

PROFESSOR SIR BRIAN FOLLETT

Pro-Chancellor,

Professor Sir Brian Follett is Chairman of the Training and Development Agency for Schools. An internationally reputed academic, he was Vice-Chancellor of the University of Warwick for ten years. His 'Follett Reports' prompted increased funding to modernise university libraries. He has written other government reports including the inquiry into the 2001 outbreak of foot and mouth disease. Sir Brian has also distinguished himself in other national roles, and has received many high academic distinctions and awards.

Brian Follett was born in Bournemouth, where his father was Superintendent of the Post Office. From Bournemouth School he went with a scholarship to the University of Bristol, took a First and then a PhD. Since then in his own words, Sir Brian has never really left university. After a couple of years in the United States, where he began his lifelong work on work on animal reproduction, he returned to a series of increasingly senior posts, at Leeds, and Bangor, then back to Bristol for 15 years, as Professor of Zoology and Chairman of the School of Biological Sciences.

In these roles Brian skilfully balanced his work so that he could teach physiology to undergraduates - something he has done throughout his career and continues to do at Oxford - and pursue his research in reproductive biology and physiology, and especially the ways in animals use biological clocks in their brains to time their breeding cycles. For this he was elected to the UK's national academy of sciences, the Royal Society, in 1984. His publication output is monumental: it includes over 260 scientific papers. Unusually, this lifelong scientist also played a significant part in the formation of the Arts and Humanities Research Council, and he was its Chairman for seven years. Not for nothing is he described as 'a good friend to the humanities': a renaissance man indeed!

In 1993 Brian Follett became Vice-Chancellor of the University Warwick, then a relatively new institution. Building on a strong and effective administration, and the entrepreneurial spirit of the academic staff, the University set out to become truly world-class. Acutely conscious of the massive challenge involved, he identified the strengths of each faculty and department, and fostered them, seeking always to build an academic community motivated by institutional rather than personal gain. In this way he led Warwick to the great success and high international profile which it enjoys today.

Among his many national roles Brian takes particular pleasure and pride in his work with the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), during the period when it abolished the 'binary divide' - the pre-1992 differentiation between universities and polytechnics - and enabled a massive growth in student numbers, which he sees as a social good, and a significant step in reversing national decline.

Brian's distinction is such that he has been called upon to chair a number of national enquiries. Some were very close to his heart as an academic: one for the ESRC and the British Academy on the future of funding for the humanities and social sciences (in 1992), and two on university libraries (in 1993 and 2003), where he 'helped to move libraries into the electronic age'. He enquired into some aspects of the problems at the Royal Liverpool Children's Hospital in 2001. Shortly afterwards the foot and mouth crisis struck British farms, and once again the government turned to him as chairman of its investigation into the spread and prevention of the disease. These high-profile roles enhanced his reputation as someone who addresses momentous and complex issues with clarity and scientific authority, and produces clear and powerful reports.

Since he left Warwick Brian has been Chairman of the Training and Development Agency for Schools. The Agency is responsible for recruiting and training the 40,000 new teachers we require each year (more than the Armed Forces!). It is committed to raising the status of school-teaching as an attractive, long-term career choice, recognising society's changing expectations of teachers, and developing new thinking and provision for their training and professional development. Under Brian's leadership it has broken new ground by introducing, for example, the concept of 'extended schools', which meet the needs of children before and after the traditional school day.

Brian's exceptional career has brought him well-deserved public honours. He was knighted for services to science in 1992. At home in Stratford-upon-Avon he is involved with the Royal Shakespeare Company. But at heart, first and last, he is an academic, and the academic world has duly honoured him many times over. Learned societies and universities around the world have given him honorary fellowships, doctorates, and prestigious awards. Today Bournemouth University is proud to add its name to this remarkable array.

Pro-Chancellor, I have the honour to present Professor Sir Brian Follett, and ask you to confer upon him the degree of Doctor of Science, *honoris causa*.