

IMPERIAL COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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13th July 1971

Professor Peter Townsend,
2 Mansfield Place,
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Dear Peter,

I looked at your paper on the Older Worker over the weekend with considerable interest. I have one or two comments which may or may not be useful.

- John?*
- 1) Would it be possible to make your international comparisons of activity rates with a narrower breakdown over the age of 65, i.e. 65 to 70 etc.?
 - Not much.* 2) Page 5: Of course the situation in Britain is that the real value of the pension has increased in relation to earnings levels over the post war period and I would have thought that this might have been part of the story in Britain. In the United States the coverage of pension schemes has increased very considerably and again this might have contributed to a decline in activity rates.
 - 3) Page 6: I could not follow the argument at the end of the second paragraph on that page.
 - 4) Pages 9-10: It is not entirely clear to me why there should be any pressure to withdraw labour from age groups below 65 when substantial reductions in the male labour force of pensionable age are no longer possible.
 - 5) I suppose you cannot give activity rates, weeks of sickness, hours of work etc., broken both by age and even broad occupational categories? This applies also to the earnings data which you give on page 19 which is available for different occupational groups (see the use I made of this in the Fabian paper).
 - 6) I am probably being very dense but I don't follow the argument on page 25. Why should the shift towards expensive salaried employment be at the expense of anyone if total GNP is increasing?

I have been to see the Office of Manpower Economics and am going to think about whether it is possible to do anything for them. I will be in touch with you about this.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Dorothy Wedderburn