Preface

Six of these ten lectures have already been printed, the first in 1951, the last in 1957. At intervals during these years I was reminded by some of my friends responsible for the teaching of social administration that students of the subject had difficulty in obtaining the relevant journals and reports. It is true that these lectures reached the sometimes unwelcome finality of print in a variety of published forms, and that certain journals are not easily available to students, particularly those less fortunately placed than students at a university. In publishing them now in book form I must, however, make one or two personal comments.

All these lectures except one were written with two kinds of audience in mind; those who come to listen and those who prefer to read. In revising them in the interests of the latter I have tried to remove some of the more obvious adornments that go to the making of a public lecture. Nothing of any consequence can have been lost in the process. I have added footnotes and references here and there, and corrected the most noticeable lapses in visual style.

What I have not been able to do much about without injury to the flow of the essays is a certain repetitiveness of content and ideas; a tendency, in several of them, for the same point to be taken up, treated in one more lightly, in another in more detail, yet never worked out as satisfactorily as if one were writing a book. For these faults I apologize.

In reprinting these six lectures I have taken the opportunity to include four that have not been published. One is a Fawcett Memorial Lecture on ‘The Position of Women’, given at Bedford College, London, in 1952. Here I have included some new material and added more up-to-date references.

The remaining three lectures, all on the National Health Service, were given under the auspices of the Sherrill Foundation in the Law Faculty at Yale University in the United States in April 1957. Though addressed to an American audience they contain material which may be of interest to students of the subject in Britain and other countries. They were subsequently submitted, with other evidence, to the Royal Commission on Doctors’ and Dentists’ Remuneration.
The Appendix to these Health Service lectures is perhaps a curiosity and needs a word of explanation. In reflecting on the many misconceptions about the Service that are current in the United States as well as in Britain I felt that something more than general statements would be appreciated. Yet one has to deal heavily in generalities in the delivery of public lectures. In respect to certain problems I wished to discuss I therefore assembled the relevant facts and Professor Eugene Rostow, Dean of the Law Faculty, was good enough to arrange for this Appendix to be mimeographed and circulated to the audience.

Since these lectures were given at Yale some new evidence of value to students of the Health Service has appeared. I refer particularly to the Report of the Committee on Administrative Tribunals and Enquiries (the Franks Committee). I have therefore included some of the material from this report in my discussion of the question of the professional freedom of the doctor under the Health Service.

Apart from these additions I have made no effort to bring up to date either the content or the documentation of these ten essays. To have undertaken such a task would have meant a complete recasting of the subjects discussed. Yet there were times when I was tempted to do so. Some of the themes I have pursued here have been overtaken by events; some by books. Our understanding of certain fundamental problems of social life in contemporary Britain has been deepened by a number of important books published in the last few years. They underline, for students of social administration in particular, one conclusion that, I hope, reviewers will draw from these essays. The social services (however we define them) can no longer be considered as ‘things apart’; as phenomena of marginal interest, like looking out of the window on a train journey. They are part of the journey itself. They are an integral part of industrialization.

The recent works I have in mind include the contribution to the study of social mobility by Professor Glass, Mrs Floud and their colleagues; the research undertaken by Professor Simey and his colleagues at Liverpool on industrial and social change; Mr Peter Townsend’s book The Family Life of Old People; Mr John Vaizey’s study of The Costs of Education; and Mr C. A. R. Crosland’s book The Future of Socialism. These I would have singled out as the most important sources of new material and new thinking in relation to the topics discussed in these essays had I embarked on the task of rewriting. If the role of the social services is to be re-interpreted in the light of the social structure of Britain in the second half of the twentieth century then it is to sources such as these that we must turn, both for the facts and for a clearer vision of reality.
I have had much advice and thoughtful criticism from friends who read particular drafts of these essays. I am grateful to Mr B. Abel-Smith, Mr N. H. Carrier, Mrs C. Cockburn, Mrs M. M. Gowing, Miss P. Jephcott, Dr J. N. Morris, Professor K. de Schweinitz, Mr J. Smith, Mr P. Townsend and Mr P. Willmott. I am also grateful to Mr Paulding Phelps for the considerable assistance he gave me in compiling the Appendix. In thanking them for their kindness I wish to absolve them all from any attachment to the often controversial views expressed in these essays. To Miss Judith Mason, my secretary, I owe an exceptional debt of gratitude for her patience and help in many ways. And to my students at the London School of Economics I am grateful for their continuing spirit of questioning. Finally, I wish to thank Mr Donald MacRae, Managing Editor of The British Journal of Sociology; the Liverpool University Press; the Editors of The Political Quarterly; the Editor of The Listener; the Editor of the Proceedings of the Eighth International Conference of Social Work; and the Editor of The Hospital for permission to reprint the essays published in their journals.

London

RICHARD M. TITMUSS

January 1958