

Editorial

This issue celebrates the Silver Jubilee of the *Journal of Social Policy*. The last twenty-five years have seen major changes in the context and content of social policy both here in the United Kingdom and in other countries. It is significant that the current issue provides a broad and international perspective on social policies, in much the same way as the first issue, published in January 1972, which was a 'special' on Values in Social Policy. This contained contributions from authors who were already household names and the review editor was very prescient in selecting books for review destined to become classics familiar to generations of students and scholars.

The *JSP* has been published throughout by Cambridge University Press, as the official journal of the Social Administration Association, renamed the Social Policy Association virtually ten years ago. The change in name illustrates the changing focus of the field, reflected in the range of topics appearing in the *Journal*.

One of the many legacies of the work of the late Richard Titmuss, as eloquently recalled in an obituary (vol. 2, 3: 1973) by Brian Abel Smith, whose own death earlier this year we mourn, is the *JSP*. Richard Titmuss was the first chair of the editorial board in his capacity as Professor of Social Administration at the London School of Economics, and was succeeded in this role by David Donnison. The first editor was Garth Plowman (1972–6) who subsequently chaired the board and was followed as editor by Robert Pinker, a real stalwart of the *Journal*, who began as review editor and ended as chair – serving in these offices from 1972 to 1986.

An enduring characteristic of the *JSP* has been, with rare exception, continuity of office. Ken Judge was editor 1981–6, followed by Alan Deacon (1987–91), previously review editor for three years. Both these colleagues chaired the editorial board in due course, as did Joan Higgins 1988–90. Both Tony Rees (1977–83) and Michael Hill (1987–91) made substantial contributions as reviewing editors. As Digest Editors, Kathleen Slack (1972–84) and Jo Campling (1985–95) put in sterling service. Of the present editorial team, Jane Millar is ending

her five-year term as review editor, while we, following Gilbert Smith's brief term, the first joint editors, are in mid-stream, with digest editor Fran Bennett appointed for 1996, and chair of the board, John Ditch, from 1995.

The *Journal* has enjoyed, throughout, generous support from what is now the Social Policy Association, many of whose members have served on successive editorial boards. We also owe a debt of gratitude to the array of anonymous referees, without whose contribution the *Journal* could not maintain its high standards. The overseas editorial advisors also play an increasingly vital role, as social policy continues to cross national boundaries. Nor should we forget successive editorial and secretarial assistants who have toiled behind the scenes, nor, dare we say it, anyone who has donated some unpaid labour towards the efforts of their academic nearest and dearest.

In January 1995 (vol. 24, 1) we as editors reviewed the academic history of the *Journal* and commented on our current editorial policy. We continue to be over-abundantly supplied with good quality articles. Mindful of the insistence of the Editorial Board that we must minimise the delay between acceptance of articles and their ultimate publication, we have instituted a series of strict policies – anonymous refereeing within three weeks, resubmission of major revisions within three months. And we still have to reject, with great reluctance, good quality articles.

Now we look forward to at least another twenty-five more prosperous years for the *Journal* and further challenging developments in the analysis and critiques of social policies. We send warm greetings to our readers and contributors, and to our publishers involved in the production of the *Journal*.

Miriam David and Dulcie Groves
Editors of the *Journal of Social Policy*.