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Government Statement on the Report of the
Lockwood Committee

1. The Report on the facilities for University and other higher education is the most complete survey that has ever been undertaken in this country. Like the Robbins Report in Great Britain, it will enable the Government to make far-reaching plans for higher education with a clear sense of purpose and direction.
2. The basic assumption of the Lockwood Committee is that courses of higher education should be available to all those who are qualified by ability and attainment to pursue them and who wish to do so. The Government accepts this assumption and also the estimate made by the Committee of the consequent requirement of 8,000/9,000 full-time university places by 1973/74. The Government agrees further that it appears likely that at least 12,000 university places may well be needed by 1980 and is prepared to plan ahead with this in mind.
3. The Government will consult with the authorities of Queen's University on the implementation of policy for the future development of the University. The most important recommendation relates to the new role which the University will be asked to perform in the expansion of its work in Applied Science and Technology. This will involve the repeal of the Higher Technological Studies Act of 1954 and will therefore necessitate consultation also with the Belfast Corporation. The limitation of Queen's University to 7,000 full-time students, including not more than 6,000 undergraduates, will require the provision of a second university elsewhere.
4. The Lockwood Committee considers that immediate steps should be taken to establish a new university so that it may be able to admit the first students by October 1968 and to provide for a build up to 2,000/3,000 students by 1973 and 5,000/6,000 by 1980. The Committee has recommended the Coleraine area as the most suitable location for the new university and the Government accepts this recommendation subject only to the condition that a site approved by the University Grants Committee will be made available without delay. The Government expects that the four sponsoring local authorities will agree to present the site: any necessary legislation empowering site acquisition will be introduced.
5. The Government greatly regrets that there will be no continuing place as a university institution for Magee University College. This need not mean, however, that the College should cease to exist. The Government will urgently seek to find, in consultation with the College authorities, a continuing use for the College within the field of higher education. Arrangements must clearly also be made to safeguard so far as possible the interests of the existing staff and the students.
6. The Government accepts in principle the Committee's recommendations relating to the training of teachers, including the new conception of an Education Centre within the new university. It will consult with Queen's University and the authorities of the existing general training colleges and other interested parties, including the Management Committee of Stranmillis College, as to the best means of applying the recommendations relating to these colleges.