



Journal of In-Service Education

ISSN: 1367-4587 (Print) 1747-5082 (Online) Journal homepage: <https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rjie19>

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To cite this article: Geoff Whitty (2000) Teacher professionalism in new times, Journal of In-Service Education, 26:2, 281-295, DOI: [10.1080/13674580000200121](https://doi.org/10.1080/13674580000200121)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13674580000200121>



Published online: 20 Dec 2006.



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Teacher Professionalism in New Times

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ABSTRACT This article, originally presented as a paper to a conference on teacher professionalism and the state in the twenty-first century, begins by discussing some key ideas in sociological literature relevant to that theme. It then considers how far such ideas can be used to help understand recent developments in teacher education. It concludes by speculating on possible futures for teacher professionalism.

Sociological Perspectives on Professionalism

Both 'professionalism' and 'the state', two key terms in the title of the Standing Committee for the Education and Training of Teachers (SCETT) conference on teacher professionalism and the state in the twenty-first century, are very much the concern of sociologists. This article begins by drawing on some of the things sociologists say about professionalism and the state in relation to the current condition of teachers, thus contributing to the first conference aim of exploring the research and thinking relevant to teachers as professionals in schools, colleges and universities. It then tries to relate some of these same ideas to the more specific research the author has been involved in on teacher education over the past 10 years. Finally, it considers what form of teacher professionalism might be appropriate for the twenty-first century, the third element of the conference theme.

Many of you will know that sociologists in the 1950s and 1960s tried to establish what features an occupation should have in order to be termed a profession. So lists were compiled of the characteristics that any group worthy of the label 'profession' needed to have. A typical list included such items as the use of skills based on theoretical knowledge, education and training in those skills certified by examination, a code of professional conduct oriented towards the 'public good' and a powerful professional organisation (Millerson, 1964). Occupations that did not

entirely meet such criteria – and these usually included teaching – were given the title ‘quasi-’ or ‘semi-professions’ (Etzioni, 1969). The attempt to gain the characteristics associated with professions was usually called ‘professionalization’ – an occupational strategy sometimes termed the ‘professional project’. Some aspects of teachers’ professional project have been apparently successful, others less so. Some would say that, for schoolteachers, the arrival of the General Teaching Council (GTC) marks the turning point and that, after a century of striving, teaching in England is on the brink of becoming a *bona fide* profession.

However, in commonsense terms, we have talked about the teaching profession for a long time. We have not tended to say that teachers in Scotland are a profession and those in England are not. Contemporary sociologists have tended to agree, arguing that their forebears were seduced by the models of medicine and the law, and have therefore imposed a normative view of what it means to be a professional as *the* essential definition of a profession. Instead, they suggest that a profession is whatever people think it is at any particular time and that can vary. So the fact that we normally talk about the teaching profession means that teaching is a profession, even when we cannot tick off those core characteristics listed earlier.

Gerard Hanlon, whose ideas I shall return to later, argues that ‘professionalism is a shifting, rather than a concrete phenomenon’ and states baldly that:

when I discuss professionals I am talking about groups such as doctors, academics, teachers, accountants, lawyers, engineers, civil servants, etc., that is those groups commonly thought of as professional by the lay public, academics, the professionals themselves and so on. (p. 45)

It may then be more productive to explore the characteristic of teaching as an occupation in the here and now, rather than asking whether it lives up to some supposed ideal. Indeed, Eliot Freidson (1983), probably the dominant American sociologist of professions in recent years, argues for seeing a profession as ‘an empirical entity about which there is little ground for generalising’ (p. 33).

This has implications for current debates about teacher professionalism in the twenty-first century. Some critics have argued that teaching is being ‘de-professionalised’ as a result of recent education reforms. But the proponents of the reforms might wish to characterise the process as one of ‘re-professionalisation’, making teacher professionalism more in keeping with the needs of a new era. However, if we are standing back from our own assumptions and preferences, and adopting the stance of sociologist, it is probably best to see all these various positions as *competing* versions of teacher professionalism for the twenty-first century, rather than seeing any one as fitting an

essentialist definition of professionalism and others as detracting from it. The particular version different people support in practice will, of course, depend on their values and their broader political perspectives, as well as the way in which they are positioned by the reforms.

So where does the state come into this? Professional status can also depend on the sort of bargain an occupation has struck with the state – what is sometimes called its ‘professional mandate’. Traditionally, professions were independent and self-governing, and individual professionals have often been self-employed. However, in industrial societies today, most professionals are directly employed and/or regulated by the state. As Dale (1989) puts it, some professions have a licensed form of autonomy, others regulated autonomy. Medicine and law, and arguably even nursing, have to some extent been licensed to manage their own affairs. The teaching profession in England has hitherto not been formally licensed in this way, but in the 1960s teachers were seen to have a considerable degree of *de facto* autonomy. Indeed, Le Grand (1997) suggests that in England, during the so-called ‘golden age of teacher control’ from 1944 to the mid-1970s, parents of children in state schools were expected to trust the professionals and accept that teachers knew what was best for their children. The state did not seem to want to intervene, even though effectively it paid teachers’ salaries.

However, a view emerged in the 1970s that teachers had abused this licensed autonomy to the detriment of their pupils and society. Public choice theorists argued that the behaviour of public servants and professionals could actually be better understood if they were assumed to be largely self-interested. Many professional groups, and particularly the ‘liberal educational establishment’ of the ‘swollen state’ of postwar social democracy, came to be regarded as ill-adapted to be either agents of the state or entrepreneurial service providers in a marketised civil society. All this supported the shift to ‘regulated’ autonomy, involving a move away from the notion that the teaching profession should have a professional mandate to act on behalf of the state in the best interests of its citizens to a view that teachers (and other professions) need to be subjected to the rigours of the market and/or greater control and surveillance on the part of the re-formed state. So, in the 1970s, we had the William Tyndale Inquiry, Jim Callaghan’s Ruskin College speech, the so-called Great Debate and, in the 1980s and 1990s, Sir Keith Joseph, Kenneth Baker, John Patten and Gillian Shephard.

Now, we have David Blunkett et al and we have something of a paradox. At one level, we have even more regulation of teachers than under the Conservatives. Yet, at the same time, with the GTC, we appear to have a shift back to licensed autonomy and on a more formal basis than ever before. Or do we? We don’t yet know quite what the GTC will turn out to be and, not surprisingly, most teachers probably think it has some positive and some negative features. What does seem clear is that

even licensed autonomy is not what it used to be, as even the doctors (if not yet the lawyers) are finding out. This applies both to individual professionals and to the organised profession. Effectively, as my colleague Basil Bernstein might put it, the state's 'modality' of control has been changing, so that it can be strong even while appearing to devolve power.

Particularly helpful in understanding this is Neave's (1988) concept of the 'evaluative state', where what matters most is not the process by which goals or targets are achieved, but the output. In the education system, as elsewhere, there has been 'a rationalisation and wholesale redistribution of functions between centre and periphery such that the centre maintains overall strategic control through fewer, but more precise, policy levers [including] the operationalisation of criteria relating to "output quality"' (p. 11). Rather than leading to a withering away of the state, the state withdraws 'from the murky plain of overwhelming detail, the better to take refuge in the clear and commanding heights of strategic "profiling"' (p. 12).

For teachers, this involves much clearer specification of what they are expected to achieve, rather than leaving it to professional judgement. However, it is not entirely true that, as Neave implies, the state thereby abandons any interest in how they achieve these things. The specification of outputs itself shapes what teachers actually do, so the state uses its levers to influence what we might call the 'content' of teachers' professionalism – or what is sometimes called teachers' 'professionalism'. In the days when they had to study such things as sociology of education, generations of trainee teachers used to struggle with the distinction between 'professionalism' and 'professionalism', introduced into the British literature by Eric Hoyle (1974). Hoyle used the term 'professionalism' to refer to 'those strategies and rhetorics employed by members of an occupation in seeking to improve status, salary and conditions'. However, he used the term 'professionalism' to refer to the 'knowledge, skills and procedures employed by teachers in the process of teaching'. There are now not only struggles over professionalism in the conventional sense, but also struggles over professionalism. The state has taken a pro-active part in this, both positively (in the sense of what it should consist of) and negatively (in terms of what should be discouraged if not outlawed).

What does the struggle between the teaching profession (or at least the so-called liberal educational establishment) and the state over the nature of teachers' professionalism involve? Partly, it is a struggle between 'restricted' and 'extended' professionalism, another distinction that Hoyle (1974) established in the literature – though what might be included under each category has probably changed somewhat since 1974. Andy Hargreaves (1994a) suggests that the conventional notion of professionalism is one 'which is grounded in notions of esoteric

knowledge, specialist expertise and public status' and that this is being superseded by one which involves 'the exercise of discretionary judgement within conditions of unavoidable and perpetual uncertainty' (p. 19). Michael Eraut (1994) similarly emphasises a whole range of 'process knowledge' that involves making judgements as the hallmark of the modern-day professional. Yet some people argue that current moves towards competence or 'standards' based training for teachers, as sponsored by the government and the Teacher Training Agency, point in entirely the opposite direction by actually reducing the amount of control and discretion open to teachers, both individually and collectively. Jones & Moore (1993) have argued that such developments serve to undermine the dominant discourse of liberal humanism within the teaching profession and replace it with one of technical rationality, while Adams & Tulasiewicz (1995) have complained that teachers are being turned into technicians, rather than 'reflective professionals'.

One way of understanding this apparent contradiction might be to see it as part of the inevitable heterodoxy of 'postmodernity', though I have counselled elsewhere against exaggerating the extent to which we have moved decisively into such a condition (Whitty & Power, 1999). Perhaps the two approaches reflect the juxtaposition of what Ronald Barnett calls 'two grand readings of our modern age'. On the one hand, there is 'a proliferation of forms of knowledge and experience', on the other a 'tendency ... to favour forms of knowledge of a particular – instrumental and operational – kind' (Barnett, 1994, p. 17). Barnett himself has suggested that 'operationalism' is a 'super-dominant tendency in higher education, which is reflective of ... wider social forces' (p. 18).

It is also possible that different elements of the profession are developing different forms of professionalism/professionality. Indeed, the state may even be encouraging this, with some members of the profession being given more autonomy and scope for flexibility than others, but only once they have met what might be termed a 'loyalty test'. Hanlon (1998) suggests that virtually all professions are becoming fragmented, with some members enthusiastically adopting the changing agenda of the state and corporate employers, while others are resisting it. He argues that, in the period up to about 1980, most professions (and particularly those serving the welfare state in the postwar period) developed a 'social service' form of professionalism in which professional experts were trusted to work in the best interests of everyone and the resources were made available by the state to help them do so. He shows how this is being challenged by what he calls a 'commercialised professionalism' in the public as well as the private sector, which responds more to the needs of profitability and international competitiveness and therefore privileges the needs of some clients over others. Similar developments have been evident within education as a

result of policies of 'marketisation' (Whitty et al, 1998). Gewirtz et al (1995) identify two traditions on the part of education managers, which they term 'bureau-professional' (or 'welfarist') and 'new managerialist'. The latter relates to the 'new public management' emphasis on such things as explicit standards/measures of performance, greater emphasis on output controls, the break-up of large entities into smaller units, market-type mechanisms, the introduction of competition and a stress on professionalised 'commercial-style' management (Bottery, 1996).

This shift of emphasis has led to changes in the nature and extent of the 'trust' that is put in professionals in the public sector on the part of the state and, to some extent, the public. Those who are prepared to 'manage' on behalf of their employers may gain enhanced status and rewards, but those pursuing the welfarist agenda are no longer trusted and have to be controlled more directly. Hanlon suggests that the clash between the two traditions will ultimately lead to a split in the professional ranks. Within teaching, there is still a struggle for hegemony in a potentially united profession, but also signs of possible fracturing along various fault lines.

The state is unlikely to be neutral even if the battles are actually fought out in the professional arena, although there are different elements even within the state and probably different views within the government itself. One reading of the dominant tendency is that it is preparing the leading cadres of the profession for leadership in the new marketised culture of schooling, while others have to be prevented from perpetuating an outmoded social service version of professionalism even if they cannot be won to the new agenda. In these circumstances, one would expect that new teachers would be given a rather restricted version of professionalism/professionality, but also opportunities to demonstrate their potential to join the leading cadres. Those continuing teachers who, through lack of competence or will, did not pass through the performance pay threshold would be limited to a restricted and highly regulated mode of professionalism. Those who did progress satisfactorily might be given licensed autonomy and more discretion in defining the nature of their professionalism.

One can see vestiges of virtually all the developments I have referred to here, but it is not yet clear how they will play out in the coming years.

Modes of Professionalism in Teacher Education

So, if these are some of the things that sociologists of the professions and of teaching say that might be relevant to what is happening to the teaching profession, what does empirical research tell us? Here, I shall limit myself to my own area of research on initial teacher education, though similar questions could be asked about INSET and training for

Headship. I shall be drawing on the Modes of Teacher Education (or MOTE) projects [1] and on a book based on them, written with Furlong et al (2000). Some of you will have been involved in these projects, either through the national surveys of all courses conducted in 1990–91 and 1995–96, or the more detailed fieldwork carried out with 50 courses. The research was undertaken against a background of rapidly changing policy from Circular 24/89, 9/92, 14/93 onwards. Since its completion in 1996, the pace of reform has not slackened – with ever more demanding forms of inspection, a national curriculum for teacher training and league tables.

The vast majority of these policy initiatives on initial teacher education were framed with the explicit or implicit aspiration of changing the nature of teacher professionalism, even though this had at times to be pursued alongside two other policy concerns that were also significant in influencing the policies actually produced – namely, the imperative of maintaining an adequate supply of well-qualified entrants to the teaching profession; and the aspiration on the part of successive Secretaries of State for Education to establish greater accountability for the content and quality of initial teacher education.

Recent governments of both political hues seem to have been convinced by New Right pressure groups that teacher educators are at the heart of a liberal educational establishment, which is wedded to outdated modes of professionalism and professionality. The preferred strategy of the neo-liberal marketisers has been deregulation of the profession to allow schools to go into the market and recruit graduates (or even non-graduates) without professional training and prepare them on an apprenticeship basis in schools (Lawlor, 1990). Deregulation also had some appeal to neo-conservative critics who detected a collectivist (and even crypto-Marxist) ideological bias among teacher educators in higher education. Thus, for example, an editorial in the *Spectator* argued that the removal of:

the statutory bar on state schools hiring those with no teacher training qualification ... would enable head teachers to find people ... who at the moment are deterred by the prospect of having to waste a year undergoing a period of Marxist indoctrination. (Spectator, 27 February, 1993)

However, neo-conservatives have also been concerned with ‘enemies within’ the teaching profession as a whole as well as within teacher education, so they have usually supported state prescription of what trainee teachers should learn, rather than just leaving it to schools.

Both the neo-liberal and the neo-conservative elements of the New Right seem to have had their influence, but government policies have always been something of a compromise between them, as well as with other relevant (and sometimes irrelevant) interest groups. The Conservative government’s introduction of new routes into teaching and

the strategy of locating more and more elements of training in schools was partly (though not wholly) a reflection of neo-liberal views. However, the government did not pursue a policy of total deregulation or a wholesale devolution of teacher training to the schools, despite significant moves in that direction. Instead, a combination of neo-conservative concerns and a modernising push for greater international competitiveness (Hickox, 1995) brought about an attempt to shape the content of teachers' professional knowledge through the introduction of a common list of competences or standards to be required of beginning teachers, regardless of the nature of the route by which they had achieved them.

These moves gave rise to charges that the government wanted to 'deprofessionalise' teaching. Thus, for example, Stuart Maclure (1993) suggested that the downgrading of university involvement in teacher education represented an attempt to dismantle the traditional defences of teaching as a profession. Other commentators felt that basing training in particular schools could limit the development of broader perspectives on education, and that specifying a limited range of competences would encourage restricted rather than extended professionalism. More charitable observers, though, argued that the government was trying to reform teacher education in order to 're-professionalise' teaching more in line with what it perceived as the needs of the twenty-first century. Indeed, some – including David Hargreaves (1994b) from within the teacher education establishment – regarded school-based training as signifying that the profession of school teaching had 'come-of-age' and was able to take responsibility for training its own. This view was shared by some of those enthusiasts within teaching who organised school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) schemes (Berrill, 1994).

One of the reasons why it is possible to regard the reforms in these different lights is that they appear to embody different, even contradictory, elements. Just as in education reform more generally, there seems to have been a dual strategy of devolving some responsibilities to schools at the same time as requiring more things from the centre. To some degree, schools and teachers appeared to have been 'empowered' to develop their own 'local' professionalisms. On the other hand, centrally specified competences and standards mean that local professional freedom is actually quite tightly constrained by the demands of the 'evaluative state'. Obviously, the work of the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) established in 1994 has been particularly significant here (Mahony & Hextall, 1996). Under the leadership of its first chief executive, Anthea Millett, the TTA has assisted the government in the development and codification of the earlier lists of competences into a detailed set of 'standards' for the award of Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), creating a national curriculum for initial teacher education, policed by OFSTED inspection. Although these proposals originated in the last years of the

Major government, they were accepted and extended by the New Labour government elected in May 1997.

To some extent, such agencies of the evaluative state represent a shift away from conventional techniques of coordination and control on the part of large-scale bureaucratic state forms and their replacement by a set of 'discursive, legislative, fiscal, organisational and other resources' (Rose & Miller, 1992, p. 189). Yet, these apparently 'postmodern' forms not only impact upon organisational subjectivities and professional identities, they also entail some fairly direct modes of control. Furthermore, particularly under New Labour, some of the TTA's and OFSTED's activity is reminiscent of the old-style 'bureaucratic' state, rather than the 'steering at a distance' associated with the evaluative state. Indeed, some of the TTA's key functions have now been taken back under the direct control of the Department for Education and Employment, though others may be devolved to the GTC in the future.

One of the problems of much of the writing about New Right ideology and state projects is that it tends to be based purely on reading the discourse, rather than studying the effects and resistances that constitute ideology-in-practice. So, in the MOTE research, we were interested in the extent to which the reforms in initial teacher education were actually bringing about changes in the prevailing view of what it meant to be a professional teacher. Landman & Ozga (1995) have suggested that, although successive government Circulars have shifted power from higher education institutions to central government and its associated agencies, teacher education has remained open to 'producer capture'. They also argue that, even though there has been a shift from 'open-ended requirements ... to the rather more technical competences' (p. 32), there has remained 'room for constructive interpretation' (p. 35).

The MOTE findings provide some support for this position. We looked at the extent to which the professional autonomy of teacher educators in both higher education institutions and schools was constrained by the reforms and the extent to which the government's requirements were serving to reshape the professionalism of trainee teachers. Both our national surveys asked course leaders of undergraduate and postgraduate courses whether their courses were designed on the basis of a particular view of teaching. By the time of our second survey, we were particularly interested in the extent to which the existence of an official list of competences, which has often been criticised for embodying technical rationality and neglecting more reflective and critical competences, was actually changing the model of the teacher espoused by teacher educators. In 1995–96, we found that 46% of courses adhered to the notion of the reflective practitioner compared with 57% at the time of the previous survey in 1990–91. Meanwhile, those specifically espousing the 'competency' model had doubled, but only to 11%. Thus, even if it was somewhat less dominant

than it had been five years previously, 'reflective practice', rather than technical rationality, was still by far the most popular discourse of professionalism within university- and college-based (and indeed school-centred) courses.

Another question on our second national survey asked respondents to choose three words from a list that would best characterise the sort of teacher their course aimed to produce. Despite some resistance to this question, the responses beyond 'reflective', 'professional' and 'competent', were quite varied. However, it is noteworthy that some of the terms that New Right critics often associate with HEI-based teacher education – such as 'child-centred' and 'critical' – were amongst the least popular choices. Unfortunately, we did not have a similar question on the earlier survey to compare this with. So the answers could either suggest that such aspirations were never as strong as critics suggested, or a recent drift towards the more conservative interpretations of reflective practice (Zeichner & Liston, 1987) or merely a degree of politically inspired caution in responding to the question!

Despite the continuing adherence to reflective practice, the actual use of competences in course planning, implementation and assessment increased significantly between our two surveys, well beyond the 11% of courses that explicitly espoused a 'competency' model. So how can the use of competences be reconciled with the continuing attachment to the reflective practitioner model? Our second survey showed that only about 8% of courses restricted themselves to using the competences specified in the government circulars, while over 75% had chosen to supplement the official lists with additional competences of their own. This was consistent with our fieldwork that indicated that there was little continuing objection to the idea of competences among course leaders, but only because they felt that reflective competences could be added to the official list in order to sustain a broader definition of professionalism. So course leaders appeared to be able to defend extended notions of teacher professionalism while still conforming to government policy.

However, Landman & Ozga (1995) suggest that 'teacher education and training is vulnerable to the combined effects of financial stringency, devolution of budgetary control to individual schools and enhanced managerialism'. Indeed, they suspect that these might succeed where prescription by Circular has failed. The MOTE research suggests that, although both forms of control have certainly been in evidence, definitions of professionalism more rooted in the traditions of the profession have survived alongside the newer requirements, albeit within limits largely determined by the state.

Towards a Democratic Professionalism?

Up to this point, I have tried to stand back, and examine current developments in teaching and teacher education with the eye of a sociologist. In this final section of the article, while still drawing upon sociological insights, I shall venture some opinions about what might be desirable directions for teacher professionalism and professionalism in the new millennium.

As far as initial teacher education is concerned, the combination of school-based training and officially specified standards seems likely to confine the common elements of teacher professionalism increasingly to an officially prescribed national curriculum for teacher education, with a variety of 'local' professionalisms at the margins. At more advanced levels, the profession as a whole may well become more differentiated and stratified. Although such developments might be characterised as having a certain 'postmodern' cachet, it seems to me that a healthy teaching profession will require continuing efforts to maintain a more broadly defined sense of common professional identity. Perhaps the GTC will be able to deliver that, though not if it merely tries to defend conventional definitions of teacher professionalism. Nor, I would argue, if it merely seeks to mimic the 'old' professionalisms of law and medicine. However, any attempt to develop an alternative conception of teacher professionalism will surely require the mobilisation of broadly based political support and not just professional partnership.

This is because, in recent years, governments and the media have encouraged the development of a 'low trust' relationship between society and its teachers, while the constant attacks on teacher educators show no sign of abating. In this context, we have to take seriously some of the charges of our critics who argue that we have abused our professional mandate and pursued our own self-interest at the expense of those less powerful than ourselves – and, in so doing, sometimes inadvertently contributed to social exclusion. Furthermore, the profession itself has not always moved to enhance its wider legitimacy. The defence of the education service has too often been conducted within the assumptions of the 'old' politics of education, which involved consultation between government, employers and unions but excluded whole constituencies – notably parents and business – to whom the New Right subsequently successfully appealed (Apple, 1996). We need to ask some fundamental questions about who has a legitimate right to be involved in defining teacher professionalism and to what end.

Conservative governments have tended to see the solution to 'producer capture' as lying in a combination of state control and market forces. New Labour has increased state regulation, while seeking to 'modernise' the profession and incorporate it into its own project through a new deal for teachers based on managerialist premises and performance-related pay (DfEE, 1998). At the same time, it has given the

teaching profession a GTC, but its long-term role and relationship to the TTA, OFSTED and the DfEE has still to be worked out. My own fear is that battle lines will be drawn up around the GTC between defenders of a traditional professional model and a statist one.

However, are state control and professional self-governance (or some combination of the two) the only modes of accountability open to us? Perhaps it is time instead to rethink the 'professional project'. In Australia, Knight et al (1993) have argued that there has always been a tension between the profession's claim to autonomy and a requirement that it be open to the needs and concerns of other groups in a democratic society. Like Ginsburg (1997) and Apple (1996), they suggest that there is a considerable tension between the professional project as conventionally conceived and the democratic project. However, they feel that changes in modern societies may now make it possible to resolve that tension and avoid both the teaching profession's and the state's forms of closure. Thus, for them, the alternative to state control is not traditional professionalism, but a 'democratic professionalism', which seeks to demystify professional work, and build alliances between teachers and excluded constituencies of students, parents and members of the community, on whose behalf decisions have traditionally been made either by professions or by the state. Celia Davies (1996) also identifies 'new professionalism' or a 'democratic professionalism' as relevant to a 'changed policy context and as a solution to some of the problems of professional power long identified in the academic literature' (p. 673).

So, if altruism and public service remain high on our professional agenda, the next re-formation of teacher professionalism will surely need to be one in which we harness teachers' professional expertise to a new democratic project for the twenty-first century. Foucault pointed out that what he called new forms of association, such as trade unions and political parties, emerged in the nineteenth century as a counter-balance to the prerogative of the state, and that they formed a seedbed for the development of new ideas on governance (Kritzman, 1988). We need to consider what modern versions of these collectivist forms of association might now be developed as a counter-balance not only to the prerogative of the state, but also to the prerogative of the market. In general terms, too little serious thinking of this type has yet been done, notwithstanding Giddens' recent espousal of a 'Third Way' that supersedes both social democracy and neo-liberalism (Giddens, 1998). Perhaps, in relation to democratic decision-making in education, the GTC and/or SCETT can take a lead in developing new forms of association that can provide a model for future modes of governance.

Throughout the last 20 years or so, teachers and teacher educators have been understandably preoccupied with issues of short-term survival in face of an unrelenting flow of new initiatives and inspections. It is now

time to begin working with others to develop approaches that relate not only to the legitimate aspirations of the profession, but also those of the wider society – and that must include those groups within civil society who have hitherto not been well-served either by the profession or by the state. At a rhetorical level, that does not seem a million miles from the thinking of the present-day unions or even New Labour. However, in the light of recent history, my question would be is either the state or the profession willing to face up to the challenge?

Acknowledgements

This article was originally presented as a paper at the Annual Conference of the Standing Committee for the Education and Training of Teachers on ‘Teacher Professionalism and the State in the 21st Century’, Dunchurch, Rugby, 26–28 November, 1999.

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Note

- [1] ‘Modes of Teacher Education: towards a basis for comparison’ (ESRC Project No. R000232810) and ‘Changing Modes of Professionalism? A Case Study of Teacher Education in Transition’ (ESRC Project No. R000234185). The generic title of MOTE was used informally for both projects.

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