

# BETTER TRAINING FOR FASTER GROWTH: THE INDUSTRIAL TRAINING ACT, 1964

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HMT, 29 Oct. 2014

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## The problem

- Raising workers' skill levels is a long-standing issue in the UK
- Training is bedevilled by a classic Olsonian 'collective action paradox'
- In 1964 the government acted to solve the problem with the Industrial Training Act
- What, if anything, can we learn from that experience?

## Sir Godfrey Ince

Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Labour, 1944-56

President of the BACIE, 1956-60

‘With an innate streak of vanity and personal ambition he enjoyed the power which fell into his own hands and the wide appreciation of his achievements. Convinced of the soundness of his own judgements he was not always an easy person with whom to negotiate.’

H.M.D Parker, quoted in Ince’s entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*

## **John Hare (Lord Blakenham)**

Minister of Labour, 1960-63

A key player in Macmillan's 'Keynesian-plus' drive for faster growth, not just in training but in other policy initiatives designed to get unions to cooperate in the 'new approach' (e.g. the introduction of redundancy pay).

## **Lawrence Helsby (Lord Helsby)**

Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Labour, 1959-62

Head of the Home Civil Service, 1963-68

## **Sir Richard ('Otto') Clarke**

HMT: 1945-66 (successively Asst Sec, Under-Sec., Third Sec., 1955-62, and Second Sec., 1962-66).

A key player in the growth-oriented policies of both the Conservative and Labour governments in the 1960s (Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Aviation, 1966; then Ministry of Technology, 1966-70).

**Federation of British Industry**

**Director General: Norman Kipping**

**British Employers' Confederation**

**President: Maurice Laing**

In 1965 Laing became President of the CBI, the result of a government sponsored merger of the FBI, BEC and National Association of British Manufacturers.

# The 1964 Industrial Training Act

- Failed to fulfil the hopes placed in it
- The Ministry of Labour rightly recognised it needed to ‘steer not row’.
- But was imprisoned in a Westminster model mindset:
  - Seeing inter-departmental politics as zero-sum
  - Torn between central direction of / cooperation with industry
  - Unable to devise strategies to achieve its objectives in conditions of ‘governance’ - a fragmented, disaggregated state beset by ‘self-organizing inter-organizational networks’  
(R. Rhodes, *Understanding Governance*, 1997)