditions and salaries. Second, if it was true that social change led to the requirement for increased training then it would make sense for an argument to be put that training should be made available as broadly as possible and not limited to élite educational models. Third, when issues about protection of title were raised, why was there no questioning of protection of current competent workers? Fourth, why was there no uproar about the Association's arbitrary requirement that social workers could not teach methods in sub-professional courses if the profession's main focus is the needs of the community and social action rather than preservation of the status and power of an élite group? Fifth, when the Ways and Means sub-committee decided that increased status of social work would reduce the threat from sub-professionals, core arguments are missing. Where was the argument to challenge the notions that status is quality, that social welfare is not necessarily different from social work? Where is the alternative view that the 'threat' could be an opportunity for the profession to expand and spread its influence across the whole field of welfare rather than defining its sphere of influence narrowly?

Lukes also provides in the three-dimensional analysis an opportunity to consider that the actors at the time may have been unconscious of their motives, the meaning and/or the consequences of their actions. They may not have had the capacity to know the consequences or the capacity to have organized themselves or acted differently. In terms of the perceived threat of the sub-professional courses and the closure of the conference to all but social workers, the AASW was unavoidably blind to the consequences of its opinions and actions. With respect to the need for training and the capacity of a National Council of Social Work to be able to exert an influence on the whole field, they had the United Kingdom as example. The AASW were therefore justifiably criticized by the Schools of Social Work and could have acted differently. On this particular issue it was within the power of the AASW to take a different line. In contrast, the

AASW's inability to talk with social welfare personnel through a representative body (not in existence at the time) could be seen to be outside its formal power and in fact structurally determined.

There is then, within this whole period, only one issue where it can be suggested that the AASW be held socially responsible: that of the perceived threat from social welfare. The Association was advised by the Schools of Social Work to re-examine its priorities, to focus on the job to be done and accept that welfare was an expanding field. The AASW was told to help social welfare in the development of modified courses; to play a vital role in social welfare; to encourage learning and that the community needed people who were willing to study and to work in the field. The AASW's response at the time was to say that it would only support social welfare if the community could tell the difference between the two sets of workers. The Association's public statement to the Schools of Social Work was more positive than its internal decision. In C. Wright-Mills' (1956) terms we had a set of people 'compact enough to be identifiable, powerful enough to decide with consequence and in a position to foresee the consequences'. Their choice of action, according to C. Wright Mills leaves them socially responsible in this instance and accountable.

Accreditation and the Binary System

During this period (Chapter 6) the power relations become increasingly complex with more players and interests being represented and missing. The main actors were the existing members of the AASW, the existing social work courses, students, educational institutions (universities and institutes of technology) which were planning to establish courses, state and federal governments and, internally, the different interests of the state and federal levels of the AASW. Missing from this list was the voice of the non-government welfare services and the recipients of social work and welfare services.

The main values and beliefs created and reinforced were: the necessity to have a mechanism for quality control of qualified immigrants and conversely to enable Australian graduates to practise overseas. They held that the principal role of the AASW was the development of practice standards; that institutes of technology constituted a lower level educational experience than universities and therefore were of lower status. They maintained that the AASW was primarily a federal organization and, that states' issues and interests were to be resolved within a whole

nation perspective. These values and beliefs set the basis for establishment of the legitimate authority of the AASW to set minimum standards, assess individuals and courses for the purpose of accreditation, structure the 'make-up' program for SAIT graduates and maintain a centralized decision-making process which led to the debate on the plebiscite. At the same time it set the scene for the use of legalism and secretive behaviour on behalf of the Federal Executive. The AASW locked out any voice belonging to non-AASW members including students and the parents of those students.

Coercion can be seen in the forcing of new courses to comply with the minimum educational standards or risk their graduates finding themselves ineligible to apply for membership of the Association (Eva Learner was later to ask PEAC if this was not holding schools to ransom²⁸⁸). It can also be found in the deprivation of accreditation for SAIT and the forced provision of a 'make-up' program and in the AASW WA Branch's decision to not treat WAIT students equally in terms of provision of field education placements - preferring the UWA students. Less severe forms of influence are demonstrated by the positive valuation of accredited courses and the educational institution's ability to use a good relationship with the AASW to secure student enrolments. Accreditation was a reward for the 'good course' and was linked to greater employment opportunities through the agreements with the state and commonwealth public service boards. Influential information was given to institutions through the consultation process involved in the development of the Basic Educational Requirements - something that new courses and courses in the planning stage missed out on because it was not broadcast. Similarly, not all courses were given a consultant to assist them in meeting the AASW's requirements; this was reserved for failed courses initially and then new courses. There was not equal or equitable treatment given to institutions developing courses. Particularly in the case of SAIT, the findings of the accreditation assessment were denied to all interested parties except PEAC, the Federal Executive, the consultant and the Director of SAIT. This effectively silenced stakeholders from dissent and challenge to the AASW's decisions, assumptions and processes.

The suppression of latent or manifest challenge to the power of the AASW was achieved through the withholding of information that the CPSB would accept SAIT graduates as Class 1 Social Workers. In fact the CPSB were happy to accept people with three year qualifications. It was only a consequence of history that all previous social work courses had been located within

²⁸⁸ Eva Learner NLA MS6202/50/7/ Minutes Professional Education and Accreditation Committee /20 December 1976/10

universities. Given the Federal Government's view that the institute of technology graduates were equal, cheaper and more practice-focused, the CPSB was being consistent with government policy by accepting all three-year-trained SAIT graduates for social work positions. The AASW Federal Executive was able to keep this quiet. They allowed the fear of the threat from Social Welfare to continue to grow within the AASW and kept the two-tier system in place. (This decision would later be rationalized in the PEAC discussion with Eva Learner as in the community's interest).

The second effective means of suppression of latent challenge was the use of the bureaucratic process within the Association. Communications were held over until full meetings of Federal Council or Federal Executive. It was often months before replies were formulated to parents of the SAIT students, the CACAE or the Minister for Education. This bought time for the heat and fervour to leave the arguments - for the articulation of grievances to appear more vague, less urgent, instead of strong statements of how others' interests had been harmed by AASW decisions and actions. There was no record of a time when representatives of the group or individual in question who had the grievance were invited to address the AASW nor an AASW member appointed as advocate for the aggrieved to argue their case. In terms of influence, the larger and more organized the group the greater their power (Brym, 1980:26). One letter has little power in contrast to a full committee or Federal Council meeting.

The AASW was feeling less secure. The defences were up. They were aware of potential challengers. They mobilized and reinforced the bias of the Association. They could see few alternative actions because that risked facing the perceived threat of social welfare courses and conflicted with their own values and belief. When the conflicts started to become obvious (but not articulated) at the meeting on the plebiscite, it seemed that only Marie Coleman was able to read that something else was at stake and move the meeting out of the stale-mate. The meeting had been manipulated through the executive's inability to tell the whole story and this itself was based in the inherent conflicts of values and beliefs operating at the time.

In reading the documents, it is clear that the active members (Good, Glastonbury, Stockbridge, Lawrence, Hamilton-Smith, etc) believed their own rhetoric. They had made considerable personal commitment to the future of the AASW and believed in the potential threat from social welfare. The constitution and structure of the AASW also hampered them. In many ways they were right. Had graduates from the institutes of technology three-year courses known that the

Commonwealth Public Service Board saw their qualifications as being suitable for the filling of Class 1 Social Work positions, then the accreditation process administered through the AASW would have been less relevant. The make-up program would not have gone ahead and the specific employment niche carved by the AASW Executive would have been lost. This explains why in this debate there is no voice of the non-government welfare sector employers. Their position descriptions and job levels were largely based on those of the CPSB. The AASW could not afford for even a hint of the undermining of this to be released. (Its justification - to come later - must also be seen to be altruistic and not self-interested).

Was it in the power of the AASW to act differently or was it structurally determined? If one sets up a Professional Association in this form with the specified aims and objectives and with the federal and branch structure, then no, it was not in its power to act differently and yes, the response was structurally determined. However, this begs the question of who controls the structure. That was the membership of the AASW itself - its constitution allows for change including change of structure.

The value given to statements from the intellectuals and senior members of the Association which reinforced and created the belief and culture of the body is relevant. This valuation is reinforced by the knowledge of the personal investment of these members, their obvious commitment to the AASW, that led to the inability of the broader membership to consider that a different set of beliefs and structures may better suit the new educational and policy environment.

C. Wright-Mills' question of social responsibility is relevant here. The AASW were not feeling powerful but besieged. They could not see the alternatives because of their position in the field and they could not move or change the processes they esteemed. They were starting to be locked in. When others are in this position, there is an expectation that they will seek advice, creatively develop alternatives or begin negotiations.²⁸⁹ The AASW did not do this. The question of its accountability will be left open.

²⁸⁹I am particularly thinking here of how we deal with parents whose child management approach is detrimental to their children. Even if these people feel locked into a particular situation we require mature behaviour to seek assistance and alternatives rather than to allow an escalation to occur.

The Split in the AASW

The initial issues underpinning the actions and power relations during the period of the split (Chapter 7) are primarily an internal challenge to the values and beliefs of the profession. Was the professional association going to be primarily concerned with professionalization and professionalism or the needs of the community? It was clear that social work was now a small group within a much larger social welfare industry rather than a battleship followed by a flotilla of rowboats. The institutional practices of the AASW were challenged from within: its membership; its finances; its exercise of standard-setting and whether that should be extended; its attention to protection through registration and, its 'democratic' structure (was it more or less democratic to have members who had no right to vote?). Still, subordinate groups were prevented from airing their opposition personally. Association members reported the views of others in the Welfare Industry but it was not until the end of the period when the AASW made formal contact with the Australian Institute of Welfare Workers. They did listen to the Minister for Education, Senator Beazley and his advocacy for the broader welfare industry, the needs of the community and the needs of minority groups in particular. However they neither began direct consultation with these groups nor required that these issues be included in courses nor actively supported research in these areas.

The documentation indicates that the active members generated ideas, developed proposals moved motions and planned how the industry of social welfare and its training should be structured and overseen. They accepted the role of the AASW within that process without formally consulting the members of the social welfare industry themselves. These active members were in the: Federal Industrial Committee, Professional Education and Accreditation Committee, Federal Council and Federal Executive

No grievances or complaints were heard directly from those affected by the AASW's proposed internal changes. At this point the silence, the lack of comment from outside is so deafening that one can wonder. Had the welfare industry taken the view that they would respectfully resign themselves to the AASW's activities? Did they decide to get on with the practical business of looking after members in the community and ignore the AASW? Or did they outright reject the AASW as a power élite exercising some of the more negative features of professionalization? Certainly this latter view is the case for those students being taught social welfare practice from a basis of critique of economic and class relations. Indeed, this was the view of many recent

graduates who had studied professions at the feet of Boreham, Pemberton and read and analyzed Wilensky.

With respect to the three-dimensional analysis, it did not appear in the documentation that perhaps the field of welfare might not want the influence of social work at all. The AASW seemed to have lacked consciousness of the meaning for others of social work. They seem unaware that it was perceived as attached to conservative Australia of the Menzies era, to Medicine and its commitment to a model of profession more consistent with power élites than with social justice and welfare for the disadvantaged and outcast. While the members of the AASW were trying to act differently, they were still not consulting; they still held to their self-perception of being professionals in a field dominated by people in occupations, better informed and more able to decide. Take for example the issue of registration. Registration must be legislated at the state level. While social work tried to do it alone, it would lack the financial capacity, the personnel resources and the time necessary to achieve it.

It was within the Association's power to act differently and it was attempting to do so. However, the members were not personally and collectively powerful enough to achieve their aims, they were blinded to some of their options and choices and further, they could not see the consequences for the future. At this point the question of social responsibility is immaterial. They were neither powerful enough nor adequately informed. The power had all but dissipated and therefore accountability would not rest with the AASW.

Accreditation of the Schools and the Problem in Sydney

The key events in this period (Chapter 8) are the visit from Eva Learner, the accreditation of WAIT and the difficulties with the accreditation at Sydney University. Of all the periods this one exemplifies the position of the AASW within the complex web of power relationships involved in the provision of professional education at the tertiary level in Australia. Not only are the interest groups identified earlier involved but also, more specific interests are explicated in the examination of the events at Sydney University. This issue itself involved Sydney University governance and administration, the Head of School, the students, the academic staff, field educator and practitioners who would employ graduates, PEAC, the Federal Council of the AASW and academics in other universities. These groups and individuals had competing and overlapping interests so that within the University there was conflict as there was within the

AASW. The matter was made more complex by the diverse membership of PEAC and AASW Federal Council. There were games within games and people who were on the same committees were aware of actions taken by others but were not communicating them in these formal settings. They operated instead on documentation because effectively the sum of available knowledge by hearsay or through personal involvement was much more than that tabled.²⁹⁰

The AASW as represented by PEAC held a strong belief in the need for university-based professional courses and the necessity for the role of the AASW in standards and quality. PEAC members articulated to Eva Learner that they saw their role as important for the country, akin to a national duty. They justified their requirement for SAIT to have a 'make-up' course as being in the community interest because if the CPSB were going to allow these people to practise as Class 1 Social Workers then somebody needed to ensure they were competent to fill that role. PEAC did not deem the CPSB's or the Commonwealth's assessment of the course quality as being authoritative. The AASW maintained its belief that they knew the skills and knowledge needed for any particular work place.

In this meeting, members of PEAC admitted that they had only just become aware of a need to involve AASW members and inform them of the activities of the committee. PEAC had been isolated while making significant decisions and, as the general members of the Association did not know the justification for these decisions, they were beginning to critique PEAC and its members.

Finally and most significantly, the social and political values of the AASW were being challenged by the radical critique of professions, a critique being taught in Schools of Social Work across the country and in the social welfare courses in the institutes of technology.

The scope of public consideration of the activities of the AASW and PEAC in particular, was limited by the reinforcing of the institutional practice of these bodies in terms of membership. In

²⁹⁰For example Professor John Lawrence as Head of School at the University of NSW allowed classes to be opened for Sydney University students to attend and thus ensure as far as possible that the students' education would not suffer as a result of the dispute at Sydney University. Whether Michael Horsburgh knew this at the time and whether Elspeth Browne and Margaret Lewis (academics at UNSW) knew it is not revealed in the record. The detail of the direct involvement of Bob Doyle in raising the students' issues on national TV compromising his own position as an academic at Sydney University was also not raised. Bob Doyle was employed by UNSW and seconded to Sydney to teach community work - he therefore could not have his employment terminated by Sydney University although he had to explain his actions to the administration at

the case of Bob Doyle, although he was a member of PEAC, he had never been a member of the AASW and was excluded from the meeting where Sydney University was debated. But he had been present in the meeting when Eva Learner conducted her examination of PEAC. Access to meetings was denied to someone who, it could be argued had an interest in the proceedings. Second, PEAC operated using formal meeting procedure rather than consensus-based decision-making or any other form. This led to minority reports being produced from the committee on two occasions. Third, PEAC could only advise and Federal Council made the decisions. They were instructed by Federal Council and by the President. Hence the thoroughly-argued decisions of PEAC needed to be fully reworked if a minority report went to Federal Council. The institutional practices limited not only full discussion but also full access to relevant information and different views and values.

Eva Learner was able to raise issues that had not been articulated or had been prevented from being heard earlier when uttered by the less powerful. For example, she questioned whether the AASW's accreditation process actually held courses to ransom. She saw that the field education criteria were too rigid and was told that in those schools where a looser arrangement was working the students were less suited for working in traditional work areas - this was expressed to her as if it constituted a problem.

What is interesting in this period is the number of times attempts by PEAC or its members to influence others failed. This gives the analyst greater insight into the actual power of the AASW within the field of interaction. Michael Horsburgh for instance, failed to have the students' report on Sydney University's School of Social Work deemed inadmissible. He also threatened the students with sanctions (failure) if they continued their action at the University - this was circumvented. PEAC threatened the withdrawal of accreditation to Sydney University - this too was ultimately circumvented. Margaret Lewis and David Neely attempted to influence Professor Tom Brennan to discuss the students' concerns and were unsuccessful. The challenge to PEAC's assessment of the Sydney University course, the lesser challenge of their assessment of the WAIT course and the further questioning of the process of accreditation brought about a challenge to the authority not only of PEAC but also of the Association.

UNSW. Further it was Bob Doyle and others who negotiated the opening of classes at UNSW for the Sydney students. (From Personal Communication with Professor Robert Doyle at Charles Sturt University, 1998.)

Force, through the use of voting procedures, was used against Bob Doyle in excluding him from the PEAC meeting and against Michael Horsburgh within meetings.

Professor Brennan consummately suppressed the latent or manifest challenge to himself, his leadership and the quality of the Sydney University course by saying that the students' document had no status and he would not comment on it.

The three-dimensional analysis focuses first on the latent conflict. The formal and overt conflict was one issue. However, the attitude to the students claims as expressed by Professor Brennan, Michael Horsburgh and the other members of PEAC reveal that there was more at stake than course accreditation and students' careers. There were issues about the authority and power of the Head of School, the independence of universities, class, democratic approaches to education, the politics of training, the encouragement and challenging of future professionals and the culture of the profession. Were the fundamental beliefs underpinning the profession to be based on conservative political, social and psychological models or were emancipatory or radical models to be embraced? To use Anna Dawe's words the nature of the 'know-how' was being challenged.

It is arguable whether the AASW and PEAC could have changed their processes, opened up the discussion, taken submissions and had a separate inquiry. There may have been financial restrictions operating, especially after the loss of membership following the split. The AASW and PEAC alone were not powerful enough to make decisions on Sydney University nor could they see all the consequences. PEAC members voted for the closing of the Committee. The process of accreditation was restructured. Whether this restructuring made the process more accessible to all the parties and more transparent is matter for another piece of research.

It becomes clear that the values and beliefs present at the formation of the Association were the basis for the construction of the constitution. They were the foundation for the subsequent formal policies and procedures which generated into a social structure with its own culture where certain other voices, views and ways of being were excluded. It is not feasible to complain that the early membership should be held socially responsible and accountable. It is clear however, that whether the grievances were articulated or not, the interests of many others appear to have been harmed by the AASW's exercise of power. There may not be the opportunity now to restructure this Association from its core values and beliefs onwards

because they are embedded in a more complex web of power relations constituting the broader structure of society. Further, until the actual harm done to those with unarticulated grievances can be described - until that story can be told - and until their alternative values and beliefs can be acknowledged as existing and legitimate, there will be no basis on which to seek apology or reconciliation.

Analysis of the Field of Interaction

The analysis of Thompson and Lukes verifies Bourdieu's position that any social formation is structured by way of a hierarchically organized series of fields, each defined as a structured space with its own laws of functioning and its own relations of force independent of those of politics and the economy (1993). One can clearly see from the analysis that it is less economic capital and more symbolic and cultural capital that separates the positions agents and groups of agents hold within the field in relation to each other within this field of interaction. It can further be seen that the positions of individuals and groups change over time. This changes not only the structure of the field but shifts the 'rules of the game' so that different strategies and 'game plans' need to be developed in order to maintain relative position (including new alliances). The other key element the analysis has exposed is that: the values and beliefs which underpin the definitions of relative position, the field, the aim of the game and the meaning of the web of interactions also become strained. If a group holds on to its values and beliefs as immutable and does not reinterpret them and consequently change structure, it risks destruction from within. Further, although the interests of others may be harmed by the structures, processes and relative positions in the field held by one group or individual, it does not mean that those fundamental values and beliefs will be altered. Nor does it mean that the structures and processes will ultimately change for the greater benefit of those who have been hitherto harmed (consciously or unconsciously).

The case study confirms too, that the *illusio* leads to a consensual validation and collective belief that everything that takes place is sensible. Where it is not, then those with higher cultural and symbolic capital (Lawrence, Hamilton-Smith, Benjamin, Good, Parker, Brennan, etc) step in to provide the sense of understanding. Their strategies include failing to reveal relevant facts or deeming some points less relevant or important - inadmissible.

The possession of the essential *habitus* for engagement in this field, too is clear. Welfare workers, those trained outside universities or in non-accredited courses, students and client groups lack the requisite *habitus* to permit 'player status'. To carry the *metaphor* of the game further, these people can even be locked out of the spectator arena (or perhaps, they so lack the *habitus* that many would not go to a 'game' even if given a free ticket). Those too, who challenge the fundamental values and beliefs either through alternative class and political analysis have on at least one occasion left the game - quit. These people, however can be spectators, can comment, can understand the rules and can explain the rules to others. You can remove the player from the game but not the game from the player.

The *habitus* is earned through access to tertiary study in social work, social welfare and more generally the social sciences. It can be earned also through personal voluntarism in the service arenas of social welfare, in provision of welfare to others, in competing for funding and services, in engagement in policy development and sometimes from being a recipient of service. To play in the 'A team' one needs at least: a university degree in social work in an accredited course, a demonstrated commitment to the profession, the education of future professionals and/or practice or, be engaged in the policy, funding and employment of social work and social welfare personnel. Acceleration to higher positions within the game comes through the possession of increased cultural and symbolic capital gained over time. This process of *officialization* assists in developing the strategies, structures, procedures and arguments which can turn self-interest into disinterested and publicly avowable interests (for example the *rationalization* of the make-up for SAIT graduates as being in the community's best interest).

One of the central presuppositions of the field (*doxa*) is that social work *per se* and the social work profession in particular, is in the common good. No one doubts that child protection and slum clearance are in the common good. Whether these and other equally esteemed functions are the sole purview of social work and the social work profession is another matter.

The profoundly buried structures and the mechanisms that ensure their reproduction are firstly the values and beliefs asserted by those who established the AASW and those who reinforced them during the years that followed. In the process of this reinforcement, the profession attempted to ensure that the separation between social work and social welfare was maintained in the hearts and minds of the membership and then translated into ways and means of ensuring the reproduction of these views within tertiary training and employment. Three things drew

university administrations into having an interest in the AASW's determination of course quality. The requirements that there be a core of qualified social workers present in every training establishment; the courses be accredited by the AASW and, that the only way into Commonwealth Public Service employment and in some State Public Service employment was through accredited courses. But, the AASW is neither all-powerful nor all-knowing. Their legitimacy and authority rests on others within the field who will choose to comply with or defy their influence.

The most successful at defying the AASW's influence are those with higher social capital, Ministers of Education, overseas experts, researchers for Commonwealth Government Commissions of Inquiry, Heads of Schools of established and revered universities and, mass dissent of members (the pressure of numbers). Great grievance or issues of high moral fabric from less culturally and symbolically powerful groups or individuals like students, migrants and Aboriginals will be less successful unless persons with high cultural and symbolic capital from *within* the AASW champion the cause.

Consider the position of the students at Sydney University. Unless there had been within the AASW and PEAC people who were willing to acknowledge the students' complaints and talk with them, taking their case seriously there would have been an instant accreditation of the Sydney University course. The whole accreditation process would have gone ahead if the students had not sent their statement to the Federal Council Meeting - clearly there was on the same plane as Margaret Lewis, a member of the AASW who was willing to act as messenger.

For some members of PEAC, the students were seen to be third parties to the issue of the accreditation of schools and had no interest relevant to the AASW. This denial of their interest serves also to enable them to be excluded from observer status at PEAC meeting if they were informed of the venue and schedule. Once their interest was accepted, their statements could be judged inadmissible or ill-formed and excluded from consideration. Therefore, even when there is a grievance, a great grievance and perceived by others to be so, it takes effort of the active members of the Association to admit that information and give it due consideration. Without the support of other academics and practitioners from within and without, there would have been no power for the students.

In the case of social welfare, only Peter Einspinner on PEAC taught in a social welfare course. There is no documentary evidence that he championed or advocated for social welfare within the AASW - he was more conservative in his approach than this. So, unless social welfare had made direct submissions to the AASW and ensured that they had friends within, they would continue to be deemed to have no interest, no grievance and therefore not be harmed by any AASW decisions which could conceivably affect them. The AASW was a more 'closed shop' than its membership had consciousness to perceive.

Finally the analysis reveals that there is a failure of those persons within the field, whether they be AASW members or not, to see that the hierarchy and structure even within the AASW is an arbitrary social construction which serves the interests of some groups rather than others. In the broader field, the relationship between social work and social welfare is equally arbitrary. The relationships between the AASW and government, the public service(s), universities, academics, students, employers, clients and communities are also arbitrary. The foundations supporting the continuation of these structures are less accessible for they go to the core of our values and beliefs about the function and role of these groups and institutions within complex societies.

Critical Analysis

The first and most important point to make is that all the people involved existed in a social structure within a pre-existing field of social interactions. There were significant class, gender and power issues operating in Australia in the period preceding and leading up to the development of the Australian Association of Social Workers. Values and beliefs held by the players reflected the social environment and experience of the actors at that time. Values and beliefs were formed not only through primary socialization but also through the experience of practice, access to tertiary education, direct advice from intellectuals and esteemed senior colleagues from overseas. Once the core values and beliefs were shared with a significant sized group they moved towards organization. The development of the constitution of the AASW was a structuring structure.²⁹¹ It developed processes and a medium through which the primary values, beliefs and concepts could be communicated and reinforced.

The use of Thompson's analysis of ideology and the modes and strategies used, enable us to see how the values and beliefs of the Association were cemented and sustained through periods of external social change. The use of Lukes shows how the developing structure, the processes, the policies and the principles (based in the values and beliefs of the Association and its members) ensured that challenges, both internal and external, were minimized. It further shows that the individuals involved were rarely deliberately exclusive or actively hostile; for the most part they honestly believed that what they were doing was in the community's best interest and the structure in which they were embedded limited their choice of action. There was a considerable lack of consciousness of other perspectives and an inability to alter the priorities of the values they held.

While this could be said to be individual inadequacy and evidence of inattention to research and critical analysis - the under-valuing of some academics, social welfare and minority groups - the analysis by Bourdieu bring us back. We are challenged to remember that the Association, its committees and its members were embedded in other social structures. They inhabited a society at the time which valued and reinforced their core, conservative beliefs through cultural and symbolic power vested in universities and academia, government, other professional groups and

²⁹¹The constitution forms an organisational structure and set of standard processes. To get issues or matters attended to by the AASW, those items need to be presented in a manner consistent with the structural form prescribed by the constitution. Hence the structure of the issue and the way in which it is presented is in fact controlled by the constitution. The constitution therefore is a structuring structure.

the stratified labour system. This is most evident at the times when power and influence was exercised and failed.

The findings of this study of the AASW therefore, reinforce Bourdieu's view (1993:6)

that each field is relatively autonomous but structurally homologous with the others. Its structure, at any given moment, is determined by the relations between the positions agents occupy in the field

The answer to the question put, is found therefore in the fundamental culture and beliefs of these people in Australia during the period under study who adhered to older sets of values and conceptual systems that limited change and reproduced a particular hierarchy of values.

The old concepts of profession continue to be currency. The social structures and decision-making processes used earlier in this century are those used today. Authority is still determined in relation to economic, symbolic and cultural capital and the decisions on what deserves distinction are not made by the least powerful. They are made by those who can manipulate information organize and mobilize others, construct structuring structures and use modes of communication which are valued highly by other capital rich individuals and groups.

This case study has shown what the AASW did, how they did it and the meaning that it had for those involved. It shows also some of the things these people could not perceive and the hidden consequences of some of the decisions, non-decisions, actions and inactions in which they engaged. It is therefore, in Geertz's terms, a cultural analysis. The analyst has sought to make sense of actions and expressions, to specify the meaning they have for the actors whose actions they are and, in so doing, to venture some suggestions, some contestable considerations about the society of which these actions and expressions are a part (Thompson, 1996:131-2).

Even a culture and society in which we reside and of which we are members (and have been socialized into), can be incomprehensible and full of contradictions for us. Lack of transparency abounds because there are political and power games afoot. Actions which depower others masquerade as fighting for status or freedom or something else. We believe in the opinions and the views of those within our social web - that is, those arenas where values are shared - who have higher status, power and distinction. Where we do not share values and beliefs and, where the machinations of others are as incomprehensible as cricket to a member of the Ik in Uganda, we are outside the field of interaction. We have no voice, have no access, cannot critique and

have no way of knowing why we should - to us the game is an absurdity. If, as a result of being so locked out of the game we are harmed - denied resources, treated as less valuable and we discover this, there is a way in. We need to have an insider explain it and advocate for our entry and involvement (even if only in the grand-stand). Eventually, one of us will be able to articulate the contradictions and the absurdities and perhaps change the rules and format of the game.²⁹²

Intellectuals within the social work profession in Australia in the period under examination, appear to be the major holders of the cultural and symbolic capital. Where they are also senior academics and academic administrators they represent organizations with immense economic capital as well. Universities, although independent and autonomous represent a significant power-bloc to an organization like a professional association. The reciprocal relationship between the universities and the Association would be much weaker if the universities dealt directly with the employers (Emerson in Blau, 1974). They need only to ensure that course quality was sufficient for graduates to gain employment in their chosen field worldwide. The lack of registration for social workers and the lack of a truly unique body of knowledge possessed by the profession gives universities the capacity to do this.²⁹³

The intellectuals and the Schools of Social Work would appear to have a vested interest in the maintenance of the reciprocal relationship. The universities are in fact more powerful. If the Association disappeared tomorrow the universities would remain and would train and educate people for practice in the field of social welfare (generally). In asking the question what is in it then for the universities, the answer remains accreditation and research. That, for better or worse the university gains some form of recognition of the quality of the course it supplies which then enables it to attract students and compete against other educational providers. The Association, in this way provides a service to the universities. A university course or department which has accreditation from a recognized professional body, can call on that external assessment of quality when applying for research grants. Moreover the professional association

²⁹²Similarly you cannot sociologically analyse what is going on without a classical sociological education. You cannot formally analyse parts of society without attending to history and you cannot move towards the future without struggling with the demons of the past, accepting them as part of the heritage of now. Just like we cannot move on with race relations and reconciliation in Australia until the non Aboriginal population recognises that its wealth and success was predicated on the subjugation of indigenous people. Where social work is now is predicated partly on the subjugation of welfare. The future does not need to continue the pathway of the past. Whether we can reflect on the current conditions and develop a path towards reconciliation and a new base of power and influence which will put the needs of the community and the most disadvantaged members of the community first is less certain. It may be dependent on major changes to the valuations which constitute or determine symbolic and cultural capital.

²⁹³If you see social welfare as separate.

provides access to research being published and broadcast through its journals and conferences.²⁹⁴ There is therefore a reciprocal exchange between the universities and the Association.²⁹⁵

One of the ways Emerson (in Blau 1974) identifies to ensure continued dependence of others on the service one has to supply is by barring access to other suppliers through a monopoly. In Australia, the AASW holds the monopoly on accrediting social work courses. The individual universities however, do not have a monopoly on the provision of social work courses and the loss of a course's accreditation causes considerable harm and distress to students. The university is deemed responsible for this because they have greater capacity through their possession of cultural and economic capital. As stated earlier, in 1965 there were 17 professional associations in the UK responsible for accreditation of courses. In the USA, there are multiple accrediting bodies for specific fields and employers. Accreditation is costly and time consuming to the institution and the accrediting body. From the universities' perspective, it is in their best interest to have to deal with only one accreditation process and so, they are unlikely to promote the genesis of additional accrediting agencies.

The findings of the study indicate that there are fewer grounds for identifying specific people as members of an élite except for the Executive. Parts of the AASW waxed and waned (Federal Industrial Committee, Professional Education and Accreditation Committee) but only the legitimacy of the Federal Executive (and in particular the Federal President) remained stable. What we have with the AASW is in fact a caste system. A closed élite where the leadership is reserved for those who come from a few select groups (families, tertiary institutions). It can help the analyst understand why the interests of the 'untouchables' are not within the conscious awareness of those in decision-making positions and how the socialization of these people and the culture in which they exist limits their world-view.

This study provides a key to the undoing of this blindness. If, for example social welfare, wants to be seen as an equal player or acknowledged and respected by the AASW with a resultant change in the educational structure, 'the rules of the game' have to be changed. This can only

²⁹⁴Study on the role and function of the AASW journal or journals of professional associations in general could expand this issue.

²⁹⁵Association membership is always considered or noted in applications for academic posts but no position has been denied as a result of being eligible to join but choosing not to join.

happen when the values and beliefs underpinning the AASW are changed causing sufficient structural change within the AASW to secure structural change within the field of interaction.

It is as hard to imagine the AASW admitting social welfare graduates and working to have social welfare courses articulate with social work courses as an integrated whole as it is to imagine the Australian Parliament giving up the debating system and using Aboriginal consensus-based decision-making processes. Therefore, while the AASW needs to be apprised of the alternative view, the changes need to begin elsewhere. As Gramsci (1971) pointed out by the time ideology has changed to benefit the least powerful we will exist in a utopia and there will be little point arguing about changing the material conditions. Therefore, the material relations between groups need to begin to change first and that will shift the ideology of those currently in power. This change in material relations comes as the less powerful group's size, level of social organization and resource control increases. In evaluating resource control not only the actual but perceived resource control needs to be considered because some of the resources will be based in symbolic and cultural capital (Michels, 1962). As the less powerful group develops stronger and stronger alliances with other groups which are assessed to be powerful, for example intellectuals,²⁹⁶ they can gain or establish a position within the field of social interaction where they are actually more powerful than the original group who opposed them. There is therefore considerable symbolic power in the relationships one develops with other groups, institutions and individuals. Being 'well-connected', well-networked and developing these connections is an exercise of power which can be transferred into symbolic, cultural and economic capital.

On reflection and analysis, this is how the story began in Australia: a group of well-connected, well-networked people - mostly women, supporting each other.

²⁹⁶ Or international monitoring bodies like the International Federation of Social Workers or International NGO bodies dealing with specific issues e.g., child welfare, women's issues etc.